POETICS OF RESONANCE AND LEGACIES OF SOUND IN GERMAN

LITERATURE SINCE 1989

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

ARINA CODRUTA ROTARU

AUGUST 2013

POETICS OF RESONANCE AND LEGACIES OF SOUND IN GERMAN

LITERATURE SINCE 1989

ARINA CODRUTA ROTARU, Ph. D.

Cornell University 2013

My dissertation analyzes two primary modes of engagement with sound in German literature since 1989. One is informed by the literary experiments of the interwar-and post-WWII avant-gardes, and the other is marked by vestiges of the manipulation of sound in Nazi and communist dictatorships. My first chapter examines complex relations between Herta Müller and Oskar Pastior, two Romanian writers of German ethnicity. By scrutinizing the relationship of these two authors to the Romanian avant-gardes and their forms of experimentation in general (such as collage), I uncover both the potential of literary experiment to resist communist ideology and basic structures of untimeliness that Müller inherited from Pastior. The second chapter is dedicated to Marcel Beyer's prose and poetry, which testify to the influence of sound poetry and dub music on structures of contemporary prose. Beyer uses these innovative practices to recreate an imaginary East and explore unsuspected afterlives of colonialism and fascism in a present setting. My third chapter is devoted to the Turkish-German author Feridun Zaimoglu and his little discussed relation to the avant-garde. My discussion of Zaimoglu's work examines musical and ideological influences in his work, from the black power movement to rap aesthetics, but also probes the influence of the postcolonial Caribbean movement of *négritude* on his understanding and codification

of sound. In my fourth chapter I address Thomas Kling's engagement with Dadaist experiments with sound as well as with the Wiener Gruppe's speech duets; I also show how Kling critically interprets these interwar and postwar traditions by recasting them in verses written under the sign of the digital.

With this comparative study, I seek to contribute to the field of German studies as it intersects with the evolving scholarship on sound studies, media studies and performance studies, and I ask how the past of experimentation in its colonial, communist, and avant-gardist dimensions transforms and conditions the social and aesthetic textures of the present.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Arina Rotaru was born in Constanta, Romania. She earned a B.A. in Foreign Languages from the University of Bucharest, a Magisterio in Facultate Philosophiae from the Pontifical University Urbaniana (Rome) and an M.A. from Cornell University. She is currently a lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York.

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother Dona Arvinti, and to the memory of my grandfather, Valentin Arvinti, my ardent supporter and friend.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

Resonance

     After the fall of communism in Europe and the Berlin Wall in 1989, German literature, for the first time since 1945, again became an ideal field for investigating the relationship between emerging forms of writing and the persistence of familiar ones for literary authors and discursive practices alike. The question about "what remains," famously formulated by Christa Wolf in her controversial book published in 1990, considered possible residues, remnants and traces of the communist past, but also prompted new "departures," as Andreas Huyssen suggests.[1] Whereas many critics have focused on new beginnings in German literature as a tendency of German literature to imagine a new national literature across the feuilletons, literature, film and visual arts of the 1990s in the wake of reunification, other new beginnings have been evident in a creative and critical focus on multilingualism as a literary practice in the 1990s.[2] I analyze multilingualism as one form of contemporary literary experimentation among others, and I situate its analysis within a more extensive examination of experimentation with sound initiated by the historical avant-gardes and refunctionalized in the present. This dissertation examines dialogues, correspondences and resonances of sound poetics through an analysis of prose, essays, and poetry by Herta Müller, Marcel Beyer, Feridun Zaimoglu, and Thomas

---

[1] See Andreas Huyssen, "Rewritings and New Beginnings: W.G. Sebald and the Literature on the Air War," in Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 138. Christa Wolf, *Was bleibt* (Frankfurt am Main: Luchterhand Literaturverlag, 1990).

[2] This renewed critical interest and related literary practices are analyzed by Yasemin Yildiz in her book *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press), 2012. In contrast to Yildiz, who confines her study of literary experimentation to

Kling, whose most important works have all been published since 1989. I call their aesthetic practices, which help refine our understanding of German "new beginnings" by engaging with colonial, National Socialist, communist and avant-garde pasts, a poetics of resonance. In my argument, the trope of resonance provides an important heuristic tool for a cultural and literary history since 1989. The resonance I address is created through two primary modes of engagement with sound. One is informed by literary experiments of the interwar-and post-WWII avant-gardes, and the other revolves around vestiges of the manipulation of sound in Nazi and communist dictatorships. My analysis pays particular attention to minority authors such as German Turks, who have not usually been analyzed in conjunction with the German past, be it National Socialist or colonial.[3] Furthermore, German literary history rarely analyzes contemporary minority authors in conjunction with a literary-historical past such as that of the historical avant-garde.[4] Although the historical avant-gardes are generally recognized in terms of a transnational form of artistic exchange, contemporary experimental migrant writers are commonly seen as belonging to an ethnic category alone, as if no ties existed between them and the historical avant-garde. My analysis of German-Romanian authors Herta Müller and Oskar Pastior and their experimental practices, as well as of Feridun Zaimoglu's poetic practices will

---

multilingualism, I consider multilingualism to be only one form of experimentation within literary and cultural landscapes since 1990. See Yasemin Yildiz, Ibid., 14-15

[3] For a seminal exception to this, see Leslie A. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Toward a New Critical Grammar of Migration* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). Contemporary German-Turkish writer Zafer Şenocak discusses what he perceives as the interrupted continuities between histories of contemporary migrants and "German" histories of the Holocaust. See Zafer Şenocak, "Die Zukunft der deutschen Vergangenheit," in *Das Land hinter den Buchstaben: Deutschland und der Islam im Umbruch* (München: Babel Verlag, 2006), 143-145. I address in more detail the link between intersecting migrant and German colonial histories in my third chapter.

[4] For exceptions see Bettina Brandt on Yoko Tawada and Herta Müller. Bettina Brandt, "Schnitt durchs Auge: Surrealistische Bilder bei Yoko Tawada, Emine Sevgi Özdamar und Herta Müller," in *Literatur und Migration* (München : Edition Text + Kritik, 2006).

address such critical omissions and provide incentives for further literary and cultural comparisons.[5] Identifying shared historical and aesthetic pasts is a first step in reinterpreting contemporary literature since 1989 beyond the dream of national unity, as I contend and will demonstrate.

Stephen Greenblatt defines resonance as a phenomenon that emerges as the power of an exhibited object to be perceived beyond its formal borders.[6] Greenblatt focuses on the notion of cultural resonance as wonder on the part of the observer and contrasts it with the philosophical impulse to exhaust an object of analysis. Greenblatt's radical distinction between resonant wonder and philosophical inquiry is undermined, however, by a residual ambiguity in the term resonance, a word derived from the Latin verb "resonare."[7] In modern French, for instance, the term demonstrates a homonymic relation between reason and resonance, since it stands both for "raisonner" (to reflect) and "résonner" (to resound).[8] This interlaced meaning shows that the sense of wonder that Greenblatt wants preserved through resonance does not need to stand in opposition, as the cultural historian implies, to epistemological inquiry as reflection. An understanding of resonance as combined inquiry and wonder accords with cultural historian Martin Seel's definition of the term as expansion of perception. Although Seel also relates the expansion of perception

---

[5] See also Leslie A. Adelson, "Experiment Mars: Contemporary German Literature, Imaginative Ethnoscapes, and the New Futurism," *Über Gegenwartsliteratur: Interpretationen und Interventionen*, ed. Mark W. Rectanus (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2008), 23-49.

[6] "Resonanz und Staunen revisited: Über Wunden, Schnitte und die *Norton Anthology of English Literature*," in *Resonanz: Potentiale einer akustischen Figur*, ed. Karsten Lichau, Viktoria Tkaczyk, Rebecca Wolf (München: Wolfgang Fink, 2009), 33.

[7] Jean-François Augoyard, *Sonic Experience: A Guide to Everyday Sounds* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2005), 108.

[8] As Veit Erlmann argues, the analysis of the two terms in opposition rather than in conjunction led to binarisms such as the one between pre-modern orality and modern ocularcentrism. The analysis of the two terms in conjunction, however, as Erlman explains, could lead to new valences of the relation

with a suspension of cognitive powers, he maintains that the term retains a phenomenal effect of presence relatable to both auditory and visual perception. [9] My analysis of sound aspects in post-1989 German literature and culture will consider sound in a related mode, not only in its formal but also in its semantic dimensions. Whereas Seel is concerned mostly with aesthetic phenomena and with the phenomenon of appearing as a manifestation of presence in its visual and auditory dimensions, I also take into account the effect of historical resonance as a conjuring of the past in the present. In contrast to analytical works that exclusively underscore the technological impact of new media on contemporary literature since 1989, I will devote my analysis to literary representations of formal, rhetorical, and performative sound, on the one hand, and their semantic reflections, on the other. While an effect of presence, in Seel's interpretation, involves the sphere of the sensorial as a manifestation of meaning, the effect of resonance, as I understand it, mobilizes meaning through conjoined effects of multiple temporal and spatial registers as they affect contemporary literature, and minority literature in particular. The promise of analyzing sound in German literature as it intersects with poetry studies, memory and Holocaust studies, social activism, critical ethnic studies and studies of the avant-garde is reflected in its potential for expanded transnational analysis and perspectives. I will also discuss sound in relation to vision in semiotic, rhetorical and socio-cultural

---

between sound and vision, as well as between orality and scripturality. See Veit Erlman, *Reason and Resonance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 15.

[9] Martin Seel, *Aesthetics of Appearing*, trans. John Farrell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 158.

registers, as they inform categories of race, ethnicity, and community in German studies.[10]

For Turkish-German writer Feridun Zaimoglu acts of preserving "signs and wonders" in a related sense entail strategies for coping with estrangement in "a foreign land," Germany.[11] In my analysis of contemporary German literature and aesthetic phenomena since 1989, including literary work by Zaimoglu, resonance is not related to contemplation and wonder alone, but also to a mode of cultivating their conjunction as a weapon of the subaltern against hegemonic regimes of a rationalizing society in contemporary Germany. These regimes are in Zaimoglu's critical perspective based on mechanisms of integration that effectively function as exclusion. In my analysis of Zaimoglu's bestseller *Kanak Sprak* (1995), I will discuss the literary and political reflections of the resonating signs and wonders he activates. As I argue, his book uses resonance in a literal mode of reverberation or "striking back."[12] I will focus in particular on the sound dimension of "striking back" more generally as well and read it as a minoritarian response to societal conventions and hegemonic practices

---

[10] In his book on *Production of Presence,* Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht seeks to reconcile what he perceives as the separation of form from content in post-medieval hermeneutics. One of the counter-examples provided by Gumbrecht is based on Hans-Georg Gadamer's own designated tension between the semantic and non-semantic components of a text, specifically as they come up in the performance of poetry. See Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 64. For a critique of the divided sign see Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, Ibid, 14.

[11] See *Kanak Sprak: 24 Misstöne vom Rande der Gesellschaft,* 6th ed. (Rotbuch: Hamburg, 2004), 110. A deeper resonance might be at play in Zaimoglu's use of the phrase. Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* uses the notion of "signs taken for wonders" to delineate both a moment of colonial invasion (the catechization of Indians through the British colonial rule in the first half of the nineteenth century), and to highlight verbal episodes when the colonized verbally challenge the signs of Western indoctrination (the Holy Scripture) imposed on them. See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Routledge: London and New York, 2004), 145-174. Whereas Bhabha is mostly concerned with the mistrust of the colonized in signs that cannot pass for wonders, Zaimoglu highlights, through resonance, a moment of direct action against signs as hegemonic conventions imposed on migrants. If Bhabha's term for talking about resistance to colonial rule is "metonymy of presence" (171), Zaimoglu's preferred rhetorical mode, as I will argue in my chapter, is catachresis.

[12] On the meaning of resonance as "striking back" see *Sonic Experience*, 111.

in post-1989 Germany. The advantage of using resonance, especially in relation to sound, as a heuristic tool for analysis, goes beyond existing approaches to minoritarian activism and can also offer additional insights into German literature since 1989 more broadly in relation to its historical, aesthetic and literary traditions.

Karsten Lichau's anthology titled *Resonanz: Potentiale einer akustischen Figur* (2009) highlights the double value of resonance as a physiological and metaphorical concept, one that reflects changes in cultural and scientific history and migrates through space and time. Drawing on this mobility of resonance highlighted by Lichau, I consider the term an important epistemological figure in establishing historical correspondences among authors and literary techniques, on the one hand, and various ways in which sound in literary texts addresses the impact that texts can have on an interested reader or audience, on the other.[13] In contrast to Wai Chee Dimock's "theory of resonance," the notion of resonance I develop in this dissertation is not only one of literary influence through semantic change, diachronic historicity or aurality. If for Dimock, texts impose their own regime on the reader and change through time, resonance in my perspective involves an additional societal dimension.[14] The trope of resonance bears in my view a strong resemblance to the figure of transmission, which Douglas Kahn identifies as one of the "abstract figures" of a "wireless imagination" in the twentieth century.[15] For Kahn, "transmission [can] situate objects and bodies in inharmonic, noisy and terrestrial relations without

---

[13] See also Breger, who discusses such immediacy in terms of "violence, fear, and trauma (231)." Claudia Breger, *An Aesthetics of Narrative Performance: Transnational Theater, Literature and Film in Contemporary Germany* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012), 231.

[14] See Wai Chee Dimock, "A Theory of Resonance," in *PMLA* 112.5 (Oct. 1997): 1060-1071.

[15] Douglas Kahn, *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio and the Avant-garde* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992)*,* 30.

consuming their autonomy."[16] From Kahn's definition of the wireless imagination, I retain in particular a spatial quality as well as the capacity of this imagination to build relations without consuming the putative autonomy of objects. Instead of regarding resonance as an abstract figure, I regard it as a material one. Resonance also relates to new modes of understanding of sound in space, in the technological environment and in literary and socio-cultural history. Despite influential anthologies such as *Sound Matters* (edited by Nora Alter and Lutz Koepnick in 2004) on the topics of sound and technology in German Studies and *Zwischen Rauschen und Offenbarung* (edited by Thomas Macho, Friedrich Kittler and Sigrid Weigel in 2008) on the mediatic history of the voice in German cultural studies, German literary history to date lacks a study of the deep impact of avant-garde experimentation with sound on contemporary literary engagements with sound. The recent anthology *Germany in the Loud Twentieth Century,* edited by Florence Feiereisen and Alexandra Merley Hill in 2012, offers an important contribution on the topic of "German sounds" in their historical functionalization from the early twentieth century to the present, including sounds in East and West and contemporary sound installations. Yet a substantial engagement with avant-garde dimensions of aesthetic practice intervening in social reality is missing. What is the deep relation between contemporary resonance and the historical avant-garde?

Neither resonance nor the avant-garde can be reduced to "presence," although both terms can be defined in terms of presence. In 1991, the anthology *Gegenwartsliteratur seit 1968,* edited by Klaus Briegleb and Sigrid Weigel, interrogated the actuality of the avant-garde at the end of the twentieth century and

proposed a critical engagement with avant-garde literature in contemporary relation to

emerging technologies, whose long-term effects could only be approximated yet, of

course, not fully assessed in the early 1990s.[17] Writing on the historical implications

of the 1990s' political upheavals, Boris Buden has more recently suggested that

scholars not only focus on technological advancements, but also take into account the

impact of post-communism on the contemporary avant-garde.[18] The double focus on

post-communism and avant-garde proposed by Buden seems justified in particular by

relations between the avant-garde project and totalitarian regimes such as Stalinism as

well as by the relative lack of scholarship on the avant-garde during communism.[19]

When Buden characterizes the post-1989 avant-garde as a "retroutopia," he echoes art

critic Inka Arns' notion of retro-avant-garde. "A retro-avant-garde" does not desire to

"transform society" as intended by the historical avant-gardes of the early twentieth

century, but focuses rather on a technological future in the absence of society.[20] By

---

[17] Klaus Briegleb and Sigrid Weigel, *Gegenwartsliteratur seit 1968* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1992), 10.
[18] Boris Buden, *Zone des Übergangs: Vom Ende des Postkommunismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009). One of the writings to address the avant-garde during communism, including the clash between communist utopianism and avant-garde experimentalism is *Experiment in Post-War Romanian Literature,* ed. Monica Spiridon, Ion Bogdan Lefter (Pitesti: Paralela 45, 1999). However, the book limits itself to highlighting intersections between various currents and artists, rather than critically evaluating them. The book also does not mention what type of continuation of the avant-garde would be possible in a post-communist and post-dissident society.
[19] In his *Total Art of Stalinism* (1992) Boris Groys reads the Stalinist project as the fulfillment of an avant-garde ideal of transfering politics into art. See also David Bathrick's observation about Lenin's "co-opting and indeed realizing, not repudiating, the revolutionary project of such artistic movements as Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism." David Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech: The Politics of Culture in the Culture of the GDR* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 90.
[20] Boris Buden, *Zone des Übergangs*. Buden borrows the term "retro-utopia" from Inke Arns, who uses it to refer to artistic movements in Slowenia and former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. In search of an alternative term for the avant-garde at its new zenith, Eda Cufer and Peter Weibel suggested in the 1990s the term "retro-avant-garde" to characterize the work of artists from the group for "new Slovene art." From their position of marginality to Western European discourses, the group voiced a Central European perspective and expressed the need to go back to the moment where the initial avant-garde project of transformation of society through art was allegedly absorbed by totalitarian state-systems. This model of contemporary avant-garde as *arrière-garde* is also embraced by William Marx, who comments on Cufer's understanding of the "retro-avant-garde" as a strategy of reaching into the past in order to "heal initial conflicts." William Marx, ed. *Les arrière-gardes au XXe siècle: L'autre face de la*

contrast, the trope of "resonance" encourages us to consider the physical impact of the past on the present as the past encounters and is transformed by a non-utopian future. Herta Müller, for example, whose work I analyze in relation to the legacies of the Romanian avant-gardes and communism, builds her formal sonorities and art objects in defiance of utopias. Her case raises questions about changes in the concept and function of the avant-garde at the end of utopia. Resonance also allows us to take into account a societal dimension, since resonance foregrounds novel relations between audience, artifacts, and public spheres. The key word for resonance is relation, which echoes forms and networks advanced by technologies of digitalization and print, on the one hand, and forms of community and subjectivity as alternatives to globalization, on the other. While the historical avant-gardes prompted the formation of one type of community, in which artistic individuality was enriched by participatory and collective situations as in simultaneous poetry and performance, National Socialist and communist dictatorships invented and imposed authoritarian communities that devised their own ways of imagining social relations, in part through sound.[21] A focus on sound and performance will allow me to highlight the creation of new contemporary networks of relation in the sense of the "acoustic

---

modernité esthétique (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004), 18. Andreas Huyssen's assessment of "present pasts" signals a form of the present suffocated by the culture of memory. His incentive is to "remember the future," rather than "worry about the future of memory." Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford California Press, 2003), 26. While Huyssen is interested in the proliferation of memory cultures in the present, Kufer and Marx articulate a stance that challenges the contribution of the Western past to the formation of the avant-garde. The terminology "retro-avant-garde" advances such a revaluation of the (Western) past in order to understand the present and "take better leaps" ["rétrograder pour mieux sauter"].

[21] With regard to the manipulation of the masses in the early twentieth century through sound, Susan Buck-Morss focuses on how communists turned to the new medium of the megaphone to reach mass audiences. Buck-Morss cites Lenin, who spoke of the radio as a "universal ear" or "the newspaper without paper." Susan Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West* (London: MIT Press, 2000), 137. The new medium of radio was also quickly adopted by National Socialists as well. See, for instance, Brian Currid, *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

communities" proposed by Brandon LaBelle.[22] LaBelle defines such communities as networks of relation that are specifically realized through sound. According to LaBelle, such networks form links, groupings, and conjunctions that transform individual identity into a relational project. I underscore the relations implied in resonance when I analyze forms of performance and mediation in Thomas Kling's poetry, for example, but I also highlight forms of relation as networks linking subaltern subjects in the literary imagination in contemporary Germany. I also show how the notion of relation proposed by Édouard Glissant as redefinition of modern identity helps to articulate a mode of relation in conjunction with resonance.[23]

 Especially in German-speaking contexts, historical and aesthetic transformations and "new beginnings" have often been analyzed through the lenses of history and geopolitics rather than in relation to avant-garde practices and experimentation. In the remainder of the introduction I will outline the implications of thinking about sound in relation to a post-communist society and then in relation to a post-fascist society. Next, I will underscore the value of sound and avant-garde experimentation for minority writers. Last but not least, I will evaluate the importance of performance studies and performance aesthetics for an analysis of German-speaking literature since 1989. My project builds on existing scholarship in performance studies but also emphasizes different aspects related to sound for the purpose of analyzing relations between contemporary literature and historical traditions.

---

[22] Brandon LaBelle, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life* (New York/London: The Continuum International Publishing House, 2010), xxi.

Sound Vestiges of Communism in a post-1989 Society

In 1996, six years after the anthology *Deckname "Lyrik": eine Dokumentation* had exposed how lyric could function as a cover up for poets involved with the secret police in communist Europe, Valeri Scherstjanoi, a Russian sound artist schooled in Germany published his radio play *Operative Personenkontrolle "Futurist"* (*Operational Person Check "Futurist"*).[24] This play was inspired by the poet's Stasi files and intended to divulge the realities of state control and surveillance in poetic milieux. Through a juxtaposition of sound poetry and its decodification in the hands of the Stasis into banal protocols, the play demonstrates how sound poetry was a target of state suspicion in spite of its hermeticism. The play's satire of sound turned into prosaic artifacts of surveillance highlights the absurdity of state control. With its playful reference to a futurist technological avant-garde used as a means to unmask state control of the past, *Operational Person Check "Futurist"* presents a revamped emergence of the avant-garde as satirical means of engaging and polemicizing with the recent political past. I use this example of a poet in dialogue with his Stasi files to introduce a related yet different case concerning German-Romanian poet Oskar Pastior. In my analysis of Oskar Pastior's sound poetry composed during communist dictatorship and after his emigration to Germany in 1968, I focus on materials that do not yet pertain to a post-1989 humorous juxtaposition of sound poetry with its awkward translation by the Stasi, as in Scherstjanoi's case, but I highlight rather how

---

[23] Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation,* trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 20.
[24] See Reiner Kunze, *Deckname "Lyrik": eine Dokumentation* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1990). For more information on the play see also Paul Cooke, "'Writing back':

Pastior as a poet expressed both self-censorship and his awareness of police censorship through his engagement with experimental avant-garde forms. Pastior's case gives a different twist to experiments such as *Operational Person Check "Futurist,"* which did not precede but succeeded Stasi attempts to control experimentation. By contrast, Pastior crafts experiment in real time, by navigating perceived prohibitions and unmasking them in experimental *double entendre*. I thus address ways in which avant-garde practices collided with state ideology under communist rule. Unlike Buden, whose analysis of the avant-garde considers engagement with the communist past as a type of continuity, critic Frank Schirrmacher, who writes for *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, declares both the avant-garde and communism to be concluded chapters of utopian thought.[25] Analyzing the novel *Ich* by Wolfgang Hilbig, written in 1993, Schirrmacher claims to offer a prototypical example of the ideological and aesthetic end of the avant-garde as a carrier of political meaning. Specifically, Schirrmacher's analysis of *Ich* thematizes the contamination of the avant-garde in former East Germany by the state police.[26] In

Dealing with the Stasi in Literature," in *Representing East Germany since Unification: From Colonization to Nostalgia* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 61-101.

[25] Frank Schirrmacher, "Wir waren der Schatten des Lebens, wir waren der Tod: Über ein literarisches Meisterwerk und seine Verhinderung durch den Geist der Moderne. Anmerkungen zu Wolfgang Hilbigs Roman "Ich," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 231, 5.10.1993: L2.

[26] Ibid. Schirrmacher's thesis about the "death of the avant-garde" in the 1990s, which is based on revelations of East German uses and deformations of experimentation through its employment in the service of the state seems not to be persuasive from a historical point of view, in particular if analyzed in the context of East Germany's already troubled relation to experimentation since 1945. Such a flawed adoption of avant-gardism was noted, for instance, by critic Bernd Hüppauf, who had long associated the avant-garde in the East with anachronism and "aesthetic nonsynchronicity" devoid of "wordplay" and other experimental features. See Bernd Hüppauf, "Moral oder Sprache: DDR Literatur vor der Moderne," in *Literatur in der DDR: Rückblicke,* special issue (München: Text+ Kritik, 1991), 223. Schirrmacher's and Hüppauf's evaluations rely, however, on different types of considerations: Hüppauf's is an evaluation contemporaneous with the East avant-garde under communism, while Schirrmacher's offers a post-factum appraisal of a different set of methods, as practices of surveillance that *can be assessed* in an avant-garde key, yet which were largely unknown at the time. The dilemma rests, however, on how to analyze the complicity of avant-garde artists with the state police, with their poetic practices offering a type of ironic model for state surveillance itself.

the novel, the first-person narrator, the manual worker M.W., turns to writing to fill the tedium of his daily life and is promptly recruited by the secret police as an unofficial collaborator of the Ministry for State Security ("IM" in the German original). M.W.'s notes on the protocols he devises reflect the manufacturing of reality through the state apparatus, to the extent to which the protagonist compares the transformation of language at the hands of the State police with Surrealist techniques of automatic writing. Surrealist practices in *Ich* such as the use of experimental linguistic effects create connections to other East German writers and their use of Surrealism: Heiner Müller, Volker Braun or Christoph Hein.[27] The reference to East German Surrealism in Hilbig's novel is not coincidental. Such reference points to the use of Surrealism by writers in East Germany such as Müller, Braun or Hein who, as David Bathrick points out, elaborate a mode of countering the status quo without imagining an anti-fascist enemy as had been the case with other forms of social critique or political vanguardism in the East.[28] This mode of resisting the status quo and deconstructing communist ideology is illustrated in particular in the novel *Ich*. There Surrealism functions to destroy the everyday use of language as well as the idea of an artist-owned interiority. Hilbig writes:

> Es war im Grunde ein den Realismus zerstörender Sprachgebrauch...einer ungewollt surrealistischen Methode ähnlich, die einen psychotischen Automatismus erzeugte. Vielleicht haben die wirklichen Surrealisten davon bloss phantasieren können...von ihnen stammt das berühmte Bild des Würfels aus dem Würfel, in dem wieder ein Würfel steckt, und darin wieder einer und so fort. Die Maschine der Genitive macht damit Ernst, dachte ich.[29]

---

[27] For more on this point see David Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech,* 128-129. In the West, on the other hand, Surrealism was revived by authors such as Peter Weiss, in part, possibly in an effort to unsettle the agenda of Gruppe 47. This phenomenon of Surrealist revival is compared by Klaus Scherpe in his excursus on modernity with a "nachzuholende Moderne," meant to reanimate a buried modernity. Scherpe also calls German modernity "verschüttet" in the wake of World War II. In Klaus Scherpe, *Die rekonstruierte Moderne: Studien zur deutschen Literatur nach 1945* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1992), XIV.

[28] Ibid. As Bathrick explains, the GDR considered itself as the anti-fascist state *par excellence* (128).

[29] Wolfgang Hilbig, *Ich* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1993), 23-24.

Paradoxically, as this text indicates, the deformation of reality at the hands of the State police creates Surrealist effects, leading to the birth of a twisted, self-multiplying reality ["das Bild des Würfels aus dem Würfel"]. Hilbig's story of an unofficial collaborator with the State security, who is recruited from the ranks of the literary world, echoes the real stories of experimental poets Rainer Schedlinski and Sascha Anderson, who after the fall of the Communist regime were unmasked for having worked for the state as spies.[30] The novel displays how the deformation of reality and language present in experimental literature can be exploited and perverted through the genre of informative surveillance protocols. It is this past complicity of the East German avant-garde with the Stasi that prompts Schirrmacher in the early 1990s to proclaim yet again the death of the avant-garde.[31] Complicity between the avant-garde and the state police in the GDR, uncovered in the wake of 1989, expands the meaning of Surrealism from a tool of subversion against the status quo into one of political conformity and literary contamination affecting literary practice itself. As suggested by *Operational Self-Control Check "Futurist,"* Surrealism turned from an artistic practice into a mechanism cultivated both by the state security apparatus in an attempt to capture and translate experimental writings, and by some artists of the East

---

[30] The scandal about the contamination of the avant-garde by the State police started in the early 1990s, when author Wolf Biermann denounced his former colleague Sascha Anderson as an unofficial informer working on both sides of the Wall. For more documentation on the scandal, see Klaus Michael, "Feindbild DDR Literatur: Die Biermann-Affäre, Staatssicherheit und die Herausbildung einer literarischen Alternativkultur in der DDR," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschehen*, May 28, 1993, 23-31.

[31] For accounts that announce the death of the avant-garde, see Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw, 12th ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1968). Hans-Magnus Enzensberger, "Aporias of the Avant-Garde," in *Zig Zag: The Politics of Culture and Vice Versa,* trans. Michael Faber-Kaiser (New York: New York Press, 1997).

German scene who had committed or been forced to infiltrate and spy on their colleagues. This double function of Surrealism, subversive of but also foundational for the communist regime, undermines the binary notion of "counter-discourse" celebrated by critics such as Wolfgang Emmerich as oppositional aesthetics in the work of Volker Braun or Heiner Müller.[32] The celebration and subsequent contestation of oppositionality on account of the duplicitous use of Surrealism in East Germany had an echo in the interpretation of Christa Wolf's work in the wake of her post-1989 confessional writings: the resulting debates showed both the partial impossibility of literature to function as genuine engaged literature in a communist state, as well as the presence of a tentacular state even in the midst of artistic experiment.

Ich shows the function of Surrealism in the service of both experiment and state control. If the communism in East Germany can be conceived as a historical experiment in itself, in the tradition of Marxist-Leninism, its end is enough to have Schirrmacher declare all other experiments outdated and malevolently deformed.[33] Judith Ryan shows in her analysis of compromised East German experiments around Prenzlauer Berg that no solid alternatives are available in theoretical terms to replace the idea of *Gesinnungsästhetik*, "the concept of art tainted by ideology" in

---

[32] Emmerich's object of analysis is not the function of Surrealism in the GDR, but rather ways in which authors of the GDR operated with modernist legacies such as "collage" or "montage" to destabilize the tenets of "realism." See Wolfgang Emmerich, "Affirmation-Utopie-Melancholie: Versuch einer Bilanz von vierzig Jahren DDR-Literatur," in *German Studies Review* 14.2 (May 1991): 325-44. See also David Bathrick's analysis of Emmerich's article in David Bathrick, *Powers of Speech*, 19. The complex question of oppositionality was replicated in the interpretation of Christa Wolf's work since her post-1989 confessional writings, where it showed the partial impossibility of literature as engaged literature in a communist state. See Judith Ryan, "'Deckname Lyrik': Poetry after 1945 and 1989," in *Wendezeiten Zeitenwenden: Positionsbestimmungen zur deutschsprachigen Literatur 1945-1995*, ed. Robert Weninger and Brigitte Rossbacher (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997), 44. Bathrick's *Powers of Speech* represents a major critical breakthrough in GDR studies in challenging simplistic oppositions between conformity and dissent.

experimental formalisms carried out by the poets of Prenzlauer Berg. [34] Both forms of literature, ideological and experimental, seem compromised in her view, and Ryan signals their paralysis without offering an alternative herself. My focus on resonance as a form of retrieving the past and refashioning the aesthetic future at the end of communist utopias suggests an alternative to this theoretical dead-end as signaled by Ryan in the late 1990s. Unlike Buden's or Schirrmacher's past-oriented avant-gardes, the experimentation and avant-gardism I highlight a new directional quality in the work of Müller and Pastior. As I will show by analyzing aesthetic practices such as the use of collage in the work of Herta Müller and Oskar Pastior, despite state ideology, despite and perhaps because of the end of utopian thought, these two artists create alterntive soundscapes through experiments in which the legacies of communism and fascism resonate in different ways in the present. In the following I will address some unsettling legacies of communism and fascism, as well as their relation to sound and experimentation.

Sound Vestiges of Fascism

In his book on the legacies of the avant-gardes since 1989, Richard Langston notes that "political, social, and cultural events never eclipsed the primacy of the fascist past in avant-garde politics of the present."[35] Langston takes a different approach from Buden or Schirrmacher to focus on what he calls the "legacies of violence" in the articulation of the avant-garde specifically as post-fascist avant-garde.

---

[33] One of the most grueling socialist methods of torture during Romanian communism was called "the Pitesti Experiment," and presupposed a complete re-education through mental and physical pain.
[34] Judith Ryan, "'Deckname Lyrik' Poetry after 1945 and 1989," *Wendezeiten Zeitenwenden,* 51.

Langston's analysis focuses on the impact of fascist violence and its enduring effect for an aesthetics of the present. I follow some violent traces of fascism in my analysis of Feridun Zaimoglu's and Günter Senkel's co-authored theater play *Schwarze Jungfrauen* [Black Virgins]. There neo-fascist legacies are exposed in a performance that has Muslims encloistered in resonating container-like spaces. This performance staged by Neco Çelik invokes Christoph Schlingensief's experiments with container-art. In his installation *Bitte liebt Österreich* Schlingensief had notably underscored traces of violence in contemporary avant-garde art by featuring in his installation the real-life expulsion of foreigners.[36] Neco Çelik's staging of *Schwarze Jungfrauen* offers a resonant space that gives expression to racial, gender and civil disobedience. If the performance of *Schwarze Jungfrauen* reveals the troubling status of foreigners relegated to container-like spaces, fascist remnants in the present are thematized in both Thomas Kling's poetry and in Marcel Beyer's poetry and prose from different perspectives. Both Kling and Beyer stage an explicitly fascist rhetoric of recitation and representation, which is generally censored in the public sphere, with the recent exception of satirical performances by Turkish-German cabaret artist Serdar Somuncu. This artist provocatively conjures Nazi sound in an unsuspecting public sphere of performance.[37] In contrast to other studies of sound and fascism, which have focused either on radio art, film and other media as propaganda materials in the Third

---

[35] Richard Langston, *Visions of Violence: German Avant-Gardes after Fascism* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 230.

[36] See Langston's account of Schlingensief's installation in *Visions of Violence,* 234-244.

[37] The musician, director and cabaret artist Serdar Somuncu became well-known in Germany for reading excerpts from *Mein Kampf* and signalling, through recitation, the contradictions contained in the book. He gave an account of his readings in two books, *Nachlaß eines Massenmörders auf Lesereise mit "Mein Kampf,"* Bastei-Lübbe-Taschenbuch, Bd. 60513 (Köln: WortArt Buchverlag, 2002) and *Auf Lesereise mit Adolf* (Köln: WortArt Buchverlag, 2009). See also Kathrin Bower, "Serdar Somuncu: Reframing Integration Through a Transnational Politics of Satire." *The German Quarterly*. 85.2 (2012): 193-213.

Reich, my analysis of authors such as Kling and Beyer highlights an aestheticized form of critical but also pantomimic, theatrical engagement with fascism. With the term "sound vestige" I refer to a particular function of resonance as an alternative to the figure of the cultural archive. While the latter is usually characterized by a vertical trajectory of accumulation, resonance unfolds through a spatial mechanics that also allows for horizontal relations. I regard the juncture of 1989 as unfolding along a sonic dimension, which in turn allows me to reconsider the avant-garde as having contemporary resonance with meaning beyond a merely historical archive.

Minor Avant-gardism and Ethnographic Sound

The 1960s debate around the death of the avant-garde and the rise of the postmodern involved critics in the United States, Germany and France and foregrounded the alleged extinction of the avant-garde as an agent of progressive action.[38] The alleged "death" of the avant-gardes was articulated by critic Matei Calinescu from a different perspective: he saw in the proclaimed death a modality for any avant-garde to reveal its constitutive form, not in disappearance but in crisis.[39] My interest in addressing the relevance of the category of avant-garde today, especially in German-speaking cultures, in which the post-war past is both bracketed and symbolically overcome, is animated by an additional concern: to contribute new perspectives on the category of the avant-garde by relating it to so-called minority writers and in the process to explore additional modalities for theorizing subaltern

---

[38] Richard Langston, *Visions of Violence,* 40.

[39] "As a culture of crisis" writes Calinescu, "the avant-garde is consciously involved in furthering the 'natural' decay of traditional forms in our world of change, and does its best to intensify and dramatize all existing symptoms of decadence and exhaustion." Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avantgarde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 124.

discourses.[40] My project also shares certain precepts with those of scholars such as James M. Harding and John Rouse, who in *Not the Other Avant-Garde* (2005) highlight the performative component of the historical avant-gardes in multiple countries and underline the relevance of such a component for a study of contemporary transnational aesthetic phenomena.[41] Harding and Rouse raise questions about the significance of a transnational avant-garde at a time when neo-liberal multiculturalism in the 1990s emphasized the values of "differentiated citizenship" (Aihwa Ong) in a society that devalued minorities and migrants and relied on "global capitalist expansion."[42] My study examines aesthetic and literary practices that value the resonant impetus of the historical avant-garde beyond a Western perspective. Illuminating transnational aspects of contemporary German poetry, prose and drama is key to this project's evaluation of both the past and the present. Such resonant transnationalism helps overcome, in my perspective, the dead-end of multiculturalism in Germany. A transnational avant-garde may be seen as one possible alternative to the multicultural approach to literatures of minorities in Germany. Although prominent scholars have used the category of "minor transnationalism" to reflect on recent developments in cultural studies in relation to minorities and to challenge outmoded models of center and periphery, no such

---

[40] See, for instance, Hal Foster's proposition for a reconsideration of the avant-garde from the perspective of racial and sexual minorities or Rebecca Schneider and Mike Sell's suggestions for an avant-garde that considers the role of gender and sexiality and of race in its constitution. Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real* (MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachussetts, 1996), x. Mike Sell, *Avant-garde Performance and the Limits of Criticism: Approaching the Living Theater, happenings/Fluxus, and the Black Arts Movement* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005). Rebecca Schneider, *The Explicit Body in Performance* (London/New York: Routledge, 1997).

[41] James M. Harding and John Rouse, *Not the Other Avant-Garde: The Transnational Foundations of Avant-Garde Performance* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006), 20.

[42] Aihwa Ong cited in Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 39-40.

analysis has been proposed with regard to what I call "minor avant-gardism."[43] The notion of a "diasporic avant-garde" has included certain avant-gardes and excluded others.[44] Given the importance of voice, speech and sound for all critiques of racism, I inquire into the status of subaltern speech to consider how it can expand theories of multilingualism and multiculturalism for minorities in the present. One case study I propose pays special attention to the experimental thrust of Zaimoglu's notion of "ethno-avant-garde." By "ethno-avant-garde," Zaimoglu designates a form of avant-garde as advanced by Muslims residing in Germany, a peripheral avant-garde that offers reinterpretation of the avant-garde beyond its secular European exhaustion.

This dissertation diverges from ethnographic methods that have been used either to suppress or to represent minority voices as such. Herta Müller's use of Surrealism in her collage practice, for example, helps unsettle any notion of ethnographic continuity through the very method of collage. I explore thematic and formal connections between colonialism and linguistics in Marcel Beyer's novel *Flughunde,* which aims to reconstruct but can at best index forgotten lives of colonial subjects by having his narrator uncover sound archives kept through National Socialism and East German communism. More generally I also focus on the impact of colonialism in contemporary sites of German "minority" writing that engages various aspects of avant-garde experimentation with sound poetics. My assessment of minority writers redirects attention away from ethnographic protocols, a popular interpretive key for engaging with minority literature, to minoritarian modes of

---

[43] Françoise-Lionnet and Shu-mei Shi, *Minor Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).
[44] Carrie Noland and Barrett Watten, ed. *Diasporic Avantgardes: Experimental Poetics and Cultural Displacement* (New York: Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 6.

creation and temporality As Johannes Fabian has pointed out, ethnographic temporality traditionally relegated colonial and ethnographic subjects to other non-European pasts. I challenge such traditional signposts of ethnographic inquiry by focusing on forms of address in Feridun Zaimoglu's work. These poetic forms of address rely in part on sound to create presence effects; these effects deny the time décalages of modernity and create both signs and wonders of their own. This entails a process of resignification, which I analyze in detail in my chapter on Zaimoglu.

For Martin Seel, resonance reshapes the forms of the real and offers a premise for resignification. As Seel writes: "what was previously located in a social or cultural order, what previously had an existence that could be anticipated and fixed, now reveals itself in a sub-meaningful appearing."[45] I interpret this "sub-meaningful" appearing as a challenge posed by minority writers to conventional hermeneutics through resonance. By focusing on imaginative relations in cross-cultural contexts, I perform what Edward Said called "contrapuntal reading," a mode of "imagining and filling in omitted references to cross-cultural contexts and the silences of history."[46] Beyond Said, I offer additional analysis of a racist and colonialist term such as "Kanak," which, although pejorative in its original intent, has acquired new cultural meanings since the 1990s that scholars still struggle to understand. My analysis of a poetics of resonance in the work of German-Turkish writers Feridun Zaimoglu in particular and contemporary German-speaking literature more generally creates transnational frames of relation between a circum-Atlantic world and German studies.

---

[45] Martin Seel, *Aesthetics of Appearing,* 145.
[46] Azade Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 14.

21

Method

Sven Werkmeister has argued that a modernist sense of resonance relied on a mimetic identity of subject and object and modeled the phenomenon in accordance with the analog media of the early twentieth century.[47] If this is true, the function of resonance in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries is affected by the prevalence of digital media and presupposes the dissolution of subject-object distinctions through non-binary relations.[48] For purposes of this dissertation, I rely on theories of the subaltern and the postcolonial to explore non-binary intersections between putative markers of identity such as gender and religion. In contrast to postcolonial studies that rely on visual concepts of subversion such as mimicry on the part of colonial subjects (Bhabha) or masquerade on the part of colonizers (Gutjahr and Hermes), I underscore alternatives of protest against racism and colonialism in popular culture and print literature. These are alternatives that rely on a poetics of sound and vision alike, and on performative strategies of engaging with audience subjectivity.[49] I reflect on postcolonial legacies in contemporary German culture both historically, through the prism of residual traces of colonialism, and aesthetically, by analyzing uses of Surrealism as methods of anti-colonial protest. My re-appraisal of postcolonial voices in German literature from what I call a minor avant-garde

---

[47] For a definition of resonance as identity of subject and object see Alfred Döblin, *Unser Dasein* (Berlin: S. Fischer Verlag, 1933). For an outline of the reliance of modernist resonance on analog media, see Sven Werkmeister, *Kulturen jenseits der Schrift: zur Figur des Primitiven in Ethnologie, Kulturtheorie und Literatur um 1900* (München: Fink, 2010), 308-309.

[48] See especially N. Katherine Hayles, *My Mother Was a Computer: Digital Subjects and Literary Texts* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005). See also Timothy Murray, *Digital Baroque: New Media Art and Cinematic Folds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

[49] On Homi Bhabha's concept of mimicry see Homi Bhabha, "On Mimicry and Man: the ambivalence of colonial discourse," in *The Location of Culture*, 121-132. On masquerade as performance on the part of the colonizer, see Ortrud Gutjahr and Stefan Hermes, ed. *Maskeraden des (Post-)Kolonialismus:*

perspective offers alternatives to multicultural modes of analysis for aesthetic and cultural products in contemporary Germany. A poetics of resonance critically engages two related types of aesthetics, the "aesthetics of the performative" proposed by Erika Fischer-Lichte in her analysis of contemporary performance, which analyzes performance as an emergent phenomenon that transcends established meaning, and "the aesthetics of proximity" suggested by Claudia Breger, respectively. Breger relies on Fischer-Lichte's understanding of presence effects, yet she includes a narrative dimension, which, Breger argues, has otherwise been largely ignored in accounts of avant-garde performance in particular.[50] My analysis of a contemporary poetics of resonance acknowledges this narrative dimension (as semantic dimension), yet my discussion of historical dimensions related to colonialism and fascism also contradict the potential violent logic of proximity. The poetics of resonance I address in writings by Herta Müller, Oskar Pastior, Thomas Kling, Marcel Beyer, and Feridun Zaimoglu investigates enriches both presence effects and modes of inter-relationality between historical pasts and futures in transnational keys. With this comparative study, I seek to contribute to the field of German studies as it intersects with the evolving scholarship on sound studies, media studies and performance studies, and I ask how the past of experimentation in its colonial, communist, and avant-gardist dimensions transforms and conditions the social and aesthetic textures of the present.

Verschattete Repräsentationen "der Anderen" in der deutschsprachigen Literatur und im Film (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2011).
[50] Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (New York: Routledge, 2008) Claudia Breger, *An Aesthetics of Narrative Performance: Transnational Theater, Literature, and Film in Contemporary Germany* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012).

My first chapter examines complex relations between Herta Müller and Oskar Pastior, two Romanian writers of German ethnicity. Their connection to the avant-garde, in particular to the Romanian avant-gardes, especially to Dadaism, sound and the absurd, is a lacuna in existing scholarship that my analysis proposes to address. By scrutinizing the relationship of these two authors to the Romanian avant-gardes and their forms of experimentation in general (such as collage), I uncover both the potential of literary experiment to resist communist ideology and basic structures of untimeliness that Müller inherited from Pastior. The second chapter is dedicated to Marcel Beyer's prose and poetry, which testify to the influence of sound poetry and dub music on structures of contemporary prose. Beyer uses these innovative practices to recreate an imaginary East and explore unsuspected afterlives of colonialism and fascism in a present setting. My third chapter is dedicated to the Turkish-German author Feridun Zaimoglu and his little discussed relation to the avant-garde. Theoretical analysis of performance in his prose work and theater, where I understand the notion of the performative to function both as a self-reflexive and social act, allows me to address this scholarly lacuna. My discussion of Zaimoglu's work examines musical and ideological influences in his work, from the black power movement to rap aesthetics, but also probes the influence of the postcolonial Caribbean movement of *négritude* on his understanding and codification of sound. The fourth chapter considers poems and poetic theory by Thomas Kling to highlight the poet's intervention against what he considers a hostility to experimentation in postwar German literature. I also address Kling's engagement with Dadaist experiments with sound as well as with the Wiener Gruppe's speech duets; I also show how Kling critically interprets these interwar and postwar traditions by recasting

them in verses written under the sign of the digital. For Kling, resonance rewrites the modernist legacy of dissonance, once defined as mere noise in opposition to harmony. This dissertation engages critical theories of sound as providing the basis for greater elaboration on the "resonance" or material history of literature at a time when the visual technologies of cartography in a post-1989 world are no longer in place.

CHAPTER 1

AVANT-GARDE CONFLUENCES AND PROHIBITIONS OF SOUND: HERTA
MÜLLER AND OSKAR PASTIOR

Herta Müller, Oskar Pastior and Traditions of Experimentation

Born in 1953 and awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2009, Herta Müller deals

extensively in her work with the legacy of communism, on the one hand, and on the

other hand, with post-World War II residues of Nazism in the German ethnic

community of Banat-Swabians into which she was born. Although the writer left

communist Romania in 1987 and has been residing in Germany ever since, her work

re-commemorates uncanny legacies of Nazism, Stalinism and communism to this day.

However, some of her novels and collages are set in the context of reunified Germany

and a post-communist Romania. Müller's *oeuvre* has generally been analyzed through

lenses focusing on vision, psychoanalysis, ethnicity, biography, memory, migration,

gender, politics or trauma studies, while other possible approaches to her work such

as performance or sound studies have been largely neglected so far.[51] At first glance

we might find a possible justification for the critical tendency to overlook what I will

demonstrate to be important components of Müller's work such as sound and

performance. This critical tendency privileges an analysis of the image instead. The

author's rich use of metaphor as well as her essays explicitly addressing image and

---

[51] For an account of visual/migration studies, see, for instance, studies by Paola Bozzi, *Der fremde Blick: zum Werk Herta Müllers* (Würzburg: Königshausen&Neumann, 2005); for a reading in light of trauma theory see Anja K. Johannsen, *Kisten, Krypten, Labyrinthe. Raumfigurationen in der Gegenwartsliteratur: W.G. Sebald, Anne Duden, Herta Müller* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag 2008); for an analysis of Müller's work from the perspective of language and identity studies see Carmen Wagner, *Sprache und Identität: Literaturwissenschaftliche und fachdidaktische Aspekte der Prosa von Herta Müller* (Oldenburg: Igel Verlag, 2002).

perception have generally been taken as guidelines for interpretation.[52] Upon closer investigation, however, we find subtler cues for more differentiated analysis among studies focused on the image in Müller's work. These studies situate the author in the context of a reappraisal of Surrealism in German-language cultures and point to the use of Surrealist techniques in her work as part of a process of historical recuperation. As Bettina Brandt argues, inspired by Ginka Steinwachs' *Mythologie des Surrealismus*, the lack of emancipation of Surrealism from the enduring impact of Dadaism in Germany as well as the beginning of Nazi persecution of experimental art in the 1930s contributed to a relatively small impact of Surrealism in Germany.[53] According to Brandt, by availing themselves of Surrealist techniques such as the use of dreamlike imagery, contemporary writers such as Herta Müller, Yoko Tawada and Emine Sevgi Özdamar, three prominent contemporary authors usually categorized as migrant writers, open their work, stylistically, to an international alignment with a literary-historical past not traditionally associated with either German or female identity. While this argument is groundbreaking, it leaves unexplored the sonic component of Surrealism, which, as I shall argue, plays an important role in Müller's work. Part of the influence of Surrealism on her work might be ascribed to Romanian

---

[52] Herta Müller, *Der Teufel sitzt im Spiegel: Wie Wahrnehmung sich erfindet* (Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1991).

[53] Bettina Brandt,"Schnitt durchs Auge: Surrealistische Bilder bei Yoko Tawada, Emine Sevgi Özdamar und Herta Müller," in *Text+Kritik* 9 (2006): 74-83. Corroborating this thesis, Liselotte Gumpel argues that the Dadaist Hans Arp found the dogmatic psychologism of André Breton too confining. Liselotte Gumpel, *"Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany: The Language of Exemplarism and Experimentalism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), 56. Other voices, such as Ernst Bloch, note that Surrealism did not make an impact in Germany and see it as a case of missed exchange, whereby Bloch adds that Expressionism was readily exported to France and Czechoslovakia. [Ernst Bloch, "Der Expressionismus, Jetzt Erblickt" (1937) in Ernst Bloch, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit,* expanded edition (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985). In the anthology *Surrealist Women: An International Anthology* (1998), edited by Penelope Rosemont, the poet Unica Zürn is the only German female Surrealist mentioned. Zürn started her work in the 1930s but became important in the 1950s and 1960s, and in was known in particular through her affiliation with the Paris Surrealist

Surrealism. Romanian Surrealism had important affiliations with French Surrealism through the group "infra-noir" formed in the inter-war period around Gellu Naum, Lygia Alexandrescu and Gherasim Luca. Under the pressure of the Cold War regime, the group disbanded.[54] Müller's operative aesthetics offers, however, a different perspective on the Surrealist legacy of Romanian extraction. Her novel approach consists in an original interpretation of the function of the image. As Dan Gulea remarks in his book *Domni, Tovarasi, Camarazi, O Evolutie a Avangardei Romane*, the Romanian historical avant-garde relied to a great extent on what Gulea calls "poetic image" and metaphorization.[55]   Although Müller, whose relation to the Romanian avant-garde remains to be investigated, does work intensely in her collages in particular with metaphor and uses images that resemble the Surrealist automatic *dictée magique*, she frames her image and metaphors with well woven rhymes and rhythms that disclose authorial control rather than irrational pictorial improvisation and *dictée magique* in the Surrealist sense. The illuminating discussion of image-

---

group. Her favorite stylistic means were anagrams. See Penelope Rosemont, ed. *Surrealist Women: An International Anthology* (Austin: University of Texas, 1998), 314-317.

[54] For more information on Romanian Dadaism and Surrealism, see Monique Yaari and Timothy Shipe, ed. *Dada, Surrealism and Romania,* in *Dada/Surrealism,* 19.1 (2012).

[55] Paul Cernat, *Domni, Tovarasi, Camarazi, O Evolutie a Avangardei Romane* [Gentlemen, Comrades, Friends, An Evolution of Romanian Avant-Garde] (Bucuresti: Paralela 45, 2007), 102. In his article on Surrealism, Walter Benjamin distinguishes between metaphor and image, with the latter being the place that can accommodate the political once removed from the sphere of contemplation. See Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism, the Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," trans. Edmund Jephcott, *New Left Review I/108*, March-April 1978: 56. Herta Müller removes the image from the sphere of contemplation by investing it with political force through the power of the performative, expressed through rhythms and rhymes; she also retains metaphor as a carrier of these rhythms and rhymes but her art does not rely either exclusively on metaphor or exclusively on vision. Many commentators on Müller limit their analysis to processes of metaphorization in her work. For an analysis of the performative as political force see Jonathan Culler, "Philosophy and Literature: The Fortunes of the Performative," *Poetics Today* 21:3 (Fall 2000): 503-519. See also recent analyses by Hartmut Steinecke, "*Atemschaukel*: Ein Roman vom 'Nullpunkt der Existenz,'" in *GegenwartsLiteratur: Ein germanistisches Jahrbuch*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler and Erin McGlothlin 10/2011 (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 2011), 14-32. It must also be noted that Herta Müller herself highlights the importance of metaphor (as process of transportation), whereas she points in particular to its performative dimension. Herta Müller, "Gelber Mais und keine Zeit," in *Oskar Pastior* Heft 186 (München: Edition Text und Kritik, 2010): 15-26 (12).

bound Surrealism in Brandt's argument overlooks other potential alliances of her three focal authors with Dadaism and its material attack on culture as opposed to Surrealism, for instance, and its equally international and anti-institutional aspect. In order to bring the performative and sonic aspect of Müller's work into analytical view, so to speak, it is important to look in particular into the author's reception of her fellow German-Romanian writer and friend Oskar Pastior in the larger context of the Romanian avant-gardes as well as within the frame of other international traditions of literary experimentation with sound.

Despite sharing many commitments with OULIPO (*Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle-The Workshop for Potential Literature*), a group that originated in the 1960s in France and was famous for its formal rigor in poetic experimentation, Oskar Pastior formally became a member only in the 1990s. This speaks to his unique status within the lyric panorama of the last five decades and his longstanding non-affiliation with any official poetic movement.[56] Both in Pastior's work, and, as I shall argue, in Müller's own work under Pastior's influence, absurdist jubilatory Dadaist practices function as a form of rebellion against an oppressive Stalinist-communist state. This connection between Dadaism and a politically subversive component is persuasively drawn by Raymond Williams in his book *The Politics of Modernism*, in which Williams highlights Dadaism's function as a practice based on verse and performance in mockery of Bolshevism.[57] Although the Dadaist influence has so far not been documented in Müller's work, it is known that Müller early on had affinities with the

[56] Harry Matthews, "Oskar oulipotisch" in *Oskar Pastior,* 47-49.
[57] See Raymond Williams, *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists* (London/NY: Verso, 1989), 81. Williams expands here on Hugo Ball's discovery (noted in his Dada Diary) that Lenin and Cabaret Voltaire shared the same street during the years of the Dadaist "revolution."

Aktionsgruppe Banat, a group of writers who mixed realism with experimentation and explicitly traced their sources of inspiration to mixed influences that included the Surrealists, "konkrete Poesie," "the theater of the absurd," and American lyric and pop art. Members of this group were forcefully disbanded by the Romanian *Securitate* in 1975. [58] The present inquiry will examine Müller's practice of collage as a method that both challenges the standard assumption that Surrealism is first and foremost an art of the image and also identifies a previously unacknowledged source of inspiration for Müller in the poetry of Oskar Pastior. The Müller-Pastior intra-poetic dialogue unfolds as tribute and contribution to a shared literary heritage the means of transmission of which are sound and performance. My critical engagement with aspects of sound and performance in the work of the two authors highlights contested continuities and discontinuities between Romanian and Western avant-gardes in the postwar and the post-communist epoch.

Oskar Pastior, State Oppression and the Romanian Avant-garde

As Valentina Glajar observes, non-Romanian ethnic groups were called a "co-inhabiting nationality" in Romania, while the word "minority" was not tolerated by Nicolae Ceausescu's regime despite the country's numerous Hungarian, German and

---

[58] Anton Sterbling, *"Am Anfang war das Gespräch": Reflexionen und Beiträge zur 'Aktionsgruppe Banat' und andere literatur-und kunstbezogene Arbeiten* (Hamburg: Krämer, 2008), 75. See also Olivia Spiridon, *Untersuchungen zur rumäniendeutschen Erzählliteratur der Nachkriegszeit* (Oldenburg : Igel Verlag Wissenschaft, 2002), 75, 210, 214. Spiridon draws a connection between Herta Müller's work and the *Wiener Gruppe* without elaborating on particular stylistic and methodic resemblances. For an account of the relations between the Wiener Gruppe and the Aktionsgruppe Banat see Roxana Nubert, "Die Aktionsgruppe Banat: Beiträge zur rumäniendeutschen Literatur in den 1970er Jahren," in *Acta Germanica,* ed. Carlotta von Malzahn, 38 (2010): 146-163, in particular 153-162. Richard Wagner, one of the members of the group, would declare that they (the group and later he and Müller) were not representative intellectuals of the *Minderheit* in Romania but rather worked, thought and wrote as an expression of revolt and fear towards that *Minderheit.* Interview with Richard Wagner quoted by Frank Schirrmacher in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* from 3.08.1991 in "Herta Müllers Essays über die

Roma ethnic minorities. [59] In 1966 Ceausescu proclaimed the country a unified Romanian national state as opposed to a multinational state, and ethnic minorities were generally disregarded as full members of public life and the state's life in general and regarded with suspicion because of their potential relations with the West. Oskar Pastior (1927-2006) was born in Hermannstadt/Romania as a poet of German ethnicity (Transylvanian Saxon) and shared, like Müller, the stigma associated with belonging to a minority under the communist regime. [60] Oskar Pastior did cultivate many relations with Western literati, especially during years of exile in Germany, and he became the Büchner-Prize laureate of 2006. Pastior also became a victim of the retaliation politics of the communist state against ethnic Germans, a politics inaugurated by Stalin; consequently, he was forced to spend five years (1944-1949) in work camps in the Ukraine after the end of World War II. After years of work in Bucharest as a radio editor, he decided to leave Romania via Austria and settle in West Berlin in 1968. [61] A little known story, which surfaced only in September 2010, disclosed Pastior's own involvement with the Romanian Secret Police. He seems to have confessed to this involvement upon arrival in West Germany but never shared it with any of his Romanian friends, including Müller. The only note about Pastior's confession to the German police was found in his *Nachlass* by Ernest Wichner; its

---

Entstellung der Literatur," 5. It is clear from this interview that Wagner sets himself apart from the German *Minderheit* in Romania, which he identifies with the specter of socialism.

[59] Valentina Glajar, *Communism, National Socialism and Imperialism: East Central Europe in German-Language Literature. Herta Müller, Erica Pedretti, and Gregor von Rezzori*. PhD Dissertation: University of Texas at Austin, 1999, 21.

[60] It could be argued that this stigma persists in the case of the Roma community in Romania.

[61] As a way of compensating for the country's bond with Nazism until August 23, 1944, when Romania entered a new alliance with the Soviet Union and its allies, men of German ethnicity aged 17-45 and women between 18-33 (from Banat, Transylvania and Satu Mare) were sent to work camps to help reconstruct the Soviet Union. See the references by Herta Müller, "Gelber Mais und keine Zeit," in *Text+ Kritik* 4 (2010): 15. Herta Müller im Gespräch mit Renate Schmidtkunz, *Ich glaube nicht an die*

title is "securitate, stasi"; the piece was written in preparation for a public discussion in 1992. The content of that note was never been made public by Pastior, and thus the nature of the confession remains unclear. Its last part was written as a dialogue between the poet and an imaginary audience or perhaps with the poet himself. The text, typed idyosincratically, reads:

> (…) was Ihre konkrete frage betrifft-bitte wenden Sie sich diesbezüglich an unsere deutschen behörden (ich glaube es war der bundesgrenzschutz) und an die entsprechenden amerikanischen, britischen u. französischen stellen, denen ich vor 34 jahren gerne und bereitwillig detailliert auskunft gab/indem ich mich ihnen rückhaltlos 'offenbarte'/-
> 　　-auch um reinen tisch zu machen,
> 　und einen heilungsprozess bei mir zu ermöglichen (und neubeginn)
> 　und eben den ganzen 'ekelkomplex' in den orkus zu schieben, weg damit!
> dies ohr, das uns hier geliehen wurde, war, nüchtern und aus grosser distanz (eines drittel jahrhunderts) gesehen, ein heilsames verdrängungsangebot 'des westens'
> 　die bis zur wende 1989 dort im land warten mussten, hatten dieses angebot nicht).[62]

The fact that Pastior associates his confession with repression [*Verdrängung*], while calling it the formal condition of a new beginning abroad, points to unresolved tension and lifelong torment. Pastior's new beginning as described here, the possibility of redemption or semi-public confession on paper, proved to be an illusion, although the author did experience, through literary success, a new beginning of another kind in the West, while keeping secret his past. After the material proof of collaboration, an agreement signed by Pastior with the Securitate,

was retrieved in 2010 by Romanian historian Stefan Sienerth, the case was intensively discussed in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* by Herta Müller, Ernest Wichner and Dieter Schlesak.[63] Ernest Wichner went further with his research and discovered that Pastior had written a series of anti-Soviet poems shortly after his return from the work camp in 1950, which he had entrusted to his friend Grete Loew. Loew was later jailed because of connections to the West and her trial coincided with the imprisonment of five prominent Transylvanian writers accused of activities against the regime, with whom Pastior appears to have been in loose contact.[64] Those mysterious and fateful poems could be said to be the earliest and most concrete documents of disobedience produced by Pastior against the work camp and the Stalinist regime and they might have constituted reason for blackmail into the collaboration agreement. The file found by Sienerth, dated June 8, 1961, represents both a collaboration agreement with the Securitate and, in essence, a vow of silence: "Ich werde die mir anvertrauten Geheimnisse niemand anderem anvertrauen (…)."[65] This collaboration, the probable object of the unpublished confession discovered in the *Nachlass*, formally took place between 1961 and 1968 and was discontinued, as documents found by Sienerth attest, after Pastior refused to return to Romania from the Federal German Republic. The exact scope of his collaboration is still being

---

published this note. The note was also reproduced in *Versuchte Rekonstruktion-Die Securitate und Oskar Pastior*, Heft 11 (München: Edition Text+Kritik, 2012), 27.

[63] See articles by Sienerth, "Der Mensch Oskar Pastior muss new bewertet werden," 17.11.2010: 29; Dieter Schlesak, "Die Schule der Schizophrenie," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16.11.2010: 33; Herta Müller, "Die Akte zeigt Pastior umzingelt," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18.09.2010: 31.

[64] It is not clear whether Loew's guardianship of Pastior's poems was also a cause of her later imprisonment, but, as Wichner notes, Pastior himself had been followed by the Securitate from that time on and later forced to rehabilitate himself for the anti-Soviet feelings mirrored in those poems entrusted to Loew. More details about the recently retrieved Pastior's files with the Securitate were published by Ernest Wichner in "'Unterschiedenes ist gut:' Der Dichter Oskar Pastior und die rumänische Securitate," *Text+ Kritik,* XI/12, 9-32.

[65] Ernest Wichner, Ibid., 9.

investigated by historians, with the Pastior Foundation and Müller also searching to shed more light on the affair through their own inquiries.[66]

Under state communism, the Romanian public sphere was completely appropriated by the state, which controlled the media and all public associations.[67] In a country haunted by censorship, Pastior wrote cryptic verses made out of fragments of words and languages, and he later confessed that he cultivated hermetic verse as a way to overcome the jargon imposed by the communist state and the lack of state recognition for ethnic plurality.[68] Furthermore, he would go on to write in his own improvised patchwork of languages, which would defy any fixed associations with country, idiom or patterns of sound. In an attempt to define his style, Pastior provides a typically idiosyncratic definition: "Sprache und Sprachen-jeweils und miteinander eine Gemengelage. Was spreche ich? Klipp und klar pastior. Auch wenn ich es als Privatidiom bezeichne und hin und wieder krimgotisch nenne, indem ich auf die

---

[66] See, for instance, the entire *Text+Kritik* Sonderband *Versuchte Rekonstruktion-Die Securitate und Oskar Pastior* (2012).

[67] See *Envisioning Eastern Europe: Postcommunist Cultural Studies,* ed. Michael D. Kennedy (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1994), 154.

[68] See the bibliographical note in *Jalousien aufgemacht: Ein Lesebuch*, ed. Klaus Ramm (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1987), 152. Here Pastior writes briefly about his deportation from Romania as a German, the rigorous division between minorities and Romanians and the "exotic origin" he was nevertheless assigned by Germans in Germany, 152. Christoph Menckel quotes from an interview with Pastior where the author explains how he undermines the binaries of language and an either/or scheme of thought: "Ich habe da eben doch die Dreiersprache als eine nicht dialektische Aufhebung gesetzt, sondern als eine Möglichkeit, sie auch optisch gegen diese bipolare Art des Denkens und Sprechens, aus der wir ja nicht herauskommen können, zu gebrauchen." [I used the tercets as a non-dialectical *Aufhebung* and as a possibility to counter, also optically, the bipolarity of speech and thought to which we are bound.] *Auskünfte von und über Pastior: Fussnoten zur neueren deutschen Literatur*, ed. Wulf Segebrecht (Bamberg: Arbeitsbereich der neueren deutschen Literatur, 1985), 13. Thus Pastior's peculiar use of language constitutes itself as a way of fighting the monolingualism of the communist state. His contempt of dialectics, in particular, could be interpreted, among others, as a subtle reply to GDR poet Johannes Becher's praise of the sonnet for its dialectical schema. For the Becher reference, see Liselotte Gumpel, *"Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), 67.

Randphänomenalität der Gemengelage in jeder Sprachbiographie verweise."[69] This

peripheral phenomenon, designated by the author as a principle of composition

already in the late 1970s in his volume *Der krimgotische Fächer*, relies on a number

of language varieties, which he describes in a nuanced way as ranging from the

"Transylvanian-Saxon dialect spoken by his grandparents to the archaic

Neuhochdeutsch of his parents, to Romanian spoken in the streets and by the

authorities, to bits of Hungarian, primitive knowledge of Russian learned in the work

camp, rudiments of Latin learned in school, Greek, Old, Medieval and Modern

German, a reading knowledge of French, English...all these reflected through a central

European ear."[70] It is significant that Pastior chose to render legible the ingredients of

his poetic composition in relation to their impact on an ear, since, as he notes, his

language protests against a certain self-censoring literary monolingualism and is

intent on dissolving it through lyric.[71] Pastior's lyric project, which alludes to

---

[69] Oskar Pastior, "Pust, Mattasch, Kradder, Sqårp-Gemengelagen," *Exophonie, Anders-Sprachigkeit (in) der Literatur*, ed. Susan Arndt, Dirk Naguschewski and Robert Stockhammer (Berlin: Cadmos Verlag, 2007), 131.

[70] See "Pust, Mattasch, Kradder, Sqårp-Gemengelagen," 128-129. This definition of Pastior's peculiar choice of language appears in print in his Frankfurter poetic lectures as well. See the second lecture from January 18, 1994, in Oskar Pastior, *Das Unding an sich*: *Frankfurter Vorlesungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1994), 66-67. The entire quotation reads as follows: "Konkret, wie ich zu sagen pflege: die siebenbürgisch-sächsische Art der Grosseltern; das leicht archaische Neuhochdeutsch der Eltern; das Rumänisch der Strassen und der Behörden; ein bissel Ungarisch; primitives Lagerrussisch; Reste von Schullatein, Pharmagriechisch, Uni-Mittel und Althochdeutsch; angelesenes Französisch, Englisch…alles vor einem mitteleuropäischen Ohr…und, alles in allem, ein mich mitausmachendes Randphänomen."

[71] Ibid. 128. "Warum nicht einmal, sagte ich mir, bedenkenlos und ohne Rücksicht auf Verluste diese eingefahrene und, weil man doch mehr im Kopf hat, immer auch zensierende literarische Einsprachigkeit einfach lyrisch beiseiteschieben und alle biographisch angeschwemmten Brocken und Kenntnisse anderer Sprachen und seien es nun Spurenelemente, quasi gleichzeitig herauslassen?" Pastior's stance against monolingualism during and in the aftermath of his communist experience presents a case of postmonolingualism emerged in a different historical context than those analyzed by Yildiz Yasemin in her analysis of the "postmonolingual condition." Yildiz focuses in particular on Franz Kafka's analysis of discrepancies within the monolingual condition through his writings on Yiddish, Theodor Adorno's analysis of *Fremdwörter* before and after his exile from Nazi Germany, Yoko Tawada's resistance to inclusion within the monolingual paradigm and Feridun Zaimoglu's use of code switching. Yildiz defines "postmonolingualism" as "the period since the emergence of

censorship derived from the constraints of monolingualism but also from external and internal pressures associated with state communism in Romania, takes the form of languages mixed in the ear. While Romanian avant-gardes sought to overcome ethnic marginalization by emigrating or merging with other artistic movements, Pastior instead highlights the complexity of his peripheral idiom as a form of resistance to mainstream culture in Romania and to ethnic division itself. [72] In his appendix to the 1978 volume of songs and ballads, *Der krimgotische Fächer* [The Crimean-Gothic Fan], in which verses oscillate between absurdism and parody, Pastior claims that he writes in order to ascertain, by means of rhythm and verse, that he still exists, while leaving open the exact meaning of existence (e.g. biological, artistic, ethical).[73] *Der krimgotische Fächer*, written outside Romania, celebrates a Swiftian world. The poems carry humorous names and point to absurd clusters of power and reigns of Babylonian megalomaniac nonsense: *Der Hof der Scheuchen, Der Hof der Windältesten, Der Hof der trünnigen Glühbecken, Der Hof der Überbauzen, De Hof der Paraputen*. Through dialect and other "wandering" languages, Pastior clings, in his own words, to a marginal linguistic and territorial phenomenon that grants him a sense of existence.[74] His practice could be interpreted in terms of one model of internal multilingualism. Defined by German studies scholar Yasemin Yildiz as one

---

monolingualism as a dominant paradigm in 18th-century Europe." Yildiz Yasemin, *The Postmonolingual Condition* (NY: Fordham University Press, 2012), 4.

[72] For a reading of Romanian avant-gardes see Paul Cernat, *Avangarda romana si complexul periferiei* [Romanian Avant-Gardes and the Periphery Complex] (Bucharest: Editura Cartea Romaneasca, 2007), 34.

[73] Anhang 2. "Das Randphänomen des krimgotischen Fächers," in *Der krimgotische Fächer: Lieder und Balladen* (Erlangen: Klaus Renner Verlag, 1978), 103. The importance of rhymed verse for survival is also expressed by Holocaust survivor and writer Ruth Klüger in her *weiterleben*: *Eine Jugend* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1992), 11-12; 123-126. This function of verse seeks to overcome limitations of language and existence under communist and National Socialist regimes.

[74] "Hat es, da es ausdrücklich das Randphänomen des krimgotischen Fächers ist, wenn überhaupt, am Ende etwas mit erdkundlichen oder gar Wandersprachen zu tun?," in Ibid., 104.

of the forms of multilingualism, internal multilingualism in a German context relies on "foreign-derived words" (Yildiz' translation for *Fremdwörter*). Such words, which remain unsassimilated, represent a site of "negociation of foreignness" and "internal otherness."[75] One argument that speaks in favor of this model being relevant to Pastior, is that Pastior brings into the texture of one language (German) practical puns and obscuring puzzles from many others and thus highlights the presence of words of foreign derivation within German language as it interrupts its continuity.[76] As I will demonstrate in my analysis of "durch lautmalerische effekte," Pastior additionally encrypts words of foreign derivation through anagrammatic ciphers. This additional codification gives a supplemental twist to the parameters of "internal multilingualism" as outlined by Yildiz. Forbidden in his country and regarded as an exotic bird in his country of adoption, Germany, Pastior uses multilingual semantics and ciphered language within the parameters of classical poetic genres. By means of semantic and geographic marginality adopted by choice, in which idiosyncratic rhymes serve him as an existential anchor, Pastior generates his invented or adapted genres as variations on sound: from songs and ballads [*Der krimgotische Fächer: Lieder und Balladen*] (1978) to listening reports [*Höricht: Sechzig Übertragungen aus einem Frequenzbereich*] (1979), sonnets [*sonetburger*] (1983), anagrams [*Anagramme*] (1985), to his 1990s' experiments with palindromes [*Kopfnuss Januskopf Gedichte in Palindromen*] (1990), vowels [*Vokalisen and Gimpfelstifte*] (1991) or sestines [*Eine*

---

[75] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 69.

[76] Yildiz defines metalinguistic multilingualism as a procedure that brings languages together and simultaneously keeps them apart when authors write in one language about another; internal multilingualism designates writing that highlights the presence of words of foreign derivation within a language; bilingual writing composes a corpus of two languages while code mixing is the term for writing that juxtaposes languages, dialects, and registers within a single text. Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: Configurations of Multilingualism in Twentieth-Century German Literature*, 31.

kleine Kunstmaschine: 34 Sestinen] (1994). Yet his work with formal sonorities points to a deeper aesthetic dissonance, which he elsewhere describes in terms of the impossibility of achieving a paradisiacal bliss status of sound unless taking into account the background noise accompanying any speech act. Pastior's commitment to this murmur of language continued after the fall of communism as well and was formally articulated, paradoxically, through ever stricter genres such as the sestine.[77]

Hörichte and Reduction to the Absurd

A brief look at Pastior's engagement with sound while an émigré in Berlin tells us more about how the poet continued to articulate a subtle critique of the communist regime in Romania, but also to dialogue with the art of making poems in the aftermath of National Socialism, and in the haunting presence of a still existing communism. Pastior's early sound experiment, *Höricht* (1979), a composition in which the words "Bericht" (report) and "Hören" (listen) are fused, points to an impossibility encrypted in the text's motto: "Das nicht einzuordnende Höricht hatte sich so grundlegend von der/ Akustik gelöst, dass es durch und durch einem Original-Rettich mit/eingebauter Kritik geähnelt hätte, hätten wir es überhaupt ver-/nommen (…)."[78] *Höricht* is the generic name for 60 types of exemplary poems, which discretely point, via allusions to sound, at a form of political critique. Had it been

---

[77] "A sestine is a poem of six six-line stanzas, and a three-line envoy, originally without rhyme, in which each stanza repeats the end words of the lines of the first stanza, but in different order, the envoy using the six words again, three in the middle of the lines and three at the end," in *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1983), 1305. "Man kann ja eine 'Paradiessprache' suchen, aber das Hintergrundrauschen im Suchen gehört zu jedem Sprechakt," *Das Unding an sich* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1994), 42. To describe his improvised translations of Petrarca's sonnets, Pastior used the term "Eigengeräuschlichkeit" (self-echoing noises), by which he indicates the gesture of reaching "under the cupola" of one language, in this Italian, in order to provide a form of translation. "Nachwort zum Projekt," in *"…was in der Mitte zu wachsen anfängt,"* Bd. 4 (München: Hanser Edition Akzente, 2008), 82.

heard properly and not uncoupled from its sonic dimension, the poem *could* have turned into a piece of protest or criticism. A possible critique of dictatorship or conventional art relies here on a presupposed but impossible ability of an audience to perceive the *Höricht* and its aesthetic critical maneuvers properly. Like the marginal phenomenon in Pastior's view, the *Höricht* retains largely potential character, since it displays a form of irony and detachment rather than pointed criticism. Rather, *Höricht* could be interpreted not as a form of criticism, but as an allusion to "vernehmen" ("hätten wir es überhaupt ver-/nommen"), as the report of a listening. Irrespective of its ultimate meaning, *Höricht* in Pastior's coinage points to a split relation between the poet and his audience based on a fractured acoustics impeding reception. The *Höricht*, like the *Krimgothic*, remains somewhere on the periphery of hearing and can be interpreted as either a solipsistic and possibly distorted listening to oneself (Höricht= listening [Hören] to an I [Ich]) or as passing judgment (*Höricht* as *Gericht*) on oneself. Ultimately Pastior's lyric draws its ambiguous force from a tension between acts of listening to oneself and the awareness of being listened to, a prohibition of sound that is both self-imposed and enforced externally.

The duplicity of listening is well illustrated by the *Höricht* "Die falsche Forelle" [the false trout]. Addressed to "four-eared listeners," the *Höricht* has at its center a four-channel sound system, called a "Quadrophonie." In technical terms, a "quadrophonic system" is created when speakers are positioned at all four corners of a listening space, from where they reproduce signals that are independent from each other. The *Höricht* as a quadrophonic resonant composite is a multi-layered space of

---

[78] Oskar Pastior, *Höricht: Sechzig Übertragungen aus einem Frequenzbereich* (Berlin: Klaus Ramm, 1979), 5.

sound, which seems to divide the poetic "I" into multiple sound identities. Two of these identities, "die falsche Forelle" and the "Wanderer," located at ambiguous points in the quadrophonic space, sing songs of protest that are indistinguishable from boisterous party propaganda and as such rely on a replacement of truth through falseness: "Hierauf singen die Forelle und der Wanderer gemeinsam 'die Gedanken sind frei,' tun das aber mit vertauschten Rollen, so dass der hier einsetzende Protest von dem gleichzeitig einsetzenden Lob nicht zu trennen ist."[79] In these poems, songs are meant for duplicitous listeners (the four-eared listeners), and are recited by politically ambiguous characters who testify to a divisive sense of sound performance, which is based on inverted identities and an ambiguous play with the notion of freedom: "Die Gedanken sind frei." Thoughts, even if proclaimed free, seem infiltrated by state ideology.

One of the poems in *Gedichtgedichte* (1973), the second volume published by Pastior after his arrival in Germany (after "Vom Sichersten ins Tausendste") articulates a different type of listening from the one presented by the *Höricht*. In *Gedichtgedichte* listening reflects the power of performance to dislocate through impromptu acts rigid structures such as those imposed by communism in the East.[80] The poem is called "durch lautmalerische effekte spitzt sich die erste zeile" [the first line gets more dramatic/intense through onomatopoetic effects] and translates into practice what it prescribes. Intertextual allusions in the poem also testify to the

---

[79] Oskar Pastior, *Höricht,* 16.
[80] See Liselotte Gumpel for an account of the forbidden act of performance and chance in the East. *"Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), 56.

influence of renowned postwar poet Paul Celan. [81] Celan's own displaced identity and his hermetic lyric in the aftermath of the Holocaust provide a foil for Pastior's sonic hermetic experiments along different poetic coordinates. An example of Pastior's intertextual allusions to Celan can be found in the poem on "onomatopoetic effects" of 1973:

> *durch lautmalerische effekte spitzt sich die erste zeile*
> des gedichtes immer mehr zi das gedicht hat fünfund-
> zwanzig zeilen durch allmähliche verjüngung der zei-
> len spitzt im gedicht sich die ritmik zi das gedicht
> benutzt kindir-lidir und fremdwirtir das gedicht endit
> mit IGITTI/FIGGI/NI pfiffig witzig spritzig treibt das
> gedicht verschiedene verhaltensweisen auf die spitze
> spiesst sie auf und führt sie ad absirdim das gedicht
> trägt den titel AU WO WUL AST MOR EUM EBIND und ist
> äusserst bestichind. [82]

This poem is about the art of making poems and about techniques meant to increase the dramatic effect of a poem through onomatopoeia, interactive cues, rhythm and skillful manipulation of verse as play with variations on words and permutation of letters. The reproduction of this piece in Pastior's *Lesebuch Jalousien aufgemacht* is accompanied by stage cues such as "ans Stehpult gehn!" and described as a transcription from a live reading. The imperative "zi" is repeated throughout the German poem. [83] This generates dramatic pathos that relies on the one hand on the intensification of beat and the addition of new verse to the degree that "zi" (tell) connotes "tell more;" on the other hand, the poem calls for the gradual reduction of words toward its end ("Verjüngung der Verse") and it also visually accomplishes this

---

[81] In his poetological lectures *Das Unding an sich* (the 5th Frankfurter lecture), Pastior briefly cites his indebtedness to Celan's poetics, 123.

[82] The poem is reproduced in *Jalousien aufgemacht* along with stage directions and the indication that it had been recorded from a reading. *Jalousien aufgemacht: Ein Lesebuch,* ed. Klaus Ramm (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2002), 167.

task. In the guise of an *ars poetica* as a reflection on the art of poetry carried out in an absurd vein, the poem offers other prescriptions for verse such as ingredients from children's songs ("kindir-lidir") and foreign words ("fremdwirtir"). For Adorno, the postwar theoretician of the Frankfurt School, words of foreign derivation are means of resistance against nationalism and against what he calls the jargon of authenticity, the attempt to mask terms of foreign origin through their words that sound closer to the national jargon of a language.[84] Yet Adorno also notes that the words appropriated through the jargon of authenticity hide, underneath their sound, their deep foreignness.[85] In her analysis of Adorno's essay on "Fremdwörter," Yasemin Yildiz assigns to the use of *Fremdwörter* a form of internal multilingualism in politically inflected German cultural discourses from the Baroque *Sprachgesellschaften* to the Enlightenment and Nazi debates on linguistic purism.[86] Read in Pastior's communist context, the use of foreign words and absurdist rhymes signify an intended resistance against and disruption of the predominant monolingualism and nationalism of the communist state and against any form of linguistic ontology, similar to what Adorno

---

[83] In Romanian," zi" is an imperative form and means "tell." In folkloric poems, the formula is used to engage an audience.

[84] Adorno deals with the case of *Fremdwörter* in two essays "Über den Gebrauch von Fremdwörtern" [On the Use of Foreign Words] and his better known "Wörter aus der Fremde" (1959). "Die Fremdwörter bildeten winzige Zellen des Widerstands gegen den Nationalismus im Ersten Weltkrieg," in Theodor W. Adorno, *Noten zur Literatur: Gesammelte Schriften* Bd. II (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974), 218. This is translated into English translated as: "Foreign words constituted little cells of resistance to the nationalism of World War I." Theodor W. Adorno, *Notes to Literature,* vol. I, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 186. See also the telling quotation: "Nirgends bewähren die Fremdwörter im Deutschen sich besser als gegenüber dem Jargon der Eigentlichkeit, jenen Termini vom Schlag des Auftrags, der Begegnung, der Aussage, des Anliegens, und wie sonst sie heissen mögen." *Noten zur Literatur* Bd. II, 221. "Nowhere do foreign words in German prove their worth more than in contrast to the jargon of authenticity, terms like *Auftrag, Begegnung, Aussage, Anliegen* [mission, encounter, message, concern], and the like," in *Notes to Literature,* vol. I, 190.

[85] Adorno, *Notes to Literature,* 190.

[86] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: Configurations of Multilingualism in Twentieth-Century German Literature*, 93; 98-117. See also the Yasemin Yildiz, *The Postmonolingual Condition,* 72-77.

criticized in the context of a post-fascist German state. According to Adorno, words of foreign derivation carry a token that identifies them as "scapegoats of language" and "bearers of dissonance" by virtue of their function as unsettling elements in a language.[87]   Furthermore, as Adorno highlights in his earlier essay "Über den Gebrauch von Fremdwörtern," foreign-derived words are "the incursion of freedom," by which he means a mode of exploding "preconceived language" with their potentially alienating yet transformative potential. [88] Pastior's poem ends with an anagram, whose decryption points to the Romanian "to swallow," a foreign word rendered doubly foreign through anagrammatic codification. The poem reads: "das gedicht endit/mit IGITTI/FIGGI/NI," which in Romanian would be an imperfect anagram of *înghiţi* (to swallow). Thus the poem carries associations with swallowing, which in English, as well as in Romanian and German (schlucken, ertragen), has the double connotation of "to tolerate" and "to ingest." In Pastior's verse, a foreign derived word points, after anagrammatic decryption, to its concrete function as a "bearer of dissonance," [Träger der Dissonanz] and reveals the hidden meaning of "ertragen," which indicates degrees of tolerance but also of resistance, depending on how much a poem can "swallow," but also "smuggle" into language. Behind

---

[87]"Das Fremdwort mahnt krass daran, dass alle wirkliche Sprache etwas von der Spielmarke hat, indem es sich selber als Spielmarke einbekennt. Es macht sich zum Sündenbock der Sprache, zum Träger der Dissonanz. *Noten zur Literatur II,* 221. The English translation reads: "By acknowledging itself as a token, the foreign word reminds us bluntly that all real language has something of the token in it. It makes itself language's scapegoat, the bearer of the dissonance that language has to give form to and not merely prettify." In Theodor W. Adorno, *Notes to Literature,* vol. I, 189. In particular the reference to scapegoating as technique of exclusion and inculpation is a reminder of the National Socialist practice of exclusion, persecution and murder of those deemed undesirable by the regime. See LaCapra, "The Return of the Historically Repressed," in Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 169-203.
[88]"Über den Gebrauch von Fremdwörtern," *Noten zur Literatur* Bd. II, 643. "On the Use of Foreign Words," *Notes to Literature,* vol. II, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 289.

anagrammatic layers, Adorno's foreign words as remnants of freedom turn for Pastior into testing grounds of encrypted resistance against state ideology.

This poem is in part a free adaptation of Paul Celan's poetological lecture *Meridian* (1960). The multiple poetological references that Pastior makes to the meaning of a poem, in particular the reduction of tropes "ad absurdum" ("ad absirdim", in Pastior's rendition), allude to Celan's speech. Celan's presentation was itself an intertextual reading of Büchner's *Lenz* fragment and his play *Danton's Tod*, which Celan constructed foremost as a meditation on the fate of *Dichtung* in Celan's time, specifically in the aftermath of the Holocaust but also the age of cybernetics, which commanded a new regime of the image.[89] In one of its most famous sequences, Celan asks: "Und was wären dann die Bilder? Das einmal, das immer wieder einmal und nur jetzt und hier Wahrgenommene und Wahrzunehmende. Und das Gedicht wäre somit der Ort, an dem alle Tropen und Metaphern *ad absurdum* geführt werden wollen."[90] Celan distinguishes between metaphors and images, assigning to the latter a phenomenal quality.[91] Celan's model formulates a rhetorical question about the feeble power of tropes and metaphors to render in words immediacy and perception, and he implicitly contrasts tropes and metaphors' rigidity to the phenomenality of

---

[89] The poem's tendency to fall silent (line 32a) in the final version of the *Meridian* is decoded in the notes as a reference to cybernetics, specifically to Norbert Wiener's language theory, which reputedly influenced concrete poetry. *The Meridian: Final Version-Drafts-Materials,* ed. Bernhard Böschenstein and Heino Schmull, trans. Pierre Joris (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 2009. 230. Max Bense's theories on cybernetics and the theory of the machine (1951) inspired the early postwar school of experimentation called *Stuttgarter Gruppe.* Its members included Helmut Heissenbüttel and Ernst Jandl. The school developed parallel to the work of concrete poets.

[90] Paul Celan, *Der Meridian: Endfassung-Entwürfe-Materialien*, ed. Bernhard Böschenstein and Heino Schmull (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1999), 10. In English: "Then what are images?/What has been, what can be perceived, again and again, and only here, only now. Hence the poem is the place where all tropes and metaphors want to be led ad absurdum." *Paul Celan*: *Collected Prose*, trans. Rosemarie Waldrop (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1986), 37-55.

images.[92] For Pastior, a poem's power to enact something and to produce certain modes of behavior (*verhaltensweisen*) is more important than the poem's ability to render perception in verse, which seems central to Celan's discourse. Pastior emphasizes instead how a poem can carry certain modes of behavior to extremes ["auf die Spitze treiben" (carry something to extremes, intensify) and "aufspiessen," (to transfix but also to impale)], and he points here to practices of recitation that the poem can use to transfix or impale an audience: "treibt/ das gedicht verschiedene verhaltensweien auf die spitze/spiesst sie auf und führt sie ad absirdim." The word "verhaltensweisen" echoes the ideological state apparatus and its prescriptions towards individual modes of behavior as well as the imposition of the state on lyric in the East to reflect principles of socialist realism. In contrast to the communist East's relegation of lyric forms to empty formalisms and their preservation only for ideological purposes, Pastior embraces lyric in order to subvert the communist's state prescription for lyric in order to reflect socio-political realities.[93] He does so by reducing it to the absurd and enabling the audience to discern the "convincing"

---

[91] An excerpt from *The Meridian* gives the following characterization of the image: "the image has phenomenal character—it appears." See "Materials," in *The Meridian,* 87.

[92] In the drafts, Celan questions the psychological relations posited by Surrealism and contests the possibility of images to render the thought of the poet (*The Meridian,* 87).

[93] Gumpel distinguishes between various ways in which poems in the East and West approach experimentation and "concreteness:" concrete poems in the East are subject to the tenets of social realism and emphasize semantic mediation as well as "the dialectic between expression of self and acquisition of the world," (Johannes Becher), whereas concrete poems in the West are non-lyrical in nature, focusing on the aesthetic medium and the intermedial capacity of language. Liselotte Gumpel, *"Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany: The Language of Exemplarism and Experimentalism* (New York and London: Yale University Press, 1976), 29, 35. David Bathrick also highlights modes of resistance through lyric in the GDR, without focusing on experimentation per se. Bathrick contrasts the "values and subject matter peculiar to the lyric genre (individualism, subjectivity, nature, love)" on the one hand, and "the entrenched norms and practices of a socialist society" such as "industrialism, progress, collectivism," on the other. The German scholar also adds a note about how protest, on the part of East German writers, involved an opposition to technology as embodiment of "Marxist-Leninist productivism." David Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech: The Politics of Culture in the GDR* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 72. Pastior's active interest in the technology of permutation and in performance differs in its radicalism from the East German mode of resistance through lyric as opposed to technology, signaled by Bathrick.

(*bestichind*) dimension of a poem potentially functioning as a state tool and an element of manipulation (as in "corrupting"). The latter semantic aspect is evident in the meaning of "bestechen" as "to bribe." The poem's final twist (das gedicht (…) ist äusserst bestichind) [..] (the poem can be extremely convincing [but also corrupting]), highlights Pastior's disclosure of the possible ultimate function of a poem in a socialist reality as convincing the audience, while at the same time containing a possibly polemical "stich" (a sting). The latter reference is evident in the change of spelling, from "e" to "i" in the word "bestichind." Pastior's practices of poetic creation and reception have the poem point to its own reality in a formal self-reflective mode of double speech, which potentially transcends the norms of communist regime; the poem involves the audience in a performative game that presupposes playing with anagrams, going to the pulpit, listening to interruptions such as "zi" and participating in an almost happening that is far from a poetic lecture.[94] Pastior's poem also inverts the usual structural and semantic hierarchies of poetic genre by disclosing the poem's title after announcing its end and by using anagrams. Read in conjunction, the title and end of the poem refer to an act of forced swallowing---"AU WO WUL AST MOR EUM EBIND," which could offer the following annagrammatic reading in Romanian: "Au oul asta eu mor mi-e bine," which in approximate translation means: "oh, this egg, me, mine, I am dying I am fine." Pastior certainly does not only rely on the Romanian encrypted meaning, but also on a more obvious allusion to death planted in the middle of the poem (as in "MOR EUM EBIND"). The poem is a hard act to swallow, all the more so when it reveals itself as an impressive but potentially specious one (as rendered through "bestichind"). But any degree of political

---

[94] For a detailed analysis of the way poems functioned in East and West, especially in regard to the

adulteration and channeling of lyric in favor of socialist realism and communist state propaganda can be exposed through Pastior's process of reduction *ad absurdum* and linguistic adulteration performed through an intensification of sounds, rhythms, riddles and puns.[95]

In the aftermath of an unnamed Holocaust, Celan's lyric declares tropes and metaphors insufficient to render perception. Reflecting on similar impossibilities of representation in the aftermath of the communist experience, Pastior's poem does not question its use of metaphors and tropes so much as it contests the poem's very function as a poem. The "bestichind" label placed as a type of counter-climax to the end of a poem that also visually performs what it prescribes, can also be read as a gerund that refers not to the poem but to its implicit relation to the audience. A poem's well-execution as in "accomplished" is undermined by its possible speciousness. Yet this pun does not necessarily allude to communism and the action of undermining censorship but also to the poem's identity itself, meant to entice the audience through both its visual and sonorous accomplishment. It is this audience which is provided with tools to distinguish between the ideologically specious poem of communism, and the poem of free words not bound by state conventions. One of these potential tools for the audience is the ability to decipher a message of words of foreign derivation that nonetheless belong to a land under communist dictatorship; the other tool is to

forbidden function of performance in the East see Gumpel. *Ibid.*, 56.

[95] The absurd is for Celan a manifestation of the presence of the human and also accompanies the conciliatory steps of *Dichtung* towards *Kunst.* Celan's comment on "es lebe der König" (long live the king) is: "Gehuldigt wird hier der für die Gegenwart des Menschlichen zeugenden Majestät des Absurden." *Der Meridian,* 3. "It is homage to the majesty of the absurd which bespeaks the presence of human beings" (Ibid., 40). "Long live the king" is further decoded by Celan as a *Gegenwort*, a counterword, which distinguishes itself from an apology for the "ancien régime" and celebrates the absurd instead as an "act of freedom" and a liberating step, whose daring manner imposes silence. The

uncover through performance the meanings of these foreign words veiled in sonic dissimulation. The poem, even if under a dictatorship, has the power to question its capacity to "swallow" the state ideology and turn the question towards the audience to perform its own critique.

Instead of recreating poetic expression from within a critique of trope and metaphor, Pastior's foregrounding of sound and his reduction of words to absurd and disarticulated entities do not merely express his subtle protest against the Romanian dictatorship left behind and its pompous state rhetoric. His poetic strategies here signal a new approach to performance. Unlike Celan, for whom trope and metaphor are rhetorical, Pastior chooses to play with sonorities and absurd word combinations in search of more direct means of performance to engage an audience and as a way of protesting against the limited possibilities granted to lyric in Communism. His testing ground is the palate, as revealed by the process of swallowing and activating sound through euphonic tentative combinations "IGGITI/FIGGI/NI." Other methods through which Pastior distances himself from Celan while acknowledging his influence are his word combinations themselves, which anticipate Oulipo's mathematical calculations, and echo the radical technologies of concrete poetry.[96] However, in contrast to the concrete poets' exploration of the materiality of the printed page, Pastior writes his poems not as self-sufficient entities exploring the materiality of spoken and non-

---

sound effects in Pastior's poem might be said to claim the phenomenality ascribed to image in Celan's interpretation.

[96] Pastior characterizes *Vom Sichersten ins Tausende*, his first book published in Germany, as motivated by his interest in molecular biology, rhymes, rhythms, sayings, and children's songs. He also explains that his poems originated for the most part in Bucharest while he worked for the radio and had to deal with a language made out of prescribed ready-made components, which he then sought to transform "on a small scale." Pastior, *Jalousien aufgemacht*, 11. The 1987 volume provides a retrospective glance on poems and small rationales about their creation.

spoken on a page, but as experiments in sound with an embodied audience in mind.[97]
Such an audience has the task of deciphering the anagrammatic puzzle through
recitation.

Pastior and the Romanian Masters of the Absurd

As we can see from the earlier poem, although officially allowed to speak his
mind in the Federal Republic of Germany, Pastior did not engage audiences or reveal
the violence done against poetry under the Romanian dictatorship through explicit
political commentary. Rather than addressing the obstructions of the communist
regime directly, he invented his peripheral way of fighting dictatorship through a
provocatively absurd verse designed according to his own recipe for acoustics and
performance. Pastior might well use hermeticism in Celan's sense, so as not be
"reified in history" or "debased by metaphor," as Sidra Ezrahi interprets Celan's
hermeticism and its strategies to ensure "inviolability against misappropriation."[98] Yet
Pastior, through his use of performance and acoustics in particular, also stages
performative bridges to his audience through the cultivation of the absurd. The poet's
enactment of the absurd has its roots in the art of two important figures of the
Romanian avant-garde whose works Pastior knew and translated: Urmuz, which was
the pen name of Dumitru Dem. Demetrescu- Buzău (1883-1923) and the self-
proclaimed inventor of Dadaism, Tristan Tzara, also known as S. Samyro, which was

---

[97] Pastior explains his poems as an act of balance between speech and language, between material
corporeal acts (*Leibhaftigkeit*) and ideological demands (*Ideologieanspruch*), between harmony
(*Einklang*) and disturbance (*Störung*). See his comment on "Gelsenvertreiben," in *Jalousien
aufgemacht*, 57.
[98] See Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, "'The Grave in the Air': Unbound Metaphors in Post-Holocaust Poetry,"
in Saul Friedlander, ed. *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution* (London,
England: Harvard University Press, 1992), 259-276.

the pen name of Samuel Rosenstock (1896-1963). Pastior couples this absurdist legacy with a work that tests the limits of technology and performance.

Urmuz, who worked as a judge in real life and fought as a soldier in World War I, left behind nine short pieces of prose (ironically called novels) and a musical poem in prose, which were shocking at the time in their extravagant, humorous and absurdist effects. For instance, the main character in his prose poem *Fuchsiada* experiences an acoustic birth through his mother's ear and later initiates himself in harmonies and counterpoints.[99] "Algazy and Grumer," one of Urmuz' famous couples, do not speak any European language and prefer to express themselves through mere sounds. After Saşa Pană's 1930 publication of Urmuz' thin work in a volume and the interwar celebration of Urmuz, in newspapers of the epoch (*Contimporanul, Unu, Bilete de papagal, Der Sturm*), as father of various factions of the Romanian avant-garde, Urmuz was rediscovered in the 1960s. In his notes on his own German translation of the collected works of Urmuz, Pastior mentions the Urmuz-Renaissance in Romania in the mid-1960s and comments on its reception by major literary critics such as Matei Călinescu or the famous playwright of the absurd, Eugène Ionesco. Călinescu sees in the grotesque cultivated by Urmuz, which the critic situates between Alfred Jarry's absurd theater and Surrealism, an inspiring impulse lying at the foundation of Eugene Ionesco's early plays. Moreover, Pastior interprets the link between Urmuz and its discovery in the late 1960s in terms of the resistance of the absurd against ideology.[100] Ionesco himself, whose essays on the avant-gardes

---

[99] See Urmuz, "Fuchsiada," in *Das gesamte Werk,* trans. Oskar Pastior (München: Text+Kritik, 1976), 57.
[100] Oskar Pastior, ed. *Urmuz: Das gesamte Werk*, 125. The so-called Urmuz-Renaissance coincided with a temporary softening of the Romanian dictatorship itself, which peaked in Ceausescu's protest

from the late 1950s associate the avant-garde with freedom and explicitly exalt its potential for rupture and revolution, prepared the ground for the reinterpretation of Urmuz in a revolutionary key.[101] Pastior's contextualization of Urmuz within the panorama of world literature includes a comparison with Russian Futurist Velimir Khlebnikov. Urmuz's work, rich in textual euphonies, cacophonies and tautologies testifies, in Pastior's view, to Khlebnikov's "language of stars" (*Sternensprache*), also known as *Zaum* or an "irrational," and "free" language based on words that proliferate according to imaginary etymologies and aim to establish a universally accessible idiom.[102] *Zaum* is intended as a revolutionary language that Chlebnikov allegedly used to evade the Stalinist rule.[103] With Urmuz though, the sonorous pun, which finds a correspondent in Pastior's anagrams, prevails and retains its universal appeal in that it discloses an immediate and exclusively phonetic dimension. Pastior inherits the sonorous puns from Urmuz and, unlike Urmuz, transfers them to verse. The absurd sonic puns inevitably point to Tzara's poetry, who has been situated in the same

---

against the Soviet invasion of Prague in 1968. However, already in 1928, the newspaper *Unu*, edited by one of the leaders of the Romanian avant-garde, Sasa Pana, had listed Urmuz among its sources of inspiration, along with Tzara, Tudor Arghezi, Marinetti or Theo von Doesburg. See George Călinescu, *Istoria Literaturii Romane: De la origini până în prezent* [The Evolution of Romanian Literature from its Origins to the Present], 2nd edition (Bucuresti: Editura Minerva, 1982), 889.

[101] Eugène Ionesco, "Discurs despre avangarda" and "Tot despre avangarda," *Note si Contranote*, trans. Ion Pop (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 67-78. In a 1938 essay on Saşa Pana's book on Dadaism and Surrealism in the Romanian context, Ionescu makes a very interesting distinction between Dadaism and Surrealism and inverts Saşa Pana's own definition of the two movements: as opposed to Pana, Ionesco credits Dadaism with the liberation and attack against culture not through spirit, which would be a romanticizing of the movement, but through *matter*, and thus highlights the material, actual rebellion of Dada against culture, as opposed to the dream-like character of Surrealism. Eugène Ionescu, "Saşa Pana: Sadismul adevarului," *Razboi cu toata lumea* I (Bucuresti: Humanitas, 1992), 296. See also Saşa Pana, *Sadismul adevarului*, 1st edition 1936, 2nd edition (Ed. Cluj Napoca: Dacia, 2009), 113.

[102] Ibid., 113. The quotations are from Aleksej Krucenych. *Zaum* was first documented by Krucenych in his "declaration of the word as such" (1912). In the volume *Mein Chlebnikov* (2003), Pastior appropriates Khlebnikov's sound compositions and neologisms and translates them into a poetic language of his own. See Michael Lentz, "Geschwister Paar der Poesie. Freiheitsrausch: Oskar Pastiors Porträt von Velimir Khlebnikov," *Frankfurter Allgeimeine Zeitung,* 24 April. Nr. 96, 2004: 44.

constellation of the absurd as Urmuz. In an article from the 1960s, Ionescu draws this connection to Tzara, but proclaims Urmuz a Dadaist before Dada, and a Surrealist before Surrealism.[104]

In his 1981 essay "Fussnoten zur rumänischen Avantgarde" [Footnotes on the Romanian Avant-garde], Pastior retraces possible links between the absurd lines of Urmuz and Tzara. Here he takes his cues from a striking similarity of motifs between some of Tzara's early, pre-Dada poems and works by Urmuz, on the one hand, and references by Urmuz to mysterious "remnants of poems" whose source of inspiration is unclear and which might have inspired Urmuzian prose on the other hand.[105] Pastior's poetic work with sound claims the Urmuzian model of phonetic and semantic disobedience and Tzara's method of "imaginäre Retroversionen;" Pastior was the translator of Tzara's juvenile poems into German. Thus Pastior's free translation of words from one language into the other, exhibited in particular in his free translations from Petrarch and Chlebnikov, is based on sonorities and not on semantics, in the manner first exhibited by Tzara.[106]

---

[103] On Khlebnikov's use of *Zaum* as a universal, transrational language, meant to escape the constraints of ideology see Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond,* trans. Charles Rougle (Princeton/New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 35.

[104] Eugène Ionesco, "Das war Urmuz" in *Akzente. Zeitschrift für Dichtung,* ed. Walter Höllerer/Hans Bender , trans. into German Irma Reblitz (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1967), 526.

[105] In *Das Tempo dieser Zeit ist keine Kleinigkeit: Zur Literatur um 1918*, ed. Jörg Drews (München: Text+Kritik, 1981), 153-168. Drews's comments reiterate Sasa Pana's conclusions from *Sadismul adevarului* (1936), 43. Eugène Ionesco prints a poem by Tzara and a few short pieces by Urmuz in his essay on "Les Précurseurs roumains du surréalisme" to illustrate the resemblance in style. Eugène Ionesco, *Les lettres nouvelles,* Jan-Février, 1965, 71-82.

[106] Pastior notes this detail in his notes to Tzara's early work. Tristan Tzara, *Die frühen Gedichte,* trans. and ed. Oskar Pastior (München: Edition Text+Kritik, 1984), 74. Later Pastior acknowledges this method as a major inspiration for his own work of *Übertragung* from Petrarch, Baudelaire and Khlebnikov. See *"Vom geknickten Umgang mit Texten und Personen"* from a series of texts not published among the documents of the years 1983-1986, in …*was in der Mitte zu wachsen anfängt* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2008), 349. Pastior mentions Tzara's "imaginäre Retroversion" as major sources of inspiration. Ibid.

While trying to reconstruct the stages of the Romanian avant-garde, Pastior leaves open the nature of a possible alliance between the absurd and modes of experimentation with sound in the vein of Urmuz as they occurred in Romania before Dadaism erupted on the international stage in 1916 at Tzara's and fellow international exiles' incentive. Through an irreverent use of sound, Pastior's work circumvents constraints of form, genre, and ideology and, also, in a peculiar constellation inspired by Tzara-Urmuz, constitutes itself as an homage to the Romanian avant-garde, in particular to its Dadaist faction. Pastior's focus on sound and formal rhymes estranged from semantics displays forms of poetic resistance while under the extreme circumstances of a dictatorship. His use of classical forms such as the sonnet fit into the dialectical schemes recommended by Marxist realist doctrines of the time and upheld the formal convention of lyric, but the forms used by Pastior also exceeded this tradition through irreverent semantic associations mediated by sound. It is this mediation of semantics through sound that relates to Pastior's later anagrams as forms of transport of meaning between depth and surface. In a poem published in 1964 before his exile, "Heisser Abend im alten Tulcea," Pastior uses the form of the sonnet to depict a natural landscape that falls apart: "Das Grammophon ramonat ratlos wieder und zerbricht. /Der ganze Hafen sitzt beim Gartenbier wie Kletten./Die Gäste drehn im Bahnhotel sich in den Betten;/Das Ringelspiel am Kai dreht sich am Abend nicht" (102). As he notes in the footnote to this poem, the form of the sonnet serves here the purpose to express a limitation, "Einschränkung." The scope of this limitation is undefined, but it creates a direct link between what Pastior calls the "corset" of the sonnet and the unspecified limitation. In *Sonetburger* (1983), the sonnet that gives the title of the volume has disintegrated semantically while keeping a vague associative

integrity made possible only through the freedom of recitation to decode the anagrammatic challenge in a possible folkloric vein: "ain udn baos/bina udn ain/obsa udn ain/nia budn aos" (156).[107] In contrast to Pastior, concrete poets in the West took a distance from lyric and only tepidly embraced the sonnet, if at all, mostly as a conventional lyrical form.[108] An example of the latter tendency is Eugen Gomringer's late shift to the sonnet. In 2008 Gomringer wrote his essay "Von der konstellation zum sonett-das reversible experiment" a replica to his 1954 essay and founding manifesto of concrete poetry, "vom vers zur konstellation." In this 2008 essay, Gomringer describes his way back from the "open forms of constellations" to the strict forms of the sonnet. For Gomringer the sonnet is a correspondent form for matter of fact biographical impressions, and remains in tone with West German uses of this poetic form in a traditional key.[109]

While for concrete poets, their main forms of expression, topographies, constellations or ideograms were pointing to self-sufficient linguistic realities, Pastior's rhymed forms were targeting critiques of the system and, possibly, of self. The use of rhyme and meter paradoxically compensating for existential deprivation is vital. Equally important is the absurdist context derived by Pastior from the Tzara-Urmuz confluence. Tzara's shift from symbolist rhymed poetry while in pre-fascist

---

[107] Ibid., 156. The anagrams seem to rely here on onomatopoetic exclamations present in Romanian folkloric dances "obşa şa." Since it is not my intention to build a relation of equivalence through translation, I will leave this anagram as it is.

[108] See, for instance, sonnets by Jandl display the formal structure of the sonnet through tautological optical repetitions of the type "erste strophe erste zeile," while the word sonett accompanies each verse on the side. In Ernst Jandl, *Für alle* (Neuwied/Berlin: Luchterhand, 1974), 233. As Gumpel observes, with both Rühm and Jandl, the sonnet is a display of "formal concretion reduced to an absolute minimum." Gumpel, *"Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany*, 111. Yet this minimalism functions within a semantic frame.

[109] See Eugen Gomringer, *eines sommers sonette* (zürich: prohelvetia, 2008) and *der sonette gezeiten [the sonnets' tides]*, trans. Markus Marti (zurich: prohelvetia, 2009).

Romania to absurdist verse after his emigration to France is a classic example of conscious genre bending, from classical verse to absurdist verse functioning as a means of Dadaist political resistance against the bourgeois dictatorship of reason as well as against concrete forms of political oppression. For Pastior, rhyme carried the baggage and the burden of political oppression into the free West.

An example of the subversive use of rhyme in his work during communism is the poem "Resonanzholz," which on first reading seems a typical propaganda poem. The poem praises the hard work of factory workers and their empowerment through song. It also serves to mythologize the work in factories. The last part reads:

> Befreite Hände befreiten die Kunst und das Können zum Glanz.
> Der Beifall am Ufer, im Lichtsaal ist immer noch Resonanz:
>
> Zum Preis und zum Lob der Erbauer, den Künstlern und Sportlern zum Lohn,
> die es zum Schwingen brachten mit dem Pulsschlag der Präzision.
>
> Zum Lob und Preis unsrer Tage, da das Licht in die Wälder stieg
> und heimkehrte tief zu den Wurzeln des Volks in der Leistung: Musik.[110]

This last part of the poem mirrors the compositional principle of the poem as a whole. It is written in rhymed couplets and contains elements of typical party rhetoric such as "Volk," "des Volkes Bruderlied," "Lob der Erbauer." Except for a disconcerting line in its middle, the poem presents itself as a celebration of communist triumph through work. The line that possibly breaks the pattern is: "Resonanzholz, geschnitten im Herztakt, präzise und radial./Und alles tönt auf in der Geige. Die Heimat wird Heimat im Saal (42)." These lines allude to a homeland which is created

---

[110] Oskar Pastior,"Resonanzholz," Texte aus den Jahren 1952-1957, in *"…sage, du habest es rauschen gehört,"* 42-43.

apparently for official purposes, in large auditoria, and not conceived in the intimacy of the heart, as one would expect of patriotic pathos. Although the final work product, the resonant wood, is carved with mechanical precision ("im Herztakt") and elicits the harmonious notes of a violin, the ensemble tonality seems hollow and estranged in the large auditorium. The "resonant wood," which echoes the first stanza's vibration of steel, "die Schwingung des Blattes vom Reschitzer Stahl" conceived with mechanical perfection, mirrors the hollowness of communist "Holzsprache." The syntagm "Holzsprache" (wooden language) was the word used during communism to describe, subversively, the jargon of the Party permeating everyday life. Although written in traditional verse as most of the Party poems of the time, the poem mentions at its end "music" as the climax of Party chants: "Zum Lob und Preis unsrer Tage, da das Licht in die Wälder stieg/und heimkehrte tief zu den Wurzeln des Volks in der Leistung: Musik (43)."[111] This music bears all the peculiarities of propaganda, yet it retains the power of turning into a menacing tool through its potential as "Schwingen." The resonant moment of "Schwingen" potentially transforms this poem from an ideological construct into a subversive one. Despite the euphonic rhyme and the politically correct vocabulary of this poem, its notion of *Heimat* retains a potentially discordant and empty note underneath mellifluous propaganda.

Since rhyme had usually been associated with classical verse and avant-garde poetics with the lack of it, Pastior's techniques of coupling the two in his exile work through a combination of formal conventions with experimental content underscore

---

[111] Ibid.

56

their ambiguous co-existence instead.[112] In literary history, one of the most dramatic

examples of the use of rhyme is provided by rhymed verse created in concentration

camps.[113] As Andrés Nader, the author of one of the first critical studies on poetry

from the camps points out, many of these poems from the camps were published in

anthologies and discovered as a discrete phenomenon only after 1990. Expanding on

this newly revealed material, scholar of comparative literature Jonathan Monroe

furthers the connection between rhyme and survival by raising questions about the

existential necessity of rhyme and also its relevance for avant-garde practices, poetry,

and modernity.[114] In the rhymed poetry from the camps highlighted in Nader's original

study of the phenomenon emergent in the early 1990s, Monroe finds the legacies of

postmodernism after the Cold War. He then uses this material to evaluate the legacies

of modernism and the avant-gardes since the 1990s. Modernism has been either

equated with the avant-gardes, in critic Renato Poggioli's vision, or categorically

distinguished from it, as in Hans Magnus Enzensberger's case, while Adorno

---

[112] Two of the poems in which Pastior links National Socialism with a form of rhyme are AUSCHWITZ as well as the poem 1940/1941, a *Listen-Gedicht* in the tradition of the Baroque, based on reconstructed memories of World War II. The poem "AUSCHWITZ" from the volume "Offne Worte," presents a pattern that Pastior calls "eine Kettenreaktion"a form of "associative style that creates an intuitive rhyme. See "Die Methode des assoziativen Stils," in "sage, du habest es rauschen gehört," 25. "DIE STRECKE/ WIDERMENSCH/IST MIT MENSCHEN/GEPFLASTERT DER WEG/MENSCH/HÖRT NICHT AUF/BEIM GEDENKEN (83)." Likewise, the poem 1940/1941 lists words without apparent connections. The poem highlights, however, the power of technology to catapult history back and forth in memory. National Socialist propaganda movies such as *Jud Süß* and Ohm Krüger or UFA filmstars are mentioned next to *Marsrakete* and physics. "Gewerbsjäger mit Rühmann und Lumpi/Traven-Jud Süß/Ohm Krüger-Katyn/(Gewerbevereinssaal) Most, Ochsen, Marsrakete/Welt ohne Schlaf/Ein Ding wie tausend Wale/Du und die Physik." Thomas Kling, "Die glühenden Halden: Dem Dichter Oskar Pastior zum fuenfundziebzigsten Geburtstag," in *Frankfurter Rundschau,* 243 (19. Okt. 2002): 21.

[113] Andrés Nader, *Traumatic Verses: On Poetry in German from the Concentration Camps,* 1933-1945 (Rochester: Camden House, 2007). Wolfgang Emmerich, quoted in Nader, had noted already in 1976 that the literature of resistance from fascist concentration camps had not been mentioned in any literary history. See *Traumatic Verses,* 23.

[114] Jonathan Monroe, "Avant-Garde Poetries after the Wall," in *Poetics Today* 21.1 (Spring 2000): 113.

envisioned a post-apocalyptic post-war extinction of the avant-gardes.[115] Discussing the aforementioned evaluations of modernity and the avant-gardes, Richard Langston frames his discussion in terms of the mission of future avant-gardes, heirs to the post-fascist avant-gardes, and in terms of a debate over the body's claim to Germany's past. Langston sees in post-1945 transformations of the body in avant-garde literature and arts, in the body's adulteration and fragmentation or its dematerialization, testimony to fascist legacies of violence.[116] Relations between body, time and matter are to Langston the most important factors for negotiating an understanding of the avant-garde in the present and its metamorphosis from pre- to post-World War II. If fractured rhyme signals for Langston a fractured imaginary and fractured bodies, in reality, Langston also posits fractured rhyme as a hallmark of avant-garde poetry. This qualification seems to rely on the dichotomy between fractured-rhyme as peculiar of modernist poetry and poetry in rhyme as characteristic of modernist poetry or classicizing poetry cultivated during dictatorships. However, as Monroe notes, dispelling an easy dichotomy and following Nader, poems written in rhyme in the camps prompt us to "resist the temptation to automatically align traditional rhyme and meter with dominant or oppressive systems."[117] Pastior's work and poetic influences raise similar concerns about the possibility of coexistence of rhyme and experimentation within the frame of the particular experience of surviving the liminal experience of a brutal work camp and the tortured conscience of exile. Yet, unlike

---

[115] See references in Richard Langston, *Visions of Violence, German Avant-Gardes after Fascism* (Evanston/Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 26-27. Renato Poggioli, *Theory of the Avantgarde* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), 73 and Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "The Aporias of the Avant-Garde," in *Zig Zag: The Politics of Culture and Vice Versa* (New York: New Press, 1997), 259. Theodor W. Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism," in *Notes to Literature,* vol. I, 87.
[116] Richard Langston, *Visions of Violence*, 256.
[117] Ibid., 120.

GDR poets who insert subversive meanings into their verse mostly through puns, Pastior preserves the classical form but permutates syntax itself and pulverizes words. Pastior's aesthetics of the absurd permeates his rhymed forms (see the genres of the sonnet, song or ballad that the author takes as point of departure for many of his volumes before 1989 and the anagrams or the sestines he cultivates after 1989), and highlights the elements of resistance inherent in the use of avant-garde practices during the Stalinist-communist persecution, which Pastior experienced first-hand. Additionally, Pastior interrogates the posterity and continuity of avant-garde practices in the aftermath of the Holocaust; furthermore, his aesthetic strategies, profoundly marked by digital technology, question their status in a period of tectonic geopolitical shifts in Europe after 1989. Although Tzara did not get to experience the antisemitic rage of Nazism and Urmuz did not live through the fascist incorporation of experimentation (Tzara left Romania for Zurich in 1915 and Urmuz died in unexplained circumstances in 1923), the rebelliousness of their aesthetics provided Pastior with tools, I contend, to unmask the constraints of postwar dictatorship in Romania and also the constraints of the state's post-fascist aesthetics, which were channeled into a cult of personality. However, Herta Müller will interpret Pastior's experiments in the key of an utmost realism and not of experimentation. The clash between realist aesthetics and an avant-garde one, which was central for Pastior, becomes an important element of Müller's own aesthetics in a different key.[118]

---

[118] Herta Müller, "Die ungewohnte Gewöhnlichkeit bei Oskar Pastior," in *Wespennest: Zeitschrift für brauchbare Texte* (Wien: n/a, 1986), 80-86. Oskar Pastior's labeling as a "realist" problematizes the distinction between socialist realism (officialized in 1934) and its mimetic style, and avant-garde formalism. Initiated in the 1950s, Pastior's work can be said to span the same time frame as Stalinist and post-utopian Stalinist art. See Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond,* trans. Charles Rougle (Princeton/New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Resonance and Survival

In her collection of essays *In der Falle* (1996), Herta Müller credits the poems written in rhyme by a Holocaust survivor, the Austrian poet Theodor Kramer, with being a relief and a support for her during the years of communist dictatorship spent in Romania. Kramer's poems, which belong to a little appreciated genre of *chançons* had, to Müller's regret, no impact on contemporary German literature.[119] In her essay on Kramer, Müller deplores the poet's disappearance from the consciousness of the general literary public nowadays and ascribes this to a lack of understanding of the paradoxical relation between rhyme and the memory of guilt and survival.[120] In Kramer's work, Müller notes, rhythm and rhyme hide the unspeakable terror, while the sound of his poems carries a burden, the weight of which is also recognizable in Celan's lyric.[121] In a different essay from *In der Falle*, Müller engages with the writings of Ruth Klüger, also a Holocaust survivor. For Klüger, writing rhymed poems, which she calls "Kinderverse," meant opposing the chaos of concentration

---

[119] Ibid., 7. Müller quotes here Peter von Matt, who writes about the absence of a Kramer reception.

[120] Ibid., 6.

[121] "Kein anderer Lyriker findet für das Schwere so leicht einen Klang. Die Last lernt fliegen, aber darunter ist die Tiefe der Celanschen Welt," in "Der leichte Klang des Schweren," *Frankfurter Anthologie*, 23. Bd. *Gedichte und Interpretationen*, ed. Marcel Reich-Ranicki (Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 2000), 132-134. Müller devotes more space to Kramer in her recent collection of essays *Immer derselbe Schnee, immer derselbe Onkel* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2011). Ibid., 38. Müller makes reference here to Klüger's reflection on rhymed poetry as an means of resistance against the "chaos" of Auschwitz. Klüger's reflection in the original reads: "Es sind Kindergedichte, die in ihrer Regelmässigkeit ein Gegengewicht zum Chaos stiften wollten, ein poetischer und therapeutischer Versuch, diesem sinnlosen und destruktiven Zirkus, in dem wir untergingen, ein sprachlich Ganzes, Gereimtes entgegenzuhalten; also eigentlich das älteste ästhetische Anliegen." Klüger, *weiter leben*, 125. In her book, Klüger engages in a polemic both with Adorno's statement about the impossibility of lyric after Auschwitz and with a representation of the Holocaust through hermetic poetry, among whose representatives she names Celan (36, 127). Klüger refers to her poems as *Kinderverse* on page 106 in *weiter leben*. She also claims that in the KZs no "important poetry" (*grosse Lyrik*) was composed but she puts it ironically, since she then adds that otherwise, if recognized as "great" lyric, the experience of the KZ's survivors would be discredited (30).

camps.[122] According to Klüger, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, a particular sense of listening ("ein Ohr" in the original) forces survivors of concentration camps to render pain and destruction in rhymed forms such as proverbs and their painfully distorted meaning, as in the infamous Auschwitz dictum ("Arbeit macht frei").[123] In comparing the extreme conditions of Nazism, Stalinism and post-Stalinism, Müller credits the act of writing in rhyme with the power to nurture survival during dictatorships, without implying, though, the lightness of verse explicitly posited by Klüger, who, however, finds in verse an unsettling meaning beyond rhyme.[124] Müller likens Pastior's writing in stanzas, first drafted in the camps, to a way out of terror and censorship governing communism.[125] Yet, as Müller notes, writing in stanzas during communism offered the option of the eulogy to the party, which guaranteed one the right to further publication: "für Strophen gab es von der Zensur keine Strafen."[126] Pastior's use of

---

[122] Ibid., 38. Müller makes reference here to Klüger's reflection on rhymed poetry as a means of resistance against the chaos of Auschwitz. Klüger's reflection in the original reads: "Es sind Kindergedichte, die in ihrer Regelmässigkeit ein Gegengewicht zum Chaos stiften wollten, ein poetischer und therapeutischer Versuch, diesem sinnlosen und destruktiven Zirkus, in dem wir untergingen, ein sprachlich Ganzes, Gereimtes entgegenzuhalten; also eigentlich das älteste ästhetische Anliegen." Klüger, *weiter leben*, 125. N.B. Klüger uses both terms, *Kinderverse* (on page 106) and *Kindergedichte* (on page 125). In her book, Klüger engages in a polemic both with Adorno's statement about the impossibility of lyric after Auschwitz and with the representation of the Holocaust through hermetic poetry, where she includes Celan. (36, 127). Celan himself engages with Adorno's controversial dictum, whose validity he questions. Celan writes, "Kein Gedicht nach Auschwitz (Adorno): was wird hier als Vorstellung von "Gedicht" unterstellt? Der Dünkel dessen, der sich untersteht hypothetisch-spekulativerweise Auschwitz aus der Nachtigallen-oder Singdrossel-Perspektive zu betrachten oder zu berichten." Cited in Axel Gellhaus, "Die Polarisierung von Poesie und Kunst bei Paul Celan," *Celan Jahrbuch* 6 (1995): 55.
[123] Ibid., 36. "Sie [die Überlebenden] haben zum Unterschied von Intakten ein Ohr für jeden Hinterhalt der Worte. Für die vielen Sprachen der deutschen Sprache. Für die Dreistigkeit der Redewendungen und Sprichwörter."
[124] In the original "die knirschende Wut" (36). In regard to her own rhymed verse, the author perceives them as motivated by a deep fear and existential restlessness that justifies the compulsiveness of verse in the camps. Klüger, *weiter leben*, 36. Elsewhere in the book Klüger refers to the lightness of rhymed verse as the only possible to help one survive through the practice of recitation and she refers in particular to ballads by Schiller. Klüger, *weiter leben*, 123.
[125] Herta Müller, "Ist aber jemand abhanden gekommen, ragt aber ein Hündchen aus dem Schaum: die ungewohnte Gewöhnlichkeit bei Oskar Pastior" in *Wespennest: Zeitschrift für brauchbare Texte* Wien, 80-86, (85). This essay is also reproduced in Herta Müller's the essay collection *Immer derselbe Schnee und immer derselbe Onkel* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2011), 146-164.
[126] Herta Müller, "Ist aber jemand abhanden gekommen," 85.

rhyme during communism was motivated by a pragmatic need to escape censorship, while the deliberate obscurity of his verse reflected a desire to allude to truths that could not otherwise be uttered at the time. Pastior carried from the work camp years an excruciating compromise between adjustment to circumstances and protest, and he developed in the process a physical relation to rhyme, Müller suggests. In an essay on Inge Müller from *In der Falle*, Müller draws an additional vital connection between poems and the body, with poems written during the Holocaust functioning as bodily measurements: "kurze Zeilen im Kopf, kurzer Atem im Mund, kurze Gesten im Körper."[127] By using references to the body ("short lines in the head, short breath in the mouth, short gestures in the body"), Müller characterizes the drama of survivors of any regime in a paradoxical register: they (the survivors) are both "saved" (*gerettet*) and "crushed" (*zerbrochen*).[128] Existential damage, which comprises physical torture, eventually overpowers those who oppose a regime, the author concludes in the essay "In der Falle" from her homonymous volume. If not killed, Müller writes, echoing Adorno's subtitle from *Minima Moralia,* survivors and protesters against dictatorial regimes are unavoidably afflicted in one way or the other: "beschädigt."[129] This affliction as a residue of survival is what Müller defines as "Beschädigung," and she speaks of Pastior's physical and literary survival in this way. According to Müller, this "Beschädigung" manifests in a broken body and becomes channeled into Pastior's work in the form of contorted verse. This yields a

---

[127] *In der Falle*, 18.

[128] Ibid., 24. This dichotomy echoes Primo Levi's distinction between the drowned and the saved in his book on survival in Auschwitz. See his chapter "The Saved and the Drowned," in *If this is a man,* trans. Stuart Woolf (London: The Bodley Head, 1958), 99-117. Müller adds here a new category, "the damaged ones." The subtitle of Adorno's book published in 1951 is *Minima Moralia: Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben*. By referring to survivors of communism as well, Müller expands Adorno's frame of reference.

[129] Ibid., 14.

kind of clarity precisely through distortion: "poetisch gebrochen in seiner Sprache, zur Unkenntlichkeit verdeutlicht."[130] Despite the seemingly cryptic character of Pastior's verses, Müller declared in an essay that she had not engaged with any other texts as much as with Pastior's play with language, which she does not characterize as experimentation but rather as utmost realism.[131] In her essay from 1998 "Die ungewohnte Gewöhnlichkeit bei Oskar Pastior," she provides in fact keys for the interpretation and deciphering of some of his poems, including excerpts from *Der krimgotische Fächer* and *Gedicht-Gedichte*, while she meditates on the tension between adjustment and rejection Pastior must have experienced in the work camp. After communism, as she demonstrates, rhyme had served Pastior to deconstruct, for instance, the concept of *Heimat*. She shows this in her analysis of "rückläufiges heimataggregat" from Pastior's volume *Das Hören des Genitivs* (2003). The poem has at its center a "homeland assembly" of "regressive nature" (rückläufig). Pastior undermines the stability of this structure by documenting its regressive nature. He manages this by literally disassembling the primary composite and inventing alternative structures that end in "at" such as "pufferstaat, akrobat, konkordat, exsudat, renegat." These words that rhyme as end-verses create a mock resonance around the notion of "Heimat," which is mentioned only in the title, but which reverberates across associative, sometimes nonsensical words exceeding a semantic frame. The play on "Heimat" recalls the earlier polemic use of homeland and its alleged inception in a conference hall in the poem RESONANZHOLZ discussed earlier in this chapter.

---

[130] Herta Müller, "Gelber Mais und keine Zeit," 17. Also published in *Immer derselbe Schnee und immer derselbe Onkel,* 96-110.
[131] "Ist aber jemand abhanden gekommen," 86.

Pastior's early poems from *Der krimgotische Fächer*, his absurdist verses about the courts of the "trünnigen Glühbecken" or the "Überbauzen," also helped Müller overcome everyday gloom in the communist factory and allowed her to count but also symbolically kill that time of duress. In her analysis of Pastior's encrypted lyric, Müller credits Pastior's verse with inspiring her to start (*anfangen*) and breathe (*aufatmen*) again.[132] Significantly, she interprets several cryptic verses by Pastior in relation to time. For instance, she chooses the last verses of TAS ILLUSIUN from "Im Hof der trünigen Glühbecken" and renders "Minze, Minze flaumiran Schpektrum" as a derivative of "ich reibe wieder Minze" [I am killing time again]. Müller also decodes "flaumiran" as "bau mir ein" [build me] and "ein Schpektrum" as "eine Perspektive, einen Ausweg" [in English this would correspond to: build me a way out]. [133] Pastior's verses and Müller's own use of rhymed verse during communism echo Ruth Klüger's equation of rhymed poems with incantations and their recitation with ways to make time pass in a concentration camp.[134] The poems as metronomes of life and time also invoke something else, the co-existence between extremity and everydayness that Michael Rothberg analyzed as defining Klüger's traumatic realism. [135] In his comments on the everyday in the life of the camps, Rothberg addresses the co-existence of the extremes "realism and experimentation" in order to comment on aporias in representations of the Holocaust, including the notion of trauma and its troubled relation to the real. The principle of "TAS ILLUSIUN"

---

[132] Herta Müller, "Ist aber jemand abhanden gekommen," 84. The whole citation reads: Es passt zum Abdanken, dann zum Aufatmen und wieder Anfangen, zum Sich-Angiften oder zum Lachen."
[133] Herta Müller, "Ist aber jemand abhanden gekommen," 83.
[134] Ruth Klüger, *weiter leben: Eine Jugend*, 124.
[135] Michael Rothberg, "Between the Extreme and the Everyday: Ruth Klüger's Traumatic Realism," in *Extremities: Trauma, Testimony and Community,* ed. Nancy K. Miller and Jason Tougaw (Urbana and Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 61.

relies on a conversion of a traumatic reality into a way out, which relies in turn on the realism of an illusion of survival.

Pastior's stories about his experience in the work camp, which Mueller collected during hours of conversation starting in 2001 revealed traumatic camp experiences in the Ukraine, which he had not disclosed until then. Yet, Müller notes, unlike her mother or the community of Swabians in her native village, who had been deported to work camps after the war, Pastior could speak out without hiding beneath a "whisper."[136] By concentrating on ruptures within Pastior's poetic language, Müller contrasts his contorted poetic idiom with the clarity of his confessional stories. What she sees in his objective account, she finds missing in his poetic work.

It might be no coincidence that Pastior never mentioned his early poems as being at the origin of his persecution and eventual exile. As Müller found out, it was his "anti-Soviet" poems written in the years of the work camp that triggered the trial against Grete Loew, the keeper of the poems, and constituted the main reason for his initial observation by the Securitate.[137] The experience of the camp, as Müller concludes, was not the only one that had contorted and broken his language; his personal experience of forced collaboration with the Romanian Secret Police and subsequent impossibility to confess led to further contortions of poetic expression.[138] The saved Pastior seems, thus, to have found refuge in elaborate sound genres, which resound at times from within Müller's own work. The intra-poetic dialogue that

---

[136] Müller refers to the whispering tone (Flüsterton) of her mother, "Gelber Mais und keine Zeit," 15.
[137] Herta Müller, "Die Akte zeigt Oskar Pastior umzingelt," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 18.9 (2009): 31.
[138] In Ibid., 31. Commenting on Stefan Sienerth's discoveries about Pastior's alleged collaboration with the Secret Romanian Police, Müller stated in an interview with *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* "Er

ensues between Müller and Pastior manifests as tension between realism and experimentation: such dialogue echoes traumatic and realist moments from a shared communist and Fascist past retold in an experimental mode.

In spite of the two authors' brief official literary collaboration, Pastior and Müller officially co-wrote only one prose fragment for their planned text, "Vom Hungerengel eins zwei drei." [139] Her novel *Atemschaukel* (2009) was inspired by conversations with Pastior and based on this co-written fragment. Pastior features in Müller's collage volume in Romanian, *Este sau nu Este Ion* (2005), as well, with two collages featuring him as a character and other collages in German dedicated to him. In the collages and prose inspired by Pastior, Müller explores various modalities of work with sound in different genres. Pastior's presence is not coincidental, I would say, but symptomatic of Müller's own engagement with sound. The rest of this chapter demonstrates this point.

Collages

At first glance, Müller's collages seem to consist of grid-like structures, which would justify reading them in a visual key. Rosalind Krauss discusses the anti-referential tendencies of the modernist avant-garde and interprets collages as a "metalanguage of the visual" in the sense of a superimposition of grounds, each of which points to another and ultimately to an absent origin.[140] Krauss' analysis highlights the linguistic structure of signs "speaking" (she uses "speaks" in quotation

---

(Pastior) sagte, die Sprache sei ihm im Lager zerbrochen, ich weiss heute, Pastior ist die Sprache nicht nur einmal, sondern ein zweites Mal zerbrochen."

[139] *Die Horen*, 50 (2005).

[140] Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), 37.

marks) through Picasso's collages; however, in her interpretation, speech stands for the visual play of signs with absence and presence. Müller's approach to collage is better justified by historical examination into the meaning and development of collage and its function beyond the visual or even "speech," understood by Krauss as the emergence of discourse as replacement of origin through representation.[141] Ignoring historical roots and multiple functions of collage, as I have argued above, critics generally underplay the meaning of the genre for the Herta Müller's work overall.[142] In particular, the use of rhyme in Müller's collages corroborates the relation between rhyme and pain in Theodor Kramer's idiosyncratic coupling of rhyme and pain, and Oskar Pastior's rhymes as accessories of the absurd.

The modernist practice of collage initiated by the Cubists in 1912 presupposed a visual revolution, which also helped inspire a poetic and a media innovation. Cubist techniques of displacement of signs on canvas and their foregrounding of objects in the apparent absence of representation influenced sound poets such as Velimir Khlebnikov and Aleksei Kruchenikh, as well as inspiring theories on the nature of poetic language.[143] Cubist techniques included cutting, pasting, gluing, and even leaving pins in place to shatter the mimetic illusion of traditional painting and break away from Western standards of representation.[144] The Futurist words-in-freedom,

---

[141] Ibid., 39.

[142] Norbert Otto Eke, "Herta Müllers Weg zum Gedicht," *Text+ Kritik,* 155 (Juli 2002): 69: "die 'grosse' Oper findet in den Collagen nicht statt, sie ist ihnen aber ablesbar." 69. Eke uses "Oper" in its Latin original meaning rather than in the sense of the musical composition and he underplays the meaning of collage for the author's work overall.[In the collages one can get an insight into the "big" work but this "big" work does not happen here.]

[143] The sound poets in question are Velimir Khlebnikov and Aleksei Kruchenikh. However, Roman Jakobson used Cubist collage in order to illustrate the nature of poetic language. See Roman Jakobson, "What is Poetry?" (1933), cited in Hal Foster et al.ed, *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (NY: Thames and Hudson, 2011), 35.

[144] Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avantgarde,* 39.

which were contemporaneous with the Cubist collages, designated strings of words (mostly nouns and verbs) that reduced syntax to bare essentials through the exclusive use of infinitive verbs, the suppression of superfluous conjunctions and unpredictable analogies between highly disparate objects.[145] In Apollinaire's so-called conversation poems, a peculiar tendency of collage emerged through a coupling of graphics with dispersed voices and onomatopoeia. Apollinaire did not belong officially to any movement but functioned rather as a mediator between Cubism and its disassembling of vision, Futurism and its disassembling of syntax, and Surrealism, with its coupling of the unconscious with the image.[146] The prevalence of the image in Surrealism goes back to the translation of the unconscious into visual terms. Although compared by Freud to the structure of language, the function of the unconscious was described in visual terms by the emerging discipline of psychoanalysis.[147] Against this trend of associating the unconscious with visuals, Apollinaire, who praised and cultivated poetry, undertook an early Surrealist poetics of sound.[148] Thus, Apollinaire formally crossed the bridge between psychoanalytic-like automatism and vision, and exploited linguistic and sonic nuances of the unconscious in an associative style. Apollinaire's conversation poems rely on a form of verbal collage comprising fragments of overheard speech, random impressions, and onomatopoeic effects glued together

---

[145] Ibid, 28.

[146] Apollinaire, who used the word Surrealism for the first time in the play *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (1918) had suggested the exploration of the unconscious as a new aesthetic creed as early as 1909. See Sasa Pana, "Introduction à la metaphysique du rêve," in *Sadismul adevarului,* 105.

[147] Freud himself did not hold Surrealism in high regard. See Hal Foster et al. ed., *Art since 1900*, 17. Freud compares the unconscious to language in *Art and Literature,* trans. James Strachey (London: Penguin, 1985).

[148]Christian Schiff documents the Surrealist scepticism against poetry. See Christian Schiff, "Banging on the Window Pane: Sound in Early Surrealism," *The Wireless Imagination* (London: MIT Press, 1992), 139-191. Breton, who was more interested in prose as a form of expression, manifested his solidarity for poetry as a revolutionary weapon at the time of the "Affaire Aragon." See André Breton, *Misère de la poésie: "L'Affaire Aragon devant l'opinion publique* (Paris: Éditions Surréalistes, 1932).

without connecting links.[149] Müller's collage poems, especially the recent volumes from 2005, in which the dialogic and the monologic play a significant role, possess a conversational quality that can be related to Apollinaire's conversation poems. Such a relation is established in particular through the ways Apollinaire's conversation poems highlighted the phonic aspects of the (Surrealist) unconscious, which are also reflected in Müller.

By underwriting images with verse, Müller challenges Surrealism's main focus on the image: in doing so, she distances herself from psychological automatism and cultivates instead new types of correspondences between inner and outer representations.[150] Müller's particular practice of Surrealism relies rather on a collation of discrepant images with voices. Her technique represents at the same time an attempt at displacing the Surrealist dislocation of logic through a dislocation of the lines of discourse itself.[151] Such shift of attention from the realm of logic to the realm of discourse, as outlined by Campos, helps understand the shift of focus from the visual reinvention of the Surrealist subject, to speech. In contrast to the Cubist canvas, which foregrounded discontinuous objects and occasionally words, Müller uses word sequences to overwrite her canvas with rhymes and rhythms to disassemble discourse

---

[149] Christine Poggi, *In Defiance of Painting*, 196. For Dada and Apollinaire see Ina Maria Brümann, *Apollinaire und die deutsche Avantgarde* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. R. Kraemer, 1998), 116-117.

[150] Rainer Warning, "Der Traum der Surrealisten," *Fragment und Totalität,* in Lucien Dällenbach and Christiaan L Hart Nibbrig ed. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984), 324-336. See also See Bettina Brandt's comment, "Das surrealistische Bild stammt aus der Poesie und nicht aus der Malerei" *Text+Kritik* Sonderband, ed. Heinz Ludwig Arnold (München: Richard Boorberg Verlag), 76. Brandt reflects on a famous verse by Lautréamont, which served as inspiration for André Breton but she does not relate the verse quality of Surrealism to Müller's peculiar use of Surrealist techniques.

[151] Haroldo de Campos, initiator of the Brazilian Noigandres concrete poetry group considers insufficient the Surrealist attempt to find within the subject a substitute for Aristotelian logic. He proposes instead to question first the realm of discursive language. Thus he shifts the focus from the alleged Surrealist challenge of logic through dream to language and speech. Haroldo de Campos, *Novas*: *Selected Writings* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 240.

and transpose it, in Jakobson's sense, between the metaphoric (Surrealist) and metonymic (Cubist) spheres of language.[152]

Müller's collages, her collection of details, fragments of phrases, words and images reflect the tension in Müller's aesthetics of self-referentiality set against the lingering everydayness of communist oppression. Such tension is further perpetuated by the author's claim that her fictional art is based in fact on such realist everydayness.[153] This unlikely mixture of fiction and realism likely has its roots in the convergence of fiction/poetry and reality in eighteenth-century thought. Most recently, Reinhard Kosellek pursued in his historical account such convergence and uncovered the joint potential of poetry and documentary history in assessing the relation between dreams and their narrative of the past in historical fashion. Kosellek assigns to dreams the capacity to relate to reality in a historical, that is to say, real and not surreal fashion. One case study he provides is represented by dreams from concentration camps, in which projections of the future are contaminated by the past.[154] The logic of this justifies Müller's Surrealist anti-utopia as a projection into the past and not into the future, in which poetry and fiction merge.

Pictorial and verbal details of Müller's collages range from the visual detail of a painting to magnified renditions of certain words or the discontinuous, uneven, or hallucinatory transcription of others. As I will argue, if regarded as a form of protest against the dictatorship, her collages represent a triumph of detail as tension between

---

[152] See the analysis of Roman Jakobson's syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes and their application in Surrealist art. *Art since 1900,* 36.

[153] For Müller, fiction is based on reality and everydayness. See her interview with Carlos Aguilera, "Mir war der rumänische Fasan immer näher als der deutsche Fasan: Ich will mit Utopien nichts zu tun haben," in *Akzente* 55 (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2008), 401.

life and self-referentiality of the collages themselves. To substantiate her adoption of detail as a measure of creation and existence, Müller cites from Eugène Ionesco and his engagement, through the absurd, with communist reality: "Leben wir also. Aber man lässt uns nicht leben. Leben wir also im Detail."[155] This statement reiterates with function of detail as poetic fiction and poetic means of survival. In a variation on the topic of utopia, formulated as a radio address, Müller describes her recourse to detail as a compulsion stemming from the impossibility of conceiving of the whole and any representations of the future of utopian kind.[156] The author thus adopts detail as an art of resistance against communism, which she perpetuates through the practice of collage. The dissolve of the whole into fragments is how Ionesco characterizes in fact the poetic art of Urmuz, from whom he seems to derive his attention to detail as fragment that resists any oppressive system. While for Urmuz, the system is represented by "juridical and social organisms," bourgeois conventionalism or religion, for Ionesco, the system is all that plus the socialist State:

> Er (Urmuz) wirft die Elemente des Denkens, die dazugehörigen Systeme, die Glieder des juristisch-sozialen Organismus, menschliche Gesichter, Vögelflügel –und Schnäbel, vereinzelte psychologische Einheiten, Christentum, Rationalismus, dialektische Prinzipien, Logik und Sprache in einen Hut; mischt das Ganze, schüttelt es durch und zieht dann der Reihe nach die Bruchstücke heraus. [157]

Müller in turn uses fragment as a replacement of the utopian project of wholeness in a communist but also post-communist world haunted by the traces of communism. In her collages, dream and reality, inner and outer voices merge with

---

[154] Reinhart Kosellek, *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 278-299.
[155] *Hunger und Seide*, 61.
[156] "Utopien bleiben offen, die Tage schliessen sich," transcript of the speech delivered for the Hessischer Rundfunk on 9.7.1998, Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach, 1. "In die Zukunft denken, voraus schauen, mit grossen Visionen oder Utopien leben—das kann ich nicht." On the topic of detail and its function see also Herta Müller, *Hunger und Seide. Essays* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1995), 50-61.

fragments from the past and the present and constitute a provocative mingling of image with verse. In the collages in Romanian and in some select collages in German from the 2005 volumes, fragmentation is embodied and dramatized through recitation.[158] Instead of the spatialization offered through visual detail, recitation also offers a temporal and sonic dimension to the visuals.[159] It is in this resonant space of recitation and installation-like exhibition that a dimension of anti-utopianism informed by the avant-garde practice of collage emerges as a polemic with the communist utopian project. This polemic emerges as thematization of inner speech as acoustics.

<p align="center">***</p>

Herta Müller's earliest collage volume is the little known *Der kalte Schmuck des Leben*s, published in 1987; this by now forgotten volume gave the title to Müller's exhibition from 2010 at the Literaturhaus in Berlin. The exhibition was in effect an installation, in which oversized collages were displayed in a gallery and accompanied by recorded versions. The walkman version in the original museal exhibition was replaced by recorded documents.

---

[157] Eugène Ionesco, "Das war Urmuz," 531.

[158] On the topic on temporalization, Benjamin Buchloh notes that the tearing gesture of Jean Arp's early 1916 *papiers dechirés* activates and temporalizes the fragmentation of collage to the same extent that the surface fissures and textural discrepancies had spatialized it. Buchloh credits Arp with inspiring the 1950s procedures of the decollagistes, who would use their affiches on the walls of the city to convey the sense of temporalized spatialization of the modern metropolis. According to Buchloh, the procedure of decollage foregrounds the latent temporal quality inherent in the collage paradigm, by comparing fragments and textures, surfaces and seams, and arranging them according to the laws of a balanced relational opposition. By contrast to collage, decollage pleads for the erosion of even the smallest semantic unit. 454. Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Villeglé: From Fragment to Detail," in *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: essays on European and American art from 1955 to 1975*, 443-460. What Buchloh omits from his paradigm of temporalization is the suggestion of time through the collage book-object.

[159] It thus transcends earlier forms of collage in the work of the author, which is more bound to vision and acoustics on page than to actual practices of recitation.

As "cold ornaments," Müller's very first collages display reality in black and white. Their play with funereal imagery seems to insert a second type of death within the would-be death of collage as commodity proclaimed by Adorno. Through the funereal drawings and stamps in the volume, the cold ornament suggests the bare core of a universe of oppression.[160] *The Cold Ornament of Life* is illustrated by a graphic designer and relies on simple narratives interrupted by graphic caesuras and apocalyptic imagery. Rhymes are not present, and continuity is granted only by images that are presented as continuations of each other. Müller's later volumes experiment with collages both in a theoretical mode and in a practical one.

In 1993 the volume *Der Wächter nimmt seinen Kamm* condensed what the poetological volume *Der Teufel sitzt im Spiegel. Wie Wahrnehmung sich erfindet* (1991) had announced in terms of artistic design through the coupling of images with essays. *Der Wächter nimmt seinen Kamm* is a book-object in the form of a postcard box filled with collages, some of them in rhymed verse and printed on postcard material illustrated with dark silhouettes. Its shape as a book-object is not linear and emphasizes the materiality of the object instead. *Im Haarknoten wohnt eine Dame* from 2000 relies heavily on end rhymes, and lyrics here are easily decoded in a political key. In contrast to these earlier volumes, Müller's collages from 2005, *Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen* and *Este sau nu este Ion*, use internal rhymes, assonances and anaphors to a larger extent and carry covert rather than overt political nuances. Her collage details here are made out of voices, speech effects, slang,

---

[160] Theodor W. Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism," *Notes to Literature* I, 86-90. The title of Müller's first collage volume and more recent exhibition of the same title reads as a possible polemic

invective or cacophony and instantiate a form of sound ethnography as collage, which continues the author's efforts to reconstruct complex ethnographies of her Swabian village and Romanian life in general under communism. The fissures in everydayness revealed by these collages can be best understood if we refer to James Clifford's important analysis of ethnography in terms of Surrealism. In his "Ethnographic Surrealism," Clifford performed a critique of the form of comparison undertaken by ethnography and its amalgamation of peoples and customs.[161] In order to show the aporias of the ethnographic discipline, Clifford decided to focus on an imaginary cohabitation of Surrealism with ethnography. As Clifford argues, such an approach exposes the fractures, discontinuities and incongruities of ethnography as a discipline of comparison. An analysis of Müller through the prism of Surrealism *and* ethnography would highlight dimensions of her work that exceed an ethnographic focus, based on an objective collection of details. For Clifford, natural hierarchies between languages and cultures are decomposed and defamiliarized in this fashion. In Müller's collages, rhymes, refrains and interjected sounds and voices do not smooth over any dissonances between verbal content and text image; instead they maintain discrepancies inherent in the concept of collage and in the imagined dialogue between the two languages of Romanian and German. The author draws her details in both volumes from the Romanian communist past with its arsenal of interrogations, denunciations, and humiliations, which the author then collates with fragments from the post-communist present.[162] Müller's collages seemingly build an ethnographic

---

against Adorno's definition of the collage in terms of the "dialectic of freedom in a context of objective unfreedom" in a context in which images have a fetishistic and dead-like character.

[161] James Clifford, "On Ethnographic Surrealism" in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1988), 118-132.

[162] See Arina Rotaru, "Herta Müller's Art of Reverberation: Sound in the Collage Books *Die blassen*

panorama in the guise of a study of fragments of daily life in an unspecified communist or post-communist setting, which is yet exceeded by Surrealist undertones. The two volumes function independently and the only apparent unity is represented by their simultaneous release. Yet further points of similarity prove to be, as I will argue, the uncanny presence of Pastior in both volumes, as well as the insistence on sound in the guise of both conversation and soliloquy. These two dimensions of sound correspond to two paradoxical aspects of collage: as words-in-freedom engaged in a dialogue with an outer world, and as dialogues with the self.

The commemorative edition of *Horen* published three collages by Müller in 2006, which she dedicated to Pastior in 2003 and composed according to dates she provides.[163] Among these collages, "Für Oskar" appears also in Müller's collage book *Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen* (2005). However, in the edition of 2005 the dedication is omitted and a different image is used. The image used in *Horen* shows the picture of a departing silhouette, its back turned to the viewer; this image is in turn pasted on top of another square image, in which colors and nuances prevail. I will return shortly to an analysis of this.

"Nehmen wir an wir sitzen schweigend auf einer Bank" (Let's Suppose We Sit Silent on a Bench), the first version of this poem to be published in 2005 in *Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen*, has as its image an L-shaped figure that sets itself between two halves of a building.[164]

Herren mit den Mokkatassen (2005) and *Este sau nu este Ion* (2005)"; forthcoming in Bettina Brandt and Valentina Glajar, ed., *Herta Müller: Politics and Aesthetics* (Nebraska: Nebraska University Press, 2013).

[163] *Die Horen* 51 (2006).

[164] Herta Müller, *Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen* (München: C. Hanser Verlag, 2005).

Figure 1. Herta Müller, "Nehmen wir an" (2005)

The mysterious L apparently marks a separation or a limit. The figure can be read as an allusion to the L-shaped *language of the stars* of Khlebnikov, to which Pastior rendered homage in one of his volumes and in his general practice of sound poetry. Khlebnikov's L-shaped *language of the stars*, which is a synonym for transrational language, claimed the power to organize the entire world on a new audial basis.[165] The transrational language of the stars was a purely phonetic language, the mission of which was to work "secretly" and "magically" upon the listener or

reader.[166] As Boris Groys observes in his analysis of the relation of the Russian avant-garde to totalitarian regimes, Khlebnikov called himself, among others, "King of Time," since he thought he had discovered "laws that delimit time and separate the new from the old in the same way that such division is possible in space."[167] As Groys shows in his analysis, Stalinism intervened into the avant-garde understanding of art by replacing the artist's ruling of the unconscious from within art with the voice of the Leader, who would permeate the artist's mind and take control over his artistic creativity.[168] Müller's collage in its two print versions signals, through a play on voices, the tension between a "free" artistic unconscious and the intromission of the state. The image shows two buildings blocks that are forcefully separated by an L-shaped object. Despite the poem's hypothetical opening with a scene of two persons sitting on bench, in silence [Nehmen wir an, wir sitzen schweigend auf einer Bank], the poem enfolds as apparent tension between an inner voice and an external one. The unlikely exchange starts with a seemingly absurd dialogue on the material value of vowels: "You cannot keep buying vowels/Okay, then go ahead buy another vowel" ("Du kannst doch nicht ständig Vokale kaufen/Gut, dann kauf eben noch einen Vokal.")[169] This puzzling line alludes to a popular television game show, *The Wheel of Fortune*, and thus to a degree of contemporaneity. When in need, contestants can literally "buy vowels" to help them solve a word puzzle. The importance of vowels in

---

[165] Groys, *The Total Work of Art,* 18.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid., 44.
[169] Lev Vygotsky's theories on language and inner speech were contemporaneous both with Khlebnikov's transrational language and with Stalinist prosecution and censoring of the artistic collective unconscious. For Vygotsky inner speech relied on a reduced nature of phonetics and the absence of its vocalization. See "Fundamental Principles of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory," in Marysia Johnson, *A Philosophy of Second Language Acquisition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 114.

the text is additionally highlighted through capitalization, with the word VOKAL having the biggest size of all other capitalized words, and words being colored in suggestive ways. The play with letters, sizes, colors and orientation on page is a tribute to Futurist and Dadaist associations of typography with intonation and sound. The allusion to the game show reveals the origin of this particular sequence as an interactive, performative game in which a contestant fills in the blanks by buying vowels and trying to restore meaning to a sequence. Yet, it is within these spaces that a clash between ordinary syntax and semantic accident occurs. The ensuing line, articulated by an external voice, plays on the letter A as in "Anzüge" (suits): "Wie viele Anzüge hast du im Schrank." The question about the "suits" conveys a controlling nuance, as it interpellates the subject as if on the run. The next line contains in a single square unit the idiomatic command: "you should quickly disappear from here" ("solltest du dich ganz schnell aus dem Staub machen,") which is succeeded by onomatopoeia, "Pok, pok," suggesting suspense through sound of rapid knocks on the door. The next line, highlighting internal rhymes, shifts from a menacing tone to a playful one: "Da hab ich mir gedacht, wir spielen es nochmal Hose und Rock/[170] im kleinen Saal ist ohnehin SILVESTERBALL" (That's when I thought, let's play again, pants and skirt/in the little hall there is a New Year's Eve ball going on anyway"). The last part of the poem is a reflection on inner thoughts and the peril of exteriorizing them. An "I" questions whether the source of speech is internal or external: "Wer hat das denn gesagt Ach was egal ich nicht" (who said that

---

[170]"Rock und Hosen" is a term used by Celan in *Meridian* to characterize *Kunst* , the mechanized form of *Dichtung*. (*Der Meridian*, 2.) One can recognize "Kunst" in "Affengestalt," close to the creature, dressed in skirt and pants, in the Celan excerpts from Büchner's *Wozzeck*. The invitation to play "pants and skirt" (Celan's term is inverted) in Müller's poem might be an allusion to a form of mechanical art performed as dissimulation, which is privately resisted by inner speech and monologue.

What it doesn't matter not me). This rhetorical question hints at the fact that the initial

dialogue (let's imagine we both sit on a bench) is in fact a monologue or a dialogue

directed to oneself. The tension between inner thoughts and external intromission

points to the conflict between the authoritarian voice of the Party Leader and an inner

voice. [171] Such a tension is reproduced again and again in the Russian avant-garde

appropriated by Stalinism, and it must have also influenced Pastior, who was a keen

reader and translator of Khlebnikov. This tension finds an echo in Müller's verses, too.

In the last fragment of Müller's poem, letters take on different, larger sizes (especially

the sibilants "s" and the words they help form), marking off a shift from vowels to

consonants. A poetic "I" uses hyperbolic expressions to convey its thoughts: "Ich

denk IN jedem Fall mental/und körperlich noch AN dein Handgelenk" ("I still think

mentally and bodily of your wrist"). Müller's obsessive focus on details in the

absence of a whole emerges here in a powerful mode. In the poem, the preposition

"AN" is capitalized and exceeds in size the surrounding words. "WRIST" stands out

through its brown background and recomposes a person's memory as imprint of a

wrist. An extraneous voice interrupts these private reflections in a violent manner,

rendered in particular by the verb "sticht" [stab]: "Und in der Zwischenzeit im

SCHRANK natürlich wirklich/wohnt dreimal der Mond und sticht/Wer hat das den

gesagt Ach, was egal Ich nicht (And in the meantime in the closet of course really/the

moon lives three times and stabs/Who said that oh no matter matter not me). At the

end of the collage, an external voice or voices interrupt the inner speech exchange.

The external interruption affects the free flow of thoughts. Such a voice without an

---

[171] *The Total Work of Art,* 63.

owner is reflected in the verse "wohnt dreimal der Mond und sticht," and Müller uses darker colors to render this intruding sequence on page. In the last sequence, the poetic "I" cannot identify the source of these voices "Wer hat das denn gesagt?." This struggle between the collage as an independent artistic object and the control through the omnipresent voice of the state recalls real tensions between socialist realism and the independent creator.[172] As I have shown in my analysis of Pastior, such tensions motivated in particular the stance of the avant-garde artist.

Collage appears as an appropriate means for Müller to encode the tension between a Surreal avant-garde in the constructivist L-sign of Khlebnikov, and the state-imposed, voice- controlling policy of socialist realism, which have manifested in particular in poetry as transrational, apparently absurdist poetry. Yet the dialogues between an inner voice and a controlling external voice are also to be read as modes of resistance to State intromission through an increased awareness of voice monitorization. Simulated dialogue with an unnamed interlocutor, which reproduces an arch-scene of surveillance, might also be specifically interpreted as an imagined reconstruction of Pastior's own engagement with the State police in Stalinist times. The dialogue opens, in fact, with two halves sitting next to each other, but not talking in the sense perceptible through listening. The collage highlights rather inner speech.

---

[172] *The Total Work of Art,* 120.

The sense of a divisive split that accompanies the pictorial suggestion in the 2005 edition is reproduced in the collage from 31.X. 2003, "für Oskar" [for Oskar]. "Für" and "Oskar" are interrupted by an image in the shape of a cubicle, a division that suggests a rupture within the dedication itself.[173] The image cubicle contains another image within itself and perpetuates the divisive sense of the whole.
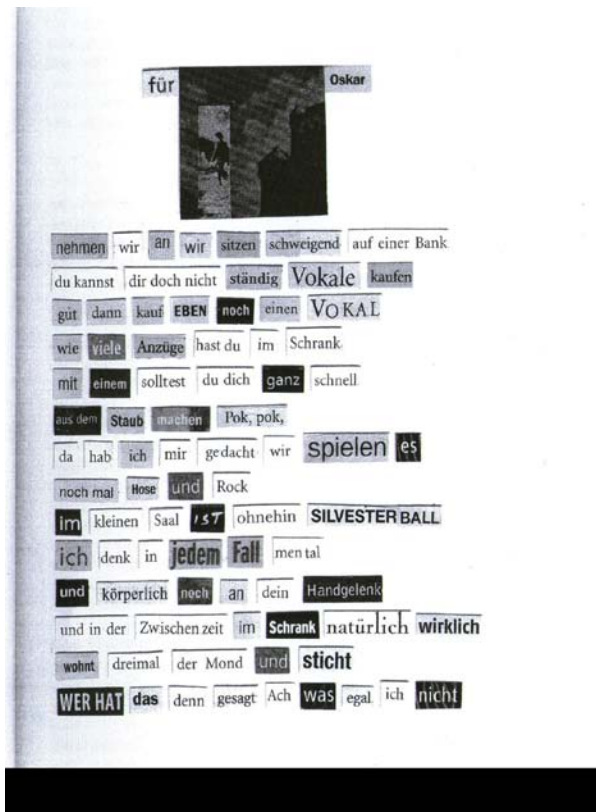
Figure 2. Herta Müller, "Nehmen wir an" (2003)

Although the poem highlights vowels, which are capitalized, and the collage cut-outs retain the musicality of fragmented pieces on a canvas, the sense of sound present in the poem is reproduced also with the help of the fractured dedication. A

---

step of the interactive game with vowels suggested in the poem (the 2005 edition) presupposes recognizing the poem as a dedication to Pastior among the other poems in the volume.

A further argument for a reading of this poem in the spirit of an intra-poetic dialogue would be to lend an ear to Pastior's own experiments with vowels that resound in the background. For instance, in Pastior's "Vokalisen" experiment, written on the cusp of 1990/1991, he explores patterns where vowels -which he calls *Selbstlaute* (independent sounds) or *Selbstläufer* (independent runners) -clash against consonants or *Mitlaute* (sounds that go with the others)*, Mitläufer* (those that run with the others, the crowd).[174] According to the distinction formulated by Johann Gottfried Herder in his treatise on the origin of language, *Selbstlaute* are originary sounds on which languages rely, which do not have written correspondents, whereas the more common *Mitlaute* are easily reproducible in writing.[175] The tension between underrepresented *Selbstlaute* and more common *Mitlaute* is extrapolated by Müller as a real human tension between *Selbstläufer* or opponents of a regime and *Mitläufer*, those who go with the crowd or those who collaborate with a regime.[176] In one essay Müller calls her connection to poetry a very private one, with poems being relegated to her inner self.[177] In light of this statement, the division of inner and outer voices appears as a reconstruction of State intrusion anticipated by a transaction in vowels,

---

[174] Pastior's mysterious conclusion to his *Vokalisen, Gimpfelstifte* reads "Selbstläufer gegen Mitläufer, Vokale gegen Konsonanten: Noch ein 'Dualismus' wird subkutan auf seine Hinfälligkeit poetisch geprüft." Pastior, *Vokalisen & Gimpfelstifte* (München: Carl Hanser, 1992), 108.

[175] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966), 12.

[176] See Herta Müller's distinction between *Selbstläufer* and *Mitläufer*. See *In der Falle*, 13-15. In Adorno's theoretical vocabulary, *Mitläufer* refers to those who went along with fascism. Herta Müller's reference includes the communist dictatorship as well.

[177] *In der Falle,* 18.

the *Selbstlaute*, as elements of resistance in the inner sphere. Such private resistance and the coded opposition I have highlighted earlier in Pastior's work are not contradictory but rather complementary. It is easily discernible that for a *Selbstläufer*, *Selbstlaute* are understood as means of personal expression. The dialogue with the self featured in the collage might reflect on a dialogue between *Selbstlaute* and *Mitlaute* or a dialogue of the poet with herself and the outer world, but it could also be an imagined intra-poetic dialogue between Müller and Pastior, on account of this strong element of resistance embodied by vowels. In light of the revelations about Pastior's collaboration with the Securitate, one could see this dialogue in an even more dramatic key, with Pastior using the metaphor of sounds that cannot find easy expression in writing in order to make a statement about his repressed and yet resistant experience as a *Mitläufer*.

Written entirely in Romanian the volume *Este sau nu este Ion* was released in the same year as *Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen*.[178] Through recitation in Romanian, Müller's poems not only add a new value to her graphics, shadows and material bodies of verse but also provide a vocal counterpart to her other collages in German. On a recorded CD, the author illustrates through voice modulations the cutouts and spaces of collage. Unlike the volume in German, in which his name does not appear, two of the collages in Romanian feature "Oskar" as a character. One collage in Romanian mentions both Ernest and Oskar (Ernest likely signals Ernest Wichner, a friend of both Pastior and Müller and member of the *Aktionsgruppe*

---

[178] It contains a singular phonetic transcription in Russian, which seems to be used for the purpose of rhyme. This line in Russian is "Şto takoi,?" which rhymes with "Aşa si joi" and purports to imitate the song of the rain.

Banat), who speak in free indirect speech and give the impression of twisting semantics ironically. An approximate translation reads as: "Ernest used to say that/at the railway station and in the country/it is summer but the cup of/coffee is full/of snow and comes/to see us randomly (...)" The association of "cup" [ceasca], the code name for the dictator, with the idiom "the cup is full" shows on the one hand that a strenuous situation is about to explode, but also that this cup, synechdochically, the dictator's, is not full of what one expect, but of snow. Through this syntagmatic displacement, the somber real of the dictatorship is overthrown and rendered surreal. The rhetoric of state criticism serves Müller to recompose idiomatic constructions from random details to create grotesque effects. For instance, "our coat is being shortened as well as our luggage," or "our hunger is fattened like a widow" evidence preposterous linguistic effects but also the freedom created through free association and permutation. These instances show how sound creates subversive effects also by means of semantics and its skillful manipulation. In another collage, "Oskar" appears as a sole character. Here a postcard-like image shows a desolate landscape on a drawn background involving a house and a man being lifted on a chair into the air. The man's head is outside the frame of the image. The image as a literal flight into the air can be read as a humorous story of ascension from which the creator is absent. Thus the collage literally transcends its frame and points to an external reality beyond the self-referential world of the collage. The text reads as follows:
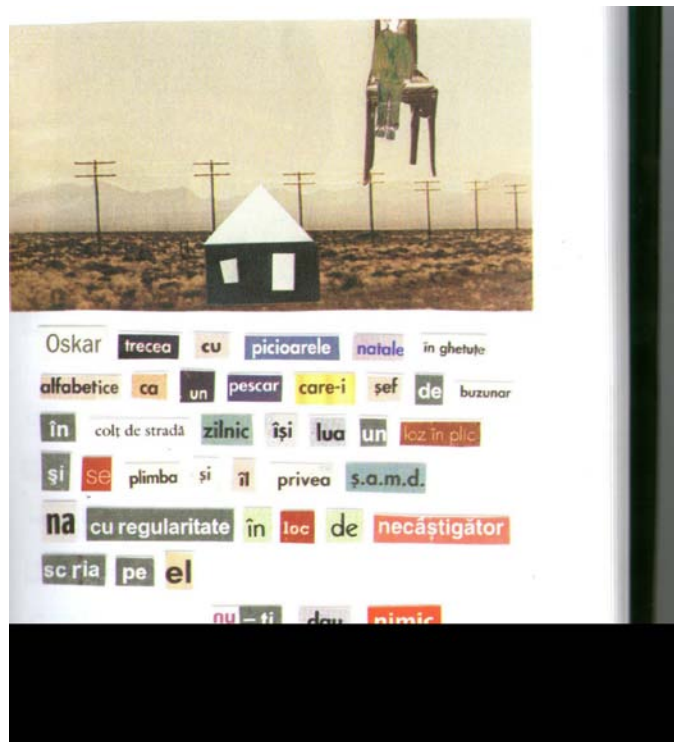
Figure 3. Herta Müller, "Oskar trecea"

"Oskar" is presented as a fisherman who fishes for words and juggles with the alphabet while relying on a game of chance such as the traditional Romanian "loz in plic" (lottery ticket). The "lottery ticket" and fishing for words stance are possible allusions to a well-known Romanian avant-garde publication where the work of Urmuz and Ionesco was once published, "bilete de papagal" [parrot tickets], whose name was modeled after a game of chance. Conceived as a forum against nationalism

---

[179] *Este sau nu este Ion*, 16.

In my translation:
Oskar was walking down on his natal feet in
alphabetic shoes like a fisherman who is a boss over one's pocket
on the corner of a street where he used to buy a lottery ticket every day
and he walked and kept looking at it and so on
oh well instead of picking the no-win ticket on a regular basis
this one was in scribed with
                    I won't give you anything
                              or
                    how many skins can you still take on

and Nazism, the publication was also inspired by Surrealism.[180] In the Müller poem, the ticket extracted every day does not turn out a win, but a loss, which is expressed not in descriptive form but through direct address. An extraneous voice literally intervenes into banal everydayness: "nu-ti dau nimic" [I won't give you anything]. On the CD, Müller's voice gives life to the written menace and its irritating address, which disrupts the context of a quotidian action and signals the intrusion of an external voice into a daily routine. Internal rhymes in "lua, plimba, privea" establish a temporary harmony in the initial stages of the poem, which is dissolved by the menacing words in the end: "I won't give you anything." The abrupt discontinuation of daily routine in the life of an individual represents an instance in which the private sphere is invaded by the public one.[181] The effect is a Surreal turbulence of chance glued onto the surface of utmost realism. The source of menace and deprivation remains ambiguous, but it can be assigned to the communist rule or the party that can see through the individual and its disguises: "how many skins can you still take on." In a typical instance for the times of the communist dictatorship, the lottery ticket with a menacing content shows how even chance and dissimulation can be controlled by the state. Through the recitation in Romanian, the menace acquires a tangible and frightening character. The combination of image, representing a mysterious ascension, and text, as grotesque interruption of an everyday pattern through an absurd message, presents a typical collage by Müller. This collage retrieves the game of chance signaled by the lottery tickets as intrusion of the absurd into the life of an individual,

---

[180] "Bilete de papagal," the game of chance, was based on a fortune-telling strategy involving a trained parrot that would pick up predictions written on scraps on paper and placed in a box while a person would play a barrel organ.
[181] Müller's work thematizes numerous some intromissions of the apparently casual into everyday events and the menacing potential of such events.

"Oskar." Thematized by Pastior in numerous volumes but contained within poetic structures and indirect word plays, the absurd is embodied here directly through a direct address that interrupts the narrative of a banal message and nevertheless invokes state terror and the imminence of threat.

In the collage dedicated to Pastior from 27.VIII. 2003 and published after his death various voices come forth: one is TUR, a character present in fragments co-published with the novel *Atemschaukel* (TUR is the adjunct of the lager director); the other one speaks as an "I." [182] This "I" engages in a monologue that also contains a moral in the form of a part spoken to oneself and to others: "Hör auf fang NIE was an/mit einem hohläugigen SCHARLATAN." Biography and fictional identity interweave and culminate in the physical split of the dedication. This collage anticipates the fragments co-authored with Pastior not only through the mention of TUR but also through the word MELDEkraut: this word is described in the novel as a word without an echo (*ohne Beiklang*), a word that does not echo anything. [183] A word that does not carry any phonetic traces is thus contrasted to the assertive "I" of artistic consciousness. Müller's self-fictional project relies on realist details, but it also transforms such details through a process of fictionalization that remembers words from the camp as devoid of sound. The speeches and rotation of voices in the poem are interwoven with hallucinatory imagery whose imagistic quality is underplayed by euphonic words: "Schiebermütze and Schnabelspitze": "der dicke Mond hat

---

[182] *Die Horen*, 51 (2006): 25.
The entire text reads: nur EIN IDIOT/sagt TUR muss sich/an beiden Händen/die NÄGEL selber schneiden/der dicke Mond hat eine/Schiebermütze der DÜNNE/eine PLATTE schnabelspitze/ICH weiss der Hundefänger BIS zur Kehle/im dunkelrotlackierten Meldekraut/SANDGELB der Mais SCHEISS NATUR/aus Glut und Gänsehaut/HÖR AUF fang NIE was an/mit einem hohläugigen SCHARLATAN" (27.VIII.2003).

eine/Schiebermütze der DÜNNE/eine PLATTE Schnabelspitze." The dream-like and menacing landscape retains something akin to an instance of surveillance, with the moon watching over the scenery. It is important to regard the author's use of Surrealist motifs such as the dream-like unconscious here and elsewhere in the volume as a tribute to the early Surrealists' closeness to verse and performance rather than to image. As Christopher Schiff points out, sound was important in particular for the early Surrealists and Apollinaire, and Bréton and Duchamp were indebted to Jean-Pierre Brisset's theories of assonant language. [184] The moral at the end of the poem, spoken from an "I" perspective, pierces the dream-like unconscious with the acuteness of an external voice. The entire poem reveals itself as an inventory of disquieting voices that will recur in the novel and the fragments. However, through its indirect rhymes (words rhyme across the poem as, for instance, in "Schiebermütze" and "schnabelspitze" rather than internally or through classic rhyme), this poem is not made to be recited silently in the guise of a prayer of the heart but rather aloud, thereby performing an opposite move from the rhymed poems that Müller claimed to have soothed her solitude during communism. If poems in rhyme were meant to help the survivors overcome fear through the assonance of rhyme, this collage, which does not rely on end-rhyme but on subtler inner rhymes, prompts its readers *as* reciters to overcome fear through acknowledgment of dissonance as incongruence.[185] As mentioned earlier, for Müller, as for Ruth Klüger, inner prayer of the heart had

---

[183]*Atemschaukel*, "MELDEKRAUT ist ein starkes Stück und besagt überhaupt nichts. MELDE war für uns ein Wort ohne Beiklang, ein Wort, das uns in Ruhe liess," 26.

[184] Christopher Schiff, "Banging on the Windowpane: Sound in Early Surrealism," *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio and the Avant-Garde*, 146.

[185] For the meaning of poems written during communism see "Und noch erschrickt unser Herz," in *In der Falle,* 36. "Das Getändel mit dem Wort hat keine Chance, die Angst spürt genau, welcher Atem jedes Wort getragen hat. Das Authentische springt heraus aus dem Gemachten. Viele hatten ihr

consisted in the silent recitation of rhymed verses in order to resist state oppression. In this collage, however, rhyme achieves a function that is both appeasing and incongruous with relief. The fictionalized transcription of voices from a work camp is not contained by rhyme in the traditional sense, yet such rhyme exists for the initiated.[186] Likewise, in the novel *Atemschaukel*, times of sufferance that result in unlikely prayer are measured according to peculiar metronomes, in which remnants of collage are incorporated.

In the last part of this chapter I am going to address succintly a few key elements in the novel *Atemschaukel,* particularly in terms of the figure of resonance to represent structures of reversible time. Through its headings, the novel makes reference to the liturgical genre of the breviary, a collection of Christian prayers and songs meant to be recited at certain times of the day or of the year. By matching the realist impersonal experience of the work camp with the liturgical sequences of the breviary, the novel illustrates a clash between sacral and chronological time. The coexistence of these two types of temporality balances the relation between realism and formal experimentation in Müller's prose. Although the setting and the subject matter of this novel pertain to a grotesque camp experience, the characters and their interractions with objects in particular, transcend the realist framework.

In the novel *Atemschaukel* (2009), time sequences in the work camp are interspersed with moments from the past and the novel's headings are formulated

---

Gedicht, rezitierten wortgenau Strophe um Strophe und sich selber in den Rausch. Bei den Gottlosen erinnerte das an ein Gebet."

[186] Such a use of rhyme brings to an extreme older traditions of rhymed couplets [*Knittelvers*] used to "associate and invert patterns of meaning within and between lines in order to deflate the mendacity of high culture and false discourse." See David Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech,* 75.

mostly in breviary form, such as "Von den strengen Menschen," "Von den Phantomschmerzen der Kuckucksuhr," "Von den Langeweilen" or "Von den Schätzen." Such patterns recall formulae for religious recitation. Many of these entries that I interpret as having their source in a form of religious breviary feature the half-allegoric, half-realistic character of the *Hungerengel*. The figure of the angel of hunger also gives the title to two novel headings, "Vom Hungerengel." The character of the angel can be interpreted as the secular remnant of a book of hours, which, as with the breviary, was traditionally used to measure time in the Catholic tradition.[187] The temporal units marked by breviary formulae correspond to the time spent by Oskar Pastior in a work camp in the Ukraine between 1945 and 1949. Müller's fictional units in the novel thus turn out to belong to the reconstructed time sequences of a work camp. These time sequences, through their association with the breviary time-units, mark, as I have discussed in Ruth Klüger's case, inner prayers of the heart that regulate the offsetting times of the camp. The time of the camp seems out of joint, as it is marked off by the sound reference to a cuckoo clock that measures only "false time" and sings erratically ("Um Punkt vergass er alles oder rief die falschen Stunden, verdoppelte die Uhrzeit oder halbierte sie," 98). If the peculiarity of a concentration camp, as the historian Kosellek observes, is the absence of time as the confounding of past, present and future, in this novel based on Pastior's work camp experience, Müller recreates time beyond the partition of rhyme, which had inspired the collage

---

[187] The figure of the angel is an important occurrence in relation to temporality, first with Walter Benjamin, second with Heiner Müller. While for Benjamin the "angel of history" is related to the structure of time, Müller's "hapless angel" stands in relation to a musical connection. The past lies behind the "hapless angel" with the noise of buried drums while he waits for history. Heiner Müller, "The Hapless Angel," in *Heiner Müller Theater Arbeit* (Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1975), 18.

volumes.[188] The novel achieves thus a form of internal rhythm and a cadence that is governed by sequences about every-day life in the camp. In the absence of collage rhyme, such sequences retain a song-like, incantatory quality, and thus fulfill the function of the breviary.

Formally, the headings of the novel recall the title of the early book of collages, *Der Wächter nimmt seinen Kamm. Vom Weggehen und Ausscheren*; in that piece, poems are contained within a postcard box, which points to the reversible temporality of a book object.[189] The suggestion of temporality in "Vom Weggehen und Ausscheren," is perpetuated in *Atemschaukel* through headings that all serve to point out ways in which time is divided. The division of time in a camp through recitation recalls the solitary recitation cultivated by Müller during times of communist durress or by Klüger in the confinement of the KZ.[190] "Vom Weggehen und Ausscheren," where the "I" perspective is conspicuously absent, contains a single personal address, which is "mein Herr, lieber Herr."[191] This allusion to an invocation of divinity reads like a remnant of a book of hours and creates a direct link between

---

[188] Reinar Kosellek, *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten,* 291.

[189] Herta Müller*, Der Wächter nimmt seinen Kamm: Vom Weggehen und Ausscheren* (Reinbeck: Rowohlt Verlag, 1993).

[190] The book of hours as a genre has received memorable revivals through Rainer Maria Rilke's *Stundenbuch* [Book of Hours: Prayers to a Lowly God] (where no images are present other than in verbal form), Franz Masereel's *Mein Stundenbuch* (1919), where black lithographs supplant words, or Eugen Gomringer's *Das Stundenbuch* (1965), in which time is emptied through constant invocation and repetition of words and for which a possible inspiration is Zen Buddhism. The language in Gomringer's *Stundenbuch* is repetitive but does not exhibit the graphic improvisations and equations of constellations. Contemporary adaptations of the genre include Rainer Goetz's *Abfall fuer Alle* (1989). The genre of the breviary, related to the book of hours, received a famous rewriting through Baldasar Gracian's *Art of Wordly Wisdom: a Pocket Oracle* (1637), and also featured prominently in the work of the irreverent Dadaist Walter Serner, in his *Die letzte Lockerung: Ein Handbrevier für Hochstapler und solche die es werden wollen* (1920).

[191] In the traditional books of hours, originally meant to accompany a Christian through the days, God is invoked and time is condensed in moments of regular devotion, while seasons are marked by distinct prayers. Müller possibly rewrites the genre into a secular mode, by condensing the constant godly

the formal pattern "vom Weggehen und Ausscheren" and its prior religious connotation. This isolated invocation of a higher instance as well as the accompanying images might be read as the key to a book of hours, albeit in the absence of transcendence. In the novel, the headings are solely empty indicators of a path of divine transcendence and liturgical demarcation. The headings mark rather a path of sufferance dominated by an existential absurd. Through the suggestion to a divine turned secular temporality, Müller invokes the internalized temporal experience in a KZ. In such a circumstance, as Kosellek notes, past, present and future have ceased to become points of orientation.[192] Müller anchors her novel in a model of temporality devoid of transcendence that only faintly relates to Christian breviaries of eternal time.[193] Here, the lyric of collage has taken refuge in prose. In the novel, lyric is reabilitated by structures of "breath," which capture not only the meaning of the poetic but also the importance of experimentation with sound under extreme circumstances.

The book's chapters are centered around an "I" narrator who is also the main character, and events in the novel present episodes of the protagonist Leopold Auberg's personal tribulation in a work camp. Auberg finds himself uprooted overnight from his daily life and thrown into a work camp on account of his German ethnicity. According to the afterword, the biography of the main character is modeled on Pastior's experience in a real work camp in Donbass in the Ukraine. The novel starts with indications of a peaceful albeit secretive life (the character hides his

---

invocation into one singular instance "mein Herr," and by having verse sequences mark time on their own.

[192] Reinhard Kosellek, *Vergangene Zukunft*, 191.

[193] Ibid.

homosexuality from his family) interrupted by the Stalinist order that requires German ethnics to reconstruct the Soviet Union through hard labor. The novel proceeds with descriptions of work camp episodes that are narrated on the verge between reality and allegory. The leitmotif of the angel of hunger, devoid of transcendence, constitutes, as in the scattered collage invocation of a Lord, the solitary remnant of a possible secular book of hours. The sense of secularized time it invokes is expressed through a lack of introspection and its replacement by a dialogue with the self as an other. The composite "Hungerengel" was suggested by Pastior himself and figures in three different fragments composed together with Pastior. In the second fragment, the *Hungerengel*, whispering to itself and to an "I," thematizes a split between monologue and dialogue, which also proves highly relevant for the narrative structure of the novel. The excerpt from the fragment ("Hungerengel II") finds its way into the novel under the heading "Vom Hungerengel" (144)[194]:

Er flüstert sich ins Ohr.
Er flüstert mir ins Ohr: Wo aufgeladen wird, kann auch abgeladen werden.
Er ist aus dem gleichen Fleisch, das er betrügen wird.
Betrogen haben wird.
Er hat es gewusst.

The angel is depicted as divided between a dialogue with the self and others. His sentences are spoken in a cryptic manner ("wo aufgeladen wird, kann auch abgeladen werden"), while the apodictic tone of the fragment is underscored by anaphors and semantic variations. The sentence "er ist aus dem gleichen Fleisch, das er betrügen wird" can be read in the light of an archaic sin, caused by the angel's uncanny resemblance and identification with the human. In light of the recent revelations about Pastior's past, the suggestion of a betrayal conveyed through this angelic character

---

[194] Herta Müller/Oskar Pastior, *Vom Hungerengel eins zwei drei* in *Die Horen* 50 (2005): 130.

("Er hat es gewusst") is highly intriguing. The fact that this fragment was co-written suggests that we might read Müller's part in it as mimetic identification with this unspoken guilt.[195] When accounting for her manner of writing this novel, Müller in fact speaks of her co-work with Pastior as of a pantomime of living and speaking:

> die Mühe die man hat, kommt daher, dass man im Schreiben weder leben noch reden kann. Schreiben ist nur die Pantomime von beidem. Die doppelte Pantomime: einmal die Pantomime der realen Gegenstände des Lebens, die in den sprachlichen Blick gezwungen werden muss. Und zweitens kommt nach dem sprachlichen Blick noch der sprachliche Trick. Es ist die zweite Pantomime, wie das Satzgefüge dem gefundenen Wort sein Gesetz beibringt.[196]

The sentence reflects more than a process of mere identification. In this excerpt, the process of joint writing emerges as a tension between art as mimetic reproduction of "real objects of life," and experimentation, brought about by the "language trick" as a type of second-degree pantomime. Beyond indicating a certain "pantomimic" degree of distance between history and its transposition into fiction, this quotation about a joint influence on the novel's writing justifies the harsh realism of the events described. Although Herta Müller, as I discussed earlier, chooses to read Pastior in the key of utmost realism rather than experimentation, both realism and experimentation shape Pastior's work as well Müller's collaborative work with Pastior or inspired by him.

---

[195] Commentators have acknowledged their puzzlement at Müller's design of the character of Leopold Auberg as a person overcome with fears whose extent Müller did not know at the time. See, for instance, Hartmut Steinecke's presupposition formulated in "Atemschaukel: *Ein Roman vom 'Nullpunkt der Existenz,'*" in *GegenwartsLiteratur,* 31. Steinecke writes: "Zu dieser 'lebenslangen Beschädigung' (AS 392) gehörten im Falle Pastiors auch Aspekte, die Herta Müller bei der Niederschrift des Romans noch nicht kannte, die aber vielleicht in den Kapiteln über das Leben Leopold Aubergs nach 1950 bereits angelegt sind: die Erpressbarkeit durch den Geheimdienst aus

One explanation why Pastior shunned realism in his verse is possibly his belief that "in retrospect, poetry degenerates into history" as he wrote in one of his poetological texts, implying that the moment one says "I" there is a certain concession made to automatism and logic.[197] This is also one of the reasons why the poetic "I" is conspicuously absent from Pastior's verse. The other explanation for Pastior's avoidance of a poetic I embedded in realism in the years following Stalinization is precisely the imminent danger he incurred upon the confiscation of his "realist" poems written in the work-camp. Auberg, the narrative "I" in Müller's novel, is not a poet; Pastior's art of verse infiltrates the novel by revealing Pastior's mannerisms in such a way that the novel exceeds them. Not only does Pastior's life infiltrate the novel but Müller also brings his art of verse, one could say, back into history, as poetic realism. This peculiar type of realism could be read in the terms suggested by Michael Rothberg as "traumatic realism," a realism that cannot contain the unspeakable of the work camp other than in terms of the "absurd and as reflection on the limits of representation."[198] This definition of realism would provide an explanation for why Pastior did not engage with realism in his work, while Müller's understanding of his realism was not yet ready to critically acknowledge the complex function of realism *in relation to* experimentation in Pastior's work.

Angst, in ein Lager zurückkehren zu müssen sowie die Gewissensqualen, diesen Sündenfall auch den besten Freunden lebenslang zu verschweigen." My emphasis.

[196]Herta Müller, "Gelber Mais und keine Zeit," 21.

[197] See "Geschichte, Poesie" in *'…was in der Mitte zu wachsen anfängt,'* Werkausgabe vol. 4, ed. Ernest Wichner (München: Hanser, 2008), 306. For the translation of the excerpt see Bettina Bannasch, "Zero-A Gaping Mouth" in *Other People's Pain: Narratives of Trauma and the Question of Ethics,* Martin Modlinger and Philipp Sonntag, ed. (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 131.

[198] Michael Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). Rothberg also implies that traumatic realism is an attempt to produce the traumatic event as an act of knowledge in front of an audience rather than as passive mimesis, an act, which, Rothberg implies, has transformative dimensions for the audience.

Fearful of concessions to the automatism of an "I," Pastior symbolically prevented his verses (written since the 1960s) from falling into history and conceding to representation, as he emphasized.[199] The novel by Müller fictionalizes a poetic "I" and paradoxically restores it to history by highlighting automatisms and identifications such as the mimetic correspondence between the author, narrator and the historical figure Pastior. In the novel's metaphor of "breath" and "breath cradle," both mechanics and automatisms of everydayness as well as the disruptive impromptu of creativity and experimentation are present.[200] Müller uses the figure of "breath" to signify both a literary collaboration and an impossibility of representation in the aftermath of Pastior's death, as she declares in the novel's post-face.[201] This impossibility of representation is not just a personal one, as Müller implies, but regards mechanisms of realist depiction that are infiltrated by trauma as poetic discourse, as sound and breath.

For Pastior, "the breath poem," a type of poem from his cycle *Gedichtgedichte* (1973), had a troubling quality. In Pastior's terminology, an *Atemgedicht* is a poem of "short breath," which, in contrast to epic, functions via an elaborate system of membranes, covers, strata and surfaces, and reveals itself as a subversive mechanism: "wer immer n/och meint das atemgedicht sei etwas harmloses/ist auf dem luftweg." If experimental poetry in the East was necessarily lyrical and as such reflected socio-political realities in contrast to the aesthetic formalism and autonomy in the West,

---

[199] "Geschichte, Poesie," 306.

[200] On the importance of "breath" for Plato, but also for symbolists, Futurists, but also for their spiritual companions, Ossip Mandelstam and Paul Celan, see Jürgen Lehmann, *Paul Celan 'Atemwende.'* Materialien, ed. Gerhard Buhr and Ronald Reuss (Munich: Koenigshausen& Neumann, 1991), 191. Lehmann also posits a connection between Ossip Mandelstam's use of "breath" in the sense of the 'glossolalic' futurist poets and Celan.

Pastior's breath poem disengages itself from this mission of the lyrical and claims subversive content for itself and a breath of a different kind.[202] In the novel, breath, as in "breath's sway," does not convey subversive freedom from the system in lyric form, but suggests the endangerment of human autonomy through automatism. The strain between the human and the mechanical is reflected through stylistically cadenced and repetitive prose introduced by headings resembling breviary entries. The composite *Atemschaukel* points to the superimposition of an extraneous movement (*schaukeln*, to sway) over a natural one (*Atem*). In illustration of this dangerous over-imposition of the mechanical over the human, work camp detainees are reduced to emaciated and apathetic bodies without time and agency, who closely resemble living dead in concentration camps.[203] Whereas in the extreme circumstances of the work camp featured in *Atemschaukel*, humans tend towards identification with objects,[204] objects feature as "the undead";[205] the angel of hunger has a liminal status, being both anthropomorphized and described as an object.[206] The composite "Hungerengel" coined by Pastior, is employed in anaphoric and laconic instances: "Der Hunger ist ein Gegenstand./Der Engel ist ins Hirn gestiegen./Der

---

[201] "Das Buch wird den Titel "Atemschaukel" tragen. Es ist ein Wort hinter dem Tod von Oskar Pastior. Herta Müller, "Gelber Mais und keine Zeit," 26.

[202] On the distinction between experimental poetries in East and West (Germany) see Liselotte Gumpel, *"Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany*, 10. As I noticed in an earlier footnote drawn on Bathrick's remark about the use of rhyme couplets in the East, there is a certain similarity between Pastior's and Brecht's use, but the former's occurs at the limits of representation, as it distorts meaning while still relying on rhyme.

[203] The living dead in the concentration camps are the so-called *Muselmänner*. See Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*, trans. Stuart Woolf (New York: Collier Books, 1961), 82. See also Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (NY: Zone Books, 1999), 52.

[204] Die Atemschaukel überschlägt sich, ich muss hecheln. Es gäbe die Heimsuchung der Gegenstände nicht, wenn es den Hunger nicht gegeben hätte." *Atemschaukel*, 34.

[205] "ich wollte einen Tausch aushandeln mit den Dingen, die ohne zu leben, untot sind." *Atemschaukel*, 249.

[206] "Der Hungerengel stellt meine Wangen auf sein Kinn. Er lässt meinen Atem schaukeln" *Atemschaukel*, 87.

Hungerengel denkt nicht. Er denkt richtig./Er fehlt nie. […]" (AS, 144). The co-written fragments entitled "Vom Hungerengel" distinguish themselves through the mode of narration: one is rendered in the third person, the other one is written both as a monologue and in the third person. The intersection between the monologic and the dialogic, however, represents the most common narrative form throughout the book. For instance, in "Ein heller Moment," (240-241) in which the narrator dialogues with Planton-Kati, a retarded detainee, the dialogue turns into monologue at the point where the narrator, upon being assigned an arbitrary name by Kati, makes sense of the absurd and translates the name (Latzi) as a name containing a flea (*Laus*):

> I asked: What was your little brother's name.
> She said: Latzi, just like you.
> But my name is Leo, she said.
> Maybe when you're at home, but here your name is Latzi, she said.
> Such a bright moment, I thought, there's even a louse--a *Laus*-inside the name, since Latzi comes from Ladislaus. [207]

This anthropomorphism of the name continues the series of transfigurations initiated by the *Hungerengel*. It also reveals a poetic technique that plays with words, sounds and their associations. For instance, words from the work camp's standard vocabulary are decoded based on their echoes, such as HASOWEH, which the narrator translates sonically as "ein verwundeter Hase" (124) or as in "Turnkultur auf kyrillisch" translated through the absurd literally humorous "Fusskultur" (55). Russian commandments carry with them sonorities close to the name of the work camp commander "Towarischtsch Schischtwanjonow,' a creaking and gasping of "ch, sch, tsch, schtsch" (30). These codifications and permutations are present in Pastior's

---

[207] Herta Müller, *The Hunger Angel: A Novel,* trans. Philip Boehm (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009), 229-230.

own poetic vocabulary, to whose work camp annotations Müller had access.[208] The series of metamorphoses of objects, meanings and letters are mediated in the novel through the reference to Hermann Minkowski's discovery of the principle of multidimensionality in space and time. In his poetic lectures, Pastior writes the following about this ambiguous principle of reality control:[209]

> Und das ist so, weil ich als Körper an einem Ort, also im Keller, ein Partikel bin, aber durch meinen Minkowski Draht gleichzeitig eine Welle. Und als Welle kann ich auch anderswo sein, und jemand, der nicht hier ist, kann bei mir sein.[210]

This constant metamorphosis of objects and characters in space and time is reflected throughout the novel and indicates the biographical and literary permutations that occur between Pastior the poet, his idiosyncratic I, and Auberg the narrator. The novel takes up the life of objects in a concentration camp and animates them with sound, as these objects are made to resonate across various scales of sound generating in particular shrill sounds, dull sounds or words that do not generate any reaction such as *Lager*: "für das Wort LAGER war mein Gehirn staub."[211] While objects are anthropomorphized through sound in particular, humans struggle to keep from metamorphosing into objects. Stalin's voice coming out of the megaphone is "cast in iron" and his moustache is made of cement. While natural voices, such as the voice of the dictator, change into iron, objects acquire sonic properties and thus rebel against obstructing laws. Through elision, sound also acts as rebellion against state control as evidenced by the mystique surrounding the unspeakable zero point:

---

[208] Yet little is known about Müller's familiarity with Pastior's work camp poems from the 1950s, if preserved.

[209] Oskar Pastior, "Erste Vorlesung," in *Das Unding an sich* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1994), 32.

[210] *Atemschaukel,* 216.

[211] Ibid., 12.

Der Nullpunkt ist das Unsagbare. Wir sind uns einig, der Nullpunkt und ich, dass man über ihn nicht sprechen kann, höchstens drumherum […] Die aufgesperrte Maul der Null kann essen, nicht reden.[212]

The zero that cannot be described in communication is defined here in terms of silence, in a manner similar to the technique of concrete poets for whom "das nicht sagbare" could be reproduced graphically and spatially. As one critic observes, for concrete poets in the West, language presented itself without functioning representationally for a reality outside, by contrast to poets in the East for whom concreteness was bound to convey a political message.[213] The personified zero growing bigger than reality itself reflects Pastior's detachment from the servile political message to which he was conditioned through his geopolitical location, and the further construction of a reality where experimentation and survival are conditioned by elision (see the elision of the "t" in De-poration). Pastior's fragment about zero (*der Nullpunkt*) also contains the recurrent mathematic equation 1 Schaufelhub=1 Gramm Brot [1 shovel load=1 gram bread], which renders not an Oulipotian experimental game with ciphers but an existential one. The crass realism of this formula contrasts with the earlier allegorical equation of zero with a devouring entity. Furthermore, the formula presents itself in mock imitation of socialist realism in the 1950s by turning upside- down the socialist-realist conventions of typical circumstances of life.[214] The pervasive voice of Stalin is highlighted from the very beginning through the MASTERS VOICE, the emblem of the gramophone company

---

[212] Herta Müller, *Atemschaukel,* 249.
[213] Liselotte Gumpel arrives at this conclusion after analyzing a poem by Helmut Heissenbüttel where "the sayable" and the "non-sayable" are freely permutated. "*Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany,* 100.
[214] For a distinction of the conventions of social realism against aesthetic formalism (in the Romanian context) see Alex Goldiş, *Critica în tranşee* (Polirom: Bucharest, 2011).

in the early twentieth century based on a scene of subservience: a dog listening to a gramophone disk of his dead master's voice. Leopold Auberg transforms the gramophone case into a suitcase for the work camp, and thus invests a phonetic symbol of innovative communication with the connotation of a new life, which is, however, penetrated by the master's voice, Stalin's. As with the collage experiments infiltrated in a mock fashion by the voice of the Party Leader, a fragile equilibrium moderates the distinction between artistic interiority and state control. Life in the camp is streamlined in its absurd formulae, including the graphic mathematic equation of survival, whereas human interiority is ascribed to objects. This formulaic character of bare life as an inversion of socialist realist glorification of life represents a possible memento to Pastior's post-camp poems in the early 1950s, which allegedly reproduced the reality of the work-camp as fragmented and upside-down, governed by elision and absurdity.[215]

The end of Müller's novel invokes imaginary dances with everyday objects in freedom, which the narrator declares unrealistic (297). The dream-like sequences of this unlikely dance are interrupted at the moment in which the narrator literally consumes one of his imaginary dancing partners, a dusty raisin. Instead of creating a link to reality, this moment creates distance: "Dann war eine Art Ferne in mir" (297). The narrator dances with imaginary objects and feels estranged by real ones, a gesture that reads as a direct consequence of the particular type of realism as poetic realism achieved through the dictatorship of objects in the camp. In the camp, sonorities replace real objects. Such a conversion of objects calls to mind the metamorphoses of

---

[215] The poems in question were allegedly the reason why Pastior was blackmailed by the Securitate. See my earlier discussion in this chapter. For a discussion of bare life as the life of the camp see

objects in the extreme situation of a concentrationary universe, as described by Rothberg under "traumatic realism." While Rothberg excludes poetry and other forms of experimentation from his analysis, he ascribes a redemptive function to trauma within realism, which points not only to the past, but also, performatively, to the future.[216] In the context of Auberg's unreal dance with the objects, the present vanishes in the distance. The complex alleged mimetic relation between the narrator Auberg, Pastior and Müller thus turns into an experiment in realism, to which the reading audience lends its ear. This performative dimension of traumatic realism highlights the potential of formation of a new audience in postwar but also in post-1989 culture, "shaped by the performative address of text and produced by it."[217]

<center>***</center>

The first part of this chapter has shown how Herta Müller and Oskar Pastior's use of avant-garde practices resisted the communist state system. My analysis has demonstrated how Pastior used multilingualism as an experimental technique of operation with sound and thus defied both prohibitions on multilingualism during State communism and the distaste for experimental avant-gardism under the social realist doctrine of the State. I further demonstrate that the complex use of rhyme in both authors serves to express clandestine dialogues at the limits of representation. Through an extreme use of realism as pantomimic writing, Müller engages in an intra-auctorial dialogue with Pastior that both affirms and subverts realist impulses and

---

Giorgio Agamben and Daniel Heller-Roazen, *Homo Sacer* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998).
[216] Michael Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism,* 104.
[217] Ibid., 140.

renders resonant a collaboration that seems to have started as inner speech. Against assumptions of a literary dialogue that emerged through the process of writing the novel, I demonstrate that a deeper poetic affiliation resides in untimely structures demonstrated by imaginary dialogues between Müller and Pastior, dialogues that preceded the official declared collaboration of the two authors. Both authors depart from an understanding of the avant-garde as utopia and probe the porous borders between realism and experimentation. Such borders emerge in the way the two authors describe objects and details, which are invested with an agency that transcends the limits of representation and manifests through performance and sound beyond the borders of realist narrative. Müller's novel *Atemschaukel* probes the limits of representation, just like Pastior did, by anchoring its structures in classical genres (the breviary), which it then transcends when objects claim agency through sound.[218] In my analysis, centered on prose, essays and collage verse, I also paid particular attention to Herta Müller's intrinsic dialogue with Holocaust survivor Ruth Klüger, whose prose defies mimetic representation and postmodernist claims of impossibility of knowledge. Klüger's work claimed the importance of rhyme for the battered life of a poem in a concentration camp and articulated a possible model for Pastior, a model he nevertheless departs from by twisting both syntax and meaning.

While this chapter has probed the importance of sound at the limits of representation in a communist labor camp, the next chapter will uncover traces of National Socialist sound within a post-communist German society. In Marcel Beyer's work, I look at ways in which National Socialist media acquire new relevance in a

---

[218] See Saul Friedländer, *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "final Solution"* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992).

post-1989 context. Encoded in innovative technologies of reproduction of sound, traces of sound preserved against the grain reassign agency and voice to instrumentalized victims of National Socialism, despite strategies of mechanical destruction. These unruly traces also show the mobility of Holocaust memory in the GDR and in a post-communist society. In addition, these sonic traces assert the impossibility of overcoming both the communist and the National Socialist pasts despite their alleged end, proclaimed in particular after 1989.

CHAPTER 2

MARCEL BEYER AND TOPOGRAPHIES OF SOUND

After the End

Born in former West Germany (Tailfingen, Württemberg) in 1965, Marcel Beyer decided to settle in Dresden in 1996. His desire to live in an area he considered still historically over-determined by the end of the German Democratic Republic was motivated by his will to know "how everything was" in communist times and to arrive at his own interpretation of the communist past.[219] Beyer's residential move was also prompted by his desire to look beyond discourses of finitude circulating in the late 1980s in Western Europe and intensified by the end of the Cold War.[220] As I argue, for Beyer, one way to look beyond proclaimed ends and new beginnings in German literature since the end of the Cold War was to consider the residual impact of National Socialism and also German colonialism after the national unification of

---

[219] Marcel Beyer, "Danach die Gleichzeitigkeit. Die DDR rückt in die Vergangenheit, ohne dass ich die Uhr anhalten könnte." In *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 176. 2 (August 2003): 14.

[220] Marcel Beyer: "Will ich mir etwas vergegenwärtigen, bevorzuge ich eine Darstellung innerhalb von Raumkoordinaten gegenüber der Zeitachse. Das hat mehrere Gründe, von denen ich einige benennen kann. Einmal ist da die eigene Sozialisation, das Aufwachsen mit Denkbildern in den achtziger Jahren, als man sich in Westeuropa ans Ende der Zeit gekommen glaubte und-'Raum' ohne 'Volk' gewissermassen-den Raum als Grösse wieder entdeckte, was sich etwa in Landkarten-und Rhizombildern niederschlug." In Marcel Beyer, "Danach die Gleichzeitigkeit." Ibid., 14. The thesis of the "end of history" at the end of the Cold War referenced here by Beyer is Francis Fukuyama's, who claimed the end of dialectical struggle between opposing systems in East and West. On major conflicting theories that influenced the 1990s see Peter Fritzsche's contrasting analysis of Fukuyama's "end of history" and Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations." As Fritzsche recapitulates, Fukuyama posits the end of ideological conflicts following the Cold War, while Huntington stresses ineluctable divisions based on culture and not on politics (his conflicting civilizations are Islam, East Asia, Africa, and the "West.") Peter Fritzsche, "1989 and the Chronological Imagination" in Anne Fuchs, Kathleen James-Chakraborty, and Linda Shortt, ed. *Debating German Cultural Identity since 1989* (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2011), 17-29. In inverting a metaphor behind the colonial expansion of the Third Reich ("Volk ohne Raum," first proposed by the novelist Hans Grimm), Beyer alludes to the rediscovery of space in the wake of new geopolitical mutations after the end of the Cold War.

1989/1990.[221] Most commentators have focused on fascist after-lives in the novel as a critique of the thesis of new beginnings.[222] My interpretation acknowledges but also expands such a thesis from the perspective of colonialism in relation to alleged new beginnings in post 1989 literature. Beyer's aesthetic enterprise was motivated less by the ambition to write a narrative of the conditions surrounding reunification, which informed the work of many of his contemporaries after the end of the Cold War, than to focus on the sonic spaces of the colonial and fascist past and their political resonance in the present. Under sonic spaces I understand the contribution of sound to forms of memorialization in the present, which expands, in my view, the coordinates of space and time that allegedly shape collective memory.[223]

Interspersing one of his literary narratives with a history of radio and sound technologies, Beyer's novel *Flughunde* (1995) brings National Socialism into focus by narrating an event out of the ordinary: the discovery of a sound archive in Dresden in 1992. In *Kaltenburg* (2008) the narrative moves back and forth between post-unification and post-war times in East and West Germany and the Third Reich, to unearth the mysterious life of an ornithologist and the complex relation between his life and work in postwar Germany and his biographical and professional identities during the Third Reich. My reading will underscore relations between fictional characters in this novel and real historical ones, such as postwar artist Joseph Beuys

---

[221] While National Socialism had just been made the object of intense debates in the late 1980s (the Historians' Debate), especially through historians who suggested the comparability of the Holocaust to Stalinism, German colonialism had not been the object of any particular public attention. On the Historians' Debate see, for instance, David Art, *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 74-82.

[222] See, for instance, Schönherr, "Topophony of Fascism: On Marcel Beyer's *Karnau Tapes,*" *Germanic Review,* 329.

[223] Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, ed. *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age,* trans. Assenka Oksiloff (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 25.

and his problematic engagement with sound. Beyer's other works, to which I will also refer in this chapter, such as a volume of verse titled *Erdkunde*, articulate uncanny Cold War topographies which merge with sound technologies of the late twentieth century.[224]

Although Beyer declared in an interview that he started his serious preoccupation with acoustic worlds only after publishing the celebrated *Flughunde* (1995), the author's interest in sound manifested much earlier.[225] Beyond his early poetic work, which evidences, in style and rhythm, contemporary musical influences, Beyer's early editorial work on the forgotten authors of modernism is dedicated to Rudolf Blümner. Blümner's most famous work is one of the earliest sound poems, "Ango laïna." According to Beyer's afterword to an edited collection on Blümner, the poet, a regular contributor to the landmark Expressionist journal *Der Sturm,* was the unacknowledged influence behind Kurt Schwitters's sound experiments and exerted an indirect influence on post-war experiments with sound.[226] In addition to Beyer's editorial interest in experimental authors from the early twentieth century to the present such as Georg Grosz, a member of Berlin Dada, or contemporary experimental Austrian author Friederike Mayröcker, Beyer's interests comprise sound

---

[224] Marcel Beyer, *Flughunde* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1996). Excerpts from the novel appeared under the title "Stimmstehler" [the voice thief] in Hugo Dottberner, ed. *Mit der Zeit erzählen? fragt er Marcel Beyer, Heiner Egge, Gundi Feyrer, Yoko Tawada* (Göttingen:Wallstein Verlag, 1999), 179-185. Marcel Beyer, *The Karnau Tapes,* trans. John Brownjohn (New York/London: Harcourt Brace & Company), 1997. Marcel Beyer, *Kaltenburg*, trans. Alan Bance (Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012). Marcel Beyer, *Erdkunde: Gedichte* (Köln: DuMont, 2002).

[225] Marcel Beyer, "Auf diesen Stoff habe ich gewartet," *Die Tageszeitung*, Nr. 9342, 12 (2010): 17. See for instance the audio play he adapted from US soldier's Jonathan Trouern Irak-notebooks, entitled *Birding Babylon.* Beyer's adaptation relies on documentary work from published *Verhörprotokolle* from the prisons of Abu Ghraib and includes fragments from war sound files as well as bird song effects to document the protagonist's story of survival.

[226] From "Nachwort" in Marcel Beyer, ed. *Der Stuhl/Die Ohrfeige und anderes literarisches Kasperlentheater* (Vergessene Autoren der Moderne: Universität Siegen, 1988), 24-26.

on narrative and poetic levels, from early twentieth-century sound experimentation to contemporary dub music.

Dub music is a "variant of Jamaican reggae that subjects instrumental tracks to heavy echo and reverberation effects."[227] As music scholar Erik Davis demonstrates, dub deconstructs a literally religious mythos of folk-cultural authenticity by dematerializing and eroding the integrity of singers and song.[228] Beyer's interpretation of dub points to the use of this technique through mixing a sample with its original, while preserving the original rhythm.[229] Beyer's evaluation of the effects of fascism in the present proceeds, I will demonstrate, through reconstructions of sound that reverberate nuances of the original event and sample it for the present.[230] For instance, one of Beyer's representative characters, the sound engineer Hermann Karnau, transforms what R. Murray Schafer calls "sound events" or live sonic manifestations into "sound objects" by transferring them to a lab for analysis and thus

---

[227] Joanna Demers, *Listening Through the Noise: The Aesthetics of Experimental Electronic* Music (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 166.

[228] Erik Davis, "'Roots and Wires' Remix," in Paul D. Miller, *Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music and Culture*, eds. Paul D. Miller aka DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid (London: MIT Press, 2008), 63.

[229] As Norbert Hummelt, who collaborated with Beyer on a number of speech performances, notes, the duo's performances anticipated a wave of pop literature and poetry slams while also distinguishing themselves from them. Hummelt indicates as a model for their performances the literary cabarets of the Wiener Gruppe. In *Auskünfte von und über Marcel Beyer,* ed. Wulf Segebrecht (Bamberg: Lehrstuhl Bamberg, 2000), 51.

[230] Beyer quoted in Martin Pesch, Ibid. As Helmut Schmitz remarks in commenting on Beyer's essay "Eine Haltung des Hoerens," the engagement with National Socialism from a sonic perspective is also directly related to the need to listen to what had been obscured through the first and second generation about the Third Reich and imposed on victims and survivors. Marcel Beyer, "Eine Haltung des Hörens," *Die Zeit,* No 49, 28 Nov. 1997, 64-65. In Helmut Schmitz, "Soundscapes of the Third Reich—Marcel Beyer's *Flughunde,*" Helmut Schmitz, ed. *German Culture and the Uncomfortable Past: Representations of National Socialism in Contemporary German Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 119-141. Schmitz interprets Beyer's desire to determine how the Third Reich still conditions him as a symptom of a new generation reconstructing the notion of guilt anew. I will present a different argument with respect to this paper's conclusion that the authenticity of the victims' utterings of pain remains either "forever silenced or filtered through its appropriation by their tormentors' perception" (140). My analysis extends the notion of the victim to Goebbels's children as well.

detaching them from their original context.[231] Karnau's "sound objects" relate to the preservation of sound in the form of cult objects in an effort to overcome the National Socialist past. Beyer's project in turn uncovers sonic vestiges of the past in post-reunification landscapes and reconsiders the role of various "sound objects," be they sonic traces or archival materials, in relation to both original sources and postwar and post-reunification poetic history. Yet his work is also different from postwar authors' efforts at memorialization through sound. Postwar author Wolfgang Hildesheimer's *Tynset* employed sound in order to process the past from the perspective of a narrator-protagonist who is the son of a Jewish victim of the Holocaust, who seeks to confront Nazi murderers through anonymous nightly phone calls. The celebrated *Tin Drum* [*Die Blechtrommel*] by Günter Grass recounts history through the repeated drum beats of an intra-diegetic narrator, who summons up territories colonized by Germans from the Polish. However, the Holocaust is not audible in Beyer's book on memory and restitution. The sound in Beyer's novel does not refer to a fictionalized coming to terms with a perpetrator past as in *Tynset*, or signal, as in *The Tin Drum*, an attempt to recollect the past of the lost Polish homeland before, during and after World War II. Beyer's actualization and articulation of submerged pasts uncovers rather unsuspected dimensions of colonialism in German contexts during and after World War II, and thus focuses on issues of historical continuity and discontinuity through the filter of thematic and historical references to sound. Beyer operates with the so-called *Erinnerungsliteratur* since 1990 not as an overcoming of the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* at the suspected end of a historical cycle culminating in

---

[231] See R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester VT: Destiny Books, 1994), 131.

reunification, but as a form of questioning the past through a narrative informed and transformed by sound media.[232] The two novels by Beyer I will discuss also bring into focus forms of Nazi science and their monopolization of media, which, as Dominick LaCapra suggested, may reopen "basic questions about the relation of science to ethicopolitical norms, and the legitimate limits of experimentation."[233] Forms of Nazi science highlighted by Beyer are important, since they contain in *nuce* forms of experimentation that contributed to developments of media and sound, while being intricately woven with moments of victimization.

Flughunde is narrated mainly through the filter of two characters, the sound engineer Hermann Karnau and Joseph Goebbels's youngest daughter, Helga. Helga and Karnau's accounts reflect on and complement each other. As such, the novel is a novel of voices, with selected passages which belong to an omniscient narrator. The historical setting throughout the novel is the Third Reich, with the exception of a brief section in the novel's seventh chapter, which shifts to the year 1992, when a routine inspection of Dresden's municipal orphanage reveals a secret sound archive, hidden underneath the Museum of Hygiene. This brief section is narrated in the third person by an omniscient narrator; the second part of that chapter reverts to Karnau's perspective in contemporary Dresden. Karnau, a retired security guard whose name figures on card indexes preserved at the sound archive, is asked to attend an inquiry into the function and purpose of this hidden archive. The novel accounts for his statements as if they were a collection of live communiqués, taped interviews, or

---

[232] Mareike Herrmann engages critically with the term "Erinnerungsliteratur" in her book on *Erzählen vom Nationalsozialismus in der deutschen Literatur seit den neunziger Jahren* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2009), 18. As she indicates, the term was coined by Lutz Seiler (1994).
[233] Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Memory, Trauma* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 177. However, LaCapra alludes to a different kind of experimentation.

newspaper clippings with news announcements: "Karnau made the following statement" or "Karnau's statement went on"; this method signals the omniscient narrator's familiarity, if not direct involvement in the findings of the investigative committee. The manner in which Karnau's words are narrated and fragmented into larger quotation blocks anticipates his reference to the technique of "cutting" through the sound-on-film system (177) as a major technological discovery in Germany. [234] According to Karnau, the sound archive contains "a whole library of recordings representing every leading figure in politics and public life since the invention of the phonograph" (176).[235] Referring to these holdings, Karnau gives the surprising example of an entry supposedly lost, *The Führer Coughs*, which discloses Karnau's genuine fascination with the figure of the *Führer*. This fascination is encapsulated in the magnification of a banal gesture turned into a major event through careful recording by Nazi acolytes. The tone of the text is both documentary and subversively ironic in its narrative staging:

> Weekly recordings on wax were made of the Führer's pulse rate while he was subjected to stress, in motion, or delivering a speech, so that regular comparisons could be made by playing back different weekly results in parallel. Were his blood vessels dilated? Had his blood pressure gone down? Did his heart take an appropriate time to regain its normal rhythm after a speech delivered *con brio*? [236]

Recorded on wax, vital impulses of the *Führer* are conveyed at various times of the day: from the delivery of a speech to the beat of his pulse or his reaction to

---

[234] In German, the entire quote reads: "Das Lichtton-System erlaubte erstmals auch zu schneiden, was beim Einritzen von Schallereignissen in Wachs nur schwerlich möglich war" (221) [The sound-on-film system also enabled cutting to be carried out for the first time, an impracticable procedure in the case of sounds engraved on wax].

[235] in German: (...) "eine ganze Bibliothek mit regelmässigen Aufnahmen aller wichtigen Personen aus Politik und öffentlichem Leben seit der Erfindung des Schallträgers"(219).

[236] Ibid., 176.

stress. Such a portrayal of the *Führer* seems to uncover a reversed version of his sublime depiction in historical accounts. During his interview with the committee, Karnau's rhetoric, which underscores the pioneering character of the recordings and Germany's leadership in the field of sound recording, discloses little concern with the ethical content of the tapes or their historical ties to Nazism. The presence of a gramophone in the archive room is explained by Karnau, for instance, by the "continuing need to play historic recordings for purposes of comparison" (177).[237] The extent of intended comparison is unclear, but the remark discloses an uncanny contemporaneity. The practice of comparison is a key factor in Beyer's own enterprise in juxtaposing the past and the present; at this narrative juncture, however, this key word reveals something about the present to which Karnau had not readily confessed. Karnau offers a first ground of comparison when he identifies the activity of the sound archive as focused on "audible manifestations of man" in contrast to "visible manifestations." Visible manifestations are the object of inquiry for the "Museum of Hygiene," in the shadow of which the sound archive silently and secretly resided for years (179). In Karnau's account, audible experiments involve a more fundamental dimension of the world, as they inquire into the depth of the human body; as such, they require human subjects in order to be conducted. Karnau gives detailed examples of ways to register bodily noises using human subjects but he fails to specify from where these human guinea pigs were taken; a slight irony arises in the text with information provided by the omniscient narrator about the committee's failure in turn to identify the source of this detail (178). Further particulars on

---

[237] In the original: "Trotz fortschreitender Technik konnten alte Geräte nicht ausgemustert werden, da man auch historische Aufnahmen weiterhin zu Vergleichen heranziehen wollte" (221).

gruesome mutilations in the name of science are offered by the omniscient narrator, but their truth content is ironically underplayed as generic rumor. The committee fails to question Karnau about the source of his knowledge, and the text tentatively suggests that Karnau's statements are fully processed only after Karnau's mysterious relocation to an unknown destination. The text refrains, however, from drawing any conclusions about Karnau: "On examining Karnau's statements more closely, the committee members started to entertain certain doubts about them" (180). The suspicions about Karnau's identity are never clearly articulated other than as hypotheses. The text also ironically supplies the information that the mutilating experiments had continued and that their practitioners had left the archive only recently, upon being warned by a mysterious informant. The text thus entertains the possibility that the tip came from somewhere inside the committee itself. Karnau's portrait as a potential accomplice emerges not through a conscious decision of the committee but rather through the rhetoric he uses when questioned about his connection to the sound archive.

Karnau's own role in historical events and within this group of experts is suggested by his use of "us" to refer to the various sound technicians involved in carrying out experiments. These experiments presuppose a type of exchange through which clients "[lend] their voices" (179) to the scientists. In Karnau's account, the experiments, which involve representatives from various disciplines gathered to collect data, points to the sound archive as a pre-World War I colonial archive of sound.[238] The use of the verb "lend" is a euphemism denoting a voluntary act rather

---

[238] Scientific efforts echoed in these studies point to archives of sound such as *Die Lautabteilung an der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek*, the project of which was to record voices of people from all over the

than brutal coercion and mirrors real historical experiments performed by German scientists on colonial subjects, as well as the rhetoric of these early scientists of experimental sound.[239] As the committee members continue their questioning, they realize, at a gradual pace conveyed by the omniscient narrative voice, that Karnau had greater familiarity with the experiments than he wanted to disclose; these suspicions are later confirmed by the discovery of what resembles a torture chamber that carries traces of human mutilations conducted in the name of science. The detail of this likely torture chamber, understated by Karnau in his testimony, along with his knowledge conveyed in his earlier rhetoric, discloses his identity as a possible participant in bloody experiments and not just a human tool, as he had previously presented himself. Before he can be called in for further questioning, he disappears.

The location in Dresden of this mysterious sound archive, which is reminiscent of the Nazi past, points in the novel to the German Democratic Republic's duplicitous engagement both with Nazism, and to GDR's alleged engagement with colonialism as two symptoms of capitalist imperialism.[240] The preserved tapes in the

world and carried colonial undertones. This archive is now hosted at the Helmholtz Center of Humboldt University. Other sound archives such as the *Phonogrammarchiv* in Vienna (founded in 1899) or the *Berlin Phonogrammarchiv* (founded in 1900) may also be suggested. As Vanessa Agnew points out in her article on "The Colonialist Beginnings of Comparative Musicology," the Berlin Phonogrammarchiv held a large number of Pacific Sound Recordings collected by German researchers prior to First World War. Vanessa Agnew, "The Colonialist Beginnings of Comparative Musicology," in Eric Ames, Marcia Klotz and Lora Wildenthal, ed. *Germany Colonial Pasts* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2005), 41-60.

[239] These experiments are eerily similar to those performed by scientists on testing subjects during the development of experimental phonetics. As Sara Pugach indicates in her analysis of the history of colonial linguistics in Germany and beyond, experimental phonetics (a discipline that developed during Germany's colonization of Africa), demanded that test subjects be available. Pugach quotes one of the scientists involved in phonetic experiments, who refers to Africans as the laboratory's premier *Experimentierkanninchen* (guinea pigs). Sara Elizabeth Pugach, *Africa in Translation: A History of Colonial Linguistics in Germany and Beyond, 1814-1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 137.

[240] Pascal Grosse mentions GDR research into the role of colonialism and its conclusion that both colonialism and imperialism are manifestations of late capitalism society, a conclusion that Grosse

novel serve as proof of lingering traces of colonial experiments, perpetuated by Nazism. Through references to the persistence of experiments with sound on obscure subjects of uncertain origin, the narrative points to the continuity of the past, in particular to interlaced histories of National Socialism and colonialism as well as their afterlives.[241] The reference to colonialism is suggested in particular by the exploitation of testing subjects, a practice inherited by Nazism from colonialism.[242] As documented by Sara Pugach in her book on *Colonial Linguistics in Africa and Beyond,* after the loss of German colonies at the end of World War I, some of the practitioners of colonial phonetics in Germany and practitioners of experiments that resemble Karnau's own, went on with their studies of the colonized, and eventually

finds insufficient for understanding specific mechanics and comparing countries that shared the same type of development. Pascal Grosse, "What does German Colonialism have to do with National Socialism?" in *Germany's Colonial Pasts*, 117. For an account of the Nazi past in the two Germanies see Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997). In German intellectual discourse since 1990, the role of the Stasi (the East German Secret Police) has come under continuous scrutiny and has made the subject of an Enquete Commission "Aufarbeitung von Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Dikatur in Deutschland" (Working-Through of the History and Consequences of the SED [Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands] Dictatorship in Germany). See Paul Cooke, *Representing East Germany since Unification: From Colonization to Nostalgia* (Berg: Oxford, New York, 2005), 35. Intense scrutiny has also concerned the role of the border guards in committing crimes against those fleeing the German Democratic Republic. Less emphasis has been placed on an analysis of the role of National Socialism and colonialism in the present, although attacks on asylum seekers in East Germany called attention to the imperiousness of understanding and working through the Nazi legacy and its afterlives. After the post-1989 right-wing attacks on immigrants in East Germany, the legacy of Nazism has been re-problematized. See Antonia Grunenberg, *Antifaschismus-ein deutscher Mythos* (Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1993). Cited in Paul Cooke, *Representing East Germany since Unification: From Colonization to Nostalgia,* 35. The fact that, in former West Germany, despite the official policy of coming to terms with the past in the earlier postwar years, former Nazi officials integrated into state structures shows that one cannot speak of National Socialist expurgation either.

[241] One of the last subjects of experiments before the fall of the Reich is a high official, probably Hitler himself, who is not described as a testing subject, but rather as a patient. The testing subjects might refer instead to all those defined by social engineering as *unwertes Wesen*. See Zygmunt Bauman, "Racism as a Form of Social Engineering," in *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 68.

[242] Interestingly, as Sara Pugach points out, Carl Meinhof, the originator of colonial phonetics and creator of a Department of Colonial Languages in Germany, became more and more interested in the importance of physical science over humanistic enterprises. His interest was increasingly devoted to how the human body produced speech over the peculiarities of language itself. Sara Pugach, *Africa in Translation,* 189. Karnau's phonetic project seems to mirror Meinhof's vocabulary and intention of "mapping" whole Africa through its languages. Pugach, *Ibid.,* 98.

became committed to National Socialism. The novel's innovation resides in articulating simultaneous questions about residual races of Nazism and colonialism for contemporary Germany.

After highlighting Karnau's disappearance in present-day Germany, the novel shifts to Karnau's perspective and his nightmare of an experiment performed on himself. This nightmare presupposes craniological measurements and taping of the cranial hum, reminiscent of the nineteenth-century pseudo-science of phrenology, in which sound and its relation to the brain were among the faculties investigated. In phrenology, a study of brain size was supposed to offer clues into the workings of the mind and the quantitative analysis of organs was considered indicative of inner processes of the mind.[243] In his nightmare, Karnau can hear that the findings about his craniological measurements and brain sounds are to be sent to the archive for experimental and clinical phonetics, an institution that uncannily resembles the sound archive's own structure and purpose: to study phonetics in relation to bodily functions. The goal of the experiment performed on Karnau is to identify the "most primordial of all sounds" (183) [das Urgeraeusch] and as such reveal the fantasy of a primordial language. Yet Karnau's interiority does not dialogue with the soul in a Platonic sense but rather entails a "silent soliloquy" (184) [der innere Monolog] and inarticulate

---

[243] As Robert Young demonstrates in *Colonial Desire,* the mid nineteenth-century theory of race championed by the Anthropological Society in London, among others, relied on such data as craniological measurements of brain size. Young also argues that in the nineteenth century, racial theory was endemic to many forms of science, including philology, and permeated "deep into the notion of nation and culture" as well. Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Culture, Theory and Race* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 66.

sound. His nightmarish experiment in interiority replaces a Cartesian search for ratio with the revelation of a primordial metallic resonance, "the authentic headnote" (182) [der wirkliche Schädelklang], which manifests as noise that transcends the sphere of the human and points to a technological moment. Karnau's interiority resides at the border of silence and noise, as the silent soliloquy of the human with a metallic resonance. The shift from nightmare to conscious state occurs through Karnau's sudden realization that he is surrounded by darkness. He gradually remembers that the persons performing the experiments on his brain are all dead. The allusion to darkness marks the threshold between nightmare and consciousness and also suggests a psychoanalytic state of trance. Back in a conscious state, Karnau meditates on the possibility of technologically modifying voices in a collective effort to erase the traces of a collective past. Among the modes of postwar dissimulation he lists the learning of a new vocabulary, under the direction of the allied forces, that would allow Germans to "discard their old tone of voice (186)" [um möglichst schnell eine flächenabdeckende Stimmveränderung herbeizuführen (231)]. Karnau's identification with a collective German body ["we Germans" (186)] shows that he is aware of a collective form of responsibility. Yet, his refusal to remember whether the experimental recordings he is carrying with him are made by his own hand, also shows his desire to dissimulate any personal involvement in the National Socialist past.

Karnau's speculations about modes of vocal dissimulation echo an earlier moment in the novel in which he reflects on the possibility of modifying his inner voice, assuming that a voice can be shaped voluntarily before articulation and the link

117

between the inner and outer world blurred: "I'm nonetheless convinced that it should be possible to remodel the voice and approximate it to the internal, cranial sound by dint of practice, by carefully adjusting the larynx and pharynx, tongue and thoracic cavity prior to speaking" (44).[244] This experiment on his part is motivated by a desire to mystify the voices tarnished by collaboration with National Socialism. By symbolically decoupling voice from timbre, Karnau makes it possible to manipulate and switch roles between perpetrator and victim.[245] For Karnau, this occurs at the level of erasure of his own subjectivity and replacement with objectively manipulated sound.

Karnau's understatement of his inner voice in order to achieve an alleged maximum objectivity of inquiry in the absence of a subjective ethos echoes mid-eighteenth century scientific experiments, which considered personal identity to be "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, (...) in perpetual flux or movement," and aimed to transform subjectivity into a form of mechanical objectivity.[246] In contrast to the eighteenth-century project of objectivity, Karnau's

---

[244] In the original: "Die Stimme muss doch formbar sein, sie muss sich doch dem inneren Schädelklang durch Übungen näherbringen lassen, durch die aufmerksame Handhabung von Kehlkopf, Zunge, Brusthöhle und Rachenraum schon vor dem Sprechen" (59).

[245] Michel Chion defines timbre as a "general physiognomy that allows us to identify a sound as emanating from a specific instrument (or more generally from a specific sound, which can be imagined or imaginary). He also describes timbre as an "auditory image." Michel Chion, "Dissolution of the Notion of Timbre," in *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies,* 22. 2 and 3 (2011): 237. Karnau's decoupling of timbre and voice estranges voice from its physical auditory correspondent or source and thus anticipates his hidden role as stealer of voices in the absence of a personal vocal nuance.

[246] In Hume's seventeenth[th]-century view, personal identity was "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement." In Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007), 223. Objectivity documents the production of a visually grounded mechanical subjectivity, where "self-registering instruments, cameras, wax molds" serve to create images for atlases documenting "birds, fossils, snowflakes, bacteria (…) with the aim of freeing images from human interference." The project of "mechanical objectivity" as the book concludes, was never realized fully. See *Objectivity,* 121. Karnau modifies the territory of inquiry into objectivity (from image to sound) and intends the human component to vanish along with any ethical considerations.

model rules out any ethical coordinates. Based on LaCapra's analysis of the function of objectivity in the Third Reich, one can say that Karnau "enacts" his own projective fantasies in the way he objectifies the past.[247] Karnau's uses his experiments of self to understand, on a larger scale, the mechanisms of dissimulation governing the accomplices of the Third Reich and their subsistence in post-war and post-wall society. Karnau comments on the case of those scarred by National Socialist verbal excesses and their postwar identity as he points out that the possibility of adding "timbre" to distinguish the present from a voice's past does not eliminate the old residual voice but adds a new layer that can later be removed. His observation indicates his actual fundamental awareness of the ethical implications of dissimulation, which a new layer of timbre cannot erase.

The novel introduces Karnau as a visionary National Socialist sound engineer who considers the Second World War a war of sound and who is aware of the veritable sound revolution triggered by processes of sound recording. Among Karnau's missions is the penetration into "dark areas."[248] Another task of the sound engineers involved in staging the speeches of the *Führer* is to make accessible his messages to disabled veterans as well as to deaf mutes through the use of sound frequencies. The tenacity with which Karnau embarks on this task to penetrate "the darkness deep inside them [the deaf-mutes]" carries Freud's rhetoric of the dark

---

[247] In his discussion of the Holocaust, LaCapra notes that an objectivity effect may accompany a concealed tendency to enact projective or wish-fulfilling tendencies in the very way the past is objectified. LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust,* 71. According to this thesis, the use of sound by Karnau is a means of objectifying and idealizing the past.

[248] In the English translation "dunkles Areal" is translated as "doubtful area" (2). As the text specifies in its beginning, such "dark areas" are located in the architectonic structures of arenas and facilitate the relation and manipulation of the audience and "sound waves" "break the listening ranks to the best effect" (2).

continent, which Freud associates with a woman as well as with Africa.[249] As Ranjana Khanna underlines in her analysis of psychoanalysis and colonialism, Freud's association of women with darkness carries with it psychoanalysis' own rhetoric of violence as colonization of the psyche.[250] The deaf-mutes function as a synecdoche for this violence. The allusion to science and progress seeking to contain the dark innermost corners of deaf-mutes who occupy the victim position in the novel, can be read in line with Zygmunt Baumann's comments on the relation between the advancements of science facilitated by modernity and the Holocaust.[251] Baumann highlights the status of some of the Holocaust victims, considered anomalous from a genetic perspective and subjected to various spurious medical maneuvers. However, as Dominick LaCapra points out, Baumann's analysis emphasizes "the role of instrumental rationality and bureaucratization" at the expense of "modernity's constitutive other," subject to rituals of sacrificialism.[252] LaCapra refers here to Nazi rituals of destruction that he compares to rituals of victimization and scapegoating. Although neither colonial exploitation nor the Holocaust sacrificial rituals are

---

[249] Darkness is also part of a Romantic rhetoric, which is often censored in favor of light as knowledge. See Hans Blumenberg, "Light as a Metaphor for Truth. At the Preliminary Stage of Philosophical Concept Formation" in *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision,* 30-62. Karnau mentions the "test subjects," who are subjected methodically to torture and live in "permanently nocturnal conditions," to the point of giving up control over their voices (137). Again, it is not clear who these test subjects are or whether they belong to a specific gender. During an air raid, Karnau meditates in darkness about how black absorbs black, in a darkness where "light is inconceivable." The meditation on darkness includes an analogy to flying foxes and their death in the dark (156). Ulrich Schönherr provides an interpretation of darkness in a psychoanalytic key, in line with Freud's dark continents of the soul. See Ulrich Schönherr, "Topophonies of Fascism: On Marcel Beyer's *The Karnau Tapes,*" *The Germanic Review 73.4* (1998): 328-349. Yet, given the time of Freud's own ruminations about psychoanalysis as "darkness," the metaphor of darkness and the need to conquer it is also a possible allusion to the rhetoric of civilizing missions to bring light into darkness, in the same way that a woman or Africa would have been understood be conquered. See Sigmund Freud, "Die Frage der Laienanalyse" [The Question of Lay Analysis] (1926), *Gesammelte Werke,* 14:241.
[250] See Rajanna Khanna, "The Archaeological Feminine: Minoan-Mycenae and the Dark Continent" in *Psychoanalysis and Colonialism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 46-53.
[251] Zygmunt Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 68-69.
[252] Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust,* 93.

explicitly mentioned in Beyer's account of Karnau's thoughts, they are hovering presences in the novel. Karnau's phonetic experiments resemble the treatment of African subjects during the early years of colonial phonetics, while his repeated references to darkness read as modes of delving deep into structures of the psyche. On the other hand, the role of the Holocaust is suggested by references to silenced victims and mutilations echoing Nazi scientific experiments. A possible suggestion of the effects of colonialism and Nazism is given by the flying foxes themselves, which provide the title to the German original. These creatures seem to that fend off the sounds of war outside and end up perishing together with the Third Reich. The flying foxes are mentioned several times: the first occurrence is in relation to Karnau's projection of flying foxes, which is inspired by images on a cigarette pack; another mention is in relation to the narrator's phantasies of Africa, specifically, of Madagascar, from where the flying foxes have been brought to Germany.[253] Given that the Nazi policy of the survival of the species addressed the survival of the fittest animals as well, the flying foxes in this novel seem to retain the symbolic function of an extraordinary type of animal that could potentially serve the Nazi doctrine, yet they also serve to undermine this doctrine through their misinterpreted relation to sound.[254] When finding out that bats, and most likely flying foxes themselves, are not only not impervious to sound but rather possess a system of echolocation far beyond human understanding, Karnau discovers that his way of mastering the past and the present

---

[253] *The Karnau Tapes,* 39. Madagascar is also the place where the Nazis were intending to deport the Jews, in an initial plan to segregate them from the rest of the continent. See, for instance, Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Harvard Belknap Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2008), 158.

[254] On the topic of the survival of ancient Germanic animal species in the Third Reich see Kitty Millet, "Caesura, Continuity, and Myth: The Stakes of Tethering the Holocaust to German Colonial Theory," in Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama, eds. *German Colonialism. Race, the Holocaust, and*

becomes futile by comparison to the animal world of apparent silence, which it cannot control. He seems to take revenge on this betrayal of his science through the animal world by transforming his testing subjects into non-humans. These testing subjects in the novel are reduced to a condition of animality [Tierleben, 170], which paradoxically gives them access to another dimension of existence: "sie führen ein Tierleben, sie sind uns endgültig entglitten (170)." This observation that belongs to Karnau is matched in the novel with a subsequent shift in focus, to the description of the flying foxes brought from a colony in Madagascar. While the testing subjects are depicted in their helplessness to orient themselves any more through sound, the flying foxes are displayed in their alleged impervious sovereignty with regard to sound. Sound, technology, and the dark stories of colonialism interlace to transcend traditional modes of capturing and rendering sounds. They also become modes of telling the history of the Holocaust or of colonialism other than in visual registers.[255]

Apart from contemplating the sonic imperviousness of the flying foxes, Karnau seeks obstinately to penetrate silence in order to convert it into sound. His thoughts recur obsessively around the putative interiority of deaf-mutes, which he once compares to flying foxes.[256] Both flying foxes and the death mutes are intriguing presences, whose interiority preoccupies him, and which he contrasts to his own

Postwar Germany (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 93-121. Karnau cannot confirm whether the flying foxes have extraordinary sound abilities, just like bats, or not.

[255] For analysis of the Holocaust as a visual construct see, for instance, Shelley Hornstein and Florence Jacobowitz, ed. *Image and Remembrance: Representation and the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003) or Barbara Zelizer, ed. *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), or Barbie Zelizer, ed. *Visual Culture and the Holocaust* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2001). For an analysis of colonialism as visual construct, see Mary Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

[256] The English translation renders Flughunde with "bats" here, but it is important to have this translation as "flying fox," (7) as in the title, since "flying foxes" do not the ability to echolocate, as

perceived lack of inwardness: "However hard I listen inwardly, I hear nothing, just the dull reverberation of nothingness, just the febrile rumbling of my guts, perhaps, from deep within the abdominal cavity" (8).[257] This discourse on lack of interiority also concerns a lack of moral interiority. The latter is substantiated in the novel by an "acoustic hinterland," defined as the state of the air before the first word is uttered (9), a condition which seems to precede logos. Explicitly using the Platonic analogy of mind's likeness to wax, Karnau defines himself as a smooth, blank wax disc in contrast to other human discs engraved with countless grooves. In contrast to both Plato (*Theatetus* 194d) and Descartes, who adopt the analogy of mind as a wax plate, Karnau's wax plate is not contaminated by any impressions of the sensible world, although it gradually becomes clear that he retains a god-like power to exert control over others.[258] Karnau styles himself as a man without history, whose gestures do not carry any baggage or bear any imprint of the sensible world. Yet, the history of sound he narrates is a history of deep incisions and profound traces, in the manner carved by a stylus onto a surface; furthermore, Karnau's incised history of sound is a material history based on secretions of living creatures.

---

bats do. In the German original: "Wie Flughunde flattern die Arme lautlos zwischen Tag und Nacht" (15).

[257] The figure of the deaf mutes vis-à-vis sound recalls Alexander Graham Bell's 1874 experiments, which preceded the invention of the telephone. These experiments, which presupposed attaching a deaf mute's ear to a metal horn, are mentioned in a book dedicated to "those without voice." Allen S. Weiss, *Breathless: Sound Recording, Disembodiment, and the Transformation of Lyrical Nostalgia* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2002), 95.

[258] In his "Rules for the Direction of the Mind," Descartes compares cognitive power to both the seal and the wax, depending on passive or active attitudes. For him, imagination retains a corporeal character. *Great Books of the Western World*, Robert Maynard Hutchins ed., vol. 31 (Encyclopedia Britannica: University of Chicago, 1952), 20. In Meditation II, "wax" features as a "piece of wax" that tests the limit of perception and intuition. Ibid., 80. On "the seal and the wax" see also Dalia Judovitz, "Vision, Representation, and Technology in Descartes" in David Michael Levin, *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 63-86. As Judovitz observes, the God analogy replaces the wax and seal analogy in Meditation II and III and likely stands for the mind of the author. The author would then be able to imprint a seal upon the shape of the external world, much in a godlike manner (79).

The color designated by Karnau as constitutive for capturing sounds is black. The reference to "black" resonates with Karnau's earlier fantasies of a nocturnal African world towards which he directs his desire for a space without warlike sounds, in which he only wishes for the "dark night" [schwarze Nacht] to encompass him (11). Karnau's ode-like invocation of darkness [Komm, schwarze Nacht] shows him as yielding to the power of the unknown over his meticulous world of technology and mechanics. The enveloping darkness is the puzzling counterforce to a mechanically calculated colonialist expansion imagined as a colonial invasion of the psyche. This expansion is signaled in the text through references to the construction of a map of vocal nuances, in which humans turn into sources of sound at the expense of their human nature. Karnau's project develops in the absence of ethical coordinates. He justifies this by the destruction of the familiar, under his motto "reducing all that is familiar to ruins," (20) in order to make a new entry on his "almost blank" map.[259] The map is both his personal un-inscribed territory and a potential signpost of technological conquests, pointing to the expansion of sonic space. The space of sound (*Raumklang*) [10], an opening metaphor in the novel, indicates the expansion of sound into space, with sound filling up and conquering its own space via new technologies of transmission. The composite *Raumklang* points to a process of expansion of sound in the mode of the colonial expansion operating in the Nazi regime's campaign to acquire ostensibly vital space, *Lebensraum*. Karnau's use of an inverted composite (*Raumklang* rather than *Klangraum*) pivots on a potentially different type of vitality than *Lebensraum;* the *Raumklang* sound itself conquers new vital territories and turns into an tool of appropriation, including the appropriation of bodies, which are made to

---

[259] In German: "auf der fast noch leeren Karte" (30).

stand for linguistic differences in colonial phonetics.[260] For Karnau, the capture of sound in the process of colonial appropriation presupposes mastering its mechanical destruction as well.

A related Karnau credo is that the "most transient, fragile phenomena demand the harshest treatment and can only be captured by means of a deleterious process" (15). Fantasies of erasure govern, in fact, Karnau's approach to the capture of sound, which he equates with the conquest of new territories in the Third Reich. When he volunteers for the Germanizing campaign in German-occupied Alsace, he intends to expand his cartographic exploits with new sounds at a time when bilingualism is being suppressed under Nazi rule. Under the guise of recording diverse sounds for scientific purposes, Karnau produces tapes that also serve to indicate the opposition of the French opponents of the Nazi regime, who refuse to speak German and thus pose a linguistic resistance to the occupation. Karnau's own efforts to build a map of sounds resembles the National Socialist own control of the present. The purpose of his tapes is to indict the opponents of the Nazi regime. It is through the production of these tapes that Karnau first starts to fantasize about the preservation of sound despite its physical erasure. When one of the tapes fails to rewind and appears erased, Karnau is confident that the sonic imprint could not have disappeared, despite its "blank" (66) status. For Karnau, who assigns absolute value to recorded sound, erasure can occur only through total destruction or immolation. The belief in destruction by fire as the only means to annihilate voice and its technological reproduction invokes fantasies of the Holocaust pyre rendered in the German original through "kein Laut, alles

---

[260] On the transformation of colonial phonetics into a laboratory designed to master *bodies* in lieu of sounds, See Sara Pugach, *Africa in Translation,* 138.

verglüht, verbrannte Kehlen" (86).[261] The soundless burned out throats function as a synecdoche for the disappearance of the Reich and of its victims in fire, yet the tapes themselves serve as material evidence of Karnau's efforts at memorialization and obstinate preservation. [262] The speculations about sound as idiosyncratic imprint beyond death precede Karnau's other scientific attempts in the field of sonic preservation of the Reich. His other major experiment in sonic preservation beyond death is the conservation of the voices of Goebbels's children, who function as another important motif in the novel.

Goebbels's children, whom Karnau hosts and shelters temporarily at Goebbels's request, serve Karnau to map another type of sonic territory for his cartographic exploits. These exploits inspire his speculations on the life of sound as product of will versus sound as product of mechanic preservation. When he compares the breath of Goebbels's children to "rhythm in concert" (26), Karnau aestheticizes their life and tries to look at children's vital impulses through the lens of both science and art. His monologues, inspired by the children's sleeping presence, address his experiments on the essence of human voice. His quest is directed at capturing living sounds, which he paradoxically researches by dissecting dead animals. Despite his preference for spending time in the dark, conversations with Goebbels's children make Karnau increasingly aware of his own voice, in particular of his aversion to his own vocal timbre. In this way, his ambivalent identity comes forth in two ways: on

---

[261] Translated, rather imprecisely, as "Not a sound, all gone [literally: all burnt out], the tape is blank [literally: burned throats], 66.
[262] The preservation of tapes as material evidence of the Holocaust emerges in antithesis to aporias otherwise associated with Holocaust representation. On the dilemmas of representing the Holocaust and the problematics of testimony see "Representing the Holocaust after the End of Testimony" in

the one hand, through his effort to shed light on new scientific discoveries, and on the

other hand, through his desire to cultivate darkness.[263] The central feature of his

aversion towards his own vocal timbre is his inability to reconcile his inner sounds

with articulated or recorded speech. Remarkably for a sound engineer who processes

the voices of others, Karnau cannot identify his own vocal timbre, which he calls

repulsive "noise" [44] ("Missklang"). His skepticism towards personal recorded

sounds concerns both the nature of technological reproduction and the transfer

between an internal and an external sphere of sound. In this crevice between inner and

articulated sound, he finds a possible solution to his desire to master voice: "It must

surely be possible to master the organ that any stranger can hear, the link between

oneself and the outside world, the sound that sheds more light on a person's character

than any other single manifestation" (45).[264] Karnau's desire contrasts starkly with the

Christian doctrine of the correspondence between inner speech and spoken word.[265]

His project to master vocal timbre coincides with his other ambitions to control the

layers of voices tainted by National Socialism, while his lack of self-recognition as

lack of vocal self-awareness erases his scruples from dissimulating his voice through

technological manipulation to replace his personal broken link between inner speech

---

James Berger, *After the End: Representations of Post-Apocalypse* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 59-105.

[263] As Hans Blumenberg shows in his study, knowledge in philosophic thought often transpires as light in the darkness of caves, human minds, dark interiors. "Light as Metaphor for Truth," in *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision,* 30-62.

[264] In German: "Es muss doch in den Griff zu bekommen sein, dieses Organ, das jeder Fremde vernehmen kann, diese Verbindung von innen nach aussen, welche die Züge eines Menschen wie keine andere Regung offenlegt. (59)."

[265] See, for instance, the Stoic distinction between inner discourse (*logos endiathetos*) and external articulation (*logos prophorikos*), which was later adopted by Augustine and Saint Thomas, and found expression as Giovanni Manetti argues, in Fernand de Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole*. Both with Saint Thomas and with Saussure, inner language is an acoustic image. Giovanni Manetti, "Animali, angeli, macchine nella filosofia del linguaggio dall'antichità à Cartesio," in *Animali, angeli e machine*, ed. Giovanni Mannetti and Alessandro Prato (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2007), 26.

and spoken word. Prone to unlimited desire for the control of the audible world, Karnau has only one inhibition: recording children's voices would bring forth his own fear of self-alienation, first experienced when recorded as a child. Through this particular form of seeming ethical restraint, Karnau prevents himself initially from mapping the children's territory; however, as it turns out later in the novel, he conducts recordings without declaring himself specifically aware of his acts, and reassigns causality from his own volition to a type of mechanical generative one.

Despite his reticence (motivated not by scruple but by personal trauma) in recording the children, Karnau is voraciously keen to immortalize the sounds of the battlefield, in particular the sounds of dying soldiers, which he collects through his particular "map of vowels" (90) [Landkarte der Vokale]. With his choice of vowels over consonants, Karnau performs an intertextual gesture that goes back to Ernst Jünger's World War II characterization of vowels as sounds of supreme pain. [266] In contrast to Jünger, who does not see vowels as able to conform to technical rules, Karnau, through his peculiar map, uses vowels precisely in a technological sense and thus provides a possible extension and materialization of Jünger's praise of vowels. Karnau styles his practice of recording as a manifestation of redemption, which accompanies souls not into death but into a peculiar type of immortality, in the literal sense of *not being able to* die, which is described by Karnau as unfathomable "darkness" (91). His cultivation of obscurity is contemporaneous with idiosyncratic

---

[266] Jünger's "Lob der Vokale" recalls in turn Johann Gottfried Herder's admiration for vowels, but also idealizes vowels as capable of rendering sounds of "supreme pain" [die Laute des höchsten Schmerzes]. See Ernst Jünger, "Lob der Vokale" in *Blätter und Steine* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlaganstalt, 1943), 59. What Jünger misses in vowels is their rare presence in technical language (51), in contrast to the consonants' power to be part of technical vocabulary and conform to rules [Gesetz]. This missing aspect of the vowels' relation to technology is retrieved by Karnau through his map.

observations about the alternation of vowels and consonants on battlefields and among the moribund. Through technology, Karnau theatricalizes and aestheticizes death as a spectacle in the absence of remorse or ethics and in the name of science. The sense of glorified scientific observation and elevation resounds in monologic exclamations of the type: "What an experience! What a vocal panorama!," which convert Karnau's inner thoughts about the soldiers' death into cinematic impressions, which are echoed in the next chapter by descriptions of unadulterated nature.[267] Through analyses of collective sound, Karnau's goal remains the identification of a primordial sound, derived directly from human marrow, and accompanied by multiple layers of "darkness." Darkness retains in his imaginary the function of an inquisitive instrument that nonetheless preserves its mystery.

His desire can be identified as a drive to advance technology while cultivating an anachronistic search for primordial darkness. Karnau exemplifies the fate of engineers in the Third Reich, subject, like Nazi philosophy and actions more generally, to what historian Jeffrey Herf has called "reactionary modernism," a form of desire to combine technical modernity with a romanticized search for essences and return to the past and the primordial as a mode of grounding national identity.[268] In the absence of a strong national identity, the territory Karnau wants to conquer is split between forces of crude rationalism and irrational improvisation as well as self-

---

[267] In German: "Welch ein Geschehen. Welch ein Panorama" (115). In German, the tone is much more restrained and there are no exclamation marks present. For an analysis of *Karnau's Tapes* from a media-technological perspective, see Bernd Künzig, "Schreie und Flüstern-Marcel Beyers Roman *Flughunde*" in *Baustelle Gegenwartsliteratur* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1998), 122-153. Künzig regards Karnau and Helga as testifying to a "mélange" of parasitary writing, which comprises audio and medial segments from Rainer Maria Rilke, Friedrich Kittler and DJ culture (136).
[268] Herf identifies ambivalent symptoms of adoration of technology and anachronistic desires for regression not only in the Nazi discourse, but also in the work of exile figures such as Ernst Bloch or Thomas Mann or right-wing romantics such as Ernst Jünger. Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism,* 13.

deception. His mind is a precise instrument of inquiry and at the same time an almost

blank wax slate, on which the sensible world is invited to leave its mark. In Herf's

view, the reconciliation of "technics and irrationalism" was not inherent in

"modernity, capitalism, or the Enlightenment, but rather in a peculiarly authoritarian,

illiberal, and unenlightened national variant of them."[269]

Karnau's status as "reactionary romantic" becomes clear in particular in the

phonograph episode. When Karnau recalls the invention of the phonograph, he praises

the overcoming of sound in the inner ear and notes that the phonograph was baptized

by Thomas Edison "Black Maria."[270] He freely associates the name of an important

technological discovery with darkness, shadows, and the flying foxes (131).

Moreover, the phonograph's chosen name, "Black Maria" points to phenomena of

forcible Christianization of so-called heathens. The mission of the phonograph

symbolically contributes to a violent appropriation. In Karnau's case, such

appropriation relies on recording sounds by others in order to replace a fallible moral

consciousness. Relying on the function of the phonograph as detachment of source

from its origin, Karnau's project and adoption of phonographic sound technology

displays an anti-Christian purpose: the replacement of the Augustinian inner divine

logos by technological sound.[271] Living in the shadows and developing the aura of a

haunted spirit, the character Karnau gives the impression that sophisticated

---

[269] Ibid., 219. One should also note here LaCapra's criticism of Herf's theory, according to which the term "reactionary modernism" as romantic technology does not sufficiently justify the emergence of anti-Semitism. See LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust,* 96.

[270] Alexander Weheliye claims in *Phonographies* that "black" is an invention of Western modernity, which exists only in relation to the modern West. *Phonographies. Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 5. From his perspective, it is ironically the phonograph that would serve to promote black American culture.

[271] On the history of inner logos in ancient philosophy and patristic, see Mirela Oliva, *Das innere Verbum in Gadamers Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 9-44.

technology has enabled him to become a stealer of voices, who performs his independent technological rites. To a certain extent, Karnau participates in what Herf describes as Goebbels's "steel-like Romanticism," an adoration of technology from a Romantic perspective, as "ghostly night filled with steel ovens." [272] Yet for Karnau the night does not exhibit the glory of steel but rather the hollowness of self, animated by a metallic ring. Apparently, as with the Romantic character Schlemihl, who forges a pact with the devil when he abandons his shadow, Karnau realizes early on and significantly in the moment of his first recording, that he has no timbre of his own.[273] But while Schlemihl is a dispossessed victim of greed, Karnau is rather enacting the maliciousness of the devil driven by paranoid fears: he fears above all having his voice robbed (93) or his sonic traces recorded. Whether his first contact with technology and voice recording is also an irretrievable personal loss is not clear, but that first realization and phobia create an important equation between high technology as loss of personal individuality and first intromission of the demonic to help retrieve that distinction of voice by appropriating it paradoxically from others. In his book on "reactionary modernism," Herf outlines the function of technology to express an "Aryan racial soul."[274] Karnau's inner sphere reveals its hollowness in the absence of a soul. His borrowed soul seems to be represented by the "dark continents" he explores through his sonic experiments. As revealed by Karnau's experiments, "dark

---

[272] Goebbels quoted in *Reactionary Modernism*, 209. In the novel Goebbels is depicted as an ardent fan of cars and speed, but he censors a Mickey Mouse movie to keep his children from identifying with American capitalism. On a symbolic level in which the mouse functions as a symbol for the excluded others, the censorship of the movie mirrors primordial fears of contamination. In his book, Herf outlines the function of technology to express an "Aryan racial soul." Herf, *Reactionary Modernism,* 222. Karnau's inner sphere reveals its hollowness in the absence of a soul. His borrowed soul seems to be represented by the "dark continents" he explores through his sonic experiments. I borrow the term "dark continents" from Ranjanna Khanna, who uses it to describe the relation between colonialism and psychoanalysis. The notion of the "dark continent" itself is a Freudian term.
[273] See Adelbert von Chamisso, *Peter Schlemihl's Wundersame Geschichte* (1814).

continents" can have a literal dimension through the exploitation of scapegoated subjects for phonetic experiments. This impulse of appropriation is explicitly equated in the novel with a cannibalistic longing (128). [275] The reference to primitive appropriation likely concerns the test subjects of Nazi experiments, considered unfit by Nazis for their ideological projects. In a descriptive tone of ethical inertia yet observational acumen, Karnau estimates that the overlay of timbre with other vocal nuances cannibalized from others is a fashionable way to obscure the National Socialist past in a postwar society.

Another of Karnau's appropriating projects relates to his participation in the imposition of German as the language of exchange in the process of linguistic colonization of occupied territories in the Third Reich. His real purpose is to collect materials for his own linguistic sampling and mapping of regions under German occupation and to use those materials for his studies.[276] He is also aware, though, that his recordings are to be used for identifying foreign sounds as evidence of linguistic resistance against the planned Nazification and homogenization of languages. The Germanizing process includes, beyond the colonialist crushing of linguistic resistance,

---

[274] Herf, *Reactionary Modernism,* 222.

[275] In German "Kann man das, was man den anderen Stimmen wegnimmt, der eigenen Stimme hinzufügen, als Prägung, als Volumen, so wie ein Kannibale überzeugt ist, er stärke seinen Leib, indem er das Fleisch anderer Menschen geniesst?" (160). As Jeffrey Herf mentions, anti-Semitism is described in a civilization course for German prisoners of war in the Soviet Union as the "most precise expression of the cannibalistic essence of [Nazi] race theory." Jeffrey Herf in *Divided Germany*, 25. This document shows that official East German doctrine identifies National Socialism with cannibalism and thus metaphorically considers the epoch as already overcome in the present.

[276] In the original: "Die Klanglandschaften zu Hause sind ausgekostet. Ich habe einsehen müssen, dass es, um mein Kartenprojekt vorwärtszutreiben, notwendig wäre, auch Stimmen anderer Regionen aufzunehmen. Darum habe ich mich freiwillig gemeldet, hier in Strassburg Entwelschungsdienst zu leisten." *Flughunde*, 83. [Having thoroughly explored the phonetic landscape at home in Germany, I realize that, in order to pursue my cartographic project further, it would be necessary to record voices from other regions. That's why I volunteered for Germanization duties here in Strasbourg, 64] In Marcel Beyer, *The Karnau Tapes,* trans. John Brownjohn (New York: Harcourt Press, 1997). The

what could be called colonization of the afterlife through the excision of names and epitaphs from funerary stones and memorial inscriptions. Karnau's technological project participates in a generic ideal of the Enlightenment as expansion of reason in one sense, but it also reveals its retrograde and reactionary design by "harnessing science to the war effort" (79).[277]   Through a simultaneous obliteration and falsification of cultural memory, Karnau's project channels sound as a punishing device rather than as a tool of knowledge. The goal of his recording devices is to recognize and process voices in spite of their possible attempts at vocal dissimulation, so as to unmask potential opponents of the Nazi regime. More broadly, the harnessing of science to the war effort echoes German earlier colonial ambitions and possible murderous scientific experiments that preceded Nazism.

The more Karnau strives for a holistic representation and collection of sound, the more Beyer's narrative mimics with its own rhythm the fragmentation and mutilation of language through Nazification. For instance, the word *Sprachmerze* [translated as "linguistic culling"] (65), which designates Karnau's frustration at not being able to immediately master and decipher on tape the sounds of those resistant to Nazism, resonates with Kurt Schwitters's symptoms of artistic resistance against war and an implicit disavowal of colonial violence: *Merz*. Beyond its meaning for Karnau as a technique of linguistic purification through the exclusion of foreign words, *Sprachmerze* echoes Kurt Schwitters's *Merz* experiments with architectural and

Germanization duties are an allusion to the violent yet insidious mode through which Karnau denounced speakers of French in a German-occupied France.

[277] In German: "Wehrtechnische Verwendbarkeit, das wissen Sie selber, Karnau, ist jetzt das oberste Gebot, hat der Abteilungsleiter gesagt: Wir muessen uns gezielt in Dienst stellen (101)." Mario Biagioli highlights the relation between Nazi science and the Holocaust through an analysis of the relation between racial hygiene, eugenics, and the institution of the concentration camps. Mario

linguistic collage before and after World War II. In these structural and generic experiments, deformation of objects but also sonic plays with disassembled semantics helped mock social hierarchies and rules by exposing their deep incoherence.[278] While trying to decode semantics that would potentially incriminate those speaking languages other than German, Karnau and his superiors face frustration when they hear only isolated syllables: "Nur immer Silbenfetzen, Stotterlaute" (85). Through disjointed semantics, the voices of those in danger of incrimination seem to dissolve into inarticulate sound and defy both technology and Karnau's will. It is not clear whether Karnau himself has deformed those sounds to the point of rendering them unrecognizable, or whether he plays in this instance with a fantasy in which sounds of others start to resemble his voice and thus become unrecognizable. Given his fear that he has no timbre of his own, Karnau finds justification to reclaim a voice, in phantasmagoric fashion, from others; against his patronizing and dissimulating project, the text points to a semantic and acoustic unraveling instead.[279] Instead of

Biagioli, *Science, Modernity, and the "Final Solution*" (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 205.

[278] Merz, which stands for "ausmerzen" and *Commerz*, was used by Schwitters as an umbrella term for his activities (Merz evenings), his art (Merz pictures, Merz poems, Merzbau, etc.), his typography (Merz advertising center) and his publications (Merz magazine). In Gwendolyn Webster, *Merz: In the beginning was Merz: From Kurt Schwitters to the Present Day* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2000), 244. According to Schwitters, one of the formal principles of Merz is deformation and destruction: "Merz ist Form. Formen heisst entformeln," Kurt Schwitters, *Merz 7*, January 1924, quoted in Gwendolyn Webster, *Merz: In the beginning was Merz: From Kurt Schwitters to the Present Day* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz), 2000, 245. In a statement from "An alle Bühnen der Welt" (1919), Schwitters lays down one of the *Merz* principles, many of which seem akin to Dadaist techniques: "Take a dentist's drill. A meat-mincing machine, a scraper-outer for tram-tracks, omnibuses and automobiles, bicycles, tandems and the tires thereof, ersatz tires from the war too, and deform them." In Gwendolyn Webster, *Merz: In the beginning was Merz: From Kurt Schwitters to the Present Day*, 306. For an analysis of the *Merz* phenomenon and Schwitters see also Patrizia McBride, "The Game of Meaning: Collage, Montage, and Parody in Kurt Schwitters," in *Modernism/modernity,* 14.2 (2007): 249-279.

[279] In sociological studies from the 1980s about identification with the victim syndrome, children of Nazi fathers identify with Nazi victims to the point of reproducing their screams for help. One consequence of this process of identification is to eradicate the *Tätervater* and become in fantasy a Jew: "nach der 'Ausmerzung des Tätervaters' wollte man am liebsten ein Jude sein." Klaus Briegleb, "Vergangenheit in der Gegenwart" *Gegenwartsliteratur seit 1968,* ed. Klaus Briegleb and Sigrid Weigel (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1992), 94.

extreme semantics, however, the narrative proceeds euphemistically, by giving details of how the language was deformed under the National Socialist dictatorship: "die deutsche Sprache muss die Fremdwörter ausschwitzen" (84). In this process of unraveling, Karnau's voice turns into an unrecognizable "siren voice" (*Sirenenstimme*, 85). His uncertainty about the identity of his voice expresses Karnau's dissimulation of self. The voice, distasteful to himself, points to the fundamental luring mission to unmask the identity of the French speakers. His lack of willingness to acknowledge murderous agency transpires in the erasure of the incriminating tapes, which appears both as an accident and a deliberate act of negligence.

Ultimately, Karnau seems to resist the dissolution of his intention to regiment sound by fetishizing sound, that is, by accepting its will as transcendent of his technological purpose or will. This prompts the question whether his manner of handling sound is to be read rather as paradoxical resistance to technology, as a wish to re-enchant the world and recapture its magic and thus defy rationalization. Such a position would turn Karnau's character and the narrative itself into a type of indirect response to intellectual debates on the role of technology such as Max Weber's 1917 verdict about the dis-enchanted technological world of rationalization and intellectualization and Theodor Adorno's definition of disenchantment as project of Enlightenment's rationality.[280] Is such a possible will for re-enchantment consonant with Karnau's simultaneous adherence to reactionary modernism, an attraction to

---

[280] For more on the re-enchantment of the world, following Max Weber's proclamation of "disenchantment" (1917) as a consequence of the rationalization and intellectualization of the world see "Introduction" in Joshua Landy and Michael Saler, ed., *The Re-Enchantment of the World. Secular Magic in a Rational Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 1-14. The quote is from Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology,* ed. and trans. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), 155. On Theodor Adorno's notion of

technological progress in the presence of the persistence of archaic beliefs? Or is rather his adherence to "magic" another side of criminal dissimulation? Early on in the novel, the text provides moments in which re-enchantment and reactionary modernism work together. A possible instance of paradoxical re-enchantment as triumph of art as "magic" over mechanics is the elaborate staging of speeches in the beginning of the novel, when an official sound arena is built as a prelude to a Nazi spectacle; others are reflexive diegetic moments in which the Goebbels children play deaf mutes and thus expose experiments with sounds performed on deaf mutes through ironic theatricality.[281] One such scene features the children confronting Karnau with a riddle by playing deaf mutes:

> The children stand there in silence. Then they wave their arms about and look at me as if to convey something, but they don't say a word. After a while they lose patience. "Well," says Helga, "haven't you guessed yet?"
> "No. Swimmers? Birds?"
> "Wrong."
> "Windmills, maybe? Characters in a silent movie?"
> "No, silly, we're deaf-mutes on parade."
> They turn about, all five of them, and march silently out into the hallway.[282]

On account of their helplessness, the deaf-mute battalion is Karnau's favorite field of observation, as well as his supervisor's main research field. Yet when the Goebbels children play deaf mutes, this challenges Karnau's control over them and turns them into independent entities that undermine the power of scientific

---

disenchantment see Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments,* ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, 2.

[281] I use theatricality in Samuel Weber's sense, as a way of resisting meaningful narrative (x). He also explains theatricality as a challenge to any system of thought based on the priority of identity and self-presence (13). Samuel Weber, *Theatricality as Medium* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004). In playing the deaf mutes, the Goebbels children mimic a performance which stages a simulacrum of the condition of deaf mutes. They break the mimesis of interpretation and reveal the staging of the medium of theater itself through an act of defamiliarization.

[282] Marcel Beyer, *Karnau's Tapes*, 53-54.

observation and manipulation. Their playful simulation of deaf mutes erupts as a moment of empowerment of those deprived of speech. The show offered by the children signals the necessity to desist from instrumentalizing victims for the theatrical purposes of Nazism. The show also resonates with muteness as a condition incurred after a trauma, and recalls the induced muteness of the testing subjects. Besides, the show anticipates and unmasks Karnau's later histrionic mission: to play the role of the victim and fake his innocence upon the downfall of the Third Reich. In postwar Dresden, after his interrogation and escape, he commemorates the freezing of sound recordings during what he calls "die stumme Zeit, die taube Zeit" (230); he references here the time span between 1945 and the 1960s, and thus articulates an additional dimension of sound history in relation to the Third Reich and post-Wall temporality. Karnau provides precise temporal details, in the manner of an omniscient narrator, and is able to reflect critically on the situation of the times, which contradicts his self-staging as a mere tool of the events rather than an active participant. Through pointed historical reflections, Karnau's monologue emerges as a mode of omniscient narration. This voice supplies the alleged information that in the 1960s, Germans restarted to record themselves. In effect, after the use of various media channels for propaganda purposes in Nazi Germany, media in Germany stopped being private and veered towards public control, which led to the reformation of the public sphere.[283] The narrative voice follows up on this project of reformation in the 1960s, which coincides historically with the time of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials (1963 to 1965), as the reference point around which the Holocaust started to be discussed on West

---

[283] For the transformations of radio in the aftermath of Nazism see Daniel Gilfillan, "Don't touch that dial:Transmitting Modes of Experimentation from Weimar to Postwar West Germany," in *Pieces of Sound: German Experimental Radio* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 87-113.

German air waves.[284] However, as Karnau notes, despite a temporal cessation in recordings during what he calls "the deaf, voiceless interlude" (185) the deep sonic traces of Nazism could not be sonically erased: the "Ja ja ja" as signs of acceptance of horrors, or "das Heil und Sieg," (230) the formal Nazi salute, resonate within the voices of Nazi survivors throughout the years. Karnau ironically observes that in the postwar period, those with participant memories of the events would have gladly turned into deaf-mutes (231). His statement alludes to phantasized manipulations of sonic recording and broadcasting and possibly reflects a tendency towards dissimulation of guilt on the part of the war criminals or awareness of crime on the part of passive observers in postwar Germany. His voice, which seemed a mere symptom of the events when interrogated by the committee, assumes ironic and critical nuances.

In 1992 Dresden, terrified by inquiries into his past, Karnau plays his personal recordings of the Goebbels children and realizes that at times the children imitate his voice or speak a fairy-tale language. Their use of fairy-tale elements showcases their private linguistic game of deconstructing technology and rational projects, in order to re-enchant them with private magic. Beyond death, these children empower themselves by creating a new riddle about recordings and noises for which Karnau

---

[284] René Wolf indicates that the 1960s, through the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem and the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials (1963-1965) created a new awareness of the Holocaust in the sphere of broadcasting, although broadcasting of the same events was reflected differently in East and West and the topic of German guilt was generally unwelcome, with the Auschwitz trials capturing less interest from the public than the Eichmann one. See René Wolf, *The Undivided Sky* (London: Pallgrave Mcmillan, 2010), 7; 148; 195. Despite this signaling a new awareness of the Holocaust, Wolf also notes the limitations of such awareness for the larger German public sphere. Beyer's perspective is different from that of Wolf, who only addresses the issue of broadcasting and not so much the one of production as self-recording, which would encourage another mode of subjectivity and possible engagement with the effects of the Holocaust. Although Beyer's thesis seems to state that the procedure of self-recording was discontinued in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust and then retaken in the 1960s, which has

cannot rationally account. The strange recordings undermine Karnau's original purpose and leave him wondering about the extent to which he can be held accountable for anything, given that his voice and the children's resound contemporaneously on tape. In the recordings, the children play with bird language such as "Kywitt, Kywitt," which seems to allude, beyond death, to the song of the ancient murdered Philomel turned into a bird by the Gods so she can tell her story of injustice.[285] Thus children, with the aid of bird language, again invent a dimension of freedom that escapes Karnau's totalizing map and efforts at controlling life through sound.[286] In contrast to conventional Cartesian science, where animals were regarded as "complex machines" that can be fully known and understood by science, the bird song here retains a resistant suggestion of freedom.[287] The children's allusion to fairy-tale bird language also marks the ability of animal sound to deny efforts of rationalization and scientific regimentation.[288] In conversation with Dr. Moreau, the National Socialist scientist who brought the flying foxes from Africa and serves as their guardian, Karnau had already expressed concerns about the power of his map of sounds to contain the animal sound world as well. Karnau is already aware that his

no proven ground, the implications of self-recording as mode of interiorization of sound suggests a closer, deeper felt mode of engagement with the past.

[285] For an actualization of the legend see William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. The intertextual story of Philomel in these dramas points to injustice performed against women, but can be extended by extrapolation to all those deprived of voice. The story tells of Tereus, who raped his wife's sister Philomela, cut out her tongue, and immured her in a tower, only to find the story of his misdeed disclosed in a tapestry woven by the victim. Philomela is later changed by the gods into a nightingale.

[286] This song can be said to undermine what Joachim Fest designated as the final method of Goebbels to stage something, namely his children's death. Joachim Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich: Portraits of the Nazi Leadership* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), 97. In Beyer's novel these children assume an agency even if they still die.

[287] On Descartes's understanding of animals as "machines created by God," see Andrea Nightingale, "Broken Knowledge," in *The Re-Enchantment of the World,* 22-23.

[288] In Adorno's view, through the embrace of modern science, humans have discarded meaning. Adorno also equals the disenchantment provoked by modern science with the "extirpation of animism." See Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments,* 2.

attempt at scientific totality is thus possibly undermined by animal language and such bird language is the only one that can escape his efforts at incorporating sounds into a logical project.[289] Through an exaltation of "magic" as vocal performance, children combat the reactionary magic of reactionary modernism with their own art. The euphonic bird language performed by the children provides a contrast to the monosyllabic human screams on the battlefield, yet these are two important moments that defy incorporation in a logical project of scientific (cartographic) or aesthetic type and prove the sonic defy of violent death.

The last sequence of *Flughunde* features the end of the Goebbels children's lives through a gurgling sound produced by the likely administration of a deadly substance. This sound takes on an incriminating agency of its own, as the narrative shows how Karnau attempts to exculpate himself by dissimulating volition and declaring himself unable to identify the source of the sound or the method of its origination. This unwanted testimony presents a deep contrast to the staged documentation of the *Führer*'s sonic presence of daily rituals in *The Führer Coughs*. The sound recorded on the tapes in Karnau's possession seems to be born almost of inertia, and testifies to life despite destruction. The ultimate erosion of sound and of life to "absolute silence" (242) does not render sound inhuman despite an apparent triumph of the mechanical. The figure of the phonograph disc revolving with the needle in the groove, in absolute silence, raises questions about what is obscured in the process of inscription and whether inscription can contain, after all, the remnants of sonic traces. The silent process conjures up dispersed and forgotten "sound

---

[289] On the notion of the total work of art see Ulrich Schönherr, "Topophony of Fascism: On Marcel Beyer's *The Karnau Tapes,*" in *Germanic Review,* 2001: 338.

objects" prepared for scientific observation. This process of self-inscription on disc, which recalls the formation of memory as inscription on wax, remixes history beyond the conventional limits of representation. By the end of *Flughunde,* where human language breaks down, bird language intervenes, and, ultimately, phonographic silence emerges, which continues yet to process forms of sound inaudible to conventional modes of transmission and reception. The novel ends with this final echo of a failed censorship to annihilate sound.

The security man Karnau poses a pretext for meditating on the function of systems of control through sound, from the development of colonial linguistics through National Socialist science, to surveillance systems of punishment and control in the East German Republic and their residual role in the formation of a culture of memory in the post-reunification world. *Flughunde* engages sound in several ways and refashions the understanding of memorial culture today in relation to German colonial memory and Holocaust representation. Karnau uses the Christian and hermeneutic tradition of an inner voice by playing on them ambivalently, either to deny these important instruments of memory and self-recording, or to designate them as a residue. By modifying these early Christian tools of memorialization to his wish, Karnau is attempting to replace Christian ethos with technological advancement and experiment, uncovering the latter's dark side in the process. Memorable remains the pun on the complex function of the phonograph in the novel, which can be read as an allusion to the sonic baptism of dark worlds through the "Black Maria." Since it is used by Karnau to both record his map of sounds and engrave the voices of the Goebbels children, the phonograph provides a sonic meta-critical dimension of the

novel. Such sonic transmission possibly displaces this novel from the category of "father literature," usually situated in the sign of a "breach," a confrontation and dispute with the father, to one of uncanny continuity.[290] Continuity with symbolic fathers means, in this case, that the novel distances itself from the conventions of "father literature." In the absence of material traces, sound provides a form of immaterial continuity that reveals memory traces reaching deep into the history of colonialism, colonial phonetics and Nazi science. The historical events, colonialism and the Third Reich, intersect in this novel on sound waves and spur new challenges to continuities between the past and the present. Karnau embodies a form of mobile memory that wants to forget and deliberately obscure incriminating traces, yet it is haunted from the past by alternative forms of memorialization represented by colonial and National Socialist sound. Having the voice of his main character survey historical pasts, nightmarish landscapes and tortuous presents, the narrator presents various modalities of reconstruction of the historical past and present through uncanny sound that unsettles the present. Although the German Demoncratic Republic is not mentioned by name, the status of the sound engineer in a state apparatus based on coercion and surveillance is easily detectable. By means of the reconstructed voice of a Nazi collaborator whose involvement in the Holocaust is difficult to document historically and whose confession is hard to obtain in the present if not through a belated re-analysis of his statements, the novel poses questions about the formation of

---

[290] Hans-Peter Söder assigns Marcel Beyer to the category of father literature. See "The Politics of Memory: History, Biography and the (Re)-Emergence of Generation Literature in Germany," *The European Legacy,* Volume 14, No2, 2009, 177-185. On the role of radio during the Kahlschlag years see Daniel Gilfillan, " Transmitting Modes of Experimentation from Weimar to Postwar West Germany," in *Pieces of Sound: German Experimental Radio* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 87-113.

historical memory in the postwar age of technological and historical obliteration and digital manipulation: this includes the transformation of Holocaust memories under the impact of the performative turn of the 1990s and the debates about the modes of Holocaust testimony.[291] The novel, through its employment of its own staged history of instrumentalized science shows the frailness of any colonial scientific or totalitarian project when confronted with the residual echoes of erased voices on tape. The resonant discontinuities between voices and bodies in this novel show us that new literary and historical beginnings are impossible after 1989. As much as Karnau desires a clean memory slate, the sonic imprint exists and is transmitted, paradoxically, through resonant bodies meant for erasure. If the task of the Auschwitz historian was to lend an ear to "what is not presentable under the rules of knowledge," the task of the writer in a post-1989 world is to recompose lost resonances through the means of new media.[292]

In the next section of this chapter I will analyze fictionalized resonances of the Holocaust in a post-war and post-communist German society. My main case study will be Beyer's novel *Kaltenburg* and the so-called legacies of violence in the work of the fictionalized figure of Joseph Beuys, one of the characters in Kaltenburg.

The Myth of History

---

[291] Barbara Besslich, Katharina Graetz, Olaf Hildebrand, ed. *Wende des Erinnerns: Geschichtskonstruktionen in der deutschen Literatur nach 1989* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2006), 27.

[292] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Differend: phrases in dispute* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 57. This citation is analyzed by Anton Kaes in the context of film culture as another means of representation of the Holocaust. See Anton Kaes, "Holocaust and the End of History: Postmodern Historiography in Cinema" in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Holocaust and the "Final Solution,"* ed. Saul Friedlander (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 208.

In my reading of Beyer's novel *Kaltenburg* and his volume of verses *Erdkunde*, I will focus on the author's approach to the problematic of the Holocaust in East and West Germany, before and after the unification. In these pieces, Beyer pursues his unconventional reading of memory culture through a renewed attention to the role and function of sound for three significant figures of German postwar culture, Joseph Beuys, Knut Sieverding and Konrad Lorenz, and the way sound helps to reshape coordinates of memory and history. Beyer also brings into focus the impact of the totalitarianism and censorship of the Cold War discourse on present Germany and pays close attention to the way stories of Nazism and Cold War dictatorship determine the fates of both perpetrators and bystanders. The three figures chosen by Beyer have played various roles in the Third Reich, yet they achieve prominence in postwar society. Beyer is thus engaging with figures that achieved almost mythical status in postwar society, and seeks to offer alternative epistemological tools for understanding their rise to prominence despite their involvement with National Socialism. The acousmatic voice of a narrator in Kaltenburg reflects on events not necessarily as he remembers them but as they resound in his memory through intersecting voices of the past. The sound of events turns into an important element in a narrative that discloses the lack of innocence of historical actors through their vicinity to events matched with their miraculous inability to hear.

In contrast to Beyer's earlier volumes, which focus either on the exploration of inner spaces of sound (*Walkmännin,* 1991) or National Socialist and contemporary sounds (*Falsches Futter*, 1997), *Erdkunde* is a 2002 text by Beyer that provides a panoramic overview of postwar sonic landscapes in both East and West. Some of the

poems deal with nostalgia for East Prussian territories as colonial spaces ("Ostpreussenmuster"), others focus on a fascination with Nazi cinematic spectacles ("Olympia Spätfilm"), while others feature an auctorial voice that recounts a Stalin biography ("Ton"). Common to all poems in *Erdkunde* is the presence of a narrative voice that reconstructs historical sites in minimalist verse, while the title refers not only to inquiries of modern geography (*Erdkunde*) but also to excavations of memory. Beyer's earth science is based on an actualization of distant and contemporary spaces, in particular of colonial spaces. The colonial moment is different, however, from the one suggested in *Flughunde* and refers rather to the internal colonization practiced by the Prussian state through the forced assimilation of the Polish community and to the internal colonization of the Stalinist state.[293] The poem "Der westdeutsche Tierfilm," divided into six parts and organized in unrhymed stanzas, anticipates many of the characters and themes from Beyer's later novel *Kaltenburg.* The most prominent feature is the use of an acousmatic voice as the condition of listening without being able to see the source of sound production.[294] The voice in the poem features as an "off-voice," but also as a narrative voice.[295] This moment of radical split between the narrative I and an "off-voice" is articulated right from the beginning:

---

[293] Royal Prussian Colonization Committee decided on the eviction of thousands of Poles into Russia, "acquire large estates from the Polish gentry, to parcel the land, and to sell these plots at subsidized rates to German family farmers brought into the region from the West." See Kristin Kopp, "Constructing Racial Difference in Colonial Poland" 1772-1795, in *Germany's Colonial Pasts,* 76-96.

[294] The term acousmatic is derived from *akousmatoi*, disciples of Pythagoras who supposedly listened to their teacher from behind a curtain so as not to be distracted by his appearance or gestures. See "Glossary" in Joanna Demers, *Listening Through the Noise: The Aesthetics of Experimental Electronic Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 163-164.

[295] Helmut Böttiger notes the spectacular enlivening of history present in this poem: "Die Geschichte, etwas vermeintlich Stillgelegtes, ist wieder in Bewegung geraten." In Helmut Böttiger, *Nach den Utopien: Eine Geschichte der deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Wien: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 2004), 194. He attributes this reanimation of history in Beyer's poems to a paradoxical enlivening of everyday materials to the presence of a classical "lyric I." Rather than a classical lyric "I," the "I" in the poem functions both as an agent has a panoramic presence.

Der ist an niemandem spurlos/
vorbeigegangen, kann sein,/
ich habe auch einmal VÖGEL IN
HAFF UND WIESEN angeschaut,

Die Stimme aus dem off klingt nah.[296]

The poem reconstructs the story of a poetic "I," first as a child and then as an adult. While the first part of the poem presents the poetic "I" as a child, the second part shows him in the company of "Sielmann" and "Joseph." Joseph is referred in the poem as the "constructor of language" [der eine Sprache baut], who tells stories about his reminiscences of Crimea "was ist ihm von der Krim geblieben (96)."[297] The allusions to Crimea, as well as references to Posen and the friendship with Sielmann (a real historical figure) allow resemblances between the poetic character "Joseph" and Joseph Beuys to emerge. Prominent postwar West German artist Beuys fought in World War II and was also a prisoner of war. Co-founder of the German Students Party, he became one of the most important but also controversial postwar German artists. The controversy surrounding him was due to a large degree to his ecological activism and professorial activities and less to his participation in World War II, as part of the German *Luftwaffe*. All characters mentioned in the poem, Joseph, Lorenz and Sielmann, are likely based on real-life personalities: the Austrian born zoologist and ornithologist Konrad Lorenz, who, beyond his ethological preoccupations, was also known for his Nazi convictions (1903-89), postwar West German artist Joseph

---

[296] Marcel Beyer, *Erdkunde*, 95.

[297] Joseph's construction of a language echoes Beyer's polemical observations against Martin Walser's statement that one should build a new language to talk about the Holocaust. Marcel Beyer, "Kommentar. Holocaust: Sprechen," in *Nonfiction* (Köln: DuMont, 2003), 249-258. The question echoes Saul Friedlander's observation that "it is the reality and the significance of modern catastrophes that generate the search for a new voice and not the use of a specific voice which constructs the significance of these catastrophes" (10). This also contradicts Walser's request for a new language to describe the events of the Holocaust and Joseph's "new language" developed as a consequence of the

Beuys (1921-1986) and Heinz Sielmann (1917-2006), pioneer filmmaker of animal life. [298] In the fifth section of the poem the first person voice proclaims that they "all were in Crimea," where they spent half of their life in ice and snow until the Tatars arrived to save them from a wreck. Through these scattered details, the narrative voice transforms an episode in the life of the historical figure Beuys, who allegedly was saved by the Tatars in World War II Crimea, into a collective one. Through the narrative voice, the story evokes a moment of German World War II defeat but also resurrection, suggested by Beuys's convalescence and subsequent healing. The days in the care of the Tatars are marked by the soldier Joseph's inability to sing a triumphant nationalistic song or recite poems:

> (...) Ganz ohne
>
> Stimme und der Atem flach, nicht/
> einmal unsre eigenen Gedichte/
> konnten wir aufsagen, keine/
> OSTARA WANDELT ÜBER ALLEN/SCHATTEN, KEIN Name, ehe nicht/
> der Brustkorb taut. [299]

The poetic perspective is split between Joseph's voice (speaking in generic tone) and the perspective of the (unnamed) Tatars, who allegedly put together the body fragments of the fallen soldier and revived him. The Tatars are presented as mythical creatures who habitually recite poems and incantations for the Easter spirit (Ostara). The eight days of convalescence among the Tatars correspond to the number of days mentioned by Beuys and later contested by his biographers. [300] The moment of

---

Crimean events.

[298] The connections between Lorenz and Nazism are highlighted, for instance, in Benedikt Foeger and Klaus Taschwer, *Die andere Seite des Spiegels: Konrad Lorenz und der Nationalsozialismus* (Vienna: Czernin, 2009).

[299] Marcel Beyer, *Erdkunde*, 97.

[300] See Max Reithmann, "In the Rubblefield of German History" in Joseph Beuys, *Mapping the Legacy,* ed. Gene Ray (New York: Distributed Art Publishers, 2001), 139-174.

revival of the dead coincides with the erasure of historical traces "ich warte noch, dass wir verschwinden" (100) and metamorphic transformation of the human into an animal: "steck deine Hand hinein und/schliess die Augen, wie Tiere einem manchmal zu/erkennen geben" (100). In the final line of the poem, the acousmatic voice seems to find a possible source in visual and tactile textuality: "Es flimmert. Der/westdeutsche Film beginnt" (100). The birth of this "West German film," which indicates the beginning of a nation in visual terms, coincides with traces that are blown away. Although the poem ends with a filmic image, its true highlight is the complex play of voices and perspectives, as well as the focus on a past that weaves in National Socialist and East German history, while it also obscures them.

The protagonists of this poetic West German postwar complex rebirth in multiple voices make key appearances under different names in the novel *Kaltenburg*. The novel, narrated from the perspective of an intra-diegetic narrator, seeks to intersperse fragments from the National Socialist past with less known episodes of East German history, and snapshots from the post-1989 history. The story highlights the relationship between Hermann Funke, the narrator, and his mentor, Ludwig Kaltenburg, against the background of successive historical and spatial transformations, and also the interlaced stories of Martin Spengler and Kurt Sieverding. Martin Spengler is a fictionalized Joseph Beuys and Knut Sieverding likely stands for pioneer film-maker of animal life, Heinz Sielmann.[301] The pretext for

---

[301] Scholar Aleida Assmann points out that the three characters correspond to the three prominent West German figures. However, she does not devote the same space to all of the figures, and Beuys/Spengler is not thoroughly analyzed. See Aleida Assmann, "History from a Bird's Eye View" in *Debating German Cultural Identity since 1989,* edited by Anne Fuchs, Kathleen James-Chakraborty, and Linda Shortt (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2011), 205-220, hier 207. Something Assmann does not mention is that the name Lorenz appears as an extradiegetic cue, one could say, in the form of an inscription written on the door of the villa in Loschwitz, which once belonged to Kaltenburg. Thus, through a private pun, the book draws a nominal connection between Kaltenburg and the historical

recounting the story of Kaltenburg is provided by an interpreter, Katharina Fischer, who visits the narrator, an expert zoologist, in order to start "moving birds around between languages (18)." What will be moved, in effect, between languages in this novel, will be snapshots of memory and transitions between sounds and silences, words spoken and words unspoken. While Kaltenburg is featured in the beginning of the novel as an old man with a poor hearing (3), Funke is described as a person who learned from his father "how to listen to the most distant sounds" (33). Funke, a survivor of the bombing of Dresden in 1945, whose formation includes being an intent listener of distant sounds, will become the main narrator (and listener) of Ludwig Kaltenburg's life. Kaltenburg, who is an Austrian-born scientist with work experience in East Germany, from where he defects to the West after the construction of the Berlin Wall, embodies the historical Konrad Lorenz.[302] In the novel, as in real life, the three friends whose lives intersected to unspoken degrees with Nazism, become important figures in postwar Germany: Knut as a pioneer of animal movies, Martin as an experimental artist and Kaltenburg as an ornithologist.

Just like Lorenz, who was known for his affinities with Nazism, Kaltenburg is the adept of an ethics that discards "small spirits" ["Es sind die Kleingeister, die mir Angst machen"(197)]. His devotion to the strong-arm National-Socialist ideology is proven by the fact that he admires Ardenne (a collaborator in the atomic bomb project) as well as general Paulus (one of the leaders of the disastrous German

---

figure Lorenz. In the novel, the villa in Loschwitz is a place haunted by Cold War ghosts and hidden surveillance mechanisms. The narrator is sure that the hidden microphone is still there, treasuring "das Knacken, das Rauschen und die blecherne Stimme" (213).

[302] Konrad Lorenz was one of the proponents of the so-called theory of decline, which proclaimed that civilizations were in a process of "decline and fall," presupposed the removal of degenerate types, and was consistent with the Aryan project of eradication of biological diversity. See Kitty Millet, "Caesura,

Stalingrad offensive).[303] The relations between Kaltenburg, Funke, Sieverding and Spengler become a pretext for narrating German history from a post-apocalyptic perspective, through flashbacks from a post-reunification time to a past dominated by the unnamed shadow of the Holocaust and the specter of GDR purges.[304]

As much as the novel emphasizes Kaltenburg's and the narrator's ability in recognizing and operating with (bird) sounds, much is left unsaid on the level of human communication. The Holocaust as well as the internal colonization of Poland are referenced through euphemisms, understatements or unsaid biographical elements. The narrator remembers having moved to Dresden from Posen, but only recalls his ties to Poland when he hears the Polish name of a bird (*Jerzyk*). The text only suggests that this could be Funke's land of origin, but never confirms it. The Holocaust is never referenced by name, yet it resonates in various forms throughout

Continuity, and Myth: The Stakes of Tethering the Holocaust to German Colonial Theory" in *German Colonialism,* 101.

[303] Another possible source of inspiration for the figure of Kaltenburg might be the German disciple of Darwin and Lamarck, Ernst Hackl, who also coined the term "ecology." See Paul Gilroy, *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line* (Harvard University Press, 2000), 39. As Gilroy points out, citing Howard Kaye, Häckl's worked not only on zoology but also on a "treatise of national socialism in support of racial community," in which he highlighted "the dysgenic effects of Western civilization." Ibid., 39.

[304] The "anticosmopolitan purges" in the GDR (Herf) and silenced cases of persecution of former postwar exiles to the GDR are referenced in the book, in particular through the case of Paul Merker. In the novel, his case functions as a memento to the complex story of GDR's relation to Anti-Semitism. As historian Jeffrey Herf documents, Merker's sympathy for the Allied powers during the the Third Reich, when he was forced into exile because of his communist views, and his demands that the German state pay for injustice against the Jews led to his persecution in a GDR state that prided itself on its foundational anti-Semitism, and yet did nothing to eradicate it. Merker's imprisonment was an additional proof that anti-Semitism was haunting the newly formed East German state. For an analysis of the obscured Paul Merker case, see Jeffrey Herf's analysis *Divided Memory*, 40-161. Through the Hagemann family, to whom the narrator's future fiance belongs, the novel sketches a community of exiles who do not find a home in the German Democratic Republic and live in a *Notgemeinschaft* (225), which likely suggests the compromises made by former antifascist combattants to subsist in a community dominated by the specters of the Third Reich as well as cope with their individual disagreements. The memories of the Hagemanns are memories of the plight of German exiles persecuted by the GDR. This conflation of memories about the Holocaust and the GDR purges from a contemporary perspective possibly demonstrates what Andreas Huyssen regards as the refunctionalization of the Holocaust trope in post 1990 from "an index for a specific event" to a "metaphor for other traumatic histories and memories." Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts,* 14.

the novel. The narrator mentions the "atmosphere of death" [Todesatmosphäre] (70), created apparently around a wounded bird, as the ultimate source of disagreement between his father and Kaltenburg. The fact that the narrator's father mimics an Austrian accent when he refers to such atmosphere draws attention to a moment of realization on the father's part of the underlying meaning of Kaltenburg's disagreement to empathy. The expression used by Kaltenburg, "cast-iron proof" (69) justifies the "atmosphere of death" as necessary sacrifice related to birds, the logic of which can likely be extrapolated to humans. The narrator is able to link this choice of words to Kaltenburg, when the latter tries to deny his involvement in the Posen scientific experiments on humans. This realization and other linguistic puzzles in relation to Kaltenburg's ambiguous postwar rhetoric (such as the reference to gas chambers in reference to animals [303]), makes the narrator slowly conclude that Kaltenburg's use of metaphoric starts to resemble a means of dissimulation and silencing of the past, which covers up something more than a linguistic and scientific aporia.[305]

The policy of silence in the novel is interrupted in very few instances. Once, the novel's narrator Hermann Funke recalls the vague explanation given by his father about awkwardly silent cattle cars crossing the border. The father gives only a spatial indication, "to the East," (78) showing an early awareness of the location of concentration camps. Another submerged Holocaust memory belongs to the narrator's

---

[305] See Agamben's reference to and criticism of the Holocaust as euphemism. Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone, 1999), 32. See also Leslie Morris, "The Sound of Silence," *The German Quarterly* 74.4 (Fall 2001): 368-378, 372. See also LaCapra's references to the representation of the Holocaust as possible breakdown of language. Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust,* 65.

future fiancée, Klara Hagemann, who remembers, through scattered oxymoronic aural impressions, freight cars and the disappearance of her neighbors in Vorkuta: "Und Klara hatte das Sirren noch im Ohr, wenn sich ein Zug vom Hauptbahnhof her naehrte, die vibrierenden Schienen, diesen feinen, beruhigenden, zu der sich ankuendigenden Gefahr gar nicht passenden Alarmton" (290) [And Klara could still hear the hum of a train approaching from the main station, the vibrating of the tracks, the faint, reassuring alarm signal that in no way befitted the danger it announced (252)]. Yet her capacity to hear is blocked by her inability or unwillingness to understand: "(…) [Klara] sah in fremde Gesichter, hoerte fremde Sprachen, hörte nichts" (291) [looking into foreign faces, hearing foreign languages, hearing nothing at all (252)]. This account of Klara's difficulties in decoding the meaning of sound prompts the narrator to recognize similarities between the "cattle cars" from his childhood in Posen and the "freight wagons" remembered by Klara. The narrator also mentions postwar conversations between Martin, Klara, Knut and Kaltenburg about the prohibition of song birds (*Singvogelverbot*) imposed on those who would soon be sent to concentration camps, and who are referred in conversation through the indefinite pronoun "they." The narrator notes, through an elliptical observation that shows his possible awareness of gruesome events happening in the vicinity of Posen, that the *Singvogelverbot* was no longer necessary after the construction of the ghetto called Litzmannstadt (Lodz in Polish), known today as an antechamber of extermination camps. In another instance, the potential use of bird language by Knut Sieverding in a planned documentary movie is considered too "revolutionary" by

Kaltenburg, who recommends that his friend refrain from making such a film.[306] His

reason is not immediately clear: does Kaltenburg understand this amalgam of animal

sounds as a sign of possible freedom, which he feels the need to suppress? Or is the

notion of fragmented and chaotic bird song too suggestive of the massacre of those

who were separated from their birds? The aversion to featuring distorted bird calls is

in this case as much a form of escapism as not mentioning the Holocaust by name. In

a similar mode of avoidance, Kaltenburg chooses the non-revolutionary path of

disavowal, which grants him an apparent protection from the Soviet power: "the

silence from Leningrad was to last for many years" (249). The silence from Leningrad

indicates that Kaltenburg conveniently conforms to the rules of silence related to the

Holocaust that apparently govern the East German Republic under Soviet tutelage.

His decision to flee Dresden and move on to the Federal Republic of Germany shows

his versatility in reinventing himself. It is, however, in the Federal Republic, that his

ambiguous references to gas chambers start to be judged as ominous references rather

than innocent word plays.

The narrator comes to a realization of Kaltenburg's guilt in the course of a

phone conversation. It is on phone waves that Kaltenburg's rhetoric unravels. In

conversation with the narrator, Kaltenburg declares himself aware of the presence of

"smoke" (350) coming out of the chimneys of a camp (*Lager*) facility in Posen. His

confessions are not meant to out him in any way, but rather inculpate one of his rival

scientists in the German Democratic Republic. The phone conversation occurs when,

---

[306] Sieverding's documentary would involve "Animal noises. Snuffling. Trampling steps. Birds calling in the distance" (249) [Tierlaute. Schnüffeln. Schritte. Ferne Vogelrufe].

as a result of the scandal related to ambiguous death camp references in the "Apocalypse" book, Kaltenburg feels compelled to provide more details about the nature of his friendship with Eberhard Matzke, a prominent GDR cadre and current opponent. Among the details offered by Kaltenburg in order to indicate his generosity and his friend's unfair reaction, feature certain favors that Kaltenburg offered to his former friend, including the possibility to study birds outside the "camps" (referred to as "Lager"). One such revealing detail provided by Kaltenburg in order to justify himself, is the reference to "smoke" (307). Despite Kaltenburg's best intentions to exculpate himself, the narrator is gradually realizing the irrefutable truth about Kaltenburg's involvement. Although the narrator realizes that his interlocutor is lying, he confesses to himself the inability to break the silence: "I didn't want to ask Kaltenburg (306)." Yet, by the end of the conversation, the narrator realizes that his communication with Kaltenburg cannot go on in the same form: "It was as though I had experienced for the very last time a voice would be heard through that receiver (309)." The realization of the moral fraud of his mentor confronts the narrator with his own personal apocalypse, as impossibility of language to render human communication in the wake of historical and personal falsification.

In documenting the friendship between Martin, Kaltenburg and Knut, the narrative uncovers their understated connection to Nazism. None of them is willing to mention Posen as a station in their biographies. Yet it is Posen (Poznan), a place between languages, where the characters' Nazi past converges. The narrator Funke characterizes Posen as a location where it is difficult to determine whether one is in Poland, since the circulating languages are rather dialectal varieties such as

Wienerisch, the *Königsberger* dialect and *Rheinisch*. This detail places Posen under colonial German occupation on an acoustic and semantic level. In the first part of the novel, Martin and Knut Sieverding, students of Funke's father, are depicted as visitors in the house of the narrator's father in Posen. Both are uniformed men, and their mission is most likely to survey the narrator's father. Kaltenburg's biographical connection to Posen is documented through his temporary work in a mental clinic, where he "takes care of disoriented, very ill people," (72) although his known disciplinary background is that of a zoologist. This detail provides a disturbing snapshot into Kaltenburg's career, whose life and work are told by Funke in the manner of an unreliable narrator. The narrator's unreliability, despite his acoustic acuity, is widely based on Kaltenburg's own fluctuating stories and personal ellipses.[307]

Funke's voice is an acousmatic one, detached from a clear origin, and hovers above action and characters; the strategy helps delegate the question of responsibility to the actors involved in his narrative accounts and substantiates him as an unreliable narrator.[308] The clearest moment of this detachment is the belated appearance of the "I," highlighted at the end of the novel's first section as if severed from narrated events. The unreliable voice of the narrator relies on the relative value of hearing in the novel, highlighted through hear-say stories circulating throughout the novel, ambiguous details provided by Kaltenburg himself, the literal inability of the narrator

---

[307] Ibid., 207. As Assmann also mentions, Posen's name is also related to Himmler's speech about the extermination of the Jewish people on October 6, 1943. As signaled in the novel, the place is the residence of the *Gauleiter* himself.

[308] Steven Connor defines acousmatic voice in a cinematic context, as a voice heard as a voice over, which does not emanate from action on screen. In *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (London/New York: Routledge, 1997), 222.

or other characters to hear or understand what they hear. An additional dimension is represented by unethical experiments that involve the physiological sense of hearing. Kaltenburg violates the hearing integrity of animals, by performing ethically dubious experiments on hearing-impaired chimps, while Knut records these experiments and earns himself the name of the only "realist" among the friends (272). Knut's artistic mantra in his animal movies is the use of the voice-over ("die Stimme aus dem Off," 245) instead of auctorial presence. The style of indirectness cultivated by Knut in his animal movies also constitutes Funke's narrative principle. All these dimensions and contorted aspects of hearing contrast, ironically, with the narrator's initial delineated acuity of listening to distant sounds, an art learned from his father. A deformed sense of hearing also contrasts to the ambition of characters in the novel to provide a realistic depiction of the surrounding world. The realist label assigned by his friends seems, however, to contradict how Knut himself understands his art, as he wishes to encapsulate "whole sequences of atmospheric noise, scratching sounds. Snuffling. Trampling. Birds calling in the distance" (249) [Atmosphäre, Kratzgeräusche hörten. Tierlaute. Schnüffeln. Schritte. Ferne Vogelrufe, 286]. His project, designed in ignorance of an audience, seems to give a playful and twisted interpretation to documentary art, and resembles rather a solipsistic idea than a realist project. This particular interpretation of realist documentary and lack of concern for an audience are mirrored by Martin's postwar artistic experiments. In postwar Germany, as the narrator Funke mentions, Martin will become a famous West German artist who will articulate unprecedented relations between animal and human life as art.[309]

---

[309] Martin's performances, which involve humans and animals, mirror Beuys's own. One such

Martin's preoccupation with "local forms of life" in the 1980s (*hiesige Lebenswelt*, 375) seems, from an art historian perspective echoed by the narrator, a prolongation of already existing artistic trends in the 1950s. Martin's early experiments display an artistic continuity with a pre-divided Germany. However, the narrator discloses that Martin's real source of inspiration is his postwar East German experience. According to the narrator's knowledge, an incognito visit in Dresden inspires the artist to transform collections of stuffed animals into materials for gallery exhibits. By describing Martin's visit, the omniscient narrator and likely participant in the events highlights the artist's apparently paradoxical passion for dead birds and living matter. Martin's ambition to call his artistic spaces "sculptures" provides an insight into forms of experimental art in postwar Germany, including postwar debates about realism and experimentation. The fact that Martin draws his inspiration from a social-realist Dresden shows him as an artist at the crossroads of two possible modes of art, the realism of one state and the experimental mode of the other. The initial misinterpretation of Martin's art on the part of the public also shows, according to the narrator, the difficulty to situate it within existing trends.

In the post-1989 conversation with the interpreter, the narrator reveals that Martin's "arrangements of space" (58) did not receive appropriate recognition in postwar Germany. In order to describe some of the compositional elements of Martin's spatial arrangements, the narrator uses visceral language that indicates that the constructions are held together by a dark, gluey and viscous liquid, as if "somebody had predated the collection of the Natural Museum" (58). The works'

---

performance by Beuys is the one-week Coyote performance, in which the artist locked himself with a living coyote in a cage. See Caroline Tisdall, *Coyote* (München: Schirmer-Mosel, 1988).

lack of popularity also points to a fundamental reshaping of the notion of sculpture itself, a remodeling of its immutable form. Martin's works, which seemingly rely on collaged commodities (*Gebrauchsgegenstände*, 375) exhibit properties of the historical Fluxus productions.[310] Yet unlike the interaction encouraged by Fluxus between spectators and artists, neither Martin's (nor Beuys's creations, for that matter) seem to encourage a direct interaction with an audience. [311] The audience is silent and passive in both Beuys's and Martin's work and the novel articulates their art's intentional separation from the public. Martin's work makes both a "dead and a lively" impression (59) on Frau Fischer, the translator and interviewer who converses with the narrator in the post-wall present; far from noting an interactive component in these productions, she remarks that Martin's work is wrapped in "dangerous silence": "Das Material war von einer gefährlichen Stille umgeben, tot und lebendig zugleich" (59). The translator even emphasizes that she would have never felt inspired to touch any of these art objects. It is clear that Martin's art does not strike her as a relational construct in which object and spectator affect one another, but rather as a relation that foregrounds the interaction of the artist with his object, one in which the audience is

---

[310] The historical Beuys was introduced to Fluxus in 1961 through the Korean artist Nam June Paik and George Maciunas, and became loosely involved with the group, which experimented in "film, performance, poetry, music, and the visual arts" and believed that "anything could be art." See Joan Rothfuss, "Joseph Beuys. Echoes in America" in *Joseph Beuys: Mapping the Legacy*, 41.

[311] See Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Reconsidering Joseph Beuys: Once Again" in *Mapping the Legacy*, 87. As Joan Rothfuss observes, a synchronous performance (Der Chef/The Chief Fluxus Song) as collaboration between Fluxus artist Robert Morris and Beuys failed. Beuys decided to perform rather alone and his distinctive style on that occasion marked Beuys's emancipation from Fluxus. The audience was, as Rothfuss emphasizes, in a "prescribed relationship with him." See Joan Rothfuss, "Joseph Beuys: Echoes in America" in *Mapping the Legacy*, 46. Sound contributed a great deal to that performance, with Schwitters's *Ursonate* resounding in the background. The artist covered in felt emitted sounds which were conveyed to the audience via loudspeakers. In Susanne Meyer-Bueser and Karin Orchar, eds. *In the beginning was Merz-From Kurt Schwitters to the Present Day* (Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2000), 333. Sound itself seems mediated and controlled in Beuys's performances, although one could also argue that it would be precisely it that would break the imposed relation to an audience.

confined to a prescribed space vis-à-vis the art object.[312] At the root of this work there seems to be silence. Fischer's remark about the deadly silence at the core of Martin's work and its estranging quality anticipates her later inquiry into the importance of humans in Martin's work:

> Er hat sich benommen, als wolle er seinem Publikum beweisen, wie leicht es ist, Menschen zu ignorieren. Aber jetzt frage ich mich auf einmal, ob die Menschen   bei Martin Spenglers Inszenierungen überhaupt eine Rolle spielten. (329)

This question about the importance of humans in Martin's work echoes the relativization of the value of the human and of living beings in Kaltenburg's own research. The narrator discloses that Kaltenburg, just like Martin, also kept animals in the house, and motivated their presence as a strategy to observe humans: "ich studiere euch" (198).[313] Although the narrator contends that humans do play a role in Martin's creation, he ironically cannot elaborate on this role's exact meaning. The effect of Martin's work resembles Beuys's artistic technique. While the historical Beuys foregrounded the animal's interaction with the human, especially in his live coyote performance, his audience was prevented from participating in it. Beuys himself defined his "sculptural" art as being inspired by Herder's concept of *Plastik* as a silent

---

[312] For more on principles of relational art, see Nicolas Bourriaud, who defines relational art as a "set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of the human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space" (113). Bourriaud gives the example of one of Beuys's artistic experiments: locked in a cage with a coyote for a few days in the experiment "I like America and America likes me," the artist tried to test a possible reconciliation between man and the "wild" world; yet Bourriaud observes the observation that this type of art is produced in the gallery and does not encourage much social exchange between the public and the artist (40), which confirms Beuys's own intentionality about his relation to an audience.

[313] Martin shares many features with the historical Beuys, such as his preference for observing animals first from a distance, and then eventually spending time locked up with them in a room in front of a silent audience as part of a performance that often involved sound as background music of a triangle or of a turbine.

image that "speaks through the human."[314] Herder's understanding of space sought, in fact, to convey sculpture through structures of feeling. Even by relying on a type of sculptural speech, Martin's creations nevertheless estrange their audience, as documented by the translator's reaction. The ambiguity of dead and living matter is, possibly, the main estranging factor. Beyond the direct parallelism between living animals and living humans, present both in the work of Martin and Kaltenburg, another, a more sinister linkage emerges. This linkage is suggested by the uncanny relation between embalmed animals and humans. The narrator finds such a connection between Kaltenburg and his stuffed animals, as they mirror his own relationship with Kaltenburg.

The uncanny relationship to the narrator transpires in the way Kaltenburg frames it: not as that of a master and disciple but rather in animal terms. Upset about the narrator's lack of future perspectives in postwar Germany, Kaltenburg calls him his "Pantoffeltierchen" (190) [translated as "amoeba", literally, the expression could also refer to a protective animal (from Pantoffel=Hüttenschuh]. Kaltenburg's vision of the future and the uncanny sound of his voice possess a type of confidence that remains inscrutable to the narrator: "Ich wollte mich, wenn ich nicht weiterwusste, an seinen Sätzen aufrichten, aber sobald ich hörte, wie der Professor zu sprechen begann, nahmen die Worte einen unheimlichen Klang an, als wolle man mich das Fürchten lehren" (193). The narrator's speculations about the meaning of Kaltenburg's plans for him, the war orphan, associate exposure to language and meaning with the learning of fear. The boy saved for civilization seems to be none other than a version of Kaspar

---

[314] See Johann Gottfried Herder, "Plastik: Einige Wahrnehmungen über Form und Gestalt aus Pygmalions Bildendem Traume," in *Werke in Zwei Bände* (1770; reprint, 2 vols. Munich: Carl Hanser, 1953), 1: 681. Cited in Pamela Kort, "Beuys: The Profile of a Successor" in *Mapping the Legacy*, 28.

Hauser, the orphan who had to learn how to speak and articulate himself after having grown up among animals in early life. To a certain extent, Kaltenburg's civilizing mission carries a different nuance from Kaspar Hauser's educators. He tries to familiarize the narrator with what it means to live among animals in order to build a scientific language of his own, although he signals, through the analogy with "Pantoffeltierchen," that he recognizes his disciple's ultimate lack of emancipation. For the intradiegetic narrator, the immersion into knowledge is accompanied by fear. Kaltenburg is the one who teaches the narrator to trespass the border between art and life and regard dead birds as works of art while confounding the sphere of the living with the one of the dead. The narrator consequently spends hours embalming these birds, at the cost of being followed by their persistent smell. He believes he recognizes the smell in Kaltenburg as well. Discipleship extends in this case to a synaesthetic provocation of all senses, to the point of mixing the register of the dead and the living. Through a punning relation between Kaltenburg's passion for embalmed animals (*Stofftiere*) and the way he addresses his disciple (*Pantoffeltier*), discipleship also transgresses its ethical boundaries into obscure territories of life and will.

The narrator's obsession with stuffed animals and their recurring smell echoes Beuys's performances with stuffed animals, fat and felt.[315] For the narrator in

---

[315] In Beuys's case, the use of felt has been interpreted as a commemoration of his healing with the help of the Tatars after his plane was shot down but also as a reference to the felt uniforms of detainees at Auschwitz. Beuys contested this reference. See Gene Ray, "Joseph Beuys and the After-Auschwitz Sublime" in Joseph Beuys, *Mapping the Legacy,* 67-69. The immediate context of Beuys's emphasis on death is the Holocaust, which, beyond the Auschwitz sketch elaborated by Beuys for a competition, paradoxically did not become the object of any public discussion by an otherwise very vocal artist.

Kaltenburg, stuffing animals is a possible attempt at mourning and commemoration of death in the aftermath of his parents' disappearance following the destruction of the city of Dresden, and it also has a ritualistic nuance, as with Beuys. The moment when Martin as character emancipates himself from the shadow of his historical alter-ego Beuys comes with his greater self-awareness of his involvement in post-war German discourses of guilt. Through Martin's account of the Crimean survival episode, the novel articulates a critical positioning vis-à-vis his real-life model.

After joining the war, Martin sends postcards from Crimea, but the narrator mentions that he could not confirm their exact location. The impossibility of the narrator to locate with certainty Martin's whereabouts has implications for the veracity of Martin's later stories about the Crimean incident. As Funke suggests, Martin's experience during the war inspired Kaltenburg's theory about phenomena of fear, which was based not on contemporary stories from Vietnam but on Martin's own stories about Crimea. In a psychoanalysis type of session, Martin recounts his Crimean incident in front of Kaltenburg. His description of the event is highly aestheticized, as it uses mythical elements from the Greek myth of Osiris, son of Isis, the god torn into pieces, dead and resurrected as ruler of the afterlife. Martin describes the earthly remains of his companion, spread on the ground after the wreck, through the parataxis "Fleisch, Knochen, Haut und Stoff" (253). The presence of saviors, the Tatars, is indicated instead by means of synecdoche: "das sind Tatarenaugen" (254). Later Martin admits his delusion and acknowledges that he had been found instead by a German search team instead. This time, Hans, his companion, is described just as "pulverized." Although he has a picture of the wreck, Martin cannot account for who

took the picture or when. He brings his confusion to Kaltenburg, who tries to suggest that Martin's memories are nothing but self-healing fantasies. Kaltenburg's assumption echoes Benjamin Buchloh's objection to what he calls the Beuys myth of salvation, through which the artist crossed out the issue of German guilt and invented a mythical postwar narrative of salvation and reconciliation.[316] Yet, as Beyer's narrative suggests, the scars of the past cannot be erased through myth-like fantasies. In this context, Kaltenburg functions in regard to Martin as a type of higher moral instance.

The narrator claims to recognize in Martin's later public performances elements of violence, and Funke assigns them to both Kaltenburg's influence and traumatic war events (257). This recognition testifies to legacies of violence in the German-speaking postwar avant-garde art, which, Richard Langston contends, represented the discursive field of reference through which the postwar avant-gardes reconfigured themselves.[317] Martin infringes the spheres of life, art and death with, adding an explicit nuance related to World War II and its traumas. Martin's own impersonation of violence by cross-dressing as a menacing loaden-clad man has him

---

[316] Beuys's individual myth is, in Buchloh's interpretation, an attempt to come to terms with the blocks and scars of his National Socialist past. When he quotes the Tatars as saying, "Du nix njemcky" (you are not German), and further, "du Tatar," Beuys indicates that the Tartars wanted him to join their clan. Such an appurtenance is, in Buchloh's interpretation, a form of establishing a myth of origin that denies Beuys's citizenship as well as his participation in the German war. Benjamin Buchloh, Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975*, 48. Martin's fantasized encounter with the Tatars, recounted in a psychoanalysis session, indicates an in-depth attempt at disidentification and, one could add, at a sort of colonization of the other by taking over their identities.

[317] Langston distinguishes between the function of violence in Dada and Surrealism and the "spectral effects of violence" from the past as "the defining feature of Germany's avant-gardes after World War II and the Holocaust." Langston posits a fundamental transformation of notions of violence from Dadaism and Surrealism to the postwar and later avant-gardes. See "Introduction" in *Visions of Violence: German Avant-Gardes after Fascism*, 9. Beuys rendered vivid possible residues of violence in postwar society by staging the sonic and silent interaction of the human with the animal. Yet, he

banned from Kaltenburg's institute in postwar Loschwitz, where Martin had moved to be immersed into a world of animal sounds (321). Martin's disguise as a loden-clad man (which recalls Beuys's ambiguous stylization and accessories as *Hirten-Führer*) causes the birds at the institute to panic and attack him. It is likely Martin's ambivalent role as a protector of sorts and as a threatening huntsman that prompts Kaltenburg to have him banned from the institute. Kaltenburg's reaction at the scene is very elliptical, yet it highlights two words, "coat" and "lab coat," which seem connected to a trauma related to frightening experiments of the past. Kaltenburg's attitude could be interpreted both as genuine fear for the birds and as a type of possible compulsive anxiety of identification with the figure of the menacing huntsman. The key to these uncanny occurrences is offered by an earlier episode in Posen, which flashes through the narrator's mind. In that memory flash, Kaltenburg appears as a falconer, has "solid leather gloves" (61), his gaze is "upward and his arms outstretched" (61). That episode is associated in the narrator's memory with Kaltenburg's experiments on humans. Kaltenburg's and Martin's destinies thus converge at a moment where the master disavows his follower.

In his accounts of Martin's postwar career, the narrator emphasizes how the loden-coat would take on new symbolic dimensions in Martin's art. The narrator reports elliptically that Martin moved to the West shortly after the incident, where he would enjoy a prodigious career not devoid of certain violent tendencies. In recounting information about performances by Martin, the narrator emphasizes their residual violence. By singling out a performance from 1964 the narrator notes that it

refrained from addressing violence directly other than by enacting it. See also Aleida Assmann's comment on Spengler's use of silence. "History from a Bird's Eye View," 216-217.

164

coincided with the twenty-year anniversary of the failed assassination attempt against Hitler. In this performance Martin stages the failed assassination attempt, which triggers a student's violent attack on the artist. The episode, a reenactment of a real episode with Beuys as protagonist, incites the public to violence and follows the same pattern of provocation to aggression as experienced later in the incident with Kaltenburg. In Martin's performance, the target vulnerable to the message of aggression is a student who, in attacking the artist, responds in the same way to his provocation as the birds did. In a sense, such a performance, which directly incites the audience, replicates earlier historical avant-garde performances with the audience taking up active and reactive roles. The intrinsic violence of the performance also enacts a mode of experimental art in the key of violence, which, according to Richard Langston is the form of avant-garde performance in a post-fascist time.[318]

The textual linkage between birds and humans is rendered most prominently through Kaltenburg's abilities to imitate bird songs, which mirror the practices of the historical Beuys. For Beuys, the sound of animals represented a modality to get in touch with other "forms of existence." [319] Both forms of mimetic approach to animals' realm echo a mode of appropriation. Unlike the function of bird sound immitation in Goebbels's children play before their death, Kaltenburg's and Beuys's imitation of birds' voices resemble rather Karnau's symptomatology of the siren

---

[318] According to Richard Langston, "the post-fascist avant-gardes wrestle with the problem of how to represent their violent fantasies, to make knowable the past, such that the experiences they mediate do not succumb to normative discourses of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*" (21). In Langston's view, the post-war West German avant-garde sought to link the pre-fascist avant-garde with contemporary art under the illusion of a "redeemable future" (54). For Langston, such continuity is impossible. See Richard Langston, *Visions of Violence: German Avant-Gardes After Fascism*. The only continuity Langston sees from the historical to the postwar avant-gardes is their enactment of violent fantasies.
[319] See Beuys im Gespräch mit Caroline Tisdall, 1978, cited in Caroline Tisdall, *Joseph Beuys,* New York, 1979, 95.

voice, the voice of the allurer. Such a hypostasis is clearly underlined in the last sequence of the text, which uncovers the staged relation between birds and humans through Kaltenburg's almost theatrical performance:

> There stands the professor on the roof of the Institute for Transport Studies, bending his knees, leaning over, spreading his arms, he begins to run, slowly straightening up and croaking at the same time. Most of the crows observe his performance without moving, just here and there a bird is infected by Kaltenburg's flying motions and follows him, as though to humor him.[320]

The final sequence of the novel presents Kaltenburg in a performative gesture, holding his arms as in a crucifix, seeming half bird, half tragic embodiment of guilt. Yet his luring posture recalls uncannily his earlier attitude in Posen, when he, with "his arm outstretched" (61) was ready to perform experiments on humans. Through histrionic movements, Kaltenburg illustrates a gesture that prompts birds to surrender and follow. While the first scene of the novel shows Kaltenburg towards the end of his life, the last scene projects him in front of an apparent new beginning, in union with the birds, which he seems to set free. The gesture is, however, only ostensibly oriented at the future. Kaltenburg perpetuates the same basic relation of master-disciple/follower towards the birds, as he did with his disciples in the past. Yet this time birds take on an agency of their own as they "pulsate" [pulsieren, 345] through the text in cloud-like formations, and impose their own regime of motion and vibration upon the written. Kaltenburg's gesture does not show expiation but preservation of the puzzle of his life, and is governed by silence, except for the imaginary beat of bird wings. A process of vital metamorphosis is possibly at stake

---

[320] Marcel Beyer, *Kaltenburg*, 345. In German: "Da steht der Professor auf dem Dach der Hochschule für Verkehrswesen, geht in die Knie, beugt den Rücken, breitet die Arme aus, beginnt zu laufen, richtet sich langsam auf und krächzt dabei. Die meisten Krähen verfolgen dieses Schauspiel, ohne sich zu rühren, nur hier und da lässt sich eine von ihnen tatsächlich von Kaltenburgs Flugbewegungen anstecken und folgt ihm ein Stück weit, als wolle sie ihm einen Gefallen tun" (394).

here, when Kaltenburg turns out to embody some of Martin's, alias Beuys's practices of aesthetic transformation. If Spengler, just like the historical Beuys invented his own myth through an imaginary appropriation of the other's (Tatar's) identity, Kaltenburg in turn seems to take on features from the historical Beuys. The relation between the two characters exhibits relevant moments in regard to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, which Beuys enacts in art without accounting for his past, while Kaltenburg denies altogether. Beuys's belief in "plasticity" as a mode of aesthetic practice and transposition of form into tactile feeling might offer an important key to the relation between the two figures. According to the tenets of plasticity, Kaltenburg gestures in a mode that tries to control space and enact its feelings within it.[321] The possible material metamorphosis of Kaltenburg's mind and transposition into the atmosphere are the black patches formed by birds in space. In the very last lines of the novel, the narrator's voice, impossible to locate but hovering in an atemporal space, points to these black patches in space. The reference goes back to the very first appearance of the jackdaws in the novel, analyzed by Aleida Assmann as a mythic descent into an infernal channel of memory, with the exception that now, the birds are not contained in a channel but set free into the open, albeit on a pulsating dark screen of memory.[322]

Karnau's enrapture in the dark evoked dark continents of memory imbued in the violence of colonial and National Socialist ostracism, whose sonic presence

---

[321] Herder's original injunction was that "Figuren des Raums als Buchstaben voriger Körpergefühle anzusehen" (7). In Johann Gottfriedd Herder, *Plastik: Einige Wahrnehmungen Über Form Und Gestalt Aus Pygmalions Bildendem Traume*, 7.
[322] Aleida Assmann, "History from a Bird's Eye View," *Debating German Cultural Identity,* 217-218. The mythic descent Assmann alludes to is Joseph's into the netherworld, from Thomas Mann's *Joseph und seine Brüder.*

continued to haunt the post-reunification imaginary. In *Kaltenburg,* the black patches formed by the jackdaws in the sky haunt the dark corners of contemporary memory.

Imagining Kaltenburg as a father figure but also contesting him in this capacity, Beyer's novel Kaltenburg could be said to belong to "father literature."[323] However, the generational aspect, including the legacy of post-war artist Beuys and his contested figure, could make a stronger case for situating the novel in the "continuity" category of the 1990s.   While an anthology such as *Victims and Perpetrators: 1933-1945: Representing the Past in Post-Unification Culture* concludes that "the dead are returning," it is not only the past that is returning, but also the potential of the past to relate to new audiences and new modes of memorialization since the German reunification. Such a reinvisioning of the past in new forms for new audiences has to do with the ability of cultural memory about the Holocaust to travel in new formats, in this case, as sound and performance in relation to memory and trauma studies. With the figure of Kaltenburg and his double lives in Nazi Germany, in East Germany and in contemporary Austria, Beyer problematizes the fragile relation between human and animal sounds in traumatic times and makes such a relationship important for an analysis of the Holocaust in the present. With the figure of Beuys, the novel thematizes a mode of authoritarian and selective communication with the audience. For the historical Beuys animal sound was at times the only agent that transgressed the boundaries set by the performance and the role of silence in it. Beuys's performances, with their partial prohibition of audience involvement, mirror the selective manner of intra-diegetic narration and also enact a

---

[323] See Hans-Peter Söder,"The Politics of Memory: History, Biography, and the (Re)-Emergence of Generation Literature in Germany" *The European Legacy,* 14.2 (2009: 177-185.

violent display of experimentation as postwar avant-gardism infused with traces of violence. By fictionalizing the character of Beuys and the triangle of friends Kaltenburg, Spengler, and Sieverding who survive the war and turn into iconic postwar characters, the unreliable narrator mixes in his story contemporary history since 1989, fragments from the Nazi past or from the German Democratic Republic and supports his narrated events with interviews, dialogues, performances or hear-say stories. This mode of recounting history prompts one to listen carefully to historical interruptions, temporal ellipses, narrative hesitations, which, above all, uncover the tragic masks of the perpetrators. Together with Beyer's *Flughunde, Kaltenburg* proposes new forms of memory studies in the sign of sound and performance. The two books contribute a novel perspective on the function of sound to reconstruct memory in a post-Cold War perspective. While *Flughunde* engages with structures of sound present in National Socialist science, which it borrows from earlier colonial experiments, *Kaltenburg* reconstructs structures of sound as repressed Holocaust memory. Both novels are united by a myth of rationality (of science, of art) that ultimately ends in collapse. In both novels, the mask as acousmatic voice and as voice that attempts to erase its timbre represents processes of dissimulation and fabrication of the past.

My focus on structures of postcolonialism during the Cold War in this novel is followed by my discussion of legacies of colonialism as they are revamped in the anti-racist movement and linguistic phenomenon of *Kanak Sprak.* This phenomenon, as I will demonstrate, articulates the fight of minorities against latent racist structures in post-1989 Germany.

If in *Flughunde* mysterious minorities were present as sound objects of scientific investigation, in my chapter third chapter, minorities turn from objects of analysis into resonating powers in their own right. The third chapter explores modes of address that stage the importance of postcolonialism on German soil, especially in relation to encounters that have not resonated so far in public imaginaries: legacies of colonialism in relation to subaltern speeech.

CHAPTER 3

SOUNDING BACK: THE CASE OF *KANAK SPRAK* AND POSTCOLONIAL
POETICS IN CONTEMPORARY GERMAN LITERATURE

Subaltern Speech

Since the early 1990s, Germany has been the scene of repeated racist

incidents.[324] Besides revealing a troubling state of affairs after reunification, hate

crimes point to deeper structural problems within the post-reunification landscape,

especially residual traces of colonialism. As Gutiérrez Rodríguez explains, the

postcolonial model promoted by black female German activists in the 1980s

highlighted in particular the "continuity of Germany's colonial history for the Federal

German Republic."[325] Racist incidents, I assert, entail, among others, latent effects of

colonialism and enduring colonial fantasies in contemporary Germany.[326] They also

---

[324] As the editors of *After the Nazi Racial State* clarify, "nineteenth-century antisemitism, anti-Slavism, and antiblack racism served a function similar to that of late-twentieth-century xenophobia (11)." *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2009). In her article on "Ethnicized Masculinity and Literary Style in *Kanak Sprak* and *Koppstoff*, " Yasemin Yildiz lists a series of racist incidents in the 1990s such as the mob violence against Roma refugees and Vietnamese contract workers in Rostock (1992), the attacks on shelters for asylum seekers (in Greifswald 1991 and elsewhere), and the fire-bombings in Mölln (1992) and Solingen (1993). See Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 174. Tom Cheesman and Karin E. Yeşilada, eds. *Feridun Zaimoglu* (Bern: Peter Lang Verlag, 2012), 73. Recent incidents range from forms of racial slur directed against African players at the World Cup 2006 in Germany to the murders of eight Turks and one Greek by right wing activists of the so-called Zwickauer Terrorzelle (NSU). The murders were infamously labeled the "Döner Morde" in German media.
[325] Among works by feminists who embraced postcolonialism the scholar Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez cites Hito Steyerl's film *Die leere Mitte* (1998), Cathy Gelbin/Kader Konuk/Peggy Piesche (1999) *Marginale Brüche,* and Fatima El-Tayeb (2001), *Schwarze Deutsche: Der Diskurs um Rasse und nationale Identität von 1890 bis 1933*. See Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, *Spricht die subalterne deutsch? Migration und postkoloniale Kritik* (München: UNRAST Verlag, 2003), 17. Ibid., 29.
[326] Susanne Zantop coined the term "colonial fantasies" to describe the colonial projections of Germans before the formation of the German nation-state as well as before the moment when Germany started to acquire its actual colonies. See Susanne Zantop, *Colonial fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Pre-Colonial Germany*, 1770-1870 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997). In her 1998 book *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism,* Meyda Yegenoglu addresses the fascination of Western societies with the Oriental veiled woman and explores intersections between feminist theory and postcolonial criticism.

require an understanding of Germany's postcolonial present in relation to its colonial past. Such racist incidents bring to light not only the necessity of analyzing postcolonialism in relation to colonialism but also of discussing the post-1989 world in conjunction with the importance of race. Recent studies of legacies of the Nazi racial state situate the contemporary importance of antiracist postcolonial analysis in relation to colonialism through an analysis of the understudied status of race from the aftermath of Nazism to the present.[327] As scholars Rita Chin or Heide Fehrenbach have demonstrated, the category of race re-emerged in the German Federal Republic in particular in association with black occupation children and in reference to the racialized image of the foreigner (the Southerner, the Turk).[328] Recent hate crimes make it even more necessary to analyze racial aspects and their functions in the post-1989 world.

Concerned with the articulation of "subaltern speech" after reunification, Gutiérrez Rodríguez associates German postcolonialism with the possibility of listening to subaltern voices in the context of an "uneven distribution of speech and

---

[327] See Geoff Eley, "The Trouble with 'Race'. Migrancy, Cultural Difference, and the Remaking of Europe" in *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*, 174. Eley points out that "the catastrophe of Nazism disqualified race as a concept across the academic disciplines no less than in the public languages of politics." Eley notes that, as a consequence, the concept of race was placed after 1945 under "a taboo."

[328] See Heide Fehrenbach, "Black Occupation Children and the Devolution of the Nazi Racial State," in Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, ed. *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe,* 30-54. Fehrenbach argues that "race" in West Germany was represented in particular by so-called *Mischlingskinder* and related to America. The emphasis on children of mixed German and African-American descent operated at the expanse of children of other African parents from Morocco and Algeria, for example. See Heide Fehrenbach, "Black Occupation Children," 42. Fehrenbach notes the similarity between the American postwar definition of race and the West German definition, in which former racial categories are no longer authorized and are relegated rather to ethnicity as cultural difference. Rita Chin's analysis of racialized "guest workers" in the 1960s and 1970s articulates an additional dimension to the understanding of race, although, as she outlines, the category dominating postwar discourse was that of ethnicity as national and cultural difference. See Rita Chin, "Guest Worker Migration and the Unexpected Return

listening opportunities": "Wie können Mitglieder aus subalternen Gruppen sich in der Öffentlichkeit einmischen, wenn die Möglichkeit des Sprechens und des Zuhörens ungleichmässig verteilt bzw. eine solche Möglichkeit diesen nicht zugedacht wird?"[329] Gutiérrez' analysis implies that subaltern expression manifests as speech and listening but also as music, beat and rhythm. Her emphasis on listening to female subaltern voices adopts Gayatri Spivak's suggestion, who in another context sought to apply feminist postcolonial theory to Anglophone spaces. The emphasis on Third World feminists highlights their need to be listened to rather than merely represented within postcolonial discourse by Western or non-Western feminists, most of whom received training in a Western tradition.[330] Gutiérrez Rodríguez' concern not only potentially opens up new possibilities for feminist analysis in the context of a patriarchal discourse in Germany but also aims to dislocate writing through speech in a postcolonial register.[331] *The Empire Writes Back*, a pioneering book in postcolonial theory had employed the stance of "writing back" as a primary mode of postcolonial criticism.[332] German Studies scholar Petra Fachinger analyzed migrant literature in this vein of "writing back" as a form of responding as well, specifically by postwar migrant writers in Germany, writing about their outsider status vis-à-vis mainstream

---

of Race," in *After the Nazi Racial State*, 92. *After the Nazi Racial State* does not include any analysis or mention of racialized images of the Roma in a postwar or post-1989 German culture.

[329] Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodriguez and Hito Steyerl, ed. *Spricht die Subalterne deutsch?*, 31.

[330] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010). On Third World Feminists see Guttiérrez-Rodríguez, *Spricht die Subalterne deutsch?,* 24; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1991).

[331] The editors of *The Empire Writes Back* mention that "The seizing of the means of communication and the liberation of post-colonial writing by the appropriation of the written word become crucial features of the process of self-assertion and of the ability to reconstruct the world as an unfolding historical process." Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, ed. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989)*,* 82.

[332] Ibid. The authors comment on the function of writing back in these terms: "The seizing of the means of communication and the liberation of post-colonial writing by the appropriation of the written word

culture and German constructions of race and ethnicity.[333] Fachinger briefly mentions

the term "talking back," a term notably derived from the vocabulary of African

American activist bell hooks, yet the German scholar limits it to Turkish women's

mode of "talking back" as a generic form of protest, while "writing back" remains for

her the preferred postcolonial mode of interaction.[334]

My analysis will focus instead on oral elements of speech to contest

hegemonic culture as well as to draw attention to silenced residues of racist and

colonial legacies.[335] I will expand, however, the analysis of speech in this context

through a reference to sound as an object of analysis. My case study for

_____

become crucial features of the process of self-assertion and of the ability to reconstruct the world as an unfolding historical process" (82).

[333] In his preface to *(Post)-Kolonialismus und Deutsche Literatur* (2005) Axel Dunker arrives at different conclusions from Fachinger, claiming that there is no possible "writing back" in German literature in the postcolonial sense as delineated by the editors of the *Empire Writes Back*. What distinguishes the literature of the former British Commonwealth and the Caribbean from German literature is, in Dunker's view, the fact that German is no longer a language used in the former colonies. Axel Dunker, "Einleitung," in Axel Dunker, ed. *(Post)-Kolonialismus und Deutsche Literatur: Impulse der angloamerikanischen Literatur-und Kulturtheorie* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2005), 41. Although this is true, Sara Lennox' examples of postcolonial works by Cameroonian authors Dualla Misipo and Kum'a Ndumbe III show that there are texts written in German in former German colonies. See Sara Lennox, "Postcolonial Writing in Germany," *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature,* ed. Ato Quayson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011-2012), 624-630.

[334] The term "talking back" was proposed by bell hooks in her collection of feminist writings on women of color *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (Boston: Southend Press, 1989). As Adelson observes, in her discussion of "who speaks" in texts about Turks, Arlene Teraoka models her term "speaking back" on the postcolonial "writing back." See Leslie A. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Toward a New Critical Grammar of Migration* (Palgrave: Macmillan, 2005), 195. In *EAST, WEST and Others: The Third World in Postwar German Literature,* Teraoka addresses the mediated speech of Turks in West German reportage prose about German-Turks and calls for the real speech of German-Turks to emerge in writings about them. Teraoka argues that the prose of Paul Geiersbach provides such a promise for a more thorough listening to the other, yet it fails short of renouncing a privileged site of identity. See Arlene A. Teraoka, *EAST, WEST and Others: The Third World in Postwar German Literature* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 167.

[335] Adelson critically points out that colonial legacies in Germany are much more complex than mere references to either German or European colonialism suggest. Adelson reviews the case of several scholars who claim German "internal" colonization of the Turks (Kien Nhgi Ha's *Ethnizität und Migration*) or "inner colonialism" (Margaret Littler in her analysis of Özdamar's "Mutterzunge"); these scholars do not address actual ties to German colonialism. See Leslie A. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn,* 176. Yasemin Yildiz mentions "racialized masculinity" as a trope in *Kanak Sprak* but she does not analyze it in relation to colonialism. See Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 174.

demonstrating the importance of subaltern speech in relation to German postcolonialism will be an analysis of sound poetics in Feridun Zaimoglu's selected work. By sound poetics I mean an active mode of resonating with colonial histories that is embodied in both music and oral forms of address. My analysis will consider ways in which Zaimoglu brings wilfully ignored voices into focus. In his most influential work from the 1990s, *Kanak Sprak: 24 Misstöne vom Rande der Gesellschaft* [Kanak Sprak: Twenty-Four Dissonant Notes from the Margins of Society (1995)] and in his co-authored theater play *Schwarze Jungfrauen* (2006), Turkish-German author Zaimoglu cultivates a highly poetic and performative style.[336] *Kanak Sprak* must be understood on multiple levels as a book, a linguistic phenomenon, and a larger social phenomenon inspiring anti-racist activism but also commercialization in popular culture and so-called *Kanak* comedy shows.[337] In the first part of this chapter I will analyze sound poetics in *Kanak Sprak*, and in the second part I will concentrate on Zaimoglu's co-authored play *Schwarze Jungfrauen* and its performative dialogue with Oriental phantasies and colonialism.

Postcolonial "Oppositionality"

Kanak Sprak was Feridun Zaimoglu's debut book. It consists of a preface and twenty-four "protocols" introducing a range of characters "from the margins of society" (a rapper, a breaker, a junkie, a poet, an occasional worker, an inmate in a

---

[336] The first collected volume to address Zaimoglu's work translates the full title of *Kanak Sprak* as *Spik-speak: Twenty-four Discords from the Edge of Society* (Tom Cheesman). In *Feridun Zaimoglu,* xi. Feridun Zaimoglu and Günter Senkel, *Schwarze Jungfrauen, Theater heute* 47, 5 (2006): 46-55.

[337] On the topic of anti-racist activism and art in the new Europe see Fatima El-Tayeb's project on *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (2011). For more details about the expansion of the Kanak phenomenon, see Tom Cheesman, "Talking 'Kanak': Zaimoglu contra

mental asylum, and so on), who bespeak their plight in poetic musical language in the first person. Published in 1995, *Kanak Sprak* is well known for having inspired the development of migrant social networks against racism and multiculturalism such as Kanak Attak.[338] I will demonstrate that the book's recourse to sound and performance is not merely thematic but a structural cornerstone of its literary engagement with the postcolonial in German literature.

Many factors speak to the importance of sound for *Kanak Sprak,* even on the superficial level of the title: *Sprak vs. Sprache*, *Misstöne* or frequent references to rap-like rhythms. Yet in order to understand sound here one cannot simply rely on postcolonialism as generically oppositional or non-Eurocentric. Petra Fachinger's postcolonial analysis of several texts written in postwar Germany, including *Kanak Sprak*, emphasizes "oppositionality" as a mode of reaction against German ethnic policies in postwar Germany.[339] Fachinger's reference to "oppositionality" seems to rely on binarisms that assign migrants their own space, either negatively or positively.

Leitkultur," *New German Critique* 92 (Spring/Summer 2004): 82-99. See also Yasemin Yildiz' analysis of the phenomenon in *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 200-201.

[338] For an analysis of the phenomenon "Kanak" see Tom Cheesman, "AKČAM—ZAIMOĞLU-'KANAK ATTAK' : TURKISH LIVES AND LETTERS IN GERMAN," *German Life and Letters* 55: 2 April 2002, 180-195. Zaimoglu later had a falling out with the group. One of the reasons mentioned by critics is Zaimoglu's use of the group's name for his feature film's title *Kanak Attack,* a film based on Zaimoglu's novel *Abschaum.* See Maria Stehle, *Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes* (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2012), 59. Other occurrences of *Kanak Sprak* in the general sense are to be found in various genres, listed here in chronological order: *Abschaum: Die wahre Geschichte des Ertan Ongun* (Hamburg: Rotbuch, 1997) and the film *Kanak Attack* (dir. Lars Becker, 2000), *Deutschland im Winter—Kanakistan: Eine Rap-Reportage* (dir. Thomas Roeschner, ZDF/Arte, 1997), *Liebesmale, scharlachrot.* Roman (Hamburg: Rotbuch, 2000), *Kopf und Kragen: Kanak-Kultur*-Compendium (Hamburg/Frankfurt/Main: Rotbuch/Fischer tb, 2001), *German Amok* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer&Witsch, 2002), radio dramatization of *Kanak Sprak* (Berlin: Hörspiel Audio, 2000), *Kopfstoff: Kanaka Sprak vom Rande der Gesellschaft* (Hamburg: Rotbuch Verlag, 1998).

[339] Petra Fachinger, *Rewriting Germany from the Margins*, 3. Yasemin Yildiz employs the term opposition to refer to the way the second generation of Turkish-Germans rose to consciousness in the 1990s against a hostile society. Although she refers to opposition to describe a rebellion against the status quo, she also implies that such opposition refers to a rebellion against the parents' generation and the latter's acceptance of the status quo. See Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 174.

The trope of "opposition" can also blur possible continuities between postcolonial works and colonial legacies.[340] I displace the meaning of oppositionality from a reactive move against an ethnic status-quo or against liberalist policies, as Fachinger interprets it, to a more comprehensive struggle against residual colonialism and racism within postcolonial Germany. This implies a critique of the mode of oppositionality itself as underlying postcolonial analysis, as Leslie A. Adelson has already noted in *The Turkish Turn*.[341] Oppositional binaries are displaced, in my view, through an emphasis on the intersectional sound poetics at work in *Kanak Sprak*. I use the term intersection in order to highlight the particular status of "blackness" in this text as pointedly cultural.[342] A reading of *Kanak Sprak* as a "sound" project also challenges the parameters of visibility around which readings of blackness and the racialization of ethnic identity in general have previously been centered.[343]

---

[340] See, for instance, Anne McClintock's criticism of postcolonialism as a concept that inherits a linear notion of time and progress from an era whose end it claims, while setting European colonialism at a temporal distance. Anne McClintock, "Postcolonialism and the Angel of Progress," *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 1-17.

[341] According to Adelson, Fachinger's analysis "broadens" the analytical framework on postcolonialism, yet relies on the "oppositional cipher" which does not challenge sufficiently existing "blind spots." See Adelson's criticism of Fachinger in *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature,* 375. Fachinger operates with the postcolonial vocabulary of "margin" and "center," which might be indicative of such a blind spot as "suspension of migrants between two worlds," in Adelson's words (*The Turkish Turn,* 375). Fachinger relates to a discourse of oppositionality indebted to "anticolonialist textual resistance" (*Rewriting Germany from the Margins,* 5). In my analysis, I will lean on a model implicitly critical of oppositionality, proposed by Michael Rothberg, who in his book *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* interprets together postcolonial and Holocaust studies and argues against the tendency to read histories of Holocaust or colonialism and/or slavery as competing histories. Rothberg pays close attention to historical facts such as the post-Holocaust epoch and decolonization, whose confluences had been ignored by memory scholars or postcolonial scholars. Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

[342] Feminist and queer studies use the term "intersectionality" to designate a "tool for social justice" and a moment when previously ignored groups of women contested the agenda of Western feminist and queer studies. See Bonnie Thornton Dill, "Intersections," in *Women's Voices: Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, eds. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2009).

[343] See, for instance, Tina M. Campt, "Pictures of 'US'? Blackness, Diaspora, and the Afro-German Subject" in *Black Europe and the African Diaspora,* ed. Darlene Clark Hine, Trica Danielle Keaton, and Stephen Small (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 63-84. One exception is represented by Margaret Ruth Jackson's dissertation, which reads blackness in association with *Kanak Sprak* as a

In the protocol titled "Der direkte Draht zum schwarzen Mann," Zaimoglu describes the sound of rap as dissonance through which text is "chopped off." He writes: "Der sound besteht aus krawall und city-hektik, zu tosendem klang und stadtgebrüll und gellendem misslaut hackt er den knallharten text ab." In this protocol, the replacement of textuality with dissonance is a pretext for Zaimoglu's enactment of a mini-history of rap music in a transnational key.[344] The affiliation of German Turkish rap with African American music is one of the many instances of such a coalition. In her comparison of the language of the protagonists in *Kanak Sprak* with the language cultivated by the Black Power movement, Fachinger proposes the notion of a "transnational consciousness" without revising her "oppositional" postcolonial frame. Her examples rely on *Kanak Sprak*'s foregrounded relations between music groups in Germany and the U.S..[345] Others modalities of analysis used by Fachinger

performative practice and points out the potential of hip-hop culture for a reading of the book. See Margaret Ruth Jackson, *The Poets of Duisburg: Risk and Hip-Hop Performance in a German Inner City,* 109-121. For an analysis of visuality as a way to essentialize knowledge about the other, in the case of a German-Chinese national, see Ming-Bao Yue, "On Not Looking German: Ethnicity, Diaspora, and the Politics of Vision," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 3(2): 173-194. Ming-Bao Yue uses Martin Jay's discussion of antiocularcentrism in French thought but does not derive potential consequences for the importance of sound in articulating a criticism of visuality, and implicitly, of racialized vision.

[344] Hip Hop culture comprises grafitti art, sound and other forms of performances. Rap is a form of hip hop, which relies exclusively on forms of sonic improvisation. As Mark Pennay mentions in his analysis of hip hop in Germany, there were two waves of rap music, one in 1983 and another in 1989. Paradoxically, in East Germany, rap activity decreased after the fall of the Wall. Penney distinguishes between German and African American hip hop. In Pennay's view, African American hip hop is all about "blackness," whereas German hip hop is more inclusive. Mark Pennay, "Rap in Germany: The Birth of a Genre" in *Global Noise. Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA,* ed. Tony Mitchell (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001), 113. Zaimoglu's protocol considers "blackness" as part of Turkish German hip hop as well. On hip hop in Germany, see Tom Cheesman, "Polyglott Politics. Hip Hop in Germany," *Debatte,* Volume 6, No 2, 1998, 191-214. Maria Stehle notes various dimensions of hip hop in German culture, including its appearance as *Deutschrap* immediately after 1990. Whereas Afro-German Hip Hop distinguishes itself through activism that challenges "cultural essentialism" (El Tayeb), *Deutschrap* invokes a fixed German identity in the wake of reunification. Fatima El-Tayeb, *European Others,* 1-41. Maria Stehle, *Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes* (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2012), 141.

[345] Petra Fachinger, Ibid., 103. If considered in the context of the appropriation of young German activists in the 1960s of symbols popular with the Black Power movement, Fachinger's framing of

are "creolization" and "hybridity." She employs these notions, as she mentions, by taking into account the ethnic specificity of the various cultures from which she borrows them.[346] Yet, by marking the ethnic boundaries residual in "creolization" or "hybridity," Fachinger inserts an additional moment of ethnic oppositionality. Rather than comparing African American and German Turkish sonic and performative models at work in *Kanak Sprak,* I propose to address a poetics of sound in *Kanak Sprak* in relation to a circum-Atlantic black diaspora, both in response to European colonialism, contemporary racism, and in dialogue with non-European avant-gardes.[347]

While I have already stressed why an analysis of a poetics of sound is important in relation to European colonialism and contemporary racism, I will demonstrate that the relation between an African and a European diaspora could and should be expanded. A precedent can be sound in the work of Katrin Sieg, who in her analysis of performance culture in postwar Germany has adapted the notion of "surrogation" first proposed by performance scholar Joseph Roach. In the circum-Atlantic world surrogation denotes a performative impersonation of Indians by African Americans and is an effort, as Sieg indicates, to mark "shared colonial histories and anti-colonial resistance in the Americas."[348] In the German context, however, she argues, racialized performances do not point to a common core of

---

oppositionality might also seem problematic. See "German Democracy and the Question of Difference," *After the Nazi Racial State,* 122.

[346] Fachinger, *Rewriting Germany from the Margins,* 5.

[347] Joseph Roach explains the notion of a circum-Atlantic world (as opposed to a transatlantic one) through the centrality of diasporic and genocidal histories of Africa and the Americas, North and South, in the creation of the culture of modernity. Roach also emphasizes the idea that a New World was not discovered in the Caribbean, but one was "truly invented there." Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 4.

[348] In Katrin Sieg, *Ethnic Drag: Performing Race, Nation, Sexuality in West Germany* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), 13.

resistance against colonial histories but rather to a form of "denial" and "ambivalence of memory and mourning," as a result of complex attempts to create fantasies of "racial harmony" rather than solidarity with the oppressed as in the case of the circum-Atlantic world.[349] While such fantasies of racial harmony were generated mostly as an echo of post-war German philosemitism, the same can not be said about the impersonation of blacks in postwar German performance culture.[350] As Fatima El-Tayeb remarks, echoing Paul Gilroy, "being black and German" was an "unthinkable" association in the hegemonic paradigm of a European ideology of postwar racelessness as well as within African diasporic discourses. [351] Such "unthinkable" connections could be extended, as I propose to do, to real and imaginary relations between German Turkish, African American, and Afro-Caribbean subjects. *Kanak Sprak*, for instance, presents an interesting confluence of avant-garde and creole forms, which many scholars analyze at the opposed poles of high and low culture.[352] My analysis will pay attention to Zaimoglu's peculiar form of poetic and sonic avant-gardism as a form of contesting colonizing cultural practices.

---

[349] Ibid., 13.

[350] In her book *Ethnic Drag*, Sieg comments on the lack of a terminological correspondent for what would correspond to American "blackface minstrelsy" in Germany. See *Ethnic Drag,* 4.

[351] El-Tayeb, *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe,* 65. An important point El-Tayeb makes elsewhere is the necessity of reflecting on the potential fruitful relationships between African diasporic discourses and European minority communities, which can potentially challenge the absence of theorizations produced by the former from emerging methodologies applied to the latter. Ibid., 44. "Being black and European" is one sign of double consciousness signalled by Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1. As El-Tayeb argues, this association has been rendered invisible by a problematic paradigm of racelessness and thus rendered "unthinkable." In his analysis of "technologies of exclusion" in post-1989 Germany, Damani J. Partridge analyzes the process of becoming "non-citizens" of non-white and "foreign" Germans at a time when post-reunification allegedly encourages the opposite. Among strategies of racialization Partridge analyzes moments of hypersexualized and racialization of "non-citizens." See Damani J. Partridge, *Race, Sex, and Citizenship in the New Germany* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012).

[352] On the topic of anti-racist activism and art in the new Europe see Fatima El-Tayeb's *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (2011). For more details about the expansion of the Kanak phenomenon, see Tom Cheesman, " 'Talking 'Kanak': Zaimoglu contra *Leitkultur*." *New*

Intersections between colonialism, Nazism and decolonization have only recently been brought to scholarly attention.[353] What would be the implications of intersecting, through works of imagination, German colonial and circum-Atlantic pasts brought to bear on Turkish people whose access to German colonial and Holocaust pasts is habitually denied?[354] Through strategies of identification with the oppressed, racialized performances in postwar Germany are similar, Sieg indicates, to processes of "surrogation" in the circum-Atlantic world, yet they serve largely as fantasies of "racial harmony" rather than critique. Are post-1989 *Kanaken* in turn supplying sonic and performative masks for yet another moment of cross-racialization?

Colonial Pasts

Commentators such as Tom Cheesman have already noted, without elaborating, that the emergence of *Kanak* as a cultural label that sought to make visible the artificiality and rigidity of conventionally ascribed identities derived from

---

German Critique 92 (Spring/Summer 2004): 82-99. See also Yasemin Yildiz' analysis of the phenomenon of *Kanak* comedy shows in *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 200-201.

[353] See especially Michael Rothberg's *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009). In his analysis of Aimé Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950), Rothberg notes the complex ways in which colonialism, Nazism and decolonization modify each other. In addition, both *Kanak Sprak, Kanaka Sprak* and Aimé Césaire's *Notebook of a Return to a Native Land* [Cahier d'un rétour au pays natal] (1939) make references to the Holocaust in the context of colonialism and migration. Damani J. Partridge also notes that, while "the Nazi anti-Semitic past is habitually linked to the neo-Nazi present," much less is said about Germany's colonial past. Partridge does not explicitly link decolonization or the Caribbean to German colonialism other than through the use of Franz Fanon's theory to explain a process of identification of white German women with black males. I will return to this in my analysis of *Schwarze Jungfrauen.* See Damani J. Partridge, *Hypersexuality and Headscarves: Race, Sex, and Citizenship in the New Germany,* 144-153.

[354] Leslie A. Adelson analyzes the identification, on the part of a German "christ lady," of a *Kanak* with a Jew in Zaimoglu's *Kanak Sprak*. (*The Turkish Turn,* 94). The woman knows that he is not a Jew, so the possibility of philosemitism fails. The moment is not one of simple confusion, but tells something about conscious fantasies related to Jews and Turks in the German imaginary, as Adelson

the history of colonialism and post-colonial migrations.[355] The term's historical baggage emerges most clearly when analyzed, as Deniz Göktürk does, as a "taboo in cultural memory," with its origin in the history of colonialism. Since "Kanake" is related to hate speech, its association with a "taboo" bespeaks, in my view, something untouchable, whereas its relation to "cultural memory" invokes possible refractions of the term in today's culture, in association with race and its taboo-like status in the aftermath of the Holocaust.[356]

Focusing on race and taboo in particular, scholar El-Tayeb has also explored a number of alternative languages, "all circumventing the mandate of silence by making specifically European taboos around race speakable." By borrowing from Édouard Glissant's vocabulary, she attributes to these languages "sonic, performative, and visual qualities" to talk about the "haunting presence of repressed histories and connections to map an alternative spatio-temporal European landscape—built around rhizomatic relations rather than borders."[357] When Göktürk speaks of a taboo and the origin of *Kanak,* she discusses it in terms of traumatic repetition, which also involves cultural memory. Her reading contrasts, at least on the surface, with Susanne Zantop's,

demonstrated. The response of the *Kanak*, who links the woman to National Socialism, enables him to insert himself into intersecting histories of Holocaust and migration. See Adelson, 95-104.

[355] Tom Cheesman, *Turkish Lives and Letters in German (XX),* 187. In "Talking 'Kanak': Zaimoglu contra *Leitkultur,*" Tom Cheesman suggests a tentative link between Wilhelmine Germany's participation in the Euro-imperial adventure in the Pacific and the penetration of "Kanake" into German slang (85).

[356] On account of its reference to the German colonial past, Göktürk associates *Kanak* with a taboo. She substantiates the relation to taboo by emphasizing the origin of the word, traceable to the colonial South Pacific, as documented by Sigmund Freud. Göktürk also relies on F.W. Murnau's last film *Tabu: A Story of the South Seas* (1931) to provide a critique of "presentist culturalism" and promote alternative uses of the visual archive. Deniz Göktürk, "Postcolonial Amnesia? Taboo Memories and Kanaks with Cameras," *German Colonialism, Visual Culture and Modern Memory* (2010), 278-301. See my later note on Adelson's discussion of taboo in *Kanak Sprak.*

[357] Fatima El-Tayeb, *European Others*, 177. Her vocabulary is here tributary to Glissant, who defined the poetics of Relation as follows: "Rhizomatic thought is the principle behind what I call the Poetics of

who coined the expression "postcolonial amnesia" in order to indicate deliberate forgetfulness manifesting as colonial fantasies in spite of the defeat of the Third Reich. For Zantop such postwar fantasies encompass "triangulations of victimizations between Germans, Jews, and Africans."[358] Göktürk's analysis of "Kanak" situates it in a post-reunification context, in which deliberate amnesia about colonial taboos is consistent with the silencing of race discourse in postwar Germany.[359]

The colonial etymology of the term "Kanak" uncovers traces of colonial histories in relation to which Turks have not otherwise been analyzed.[360] Göktürk and other commentators on the *Kanak* phenomenon note that the word *Kanak* is derived from colonial vocabulary and refers to the people of New Caledonia in the South

Relation, in which each and every relationship is extended through a relationship with the Other." Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation,* 11.

[358] The term "postcolonial amnesia" was coined by Susanne Zantop, who mentions it in an article on Veit Harlan's *Opfergang.* See Susanne Zantop, "*Kolonie* und *Heimat:* Race, Gender, and Postcolonial Amnesia in Veit Harlan's *Opfergang*," in *Women in German Yearbook* 17 (2001): 1-13. According to Marcia Klotz or Pascal Grosse scholars, the issue of Germany's postcolonialism is related to a project of colonialism that was accelerated by the loss of Germany's colonies with the Treaty of Versailles. Thus, those colonial fantasies articulated by Susanne Zantop in her groundbreaking study of German colonialism *avant la lettre,* have continued to articulate themselves in terms of fantasies of racial conquest. See Pascal Grosse, "What does German Colonialism have to do with National Socialism?" *Germany's Colonial Pasts,* eds. Eric Ames, Marcia Klotz, and Lora Wildenthal (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2005)*,* 115-134. See also Marcia Klotz, "The Weimar Republic: A Postcolonial State in a Still-Colonial World," *Germany's Colonial Pasts* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2005), 135-148.

[359] Taboo in its relation to *Kanaken* through Holocaust and genocidal histories of literary referentiality, but not necessarily in conjunction with representations of race or colonialism, has already been carefully teased out by Leslie Adelson in her analysis of *Kanak Sprak.* Leslie A. Adelson, "Genocide and Taboo," *The Turkish Turn*, 79-104. Adelson pays extensive attention in particular to Holocaust history and taboo.

[360] See, for instance, Adelson's discussion of Kien Nghi Ha's postcolonial analysis of Turks in Germany, which creates oppositional relations between Turks and slavery or Auschwitz but not between Turks and German colonialism. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn,* 176. In their translations from *Kopfstoff,* Kristin Dickinson, Robin Ellis and Priscilla D. Layne consider that a reading of the text "Sistem versus Soopcoolture" as pertaining to the genre of postwar *Gastarbeiter* literature would establish a totally different context from the one of American slavery and would thus obstruct the potential of translation in the key of Afro-American vernacular. Yet, what they see as contradiction is perfectly justified if we do not understand the colonial potential of Kanak/a Sprak and the histories of American slavery and German Gastarbeiter/colonized subjects as competing histories. See "Translating Communities: Rethinking the Collective in Feridun Zaimoglu's *Koppstoff*", trans. Kristin Dickinson, Robin Ellis, and Priscilla D. Layne, *TRANSIT* 4(1), 2008, 10.

Pacific; they called themselves Canaques, were colonized by the French, and throughout the twentieth century attempted to acquire self-rule. [361] Interestingly, the word does not have its roots in the colonies owned by the Germans in the South Pacific but rather in the French colonies. The migration of the term speaks to intersecting colonial histories and memories. In her analysis, Göktürk provides a reading of the term's etymology through the German-Colonial Dictionary (Deutsches-Kolonial Lexikon), in which *Kanaka* is listed as the indigenous word for "man, person" in Polynesian languages.[362] She also notes that the Germanized verb *verkanakern* is listed there as an undesired effect of intercultural contact, the process of the "sinking of the Whites to the level of the natives," which Göktürk regards as a colonial project informing contemporary racism.[363] Both Seidel-Arpaci and Göktürk indicate that the term "Verkanakerung" can be traced back to Immanuel Kant, who uses it to refer, pejoratively, to a miscegenation of races and its ruinous consequences for the construction of German character.[364] "Verkanakerung" was also used to describe miscegenation between Samoans and Caucasians in German colonies leading to an alleged degradation of the white race.[365] Seidel-Arpaci notes that the term *Canaque* was later re-signified as a symbol of Melanesian unity in confrontation with

---

[361]For colonial echoes of the term "kanak" see Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue:Configurations of Multilingualism in Twentieth-Century German Literature.* Dissertation, Cornell University, 2006, 207. For echoes of the term in the present see Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*: *The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 172, 252.

[362] For similar readings of the term see Leslie Adelson, "Touching Tales of Turks, Germans, and Jews: Cultural Alterity, Historical Narrative, and Literary Riddles for the 1990s." *New German Critique* 80 (2000): 1-32. Tom Cheesman's rhetorical question points to the relation between Wilhelmine Germany's participation in the Euro-imperial adventure in the Pacific and the penetration of "Kanake" into German slang. "Talking 'Kanak': Zaimoglu contra *Leitkultur*," 85.

[363] Göktürk, "Postcolonial Amnesia?," 290.

[364] Immanuel Kant, "Medicin: Handschriftlicher Nachlass," *Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften,* ed., *Kants gesammelte Schriften* Bd. XV, I. Hälfte, Anthropologie (Berlin: Verlag Georg Reimer, 1913). Cited in Anette Seidel-Arpaci, "Kant in 'Deutsch Samoa,' " 207.

French colonial administrators.[366] Based on this detail, Seidel-Arpaci hypothesizes a similar process in the context of colonization in South Pacific islands by the German Reich at the end of the twentieth century. Yet she leaves open the puzzle of the discontinuous usage of the term between the turn of the century and the period after 1945.[367] Göktürk mentions the same re-signification of *Canaque* as Seidel, but Göktürk focuses rather on the use and resurfacing of the term in the 1990s. Like Seidel, Göktürk does not account for the gap between the use of the term as a racial slur in the 1960s and its re-signification in the 1990s.[368] In explicitly comparing the contemporary reinstatement of the term *Kanake* in Germany with the African American re-signification of "nigger" in a critical key, Göktürk fails to investigate the larger Pan-African connections implied by the reappropriation of one common figure of hate speech. Despite noting the possibility of a transnational process linking the twentieth-century re-signification of *Canaque* in French New Caledonia in the Pacific and the use of the term in Germany, Göktürk does not situate these new semantic connotations in light of other colonial or anti-colonial traditions. One such tradition is the French Caribbean one and its own history of re-signification of racist slur in the circum-Atlantic world. Although the relation between the South Pacific islands of New Caledonia and the German colonies in the South Pacific would appear more immediate, the legacy of oppression in the circum-Atlantic world via French colonialism seems to follow the same contours of anti-colonialist appropriation of

---

[365] See Paul Mochida, "The 'yin' and 'yang' of Wilhelm Solf by Peter Hempenstall." *Journal of Pacific History,* September 1998. Cited in Seidel-Arpaci, "Kant in 'Deutsch Samoa,'" 207.

[366] Seidel-Arpaci, "Kant in 'Deutsch-Samoa' und Gollwitz: 'Hospitalität' umd Selbst-Positionierung in einem deutschen Kontext," in *Spricht die Subalterne deutsch?,* ed. Hito Steyerl, Encarnacion Gutiérrez Rodríguez, ed., 206. Seidel-Arpaci quotes in fact an analysis by Suzanne Romain, *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[367] Annette Seidel-Arpaci, Ibid., 208. I do not condone Seidel-Arpaci's speculations about *Kanak* as a term standing for "Re-Humanisierung."

racist slurs.[369] I will argue that the early twentieth-century anti-colonial movement of *négritude* could prove highly relevant for a reading of Zaimoglu's postcolonial poetics of sound to combat patterns of colonial oppression through a critical poetics.[370] Originating in the Caribbean, the pan-African, experimental, anti-colonial movement of *négritude* and creolization too can be used as conceptual tools for understanding the poetics of *Kanak Sprak* in the context of a transnational and pointedly cultural blackness.[371] My approach thus also considers the Turkish-German minority in poetic dialogue with activist alliances of imagined communities of "people of color," which

---

[368] However, her analysis indicates that this re-signification occurred in the early 1990s. Ibid., 283.

[369] The impact of the Haitian revolution on G.W.F. Hegel's work (through his reading of the magazine Minerva, which had covered both the French Revolution and the Haitian revolution) shows such a circulation between the circum-Atlantic, the European world, and its colonies, respectively. In *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History,* Susan Buck-Morss points out the importance of ending the silence on Hegel and Haiti, to the effect of reconsidering an Eurocentric vision of history. Buck-Morss also draws attention to historical anomalies that threaten to destabilize "coherent narratives of Western progress or continuity. In Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 148. Such a circulation of colonial stories and their disavowal (as racial slur and its disavowal through defiant use) might testify not only to histories of subjection but also to common moments of rebellion and contestation of the colonial rule. In a sense, the whole project *Der Black Atlantic,* published by the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, envisions a possible mingling of German and Caribbean pasts and futures. See Tina Campt and Paul Gilroy, *Der Black Atlantic* (Berlin: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2004).

[370] A similar moment of resignification occurred in nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century with Yiddish, as Elizabeth Loetz demonstrates in her article on "Yiddish, Kanak Sprak, Klezmer, and HipHop: Ethnolect, Minority Culture, Multiculturalism, and Stereotype in Germany," in *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 25. 1 (Fall 2006): 33-62. Loetz focuses on the reinscription of difference through the use of "Kanak Sprak" or Yiddish in contexts in which minorities had become indistinguishable from the mainstream. While the use of Yiddish presents an important case of revaluation of language and sound, the argument that "Kanak Sprak" is used to reinscribe difference where difference is lacking is less apt. In my view, transvaluation occurs not as a reinscription of difference, but rather as disidentification, as performative strategy to intervene in the majoritarian public sphere by using damaged stereotypes and transforming them into sites of self-creation. For an analysis of disidentification see José Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics,* 196.

[371] In her 2010 dissertation, Margaret Ruth Jackson argued for a reading of the racial signifier of blackness as transtextual, in the sense articulated by E. Patrick Jackson in his *Appropriating Blackness* as "blackness which does not belong to any individual or group," but is rather appropriated by individuals or groups in order to circumscribe its boundaries or exclude other individuals or groups." Margaret Ruth Jackson, *The Poets of Duisburg: Risk and Hip-Hop Performance in a German Inner City,* Dissertation, Florida State University, 2010. According to Paul Gilroy, poetic scatology pertaining to the Caribbean was replaced in the late 1980s and early 1990s with a self-conscious militant and militarized type of black solidarity and a "hip-hop mentality." Paul Gilroy, *Der Black Atlantic,* eds. Tina Campt and Paul Gilroy (Berlin: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2004). Gilroy notes the relation between Caribbean and African American hip-hop.

have otherwise stressed solidarity between "all racialized people of African, Asian, Latin American, Arabic, Jewish, indigenous, or Pacific background."[372]

Zaimoglu's *Kanak Sprak* mobilizes resistance to hate speech in part by engaging African-American traditions of resistance against racism, but the book also highlights elements drawn from Caribbean and South-Pacific anti-colonialism in the form of resonant sound practices. Whereas Göktürk addresses the "reversal of the ethnographic gaze," (278) and dedicates her analysis exclusively to the register of the visual, *Kanak Sprak*'s resistance to hate speech in the way Zaimoglu presents it is also fundamentally sonic. This is a mode that I would designate as sounding back.[373]

Creolization. Ethnography and the Creole

In his article on "Kolonialer Diskurs und deutsche Literatur," Herbert Uerling mentions that there is no phenomenon in German literature comparable to the creolization or métissage of Francophone, Caribbean, and Latin American literature, despite the hybridization of literary practices present in "migrant literature." Among representatives of the latter he lists Yoko Tawada, Emine Sevgi Özdamar and Feridun Zaimoglu.[374] As Denis-Constant Martin contends, the term "hybridity" retains the

---

[372] See Sara Lennox' observation, according to which an anthology such as *Re-Visionen: Postkoloniale Perspektiven von People of Color auf Rassismus, Kulturpolitik und Widerstand in Deutschland,* ed. Kiên Nghi Hà (Münster: Unrast, 2007) does not include the Turkish-German minority among "people of color," even though some of its authors are of Turkish origin. Sara Lennox, "Postcolonial Writing in Germany," 623.

[373] The reversal of the ethnographic gaze is a common means of the colonized subject to challenge his aggressors. Scholar of postcolonial studies Jahan Ramazani interprets the "inversion of the ethnographic gaze" as a technique of postcolonial writers to "anthropologize" the West. For example, Ugandan poet Okot p'Bitek's *Song of Lawino* uses techniques of defamiliarization to draw attention to seemingly irrational aspects of Western behavior. For example, Jahan Ramazani, *The Hybrid Muse,* 167. In his analysis of *Kanak Sprak,* Tom Cheesman also talks about the "inversion of the ethnographic gaze." See "Talking 'Kanak': Zaimoglu contra *Leitkultur,*" 2004: 86.

[374] "Hybridity" is one of the terms institutionalized in postcolonial studies by Homi Bhabha, who uses it to refer to transformation incurred in the language of masters by the very process of domination. For Bhabha, the colonized subject produces an unresolvable problem of cultural difference within colonial

187

stamp of an original meaning and cannot be used to analyze creative dynamics because of its retained rigidity. Denis Martin contrasts static hybridity with dynamic "creolization."[375] Creolization of some sort has been, however, sporadically mentioned in relation to German literature or with *Kanak Sprak*.[376] In an essay from 2001, writer Maxim Biller described migrants in terms of a *Kreolen Melange*, which he set in opposition to ethnic Germans, the *Gen-Deutschen*.[377] In an article published in the same year, Zaimoglu took a stand against Maxim Biller's notion of *Kreolen Melange*, which he considered to be modeled on racist vocabulary.[378] Zaimoglu's reference to Creole in the composition of "Kanak Sprak" mentions the term mélange, yet operates in reverse of Biller's binarist description of the term. Zaimoglu also shifts the focus from ethnic and racial identity to linguistic form. Zaimoglu refers to "Kanak Sprak" as a mixture of underground code and idiosyncratic jargon, which contains,

cultures of authority. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 33. See also Robert Young's comment on hybridity and its transformation from a racial into a cultural theory. Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995). Other theorists account for hybridity as a site of productivity where identity's fragmentary nature is accepted and negotiated, but these scholars also criticize hybridity from the point of view of "forced assimilation" or "cultural mimicry." See José Muñoz, *Disidentifications, Queers of Color and the Performance of* Politics (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 78-79.

[375] See Denis-Constant Martin, "The Musical Heritage of Slavery: From Creolization to 'World Music,' in *Music and Globalization: Critical Encounters,* ed. Bob W. White (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012), 35.

[376] See Martin Hager's interview with Feridun Zaimoglu, *Die Tageszeitung,* 6. 28 (August 2000): 230. Hager mentions Glissant and the phenomenon of creolization in the Caribbean as analogous to the mixture of cultures in Germany after the first *Gastarbeiter* arrived and after initiation of work-related migration following the fall of the Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

[377] Maxim Biller, "Wir sind zwei Volk! Über stolze Gen-Deutsche und die Frage, warum unser Land jetzt eine Ausländerpartei braucht." In: *MAX/08* (2001). www.max.de/reportagen/maxim_biller. Accessed on May 1st, 2013.

[378] Feridun Zaimoglu, "Antwort auf die Auslaenderpartei." In *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* 25.4.2001. Anette Seidel-Arpaci referenced the debate between Biller and Zaimoglu around the notion of creole in her article on "Kant in 'Deutsch-Samoa' and Gollwitz: 'Hospitalität' und Selbst-Positionierung in einem deutschen Kontext," in *Spricht die Subalterne deutsch?* With "creoles" Biller raises awareness of a variety of migrants and non-migrants who do not fit into existing racial and ethnic categories. Yet, as Seidel-Arpaci points out, Biller's creoles seem in opposition to authentic Germans. Biller's "Kreolen-Melange" thus relies to a considerable extent on elements of exoticization of the foreigner. *Seidel Arpaci,* 203.

among others, a *rotwelsch* of secret codes and signs.[379] The term "Creole" was used in the former Spanish, French and Portuguese colonies to refer to natives of European blood or to natives of mixed blood and it is derived from the Latin "creare," which means create or raise.[380] The Barbadian poet Edward K. Brathwaite traces the term to the Spanish *criar* (to create, imagine, found, or settle) and *colon* (a colonist, a founder, a settler).[381] For Glissant, "Creole" reflects a process of liberation of the body, and is deeply connected with sound, as scream released upon liberation.[382] When reflecting on the alleged transition from the oral to the written in the process of colonization, Glissant proposes the term "non-written," to express that which refuses itself to writing. This "non-written" is compared by Glissant to speed and "jumbled rush," which allow creole to be inaccessible to the masters.[383]

"Kanak Sprak," a language turned impenetrable through sound, and that relies on the destruction of material tapes, refuses itself to a hegemonic speaker. Rap-like sentences, alliterative speech ("das wippen und wappen des lauts", 127) euphonic constructions and repetitions such as "die fotzedadiefotzedadiefotzeda" or transcriptions of speech ("n'hasse-mal-ne-mark penner") contribute to such sonic opacity. Poetic rhythmic repetitions such as ["Bist du'n lamm, fressen sie dich, bist du'n kleiner fisch, fressen sie dich, bist du ohne kodex, fressen sie dich" (41)]

---

[379] *Kanak Sprak,* 13. For a detailed analysis of Zaimoglu's use of language see Yasemin Yildiz's chapter in *Beyond the Mother Tongue. The Postmonolingual Tradition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 169-203.

[380] See Annette Seidel-Arpaci, "Kant in 'Deutsch-Samoa' und Gollwitz: 'Hospitalität' umd Selbst-Positionierung in einem deutschen Kontext," Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodriguez, Hito Steyerl, eds., *Spricht die Subalterne deutsch? Migration und postkoloniale Kritik*, 209.

[381] Edward Kamau Brathwaite, *Contradictory Omens: Cultural Diversity and Integration in the Caribbean* (1974), cited in Shalini Puri, *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity* (New York: Pallgrave Macmillan, 2004), 61.

[382] Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 123.

[383] Ibid, 124.

transpose the text into multiple performative units. For Zaimoglu, sound is incorporated into the text as rhythmic beat. Analyzing the publication of *Kanak Sprak* as a linguistic experiment, Yasemin Yildiz distinguishes this experiment from those emerging in a colonial or postcolonial context as a result of an imposed language. [384] For Yildiz, *Kanak Sprak* evidences a moment of linguistic appropriation "as a response to linguistic dispossession," which, paradoxically, does not find its correspondent in the streets, the place where one would expect such a moment of appropriation to be reflected. [385] In Yildiz' view, the difference of "Kanak Sprak" from the language of postcolonial subjects is that its speakers do not create it in order to come to terms with oppression but rather in order to claim a "withheld" language, which takes the contours of an invented language. [386] Although "Kanak Sprak" might be a unique vernacular, as Yildiz describes it, I argue that its underlying motivation entails a connection to transnational forms of linguistic protest rather than a self-generational mechanism "without sources elsewhere" in the sense proposed by Yildiz. [387]

Yildiz acknowledges "Kanak Sprak" as an instance of racialized and gendered language, yet she also describes it as a mode of (male) "self-generation, without reference to parents and other affiliations." [388] When distinguishing between language in postcolonial situations and "Kanak Sprak," Yildiz references a few instances of

---

[384] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 181.
[385] Yildiz, *Ibid.,* 173.
[386] Yildiz uses the term "withheld" to distinguish it from a language imposed from the outside. *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 181. Yet, the desire for a withheld language points to an identity-based longing.
[387] Yildiz borrows the term "synthetic vernacular" from Matthew Hart. See Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 173. The exact term used by Yildiz is "male self-generation without sources elsewhere" (173).

Anglo-Saxon and Latin-American case studies to illustrate postcolonial linguistic dimensions. Yildiz does not include creolization as a possible categorical tool of analysis for the colonial and postcolonial linguistic situation, although she mentions the case of a Caribbean writer, the Martinican Raphael Confiant.[389] The author chosen by her is one of the co-authors of a relatively recent manifesto of "creoleness," which Glissant considers an identity-based construction and which he contrasts with creolization.[390] I argue that, if we shift our focus to "Kanak Sprak" as creolization, in the sense proposed by Glissant, as a transnational and counterhegemonic construct, then many other relevant intersecting linguistic and historical legacies are made possible. In my reading, I will focus in particular on the imaginative relations between Turkish-German and Afro-Caribbean cultural practices as contemporary forms of creolization.

Recent scholarship on creolization has expanded its scope from particular colonial sites and moments of world history to "many forms of cultural contact, including both reciprocal and asymmetrical exchanges across a wide range of cultural

---

[388] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 182. Yildiz mentions the "historical depth" of the linguascape she envisions, yet she keeps the figure of "self-generation" and "detachment" in place. See, Ibid., 192.

[389] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 180. Yildiz claims that *Kanak Sprak* is different from Confiant's language, for instance, through a different relation to language. Confiant's language displaying a mode of contamination of high and low literature. Yet, in my view, such a division, even as amalgamation, is erased with *Kanak Sprak,* in which high and low, avant-garde and creole no longer stand as separate entities.

[390] The manifesto "In Praise of Creoleness" by Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau, and Raphael Confiant defines creoleness as "the interactional or transactional aggregate of Caribbean, African, Asian, and Levantine cultural elements, united in the same soil by the yoke of history" (1990: 891) but they contrast creoleness with "negritude," which allegedly replaced the illusion of Europe with an African illusion. "In Praise of Creoleness," trans. Mohamed B. Taleb Khyar, in *Callaloo* 1990, 13: 886-909. For an account of Glissant's criticism of "In Praise of Creoleness" see Dominique Chancé, in *The Creolization of Theory,* 264. In Chancé's view, creolization overcomes identity-based constructions such as Creoleness and *négritude*. I will address relevant aspects of *négritude* later in this chapter.

formations."[391] Such scholarship allows us to regard "creolization" as a transhistorical

phenomenon. If in cultural studies the term "creolization" carries a trace of

domination, subalternity and hierarchy (Stuart Hall), Martinican scholar Édouard

Glissant defines it rather as a spatial construct, through which the subject can be both

"rooted and open" beyond the shock of a colonial encounter.[392] In Glissant's words,

creolization means the bringing into contact, in some place in the world, of two or

more cultures, or at least of two or more elements of distinct cultures, in such a way

that a new state of affairs ensues that is totally unpredictable when compared with the

mere synthesis or sum of these.[393] A productive example of the relation between

creolization and theory is provided by Fatima El-Tayeb, who accounts in the field of

contemporary ethnic studies for European diasporas in terms of "situational

communities" meant to replace "root identity," which she derives from Glissant's

---

[391] *The Creolization of Theory*, ed. Francoise Lionnet and Shu-Mei Shih (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011), 1. The interdisciplinary work of scholars such as Shu-Mei Shi and Françoise Lionnet explores experiential and analytical valences of the term "creolization," which in their view offers alternatives to postmodernism and area studies against the latter's pragmatic and empirical emphases. According to these scholars, creolization likewise presents "alternatives to theories of globalization and the universalizing use of French Theory in American academia with its quasi exclusion of ethnic studies, race or gender studies." Ibid., 6. The sense in which the editors Lionnet and Shih use the term creolization is as "forced transculturation." Ibid., 6. For volume contributor Barnor Hesse, "creolization" should not be strictly associated with French Caribbean models. Ibid., 37. The volume testifies to this imperative, in that it does not limit the notion of creolization to the French Caribbean space.

[392] Stuart Hall, "Creolization, Diaspora, and Hybridity in the Context of Globalization," Okwui Enwezor ed., *Creolité and Creolization* (Ostfildernruit: Hatje Cabtze, 2003), 185-198. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation,* 34.

[393] Cited in Denis-Constant Martin, "The Musical Heritage of Slavery," 37. Glissant makes an important distinction between Creolization and Creoleness; the latter is for him an identity reduction to "Frenchness, negritudes, or other generalizing concepts." *Poetics of Relation,* 89. Glissant's definition both relies on and has inspired other debates on creolization in Caribbean spaces. In 1977 Kamau Brathwaite proposed the idea of "negative or regressive creolization," marked by a rejection of relations of subordination between whites and blacks and the desire to unearth elements of an ancestral culture to preserve the unique identity of a group. Edward Kamau Brathwaite, "Caliban, Ariel, and Prospero in the Conflict of Creolization: A Study of the Slave Revolt in Jamaica in 1831-32," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1997, 292: 41-62 (54).

Caribbean Discourse (1989).[394] Another term El-Tayeb borrows from Glissant in order to reflect on diasporic identities in Europe is "relationship" as a structural term; however, this relationship as articulated by El-Tayeb focuses mainly on African-American influences and does not fully account for the impact of other forms of black solidarity (e.g. Afro-Caribbean) on contemporary European diasporic culture.[395] While El-Tayeb employs Glissant's terminology, she uses creolization mostly in a metaphorical sense, without highlighting specific relations between Afro-Caribbean and Turkish-German diasporas.

However, I want to highlight that creolization is first and foremost a sonic and theatrical phenomenon.[396] The sound dimension of creolization I want to foreground also borrows from Glissant's earlier notion of "antillanité," defined as the desire for a "cross-cultural imagination" and "polyphony."[397] Through "antillanité," as he did with "creole," Glissant defines this orality as a form of resistance against the written.[398] This resistance against the written reflects the desire of the subaltern to respond to a postcolonial context in sonic terms.

---

[394] *Queering Ethnicity*, 79. In *Poetics of Relation,* too, Glissant contrasts "identity as root" to "identity as relation" and notes that identity as root relies on a myth about the making of the world, rooted in a distant past, whereas identity as relation establishes identity by means of contact with other cultures. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 212.

[395] A general focus on the American nation as source of black consciousness to the exclusion of forms of blackness in other areas is also noted by the editors of the collection *Global Circuits of Blackness: Interrogating the African Diaspora*, ed. Jean Rahier, Percy C. Hintzen and Felipe Smith (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010), xiv. El-Tayeb does comment, however, on Audre Lorde and Édouard Glissant as important influences for Afro-German cultures. In his article published in *Black Europe,* Alexander Weheliye draws attention, however, to the necessity to look beyond the Afro-American model for a reading of European diasporic forms. Alexander Weheliye, "My Volk to Come: Peoplehood in Recent Diaspora and Afro-German Popular Music," in *Black Europe and the African Diaspora,* ed. Darlene Clark Hine, Tricia Danielle Keaton and Stephanie Small (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 161-180.

[396] For a study of "the musical heritage of slavery" see Denis-Constant Martin in *Music and Globalization: Critical Encounters,* ed. Bob W. White (Indiana, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 17-39. Martin sees two lines of cross-fertilization between North America and South Africa.

[397] Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), xliii.

In my interpretation, creolization highlights not a withheld language, which would suggest a tacit desire for German, but a more extensive phenomenon of resonance between lingering and racialized colonial histories, linguistic gestures derived from African American and Afro-Caribbean traditions of sound, and subcultural avant-garde poetic forms intervening in an allegedly raceless German society.[399] With the term "subcultural avant-garde poetic forms I am seeking to displace common assumptions of creole as a language suited rather for popular subculture than for the avant-garde.[400] Such an analysis responds to the call of the anthology *Not the Other Avant-Garde,* which asks for a reconsideration of the avant-garde from the perspective of performance (studies) outside an Eurocentric frame.[401] What are the elements that characterize "Kanak Sprak" as both creole and avant-garde, which are usually thought in opposition to each other?

In his *History of the Voice,* Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite defines creole (especially in the Anglophone space) as a symbolic deviation from the imposed poetic

---

[398] Édouard Glissant, *Le Discours Antillais*, 33.

[399] On contemporary racelessness see Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2009). Fatima El-Tayeb describes Europe as a "colorblind continent in which difference is marked along lines of nationality and ethnicized Others are routinely ascribed a position outside the nation, allowing the permanent externalization and thus silencing of a debate on the legacy of racism and colonialism. Fatima El-Tayeb, *European Others,* 14-15.

[400] Noland and Watten argue in their introduction that creole is rather suited for popular subculture than for the avant-garde. Carrie Noland, Barrett Watten, ed. *Diasporic Avantgardes*, 146. Their anthology also distinguishes between a Western avant-garde and an avant-garde in the Americas, which is somewhat contrary to the principle of creolization in the favor of which the editors ultimately argue. Ibid., 7.

[401] For the editors James M. Harding and John Rouse, a break with the past in avant-garde terms also coincided with the "emergence of a postcolonial identity" and "with a fundamental rethinking of the historical narratives produced and maintained by Western cultural assumptions." James M. Harding, John Rouse, ed. *Not the Other Avant-Garde: The Transnational Foundations of Avant-Garde Performance* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006). The book uses a study of performance to reconceptualize the avant-garde in periods, spaces and cultures that have not received attention so far. Examples include the avant-garde and performance cultures in Africa or avant-garde drama in the Middle East.

pentameter.[402] For him, creole emerges as breakdown of pentameter rhythm through a process that includes a non-conventional vocabulary of nature. He writes: "the hurricane does not roar in pentameters (10)." His point is that this playfulness with sound in the Caribbean creates a language that rejects what he calls "the caricature of dialect" (13), while preserving its own rhythm. "Kanak Sprak"'s flow is a deviation from accustomed rhythms as well as conventions of representation. Its flow does not reflect conventional punctuation and cadence or the type of speech normally associated with Turkish immigrants. In fact, as Yasemin Yildiz observes, Turkish is quasi non-existent in "Kanak Sprak."[403] By truncating words and deviating from conventional syntax, Zaimoglu's *Kanak Sprak* reflects, as one critic has observed, a rapport with the avant-gardes, in particular with their anti-bourgeois character and their destruction of language.[404] While this claim remains very general and highlights Zaimoglu's political stance (as opposed to an apolitical type of literature developed since 1989 in rejection of the 1968 generation), it nonetheless points to new avenues for criticism, which I would like to develop more fully here.

As Kristen Prinz observes, Zaimoglu's transgenerational criticism reflected in the political nature of his text(s), both polemicizes with the a-historical nature of Generation Golf (n.b. also called Generation X) and establishes a rapport to the avant-

---

[402] Kamau Brathwaite, *History of the Voice: The Development of Nation Language in Anglophone Caribbean Poetry* (London: New Beacon Books, 1984), 9.

[403] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 183.

[404] Kirsten Prinz, "Zum Generationenbegriff in der 'türkischdeutschen' Literatur," in Andrea Geier und Jan Süselbeck, ed., *Konkurrenzen, Konflikte, Kontinuitäten: Generationenfragen in der Literatur seit 1990* (Goettingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2009), 195. Glissant's stylistic imperative towards opacity (as opposed to transparency) seems to find a correlate in Zaimoglu's syntax, which dispels easy decoding. Glissant defines transparency as a reduction of otherness and an embrace of Western requirements for transparency as surveillance. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 189. The early 1990s in West German literature were also marked by an allergy against politically motivated literature, dubbed *Gesinnungsästhetik.* Frank Schirrmacher, Ulrich Greiner and Karlheinz Bohrer were among the critics involved in the debate.

gardes, in particular to their non-bourgeois character and their disassembling of language.[405] Prinz' frame of reference is likely the European avant-gardes. The "protocols" appeal, however, to contradictions within the notion of avant-garde itself, I contend. Such contradictions include at least two aspects. First, the pairing of *creatio ex nihilo* and repetition: the self-fashioning of the speaking subject as god and creator versus the repetition of certain musical and aesthetic conventions such as rap and the play with multiple accounts of origin. Rapper Ali's protocol, which recounts the beginning of "rap times" (27), accounts for rap's commercial success and pleads for a form of commodified musical creation.[406] Zaimoglu's other stories of creation in the text create the opposite effect, of creation out of nothingness, as in the tautological rhyme of the protocol "Ich bin, wer ich bin," in which Hasan the drifter tells a story of an apocalyptic creation that perpetuates contagiously: "im anfang war schlick, und der kam irgendmal an die reihe, puste, gottes ureigene heilige puste kam da rein und brachte ordentlich ordnung in den matsch, war wohl wie eine gute infektion (91)." Hasan himself is removed from the universal story of creation he improvises in the beginning. The general public wants him elsewhere, in his own secluded space: "(...) sie meinen nicht, dass du in derselben gegend hängst wie sie, sie sagen, du bist die gegend, und das musst du erstmal in den kopf kriegen (93)." By

---

[405] Kirsten Prinz, "Zum Generationenbegriff in der 'türkischdeutschen' Literatur," in *Generationen*, 195.

[406] The beginning of the third testimony reads "im anfang der rap-times." This points to a mythical origin of rap, but goes on to embed this origin in other cultures and traditions. On commodification and repetition in rap culture, Tricia Rose analyzes rap's use of sampling technology and looped rhythmic lines, coupled with its significant commercial presence and asks whether rap's use of repetition in rhythm and sound organization is a "by-product of the parameters of industrial production." Rose does not suggest that black music forms such as rap and hip hop supersede industrial production but she regards them as possible means to subvert it. Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 64; 72. Rap's use of sampling technology, looped rhythmic lines, coupled with its significant commercial presence raises questions, in Tricia Rose's view, of the relationship between industrial imperatives and their impact on cultural production. Tricia Rose, *Black Noise*, 64, 72.

recounting a story of creation of which he is not a part, Hasan highlights the removal of the postcolonial subject into another space.[407] This form of impossibility of spatial simultaneity echoes the unthinkable co-existence between avant-garde (as a Western privileged construct) and creole as a form of anticolonial language developed in the Caribbean. "Kanak Sprak" transgresses the norms of punctuation and word composition, as it questions the boundaries between subjects relegated in their own space and the time of the present.[408] If creole is a violation of the pentameter, in Brathwaite's sense, "Kanak Sprak" does similar things with a sonorous and boisterous poetic language that deviates from prior ethnographic norms of representation and localization of Turks as social subjects.

The beat "strikes out" the presumed untranslatability that Petra Fachinger describes as constitutive of postcolonial writing: "the choice of leaving words untranslated in postcolonial texts is a political act."[409] In contriving his *Kanak Sprak* vocabulary, Zaimoglu suggests rather that untranslated words, which Fachinger understands as means of "authenticity," are in fact techniques of Orientalization: "Dieser Folklore-Falle musste meine Nachdichtung entgehen" (14). As Yildiz also emphasizes, Zaimoglu does not leave words untranslated but recomposes them into a poetic idiom.[410] He uses sound gestures and spoken word performance to evade the folkloric tendencies of contemporary Orientalism and to expose the stereotypes about

---

[407] On the topic of the time and space lag of the translation of modernity into postcoloniality, see Homi K. Bhabha, "' Race,' Time and the Revision of Modernity," *The Location of Culture* (Routledge: London and New York, 1994).

[408] See, for instance, the elisions of words, apocopes, aphareses. Examples are "ne" instead of "eine," "is" instead of "is," "orntlich" instead of "ordentlich, or "mit'm'mund" instead of "mit dem Mund." See Matteo Galli, "Feridun Zaimoglu-der Schriftsteller als Dealer." In Auteri, Aura/Cottone, Margherita (ed.) *Deutsche Kultur und Islam am Mittelmeer: Akten der Tagung*, Palermo, 13.-15. November 2003 (Goeppingen: Kümmerle, 2005).

[409] Fachinger, *Rewriting Germany from the Margins,* 45.

Turks and migrants in general as circulated in mainstream German media. Zaimoglu's use of language indicts authentic Turkish words as merely decorative: "the Kanak does not master entirely his 'mother tongue' and 'Alemanisch' is accessible to him but in part."[411] Zaimoglu's favored secession from the "mother tongue" is indicative of a detour from ethnic readings; the ideal of defolkloration is a pursuit he shares with Brathwaite's definition of the creole as rejection of dialect as caricature. In articulating his poetics of creolization, Glissant had also spoken of defolkloration as the goal of his own sound poetics. Such defolkloration as liberation from ethnographic conventions alters the conventions of text and speech expected from "Kanak Sprak."

Right from its introduction, *Kanak Sprak* defies commmentators' tentative efforts at interpreting it in an ethnographic key.[412] The symbolic gesture of "destroying the tapes" on which the interviews were based as communicated by an auctorial "I" in the introduction, precludes ethnographic accounts that would remove the *Kanak* to a distant time and space. Despite highlighting in his introduction the visual, monadic and impenetrable character of the linguistic construct he proposes (*Sprachbild*), Zaimoglu allows a sonic residue that remains unarticulated in this image to unfold in an audible manner in the protocols that follow, namely, in the rhythm and beat peculiar to his accounts and characters. Zaimoglu asks his readers to consider the "Protokolle" as recordings and thus to treat them as sonic objects, yet he also imagines a scene of live listening. Zaimoglu's preference for live accounts and listening is

---

[410] Yildiz' focus, is, however, on what she calls a monolingual idiom with a multilingual effect. Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 179.

[411] *Kanak Sprak,* 13. The translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

[412] Fachinger's uncertainty about terminology reflects the scholars' dilemma about the exact status of ethnography in Zaimoglu's texts. Fachinger oscillates between calling the protocols ethnographic documents and putting scare-quotes to the ethnographic method employed by Zaimoglu. See Petra Fachinger, *Rewriting Germany from the Margins,* 104.Cheesman, for instance, calls Zaimoglu's

clearly distinguishable from ethnographic accounts that privilege written documentation of native informants.[413] At times, the interlocutor in *Kanak Sprak* is characterized as mute [du bist stumm] (57), at other times the protocol speaker gets familiar with a "brother" whom he summons to write down the answers in his notebook: "(…) [also schreib das man wie ne wichtige eintragung] (89). In *Kanak Sprak,* the invisible interlocutor, collector and participant observer, is called "brother," and is summoned to listen: "you hear this from me, brother" (96). In Gayatri Spivak's interpretation of other texts and contexts, the native informant in ethnography is the figure that provides data to be interpreted by a knowing subject for reading. This site made accessible by the ethnographic informant and meant to be read and constructed by a reading subject is the object of Spivak's criticism. Zaimoglu redefines such objects of ethnographic inquiry from a site to be read into one to be heard. By offering material for the ear rather than for the eye, Zaimoglu's subjects seem to serve a different purpose from the one of conventional ethnography and thus defy what Spivak describes as the postcolonial masquerading of the native informant position, which implies a misuse of listening as a technique of inquiry.[414]

Zaimoglu's transformation of written ethnography through emphatic aurality follows in the footsteps of Johannes Fabian's call for a turn "from informative to

---

subjects in *Kanak Sprak,* "ethnographic informants." Tom Cheesman, "Akçam-Zaimoglu-'Kanak Attak': Turkish Lives and Letters in German," in *German Life and Letters* 55:2 (April 2002: 187.

[413] Fanon's account of colonial diseases uses the ethnographic method of native informants. See Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Hamdsworth: Penguin, 1967).

[414] Edward Said, "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors," *Critical Inquiry 15* (1989): 220. See also Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 49. As I will demonstrate, Zaimoglu's accounts provide a critique of other types of sound-based ethnography as well. By contrast to the sound recordings in the Humboldt *Lautarchiv,* his accounts defy ethnography through sound.

performative ethnography," which foregrounds listening and the ear.[415] If ethnographic reports have an oral character, which means they are meant to be read aloud, Zaimoglu's text, mediated by apostrophe, replaces orality through aurality, something also meant to be listened to.[416] The term aurality is defined by Veit Erlmann as a phenomenon that considers both "the materiality of perception" and "the conditions that must be given for something to become recognized, labeled and valorized as audible in first place."[417] The direct address in Zaimoglu's text establishes a rapport with an external other, yet whose goal does not seem to be the creation of a homogenous commmunity of understanding; such a rapport of incommensurability of communication has been called by Naoki Sakai and Jon Solomon a "heterolingual address."[418] In Sakai and Solomon's understanding, "heterolingual address" does not rely on a spatialized distribution of the foreign, which, according to them, is peculiar to hermeneutics and its creation of delimited spaces of inside and outside, in which "each horizon must first be sanitized of the foreign contamination and sanitized."[419] This definition of heterolingual address as impossibility of separation also shows why the spaces of the *Kanak* and the spaces of hegemonic others cannot be separated, a

---

[415] Johannes Fabian, *Power and Performance: Ethnographic Explorations through Proverbial Wisdom and Theater in Shaba, Zaire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 3. As Dwight Conquergood demonstrates, Fabian's approach has likely been influenced by Frederick Douglas's protest performances of enslaved people from *My Bondage and My Freedom.* See Dwight Conquergood, "Interventions and Radical Research," The Performance Studies Reader, ed. Henry Bial (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 315.

[416] For a discussion of apostrophe as performative act, see Irene Kacandes, "Apostrophe: Talk as Performance," in *Talk Fiction: Literature and the Talk Explosion* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

[417] Veit Erlmann, *Reason and Resonance: A History of Modern Aurality* (New York: New Zone Books, 2010), 17-18.

[418] According to Naoki Sakai and Jon Solomon, this mode of address does not presuppose the homogeneity of a community and is consistent with a heterolingual address as opposed to a hermeneutic homosocial one, *Translation, Biopolitics, Colonial Difference,* ed. Naoki Sakai and Jon Solomon (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006), 8. One of the purposes of the two editors is to combat a notion of relation based on equivalence of West with the non-West. Ibid., 18.

[419] Ibid., 8.

condition Hasan deplores but against which he can only react by means of apostrophe. Another instance we can read as heterolingual address is the *Kanak* interpretation of the Cartesian statement tracing the Western binarism between ratio and the world. Instead of using the Cartesian statement "I think, therefore I am" to express existential certainty, Zaimoglu, through a *Kanak* voice, hints at the performative permutation "I show, therefore I am." The Kanak exact words are: "I show and create presence" [in the German original, "Ich zeige und erzeuge Präsenz" (14).][420] In the preface of the book, the body of the *Kanak* features prominently and statuarily in a "freeze," an improvised pose typical of hip-hop[421]: "Die weit ausholenden Arme, das geerdete linke Standbein und das mit der Schuhspitze scharrende rechte Spielbein bedeuten dem Gegenüber, dass der Kanake in diesem Augenblick auf eine rege Unterhaltung grossen Wert legt." (13). Against the schematic outline and limited inscription exemplified by Zaimoglu's "strickmaenneken aus teppich," which Adelson analyzes at length, the freeze pose breaks the beat and constructs a rhythm of its own by furnishing to the breaker an alternative identity.[422] The unrealistic figure of the "strickmaenneken" (stick figure; literally: little man drawing) is replaced in Kanak Sprak by a breaker pose, equally frozen. Yet hip-hop and surreptitious sound resound

---

[420] As Adelson demonstrates, it is the imagined failed powers of speech of the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* that prompt Bhabha to turn his presence into an icon or trope. By reinventing the Turk as performative presence, Zaimoglu reclaims powers of speech from the register of iconicity. Leslie A. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn*, 98. My reading provides additional sources for understanding the component of speech not tied exclusively to gesture, but also to hip hop sound. Adelson provides a reading of presence by focusing her analysis on the way *Kanak Sprak* lends voice and visibility to a certain type of "presence" through posture. Yet her use of the category of voice is mostly a symbolic one. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn,* 98.

[421] See Tricia Rose's description of the freeze. *Black Noise*, 47.

[422] Adelson develops certain key theses in *The Turkish Turn* by elaborating on Claudia Brodsky Lacour's repositioning of the place of Descartes in Europe. For Brodsky-Lacour, Descartes's method of drawing a line yields a figure "with no worldly analogue." Adelson applies this in turn to the literary figures and "touching tales" of Turkish migration she analyzes, including relevant lines "drawn in thought" in *Kanak Sprak.*

in the background, since they empower the *Kanak* to such poses and self-definitions. In contrast to the unisonant national community outlined by Benedict Anderson in his *Imagined Communities,* which relies on songs and poetry to build an identity that may transcend borders but ultimately depends on a national model, Zaimoglu's work uses poetic sound to anchor the *Kanak* in relations of social antagonism and protest, with the potential of connections and affiliations that transect national coordinates.[423] The dissonant "Kanak Sprak" claims its own beat in a non-homogeneous space and time, which the *Kanak* freezes at will and animates then through textual sound. The generic dicta "I show and create presence" and "I am what I am" (Hasan) are modes of heterolingual address, through which the speaker transcends the imposition of separate vocal spaces, as he challenges through artistic practice other forms of Western binaries such as color, space, and time.[424]

The modern tendency to construct space for "others" according to a colonial logic of progress is identified by Bhabha as "catachresis."[425] Catachresis, according to Bhabha, facilitates an interruption in the logic of colonial coherence by defamiliarizing colonial vectors of articulation in time and space. In Judith Butler's understanding, echoed in Gayatri Spivak's postcolonial interpretation, catachresis originates where terms that have traditionally signified in certain ways are

---

[423] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* revised edition (London/New York: Verso, 2006), 145.
[424] The coordinate of gender comes forth more prominently only in the story of the transsexual Azize and her unsettled identity. On a textual level, the spatial separation is expressed through the statement "Du bist die gegend," which radicalizes the notion of difference in Hasan's account from *Kanak Sprak*: "Paβ auf, sie meinen nicht, daβ du in derselben gegend hängst wie sie, sie sagen, du bist die gegend, und das muβt du erstmal in den kopf kriegen" (93).
[425] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture,* 242.

misappropriated for other purposes.[426] The primary example of catachresis in *Kanak Sprak* is the word "Misstöne" of the subtitle (discordant sounds or dissonances).[427] *Misstöne* refers in the first instance to the discordant/dissonant voices of anti-bourgeois criticism articulated in the "protocols," but the word also alludes implicitly to a missing object, the tapes on which testimonies have been recorded. According to media theorist Dieter Mersch, the figure of catachresis is a figure of impossibility that becomes newly committed to language. He writes: "Die Figur der Katachrese bildet eine logische Unmöglichkeit. Sie sucht etwas zu sagen, wofür noch kein Name existiert, was unsagbar bleibt und wofür eine Sprache erst gefunden werden muss: Sie lässt Neues aufscheinen."[428] Through the mismatch inherent in this figure, Zaimoglu expresses several registers of apparent impossibility such as the transformation of stigmas into weapons. For instance, a pop singer in one of the protocols bears a false "mark of Cain" (kainsmal) on his forehead and between his blond eyebrows. The correspondent of Cain's brand for the *Kanak* is "the burned-in mark" (brandstempel auf der stirn) (195), which singles out the *Kanak* from other persons. The burned-in mark is a possible punning allusion to murderous attacks against Turkish immigrants in Moelln and Solingen, while *Stempel* likely conjures up deeply ingrained German bureaucracy. In his postcolonial analysis of the scar as a recurrent motif in the works

---

[426] Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, 144. See also Gayatri Spivak, "In a Word. Interview" with Ellen Rooney, in *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies,* 1.2 (summer 1989), 124-56.

[427] The word "Misstöne" also reminisces of the "Misslaute" used to define assimilated Jews on German stages. In her *Ethnic Drag,* Katrin Sieg the genre of the Jew Farces, meant to deride Jewish "racial mimicry" but also to hyperbolize their speech, in particular their sounding. See Katrin Sieg, *Ethnic Drag*, 40-41.

[428] See Dieter Mersch, *Ereignis und Aura: Untersuchungen zu einer Ästhetik des Performativen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002), 198. Related to the logic of forms not yet committed to representation because no critical vocabulary had yet been invented, see Leslie A. Adelson's interpretation of Zaimoglu in "Touching Tales" and *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Toward a New Critical Grammar of Migration* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

of Saint Lucian writer Derek Walcott, Jahan Ramazani remarks that the scar stands for cultural hybridity, since it points to cultural convergence in the Americas without effacing its violent genesis.[429] Ramazani also interprets the scar counter-intuitively as a "racially unmarked interiority that erupts as exteriority."[430] For Zaimoglu, the phonetic correlate of scarred identity is the rapping *Kanak* style itself. When Akay from the flea market claims that "unser stil ist so verdammt nigger" (25), he transforms a racialized scar into a performative weapon. Akay chants in a rhythmic, musical, anaphoric style about living in a ghetto:

> Honey, ich liefere dir den rechten zusammenhang, du willst es wissen, ich geb dir das verschissene wissen: wir sind hier allesamt nigger, wir haben unser ghetto, wir schleppen's überall hin, wir dampfen fremdländisch, unser schweiss ist nigger, unser leben ist nigger, die goldketten sind nigger, unsere zinken und unsere fressen und unser stil ist nigger, unsere zinken und unser eigner stil ist so verdammt nigger, dass wir wie blöde an unsrer haut kratzen, und dabei kapieren wir, dass zum nigger nicht die olle pechhaut gehört, aber zum nigger gehört ne ganze menge anderssein und andres leben.[431]

Here Zaimoglu de-essentializes the connection between the racial attribute nigger and skin color by explaining its derogatory nuances as motivated by social conditions of exclusion. Consequently, the *Kanak* appropriates this estranged status as blackness and then exudes it as body sweat "unser schweiss ist nigger", providing a definition of blackness as alterity not tied to skin color.[432] Through anaphors and repetitions, the locally anchored context established by Akay proclaims a community that raps from

---

[429] Jahan Ramazani, *The Hybrid Muse,* 65.
[430] Ramazani, Ibid.
[431] Feridun Zaimoglu, *Kanak Sprak*, 25.
[432] "Unser schweiss ist nigger" is also possibly a pun on "Negerschweiss, a colloquial term for Coca cola, a commodified racist term showing the importation of racism in Germany via an American trajectory. See Sander L. Gilman, *On Blackness without Blacks,* xii.

the Turkish to the American ghettos and highlights the decalations of modernity as difference (*anderssein und andres leben).* The mode of address here is heterolingual, in the sense that is does not rely on the homogeneity of a harmonious community but allows here blackness to emerge as a form that unsettles any alleged homogeneity between a speaker and an addressee: "Das ist die niggernummer, kumpel, es gibt die saubere kanakentour und die schmutzige, was auch immer du anstellen magst, den fremdländer kannst du nimmer aus der fresse wischen" (26). Through the invocation of a "kumpel" who performs an exteriority identified through the self-denigrating "niggernummer," the text inverts the registers of alterity and identification. A radical aural alterity haunts Zaimoglu's text ("den fremdländer kannst du nimmer aus der fresse wischen") and also troubles the hermeneutic division of inside and outside through this heterolingual address in which identities are unsettled through subcultural and yet highly experimental aesthetic practices. Zaimoglu himself terms his technique, which claims the authenticity of the collected materials and identities, "new realism;" according to him, the term opposes mainstream culture and promotes "ethnicization," not as a return to ethnicity but as a redefinion of notions of origin and roots as not tied to national heritage. If we were to compare strategies of construction of the *Kanak* origin with what Paul Gilroy considers the redefinition of modern black political culture: in both cases a shift of interest emerges from a definition of culture and identity in terms of roots and rootedness, modeled on European paradigms, to a process of movement and mediation. [433]

---

[433] "Die Entmystifizierung ist eingeleitet, der Weg zu einem neuen Realismus gelegt. Inmitten der Mainstreamkultur entstehen die ersten rohen Entwürfe für eine ethnizistische Struktur in Deutschland." *Gründe der Empörung: Feridun Zaimoglu im Gespräch mit Anja Duerrschmidt* in *Theater der Zeit: Zeitschrift für Politik und Theater* 57 (2002), 2, 14-15. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 19.

Ali, from the Turkish-German-Cuban rap band "da crime posse" references the first rap text widely broadcast in Germany, "the message," and praises the relation of music to politics enacted by author of the message, "grandmaster flash" (27). Talking to his interlocutor in rhythmed speech, Ali credits rap's aural circulation with its power to influence the masses and also to create structures among subalterns: "Mit public enemy glomm die wahre kulturepoche auf, kultur deshalb, weil die information an das volk über die mundaussage ging, der direkte draht zum schwarzen mann (…) (28)." Such a statement, in which the African American group Public Enemy figures as a model, establishes a relation of emulation between an African American music group and the Turkish German Cuban band. Through a presentation of "da crime posse" as directly influenced by "black" rap, Zaimoglu contests its popular labeling as a Turkish Oriental group and implicitly exposes the use of Orientalism by Turkish music groups that do rely on folklore and national Turkish symbols.[434] Writing about rap production, Tricia Rose argues that rap resonates with "black cultural priorities in the age of digital reproduction," and she specifically mentions similarities to Caribbean sounds.[435] The advent of rap in Zaimoglu's text displays the force of a transnational message. Although not specified in Ali's account, the other subtext of the "direct link" could be the group Advanced Chemistry, which was formed, like the anti-racist movement Kanak Attak, in the wake of racist violence in Germany. Weheliye discusses Advanced Chemistry, an Afro-German and Italian German group,

---

[434] See Timothy S. Brown's analysis "'Keeping it Real' in a Different Hood: (African)-Americanization of Hip Hop in Germany," in *The Vinyl Ain't Final. Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Popular Culture,* ed. Dipannita Basu and Sidney J. Lemelle (London/Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, 2006), 137-150.
[435] Rose also notes that Caribbean music, especially Jamaica's talk over and dub, share a number of similarities with rap's sound. Tricia Rose, *Black Noise,* 75. In Paul Gilroy's vision, Caribbean hip-hop provides an alternative to African-American hip hop nationalism. "Jewels Brought from Bondage: Black Music and the Politics of Authenticity," in Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic,* 72-111.

as the first group to position itself as "German citizens of color."[436] Turkish rap, however, is absent from Weheliye's analysis of non-U.S. voices in hip-hop. This connection is explicitly re-established in *Kanak Sprak* through Zaimoglu's "direct link" to U.S. and non-U.S. rap and through the voice of Ali. Invoking the beginnings of rap, Ali equates this with "kicking one's socks off" (29) via a powerful, raw sound: "Wir müssen Interesse wecken, und wir müssen um jeden preis einen rauhen und prächtigen sound anbieten, der sie vom sockel haut" (29). As Tom Cheesman notes, although rapping in Turkish started in the 1980s, the first rap record dates from 1991.[437] Ali's insistence on his group's potential to sound its own groundbreaking note is consistent with the struggle of Turkish rap to make a name for itself while sounding distant beats.

Zaimoglu's *Kanak Sprak* poetics are constituted through sound and the rap beat; readers are explicitly told that this style draws on revolutionary possibilities inspired, in part, by the Black consciousness movement in the United States: "Analog zur Black-consciousness-Bewegung in den USA werden sich die einzelnen Kanak-Subidentitäten zunehmend übergreifender Zusammenhänge und Inhalte bewusst."[438] According to the editors of *Global Blackness,* in the Americas or Britain, someone is "black," not on the basis of skin color, but by virtue of a so-called black consciousness "embedded in the materialities of social, political, and cultural

---

[436] Alexandre Weheliye, *Sonic Phonographies,* 165.
[437] See Tom Cheesman, "Polyglott Politics. Hip Hop in Germany," in *Debatte,* Volume 6, No 2, 1998, 191-214. A possible reason for this belated affirmation of rap is provided by Zaimoglu through the allusion to the "stalinorgel" mowing down revolutionaries in an unspecified revolutionary scene pointing to a possible Eastern rebellion against communism. *Kanak Sprak,* 29.
[438] *Kanak Sprak,* 17. I propose a reading of this analogy in the sense proposed by Solomon and Sakai for an analysis of East-West relations, as "non-equivalent relation" and proximity. See footnote 176.

geography."[439] This definition of blackness, while aiming for a diasporic community beyond racial appurtenance, still defines black in reference to color. Zaimoglu seems to advance another type of analogy, both non-racialized and non-ethnic, while retaining the locally specific as engagement with a traumatic past.[440] The "abject" is one of those seemingly colorblind references that permeate *Kanak Sprak*. Commenting on social and cultural phenomena pertaining to Turkish migration, Leslie A. Adelson observes that in general the abject has long been an attendant stereotype, embodied and gendered in the figures of the trash man and the cleaning woman.[441] For Alexander Weheliye, the abject always poses a threat, insofar as it "disfigures the presumed stability of the subject."[442] Weheliye, in his analysis of sonic grooves in Afro-modernity and Anne McClintock, in her analysis of modern industrial imperialism, use Julia Kristeva's theory of the abject to underscore the relief of an "I" through banning the abject, although the abject functions as "something rejected from which one does not part."[443] The abject, linked in Zaimoglu's examples to visuality and presence, is however, not tied to the Turkish-German community as such, but to other marginalized and abjected communities. One such community in *Kanak Sprak* is the Jewish one in Germany, which had been notoriously stigmatized as the abject of

---

[439] *Global Circuits of Blackness*, xix.

[440] In his book *History and Memory after Auschwitz,* Dominick LaCapra mentions the Turks' difficult status in Germany in the 1980s, and in a subsequent chapter he addresses Camus's work through the prism of the Holocaust and Algerian colonialism. One of Adelson's operative analytical figures in both "Touching Tales" and *The Turkish Turn* is not analogy but "proximity" instead. See footnote 15 in Leslie A. Adelson, "Touching Tales of Turks, Germans, and Jews: Cultural Alterity, Historical Narrative and Literary Riddles for the 1990s"*,* in *New German Critique* 80 (Spring-Summer 2000): 93-124 (99). This lens enables stories of Turks, Jews, and Germans to "touch" in significant ways in her assessment. This proximity also applies when reading Turks not only in juxtaposition to German historical events but also to colonial temporalities elsewhere, for instance, in the Algerian struggle for liberation, a context that will become important in particular for my reading of *Schwarze Jungfrauen.*

[441] Leslie Adelson, *The Turkish Turn*, 127.

[442] Alexander Weheliye, *Sonic Grooves in Afro-Modernity*, 165.

National Socialism.[444] Through a moment of disidentification, one *Kanak* is referenced as "my beautiful Jew" by a "christ lady," which prompts a reversal of identity and religious roles.[445] While this Christian lady assigns the Turk before her a Jewish identity, she operates with sound as marginalized speech: one aspect is related to Turks as a silent minority and another refers to Jews as dead silenced body, which the woman aspires to revive and debase through a euphonic pun ("Judenschniddel") that sounds like endearment but connotes severance, as Adelson has demonstrated, and violence.[446] In this episode of the encounter between the Kanak and the "christ lady," Adelson demonstrates, the lady assigns a passive identity to the Turk, who in turn uses a phonetic pun to counteract it ("Judenschnitzeln," 71).[447] Beyond this assignment of aggressive identity, which points to stories of victimization and subjection, Turks exert agency by referring to stories of National Socialism, and thus carving sonic places for themselves in a historical memory from which they had been habitually excluded. Another mode for the *Kanaks* to gain agency and place themselves within historical memory, not only National Socialist, but also colonial, is by sounding blackness through rap and hip hop sound.

What rap extricates from abjection is a riot or a promise of rebellion. In his *Kanak* protocol Rahman connects his abjectification to a hollow sound that

---

[443] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 4. Cited in Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 71. Judith Butler sees abjection resulting from an address that acts as the opposite of recognition. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 5.

[444] Matthew P. Fitzpatrick reflects on a wider debate to discuss the abject in terms of both colonial histories and the Holocaust. In "The Pre-History of the Holocaust? The *Sonderweg* and *Historikerstreit* Debate and the Abject Colonial Past," in *Central European History* 41 (2008): 477-503.

[445] See Adelson's interpretation of this substitution in a key scene from *Kanak Sprak,* which transcends the coordinates of a German fantasy about Jews through Turkish powers of speech. *The Turkish Turn,* 195.

[446] See Adelson's analysis of the punning constellation and implication of "juddenschniddel" and "judenschitzeln" in this passage of *Kanak Sprak, The Turkish Turn,* 101-103.

nevertheless points to a distant riot: "Da haun die tarife längst nicht mehr hin, dir kommt's vor, als wärst du'n frass oder eher schon stinkiger abfall oder so ne blechdose, wo man wegkickt, und's *scheppert wie krawall*" (*Kanak Sprak,* emphasis added, 195). Commenting on the abject in *Kanak Sprak*, Yasemin Yildiz notes that "despite defiant appropriations of racial slur figures cannot be redeemed."[448] Yet, this sound of distant riot is not just a passive sound but evidences connections with movements of black liberation and thus achieves a type of transvaluation. This becomes recognizable as the sonic gesture performed by *négritude* as one of the cultural and experimental movements in the Caribbean that transvalued slur in a colonial and postcolonial context. The textual alliance of *Kanaks* with blacks through sounds and gestures of defiance reveals connections on the level of colonial and postcolonial histories and imaginaries.[449] How can redemption, after all, be achieved through a reappropriation of slur?

Writing about Afro-Germans, Tina M. Campt observes that the difficulty of Afro-Germans in identifying with a larger African, Carribean or African American community resides in particular in the inexistence of a "diasporic memory," since such memories are constructed, in her view, usually in the absence of Afro-Germans as active subjects.[450] From this perspective, Zaimoglu's work contributes to an

---

[447] Ibid.

[448] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue,* 195.

[449] This interpretation differs from Claudia Breger's understanding of Zaimoglu's use of abjection. Breger claims that although Zaimoglu's characters articulate their solidarity with their "African brothers," their use of racist abjection is a mode of distinguishing their *Kanak* identities from them. In my interpretation, it is precisely this nuanced use of abjection as transvaluation that creates a transnational link. See Claudia Breger, *An Aesthetics of Narrative Performance: Transnational Theater, Literature, and Film in Cotemporary Germany* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012), 108.

[450] Tina M. Campt, "Diaspora Space, Ethnographic Space: Writing History Between the Lines," in *Globalization and Race,* 96.

imagined joint diasporic memory, one in which the *Kanaks*, as well as Turkish Germans are excluded from imagined communities of "people of color."[451] I argue that further work of imagination between new diasporic forms can contribute new possible intersections between experimental sound practices in the Caribbean and in Germany.

Blackness. Caliban's curse

In his "Protokolle" Zaimoglu mocks the facile documentarism and claimed authenticity of the literature on guest-workers. Rather, Zaimoglu uses authenticity in a performative sense, in the way in which minstrelsy taught that authenticity was performative, with the tradition of blackface confounding the genuine in terms of expectations of race and sound.[452] In this sense, Zaimoglu makes direct references to the tradition of blackface performance and to its criticism in the anti-racist performances by black performers performing in blackface. Thus, Zaimoglu not only pays attention to the subaltern speech as "who speaks" but also to other effects not necessarily focused on the agency of the voice but rather conveyed through other aspects of sound performance. Rey Chow describes this alternative mode of analyzing subaltern speech as "what plays," a form of musical dissident performance that

---

[451] Criticizing activist alliances of imagined communities of "people of color" intended to foster solidarity between "all racialized people of African, Asian, Latin American, Arabic, Jewish, indigenous, or Pacific background," Lennox notes that there is no place for the Turkish-German minority. Sara Lennox, "Postcolonial Writing in Germany," 623. Lennox refers to the anthology *Re-Visionen: Postkoloniale Perspektiven von People of Color auf Rassismus, Kulturpolitik und Widerstand in Deutschland, e*d. Kiên Nghi Hà (Muenster: Unrast, 2007).

[452] Karl Hagstrom Miller, *Segregating Sound. Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crown* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 5. See my later comment on Katrin Sieg's comment about the use of minstrelsy as a theoretical tool.

highlights an excess of emotions.[453] Postcolonial and feminist theorists have often used the Shakespearean figures of Caliban and Prospero to articulate the relation of colonial subjection and redemption via these figures' use of language and sound too.

José Muñoz, drawing on Judith Butler's analysis of hate speech, identifies the relation between Caliban and Prospero in Shakespeare's *Tempest* (dramatized, among others, by Césaire), as a moment in which Caliban uses his monstrous stigma and transforms it into a site from which to curse Prospero. As Muñoz notes, "rather than counteridentify with Prospero (refusing to speak his language) or identify with his master (to speak like Prospero), he chooses to disidentify by recomposing Prospero's idiom and making it his own."[454] Muñoz defines disidentification as "survival strategy of the minority subject for the negotiation of a phobic majoritarian public sphere that continuously elides or punishes the existence of those who do not conform to the phantasm of normative citizenship."[455] Judith Butler, who inspired Muñoz' use of the term, defines it as a failure of identification in the sense of a prescribed relation between self and other.[456] Having his *Kanaks* appear as marginalized subjects taking on the mask of "niggers" and performing exclusion precisely by taking on this mask as a spoken performance, Zaimoglu activates moments of subversion contained in the interpretation of blackface by black performers. By identifying with the "niggers," Akay also articulates a sense of external self-contemplation, which he mentions

---

[453] See Rey Chow, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 148. Chow emphasizes "what plays" over "who speaks" in order to de-centralize the question about the subject, as raised from a hegemonic perspective. Through "what plays," Chow aims to take into account also forms of technologically mediated subjectivity such as music.

[454] José Munoz, *Disidentifications,* 185. Muñoz goes on to apply this appropriation in the context of parodies of hybrid postcolonial identities by Latin American queer subjects.

[455] Muñóz quoted in El-Tayeb, *European Others*, xxxiii. José Muñoz*, Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, 4.

through a form of self-address: "joker, jetzt bist du in deiner eigenen sendung" (25).

Although the focus seems to focus on *Sendung* (show, performance), such awareness is articulated by Akay through sound and speech.

Zaimoglu's *Kanaks* do not take on the masks of Turkish *Gastarbeiter,* more readily available from the genre of literature on migrants. Zaimoglu's move is also the opposite of the gesture made by Günter Walraff, who in *Ganz unten* emphatically takes on the mask of an underprivileged Ali to unmask social injustice in Germany. Such masks in the 1980s commented on the condition of Turkish migrants. Instead, Zaimoglu's use of "new realism" understands disidentification as a mode of redefining social relations between self and other and thus repositioning minoritarian voices. Zaimoglu refashions minoritarian positions through his use of masks in reference to practices of black performers, who used them around the turn of the century to distinguish their performances in blackface from those of white performers in blackface.[457] Zaimoglu's understanding of disidentification differs from Muñoz's use of the term. Muñoz applies the process of disidentification only to the classic genre of minstrelsy in which whites perform blackness, and reverses the genre by analyzing performers who appear in "whiteface" (109). Zaimoglu performs instead a double disidentification by relating *Kanak* figures to the genre of blacks performing and appropriating the technique of blackness rather than using "whiteface." The mask of disidentification invokes a condition of postcoloniality as verbalized fight. If the racist

---

[456] El-Tayeb, *European Others,* xxxiii. See also Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter* (New York: London, 1993), 112.

[457] The first African American dance company uses the genre of the discriminating "coon" songs, performed in blackface by white people, and adds the epithet "real" to it. "Real" refers here to a mode of subversion, which entices the audience with the very conventions it tries to undermine. Krasner sees understands the use of "real" in this context as closely connected to a type of unreal and "even" the surreal event. David Krasner, "The Real Thing," in W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Beyond Blackface: African*

designation of the "coon song" in the Americas was meant to invoke discrimination, the performance in blackface inverts the terms of the discriminating moment by drawing attention to the problematic nature of the "real."[458] One such instance is the moment when, after identifying with the"nigger," the *Kanak* draws attention to the effects of ostracization of the *Kanak* as a cancerous scar growing in his face. The scar is not real, but its effects are, and they unite communities of oppressed via a scarred-like tissue to be redeemed through speech. The reference to the "nigger nummer" (26) and "kanakentour" (26) as episodes in the life of the *Kanak* draws increased attention to the performative aspect of Akay's existence and as well as to the vocal performance associated with blackface.

In her article on "Ethnic Drag and National Structures of Identity" Katrin Sieg explains her thoughts on the possibility of using the term "blackface" in order to refer to ethnic impersonations in German postwar (theatrical) contexts but ultimately decides against it in favor of ethnic drag, which indicates, in her view, both a "representational field on which race and national identity have been paradigmatically articulated in postwar Germany" and its disavowal (297). [459] She explains her choice as a consequence of the term "blackface" being associated with a specific American culture of minstrelsy and because impersonations of Turks were "not as institutionalized" (299) as minstrelsy was. Yet, one must also note that representations

Americans and the Creation of American Popular Culture 1890-1930 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 99-123.

[458] I use "real" in the sense employed by Tina Campt. Campt defines as "real" as the diasporic space in which "relations, definitions, and identifications within and between communities come to materialize and matter." See Tina M. Campt, "Diaspora Space, Ethnographic Space. Writing History Between the Lines," in *Globalization and Race,* 96. Campt's definition borrows in turn from Butler's definition of interpellation as transformation of the real. Judith Butler in *Bodies that Matter: On the Discoursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

of Turks did become institutionalized nonetheless through literature documenting Turkish migration, which created stock figures of Turkish migrants. When characters take on virtual masks and perform in front of a recorder and an interlocutor, characters undermine any efforts at trustworthiness. This method functions in sharp contrast to the documentary realist purpose of first-generation Turkish German writers and as such, acts as a generational critique.[460] In employing the notion of "new realism," Zaimoglu uses realism for similar purposes as blackface, in which black performers played on the "real" as that which does not appear, but rather that which is inferred from speech. In Zaimoglu's case, Akay "from the flea market" proposes his own definition of the real by identifying members of the *Kanak* community with "niggers" living in a ghetto.

Embracing the "mask" of the protocols, Zaimoglu uses irony in its Greek sense of dissembling: saying one thing when the other is meant, bringing in a disconnection between speaker and interlocutor, between the speaker and what is being spoken or between the speaker and himself.[461] According to genre theorist Adena Rosmarin, this stance resembles romantic irony in the sense cultivated by Friedrich Schlegel; one is at once carried away and in control of his transport.[462] In particular the protocols'

---

[459] Katrin Sieg, "Ethnic Drag and National Structures of Identity," *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and Its Legacy,* ed. Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox and Susanne Zantop (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).

[460] See, for instance, Dursun Akcam bilingual documentation of interviews with Turks of first generation, *Alman ocagi: Tuerkler Almalan anlatiyor: Deutsches Heim: Glück allein: wie Türken Deutsche sehen* (Göttingen: Lamuv Verlag, 1994).

[461] For an analysis of masks as irony see Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971), 120.

[462] Adena Rosmarin, *The Power of Genre* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1985), 122. Rosmarin counterposes mask dramatic lyric to dramatic monologues, which she defines as instances in which the speakers are unaware that they are written, whereas in mask lyric speakers are self-conscious of this aspect. Rosmarin's analysis does not include the awareness of performing itself and in this

balance between fantasies of creation and destruction corresponds to a speaker of masks as defined by Rosmarin in her analysis of mask lyric, in which the speaker is aware of "being written." Since Zaimoglu's characters demand the destruction of original recordings, they reinvent themselves in textual performance while drawing attention to an estrangement between subject (the one who is written), voice (the one who speaks or who is spoken through) and performance (the text that raps and plays). This complex scene of delivery in which the subject performs and strikes a beat while rendering the audience aware of a duplicitous play in and out of a textual web presents the *Kanak* as the embodiment of tension; not as anthropological subject from a colonial past or the victim of a temporally and spatially displaced narrative, but as striving to be co-temporaneous with his heterolingual audience.[463] The protocol of Bayram, the breaker, ends with a repetitive incantation that thematizes creation in the present of recitation. The text itself turns into "strom," as the recited part goes: "(...) hier bei uns, bei den breakern und rappern, bei den brüdern und schwestern, ist schluss mit dem stuss, wir schwimmen nicht mit dem strom, wir machen einen eigenen strikten strom, wo jeder'n fluss is und aufhört'n gottverschissenen rinnsal zu sein (42)."

---

sense, her distinction between mask monologue and dramatic monologue seems insufficient to apply to *Kanak Sprak*.

[463] For an analysis and criticism of anthropological investigation as negation of the dialogic potential of its ethnographic subjects see Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). For an analysis of the present impact of the notion of contemporaneity see Pedro Erber, "Contemporaneity and Its Discontents," in *Diacritics,* 41.1 (2013): 37-38.

Négritude blackness /Transatlantic Avant-garde

Bennetta Jules-Rosette concludes in *The African Writers' Landscape* that *négritude* has been supplanted by creolization in the present.[464] If creolization is the contemporary inheritor of *négritude*, what did it take over from *négritude*? As a form that initiated a dialogue between European and non-European avant-gardes, *négritude* developed in part as a reversal of Western colonialist stereotypes.[465] The term "négritude" first appeared in print in an article published by Aimé Césaire in *Légitime Défense* but it gained recognition through Césaire's well-known *Notebook of a Return to The Native Land* [Cahier d'un rétour au pays natal] (1939).[466] In broad terms *négritude* presupposed a revolution in the Caribbean that would be conducted through poetic and political means under the banner of Surrealism and in the lineage of Dadaism.[467] In the years preceding decolonization, the Senegalese politician, statesman and poet Léopold Senghor, inspired by W.E.B. Du Bois' revolutionary

---

[464] Bennetta Jules-Rosette, *The African Writers' Landscape* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 209.

[465] Bruce Baugh demonstrates the subversive relation of filiation entertained by the Surrealists with the Hegelian legacy. See Bruce Baugh, *French Hegel: From Surrealism to Postmodernism* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 3.The long poem was first published in 1939 on the eve of World War II but its subsequent versions in 1947 and 1956 spanned the political shift from anticolonialism in the prewar years and the incipient decolonization in the years after. See Renée Larrier, "'Crier/Écrire/Cahier' Anagrammatic Configurations of Voice in Francophone Caribbean Narratives," The French Review, Vol. 69, No 2, December 1995, 275-283. *Notebook of a Return* addresses colonial racism by embracing a broader African diaspora than the Martinican one and displays the transformation of the colonial subject's silence through sound and agency. In the poem, the poetic "I" travels from Europe to Martinique, which is the reverse voyage from the usual percourse of the colonial subject from the colonies to Europe. The travel is a journey of discovery, punctuated by sounds and poetic licence.

[467] Réné Ménil, one of the co-founders of *négritude*, places the movement in the lineage of Dadaism but adds that *négritude* will reinvent Dada, which, according to him, isolated itself in its subjectivity. For Ménil, notions of liberty, life and poetry, are motors of *négritude*. ("Humor: Introduction to 1945" in *Refusal of the Shadow*, 174). Paul Laraque calls *négritude* the only poetic movement of the century---historically situated between two world wars and two abortive attempts at verbal destruction (Dada and lettrism). "Haiti 1946: Surrealism and Revolution," *Refusal of the Shadow,* 228. For the notion of a

theories on racism as well as Du Bois's narrative interweaving of sound, sorrow songs

and race from his landmark *Souls of Black Folk*, elaborated the cultural ideology of

négritude, in an attempt to recover an African character and cultural essence deemed

lost through years of colonial occupation of the Caribbean space. Senghor credited the

Harlem Renaissance and the "indigenist" movement in Haiti with providing

inspiration for *négritude* and named Edward Eric Blyden's nineteenth-century

theories of black consciousness as sources of inspiration for *négritude* ideals.[468] As

Robert Young indicates, *négritude,* the best-known African political and cultural

movement of the 1930s, stood both for separatism and negotiation between African

and European cultures, which explains its controversial position.[469] Although

négritude is mostly known for its search for Caribbean authenticity and pre-colonial

origins,[470] whereas Zaimoglu's work stands rather for a reconfiguration of ethnos[471]

---

revolution as poetics and action see Aimé Césaire,"Calling the Magician: A Few Words for a Caribbean Civilization," in *Refusal of the Shadow,* 121.

[468] Leopold Senghor,"Blyden, Precursor to Negritude," in Lynch, Hollis R (ed.) *Selected Letters of Edward Wilmoth Blyden* (New York: Millwood, Kraus Intl. 1978), ixi-xx.

[469] Robert Young, *Postcolonialism*, 267.

[470] Critics acknowledge Césaire's own definition of negritude in the *Cahier* as being divided between assertions of primordial Africanity and its futility. Gary Wilder provides a reading of the *Cahier* as an attempt to affirm nativism as opposed to exoticism, which does not lack in self-criticism. See Gary Wilder, "Race, Reason, Impasse: Césaire, Fanon, and the Legacy of Emancipation" *Radical History Review,* 90 (2004): 31-61. *La Race nègre,* the publication of the *Ligue de Défense de la Race Nègre*, for instance, accused *négritude* of elitism on account of its use of non-indigenous forms (Young, 267). However, Young dispels accusations of essentialism, racialism, or lack of political radicalism leveled at *négritude* caused by "its apparently accommodating attitude towards French culture." (265) A criticism of *négritude* as purported return to African roots comes from Santa Lucian poet Derek Walcott as well, who claims that "a return is impossible, cause we cannot return to what we have never been." Derek Walcott, "The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?" (1974). In *Critical Perspectives on Derek Walcott,* ed. Robert D. Hamner (Washington DC: Three Continents Press, 1993)*,* 53. A more general critique of the postcolonial "nostalgia for lost origins" is articulated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, 306. One of the authors identified by Sara Lennox among Germany's first postcolonial writers, the Cameroonian Misipo Dualla, who studied in France, expressed dissatisfaction with the concept of *négritude*. See Lennox, "Postcolonial Writing in German," 625.

[471] For a reading of Zaimoglu as an unsettling of categories of ethnicity, see Leslie A. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn,* 11.

and deconstruction of authenticity,[472] certain parallels and important interplays between the two historically and culturally disparate phenomena emerge upon a close consideration. Parallels between the broad cultural phenomenon of *Kanak Sprak,* which was generated by Zaimoglu's eponymous first book, and *négritude*, the cultural and aesthetic movement initiated in the Caribbean space, are suggested by a shared play with masks ridiculing origin as source of ethnicity and inverting stereotypes; these techniques of play and inversion are articulated in techniques of experimentation with sound and address.[473]

Through its insistence on the political impact of poetry and poetics, *négritude* opposed European Surrealism. André Breton, one of the most prominent European Surrealists, observed, for instance, that political élan motivated a break with the indirect language of poetry and thus he did not consider poetry a plausible mode of political action.[474] Commentators such as Natalie Melas have interpreted Césaire's

---

[472] My reading departs from understandings of Zaimoglu's work as speaking in "the voice of authenticity." See, for instance, the genre of *Betroffenheitsliteratur* ("literature of affliction"), which used orality in the sense of first person testimonies about incumbent suffering and interpellation of the reader. For an analysis of Zaimoglu in critical relation to *Betroffenheitsliteratur* see also Leslie Adelson, *The Turkish Turn,* 111. Zaimoglu mimics this tone of orality but inverts it by modifying its purpose and tone.

[473] In the years preceding decolonization, the Senegalese politician, statesman and poet Léopold Senghor, inspired by W.E.B. Du Bois' revolutionary theories on racism as well as Du Bois's narrative interweaving of sound, sorrow songs and race from his landmark *Souls of Black Folk*, elaborated the cultural ideology of *négritude*, in an attempt to recover an African character and cultural essence deemed lost through years of colonial occupation of the Caribbean space. Senghor credited the Harlem Renaissance and the "indigenist" movement in Haiti with providing inspiration for *négritude* and named Edward Eric Blyden's nineteenth-century theories of black consciousness as sources of inspiration for *négritude* ideals. Leopold Senghor,"Blyden, Precursor to Negritude," in Lynch, Hollis R (ed.) *Selected Letters of Edward William Blyden* (New York: Millwood, Kraus Intl. 1978), ixi-xx.

[474] See André Breton, *Misère de la poésie: 'L'Affaire Aragon' devant L'Opinion Publique* (Paris: Éditions Surréalists, 1932), 13. Breton's position vis-à-vis Aragon's communist poem "Front Rouge" is ambiguous: it seems that he defends Aragon against communist propaganda accusations at the expense of poetry's political efficiency and importance. This mistrust in poetry's power to function as a proper political weapon was echoed by other writers such as Franz Fanon or Jean Paul Sartre as well as by postcolonial critics such as Edward Said. Carrie Noland, "Red Front/Black Front: Aimé Césaire and the Affaire Aragon," *Diacritics,* 36.1 (Spring 2006): 64-84 (68). Noland refers in particular to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth,* Said's *Culture and Imperialism* and Sartre's *What is Literature* (1948). Noland

---

Notebook of a Return as the writing in which *négritude* as revolutionary poetics comes into being. Following Césaire's intention to express "how the black man can come into language and can express his condition and can constitute himself in a language that denigrates and negates him," Melas identifies this political mission through a particular take on modernity as constitutive of the black subject. [475] In doing so, she relies on Homi Bhabha's analysis of contra-modernity as the questioning of modernity's understanding of temporality as synchronicity, and she applies such contestation of modernity's unified time to *négritude*'s disjunctive temporality to her analysis of *Notebook of a Return.* [476] As Natalie Melas observes, a "displaced interlocutor" allows for this poem's address beyond a particular epoch and justifies what the scholar calls its historical untimeliness, a possibility to understand the actuality of colonialism through a formal temporal décalage. Melas's poem analysis interprets décalage as a mode of signaling, through disjointed tenses, the practice of colonial modernity to relocate the other into a distant past. This disjunctive mode of address involves an interlocutor who is absent and in whose absence discourse inserts itself. The poem articulates a paradoxical monologue, in which the poetic "I" makes injurious remarks to an imaginary interlocutor, yet the mode of address is interrupted by free indirect speech. As Melas writes, analyzing the beginning of the poem, "Once the interlocutor is out of earshot, the voice can, in principle, say anything at all, let loose all its hopes and all its recriminations, for there will be no consequences" (575).

---

concludes that the three authors assign to experimental poetry in particular an anti-mimetic, anti-ethnographic, non-descriptive moment and thus deny it a political impact.

[475] Interview of J. Siegel with Aimé Césaire, published in *Afrique 5* (1961). Cited by Melas in "*Untimeliness, or Négritude and the Politics of Contramodernity*," "Untimeliness or Negritude and the Poetics of Contramodernity," in *South Atlantic Quarterly* 108:3, Summer 2009, 572.

[476] As Melas notes, Bhabha introduces the term in his 1991 essay on "'Race,' Time, and the Revision of Modernity," and develops it in his 1992 essay "The Colonial and the Postmodern." Both essays were

In Zaimoglu's "protocols," once the tapes are destroyed, the rest unfolds as a sequence of testimonies in which the protagonists monologue with an imaginary or a real other and reclaim their contemporaneous status in the scheme of events. The magic (as power of words) and self-creational component of Zaimoglu's text exceeds the reading of the text in an ethnographic key and gestures towards an aural performative interpretation, which is mediated by apostrophe.[477] For instance, Kadir, sociologist, fantasizes about triggering natural catastrophes through a personal gesture: "Den stecken trieb ich in die feuchte erde, meist noch klumpig nach regenfall, und stellte mir vor, wie ich unheil stiftete, die eintracht der unterwelt durch meine private naturkatastrophe für kurze zeit zu fall brachte" (100). Kadir's idea of destruction and catastrophe through a private event corresponds to a type of mimeticism cultivated through analogous language creating magic connections between reference and referee.[478] Although *Kanak Sprak* does not cultivate folkloric stylistic arabesques, it presents one of its characters as as a "child of the Orient,"

---

published in *The Location of Culture* (1994). See Natalie Melas, "Untimeliness or Negritude and the Poetics of Contramodernity," in *South Atlantic Quarterly* 108:3, Summer 2009.

[477] Magic might also be read as a modality of the subject to counter representations of the Orient as "interwoven by sexual imageries, unconscious fantasies, desires, fears, and dreams." See Meyda Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 20. Yegenoglu engages critically, in her turn, Edward Said's qualification of Orientalism as homologous to realism. Although *Kanak Sprak* does not cultivate folkloric stylistic arabesques, it presents one of its characters as influenced by magic-like occurrences and as a "child of the Orient." (100) Kadir defines his origin as infused by a type of marvelous realism, which uses miraculous repetitive stories of destruction to transcend abstract (Western) rationality in order to articulate themselves. See "Marvelous Realism" in Shalini Puri, *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 142. This type of defamiliarization shatters the frame of the present set up by *Kanak Sprak* and offers one more type of empowerment to the *Kanak.*

[478] In explaining analogous language in "Doctrine of the Similar," [Lehre vom Ähnlichen] Benjamin inquired into the magic side of language giving the example of onomatopoeia and sound as nonsensuous similarities. Walter Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar" in Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings* Volume 2, Part 2 1931-1934, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 697. As Sven Werkmeister points out, Benjamin used in his "Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels" the model of Chladni's sound figures in sand to articulate a model of writing based on an analogy between writing and sound, with writing marking the simultaneity of sound (Ton) and letter (Buchstabe). Sven

influenced by magic-like occurrences (100). Kadir defines his origin as infused by a type of marvelous realism, which uses miraculous repetitive stories of destruction to transcend abstract (Western) rationality in order to articulate themselves.[479] Self-creation occurs in a sonic key, in which magic is appropriated through a discourse of empowerment. Such acts of self-creation help shatter the articulation of the *Kanaken* as stock forms of thought. The emphasis of *Kanak Sprak* on magic resonates with the criticism of European avant-gardes through the lenses of magic realism.[480] *Kanak Sprak*'s main contribution to the modification of ethnography as a scene of representation for colonial subjects and for migrants is this act of reclamation in speech of a present denied in ethnographic writing. Combining linguistic creolization with the magic of "new realism," Zaimoglu cultivates a type of poetic vanguardism that is consistent with the mission of transatlantic avant-gardes in their contestation of European avant-gardism. The poetic manifesto of the poet Memet is dedicated to the "soiled ones," [die Beschmutzten], whose life and work cannot be ascribed to conventional aesthetics. In the name of the *Kanaken*, Memet turns to "signs and wonders" [zeichen und wunder], in an attempt to cope with a sense of alienation in a "foreign land" (110). The aesthetics of the *Kanaken* is built on this contradiction

---

Werkmeister, *Kulturen jenseits der Schrift: Zur Figur des Primitiven in Ethnologie, Kulturtheorie und Literatur um 1900* (Muenchen: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2010), 223.

[479] See "Marvelous Realism" in Shalini Puri, *The Caribbean Postcolonia: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 142.

[480] In one such critique of European Surrealism, Alejo Carpentier considers creolization as a form of magic realism, able to revigorate, the European imaginary through the "magical real" and thus focus the attention on race mixing and anti-colonial thought. Carpentier's manifesto "On the Marvelous Real," first published in 1949, was translated into English in 1995 in Louis Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris, ed., *Magic Realism: Theory, History, Community* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 75-88. Ralph J. Poole discusses the relations between various transatlantic avant-gardes, including negritude in the Francophone space and magic realism in the Hispanic one in his "Breton auf Haiti. Magischer Realismus und transatlantische Avantgarde," in *Realismus nach den europäischen Avantgarden: Ästhetik, Poetologie und Kognition in Film und Literatur der Nachkriegszeit* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2012), 41-63.

between "magic" and the abject, which ensues as a result of the "anomalies and perversions" that the host country has imposed on the less privileged. Memet's aesthetics counteracts such perversions of daily existence and infinite torture with a form of grotesque magic, in which "reality" is conceived as a harsh "capsule" that the *Kanaken* embrace as a transitory state and from there they hope to grow wings to project themselves into another dimension. Yet, through Memet's voice, the plight of the *Kanaken* is not removed into another space and time, but becomes significant in the present, as this sufferance becomes perceptible through the work of damaged vocal chords: "man wird sie hören, den singsang von irren draussen in der nacht (109)." Memet's protocol, which replaces aesthetics with a form of magical abject, adds to the testimonies of other artists in "Kanak Sprak," most of whom are musicians. Whereas Memet sets in question the value of Western aesthetics and addresses the sorrow of migrants in unsettling times, the breakers and rappers theorize the rhythms that constitute their whole creative enterprise as "niggerstil." In the same way in which Memet contests the value of aesthetics, rappers change the value of text through performance.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In the end of her analysis of *Notebook of a Return*, Melas points to "vanguardism of revolutionary emancipation" (576) as well as to contramodernity as manifest modes of *négritude*. This vanguardism could be amplified through a sustained analysis of the treatment of race in the poem, which Melas analyzes briefly as "transvaluation." *Négritude*, as Natalie Melas points out, involves the linguistic gesture of seizing the improper colonial term "nègre" and "seeking to transvalue

<p style="text-align:center">223</p>

denigration and alienation" in the present rather than "positing something completely anterior to colonial history," which the dream of one Africa might entail.[481]

In a contested document that celebrated *négritude* at a time of student struggles, Jean-Paul Sartre wrote his famous preface "Orphée Noir" (Black Orpheus) to the *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poésie Nègre et Malgache* (1969), which was edited by Senghor.[482] Here, Sartre criticized the privilege of the "white man" who saw for years without being "seen." Proposing a reversal of the gaze, Sartre argued that it is the black gaze that looks and contains the white one. Glissant's interpretation of *Black Orpheus* emphasizes rather its sound dimension, as response to the "inadequacy of language."[483] Glissant illustrates the sound effect of *Black Orpheus* by recurring to the figures of Caliban and Prospero and emphasizing the "militant idiom", which the African or Caribbean Caliban deployed in order to combat "Prospero's hubris".[484] Glissant distinguishes between Prospero and Caliban in Saussurean terms, and by calling Caliban's language *langage,* a form of actualized speech, and Prospero's *langue,* an idealized language. In his essay, Sartre echoes Césaire's interpretation of the white world in sonic terms, as an entity that, after decolonization, releases a creaking sound from its old articulations and allows others to listen for the first time to its finitude: "hear the white world."[485]According to Sartre, *négritude* emerges at the moment when the black man "has his back up against the wall of authenticity." In

[481] See Natalie Melas, "Untimeliness or Negritude and the Poetics of Contramodernity," in *South Atlantic Quarterly* 108:3 (Summer 2009): 569.

[482] *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poésie Nègre et Malgache de Langue Française*, ed. Léopold Senghor (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969).

[483] Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse,* xx.

[484] Ibid.

[485]"Black Orpheus," in *What Is Literature and Other Essays,* trans. Steven Ungar (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 293.

depicting the moment of reversal of power originating with *négritude*, Sartre coins the term "antiracist racism," and elaborates: "having been insulted and formerly enslaved, he [the black man] picks up the word 'nigger' which was thrown at him like a stone, he draws himself erect and proudly proclaims himself a black man, face to face with white men."[486]

A different situation emerges with the "blackface," in Zaimoglu's interpretation, as double disidentification with both the discriminating tradition of blackface and with the possibility of playing in whiteface. By performing "nigger," the "black man" turns blackface into an act he appropriates not in relation to "white" but in relation to himself. This stage of transformation as performance is intimated by Sartre; however, Sartre's oppositional terms seem still to play out in a dialectical field of black versus white. Yet the movement of *négritude* to which he is committed overcomes this binary through a whole register of sound and performance that dislocates metaphoric language. *Négritude* as vocal and performative inversion of discriminating stereotypes reflects, beyond Sartre's historical understanding of negativity, a vocal and performative Afro-Caribbean response to European Surrealism. Through magic, this Afro-Caribbean mode of Surrealism inverts a Hegelian type of dialectics of master and slave underlying an European Surrealist

---

[486] Jean-Paul Sartre, "Black Orpheus," in '*What is Literature?' and Other Essays*, 296. Sartre's white-black binarism can be subject to criticism from the perspective of a confirmation of Hegelian dialectics. An implicit critique of the inherent binary of the metaphor black as opposition to white is articulated by Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* who suggests that the colonial mechanism has excluded blacks from the self-other dynamic and demoted them to non-alterity. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 143. See also Diana Fuss, *Identification Papers,* 142.

aesthetics.[487] As Melas remarks, in Sartre's argument as well as in *négritude*, poetic, and, we could add, magical impulse coincides with revolutionary impulse.[488] However, the opponents of *Kanaks* who perform as blacks are not "the whites," as in Sartre's dialectical model, but more comprehensive models of racialized, class-based and social hegemony. The simulated authenticity of blackface in Zaimoglu uncovers the use of talking masks against a discourse of stock authenticity unfolding in literary representations of Turks. Instead of displacing them to the periphery, Zaimoglu allows them take center stage.[489] Thus, Zaimoglu challenges the Sartrian notion that working class people and minorities in general cannot use poetic language to express their suffering by having his "Kanaken" consciously relate themselves to "blacks" (a move performed by Sartre too when he equates the working class with blacks) not through a logic of equivalence, as with Sartre, but through one of solidarity. From the margins of poetic sound and performance, Zaimoglu revises the Sartrean model of visuality and binarism and aligns it with the poetics of an imagined *négritude* for the twenty-first century.[490] Through a moment of disidentification, the *Kanak* creates and appropriates his language and foregrounds the re-imagined character of race on stage,

---

[487] Bruce Baugh demonstrates the subversive relation of filiation entertained by the Surrealists with the Hegelian legacy. See Bruce Baugh, *French Hegel: From Surrealism to Postmodernism* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003).

[488] For Melas, poetic impulse as labor positions *négritude* "at the vanguard of anticapitalist contramodernity." "Untimeliness, or Négritude and the Poetics of Contramodernity," 578.

[489] In Deniz Göktürk's analysis, authenticity and victimology have constantly characterized the discourse on migrants. See *Turkish Delight-German Fright: migrant identities in transnational cinema* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 1999). For an analysis of female victimology, see Karin Yeşilada, "Die geschundene Suleika: Das Eigenbild der Tuerkin in der deutschsprachigen Literatur türkischer Autorinnen nichtdeutscher Herkunft," in *Interkulturelle Konfigurationen: Zur deutschsprachigen Erzaehlliteratur von Autorinnen nichtdeutscher Herkunft,* ed. Mary Howard (München: Iudicium, 1997), 95-114.

[490] Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 84. Césaire's focus on sound displaces the highlight of vision in an author such as Fanon as well. See Fanon's primary scene of discrimination of the "Negro" as a visual one. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Hamdsworth: Penguin, 1967), 182-3.

as transvaluative sound, emerging from the sublimated racialized "coon songs" and manifesting as boisterous hip hop beat. This beat is not only peculiar to the protocols of breakers and rappers but replaces the notion of aesthetics deeemed unsatisfactory by the poet Memet. The poetics of sound and performance undermines equivalence and traverses national, ethnic and racial lines of difference. Caliban's curse is both redemptive and haunting, and enables an understanding of creolization beyond the confines of the Caribbean.

In the following, I will explore the value of "blackness" in the play *Black Virgins,* co-authored by Zaimoglu with Günter Senkel (2006), in order to show how this operates in contemporary theatrical performance.

Black Virgins

Reflecting on post-September 11 anti-Islamisms, Claudia Breger interprets the play *Schwarze Jungfrauen* as a response to post-September 11 discourses of cultural difference. According to Breger, it is paradoxically such anti-Islamic reverberations that "provided transnational contexts for a refashioning of the racialized discourses of national identity that had dominated twentieth-century German culture since their decisive formation in the country's colonial period" (42). *Schwarze Jungfrauen,* I argue, does not reconfigure racialized discourses by substituting one discourse (colonialism and its legacies) with another, as Breger's statement possibly implies, but rather provides arguments for the coexistence of several racialized discourses, past and present. While seeking to explain why the division between narrative and

performance does not hold in today's contemporary aesthetics, Breger concludes that

this alleged division cannot be sustained if considered in the light of African diasporic

aesthetics and their primarily oral character (10). Yet, when Breger states that

"performative legacies of European modernism and postmodernism intersect with

ongoing-African diaspora, feminist, postmodern, and 'beyond postmodernism'-

returns to narrative," she upholds a common locus in postcolonial studies, in which

primarily oral cultures strike back at their colonial aggressors by "writing back."[491]

Since Breger's analysis does not mention the role played by postcolonial and

decolonizing moments on African orality, the return she highlights, of performative

legacies to narrative resembles a postcolonial pattern of resistance present in African

decolonization. Thus, what Breger claims as a return is rather a continuity of

postcolonial resistance that also manifests on the level of artistic form. The term

proposed by Breger in order to reflect the intersection between orality and narrative in

contemporary aesthetics is "theatricalized narration," (11); this term relies precisely

on African diasporic legacies that provide Breger with the incentive to reconsider

commonly drawn divisions between performance and narrative. What remains

unconsidered in Breger's particular analysis is a postcolonial dimension of

contemporary performance, which would explain why and how sound and speech

replace such narrative patterns. In the following, I will analyze the play *Schwarze

Jungfrauen,* co-authored by Zaimoglu with Günter Senkel, in order to show how the

piece weaves in postcolonial subaltern voices, while consciously integrating a form of

discourse which is consistent with *Kanak Sprak's* overcoming of oppositional

divisions between "Kanak Sprak" as "creole," and avant-garde practices. Zaimoglu

---

[491] See the Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*: *Theory and*

discards such oppositions when he refers to *Schwarze Jungfrauen* as a form of "ethno-avant-garde," which he understands in opposition to Western modernity.[492]

Commissioned by the Berlin Hebbel Theater am Ufer (HAU) for a theater festival called "Beyond Belonging—Migration," *Schwarze Jungfrauen* (in translation, *Black Virgins*) was first staged by Neco Çelik.[493] After it premiered at the HAU theater in March 2006, the NDR German broadcasting station turned it into a radio play according to a script prepared by the authors of the original play, Feridun Zaimoglu and Günter Senkel. My analysis of the play relies both on the five monologues published in *Theater heute* in 2006, on the unpublished manuscript archived with NDR, as well as on Çelik's staged performance. As the printed script indicates, the play consists of ten monologues, five out of which were used for the HAU performance.[494] The protagonists are a Bosnian Muslim who confesses to her faith, while she uses profanities and xenophobic speech, a conservative Muslim who highlights traces of Nazism still present in Germany, a Muslim woman who lives in the Berlin underground and believes in an unconventional religion, a disabled woman who wears a Hijab yet indulges in promiscuous sex, and a German woman who converted to Islam. The staged version of the play includes the monologue of a student, which substitutes for most of the fourth printed monologue. In the play, references to Islam become a contact zone between contemporary fears and taboos

---

Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures (1989).

[492] I will return to Zaimoglu's statement later in this chapter.

[493] See Claudia Breger, *An Aesthetics of Narrative Performance: Transnational Theater, Literature and Film in Contemporary Germany* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 2012), 231. See also Katrin Sieg, "Black Virgins: Sexuality and the Democratic Body in Europe," in *New German Critique* 109, 37.1 (Winter 2010): 147-185.

[494] As Katrin Sieg notes, only four of the printed monologues were used for the HAU performance. A fifth monologue, which is present in the archived NDR material, was used for the 2006 performance.

ranging from anti-Semitism, fascism, and xenophobia to empowered Muslim women reflecting critically on the veil from an uncensored non-Western perspective.[495] What is striking is that the protagonists cannot be ascribed to either the category of an unveiled liberated woman according to Western canons or the category of a veiled, silent, and demure woman. It is their incessant speech that draws attention to the theme of subaltern expression and revisits postcolonial attempts at representing women of the non-Western world.[496] The "black virgins" let the religious subaltern not only speak but also play. I am relying here on Rey Chow's understanding of "what plays" as an alternative to "what speaks." For Rey Chow, "what speaks" is always formulated from a sovereign perspective, which centers on the quest for a grammatical subject or on "an act of speaking." By contrast, "what plays" centers on a "surplus of emotions" and counters the "symphonic effects of mainstream culture" or other forms of monopolized speech, which it opposes through noises and voices.[497] The play is consonant with the intention of Zaimoglu and Senkel to achieve "musicality" on stage and an impact on the audience through their characters and the extreme positions they embody.[498]

Through performance, the characters in this play are both outside and within the flow of writing, which corresponds to the notion of dramatic monologue, "creating

---

See See Katrin Sieg, Katrin Sieg, "Black Virgins: Sexuality and the Democratic Body in Europe," in *New German Critique* 109. Vol. 37, No1, Winter 2010, 154.

[495] For an analysis of the ethnicization of the Islamic diaspora see Bassam Tibi, "The Return of Ethnicity to Europe via Islamic Migration? The Ethnicization of the Islamic Diaspora," in Roland Hsu, ed. *Ethnic Europe. Mobility, Identity, and Conflict in a Globalized World,* 127-156.

[496] On the notion of "double contradiction" see Gayatri Spivak, "Who Claims Alterity?" in *Remaking History,* ed. Barbara Krüger and Phil Marian (Seattle: Bay Press, 1989), 269-92. Cited in Nima Naghibi, *Rethinking Global Sisterhood: Western Feminism and Iran* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 72.

[497] Chow's case study is China's popular music, which she contrasts to official state music. Chow's case study is China's popular music, which she contrasts to official state music. See Rey Chow, "Listening Otherwise, Music Miniaturized," in *Writing Diaspora*, 144-164.

the illusion of someone speaking and making us aware of that illusion." [499] In the third monologue, for instance, the Bosnian Muslim draws attention to the distinction between "Schein und Sein" (46). In their speeches about shocking lives and unconventional religious and sexual practices, the "virgins" highlight disguise and masquerade. In addition, they develop a type of agency that Carrie Noland has described as the power to alter acquired behaviors and beliefs through a counter-reaction generated in the human body.[500] In *Schwarze Jungfrauen*, the co-authors create a performative rebellion of gender, race and religion, through which they allow their characters to oscillate between their own senses of the sacred and the secular. The veiled body of the "black virgins" turns, as we will see, from a site of nationalist and colonial fantasies into a sounding board of personal desires.[501]

Schwarze Jungfrauen presents ostensibly real accounts of marginalized Muslim women who offer scandalous snippets of biographical facts at societal and artistic margins. The ostensibly monologic mode is undermined through scattered references to an interlocutor or to God, which signal, as with *Kanak Sprak*, resistance to an objective mode of ethnographic observation. Elaborating on the preliminary work that constituted the basis for his "Protokolle" used in *Schwarze Jungfrauen*,

---

[498] Eva Berendt und Franz Wille im Gespräch mit Feridun Zaimoglu und Günter Senkel, "Wir haben mir unseren Muendern ihre Melodien gepfiffen," *Theater heute* 07-08, 47.

[499] See Adena Rosmarin, *The Power of Genre,* 81. Rosmarin's distinction between mask lyric and dramatic monologue might be summarized as follows: in mask lyric characters are aware of "being written" and so are the spectators made aware of the masks worn by characters, whereas in dramatic monologues characters are not aware of being written, but the spectator is. Both genres seem to counteract facile illusionism. *Schwarze Jungfrauen* is described in fact as a series of ten dramatic monologues. *Theater heute* 47(2006), 5, 46-55.

[500] Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (London/England: Harvard University Press, 2009), 9.

[501] In her book *Colonial Fantasies*, Meyda Yegenoglu analyzes the Turkish and Algerian nationalist use of women in opposition to the role of women in colonial and conquering fantasies *towards* the Orient; the result of these combined fantasies transforms veiled Muslim women into silent sites of

Zaimoglu defines his observer-participant perspective as "the advanced post of a decadent modernity" ("der vorgeschobene Posten einer dekadenten Moderne").[502] This divided status between European modernity and rebellious avant-garde but also between modernity and counter-modernity, we could add, defines Zaimoglu's self-configuration within the panorama of contemporary literature. On the one hand, the author is critical of a notion of modernity that limits itself to recounting the story of the capitalist West, and on the other hand, he styles himself as part of a critical vanguard that leaves behind modernity's past to promote altogether new forms of aesthetic expression and social impact. One of the "black virgins" whose monologue is published in the archived NDR manuscript, identifies with an Islamic renaissance as the "rearguard of a rotten modernity" and offers an oppositional response to the avant-gardes' self-proclaimed mission as forerunners of modernity.[503] Zaimoglu's understanding of the "Neo-Muslima," women who wear head-scarves, as a "deutsche Ethno-avant-garde" reflects derisively on the commonly alleged split between ethnic traditions and anticipated futures.[504] This ethno-avantgarde also positions itself against and reverses a temporal logic of Western modernity, which places the

negotiation. See in particular "The battle of the veil: woman between nationalism and Orientalism" in *Colonial Fantasies,* 121-144.

[502] Eva Berendt interview with Zaimoglu and Senkel, *Theater heute* 07/08, 47. The fact that Zaimoglu situates himself in relation to a "rotten modernity" might allude to his persiflage of phenomena of cultural brokering, in which individuals speak in the name of entire groups and situate Islam in opposition to modernity. See Katrin Sieg, Katrin Sieg, "Black Virgins: Sexuality and the Democratic Body in Europe," 150.

[503] NDR manuscript, 35. Excerpts from this monologue, the fifth, are published in Programmheft of a premiere of the play from 27.03. 2010 in Hannover, and staged by Lars-Ole Walburg.

[504] Interview with Vera Gaserow, "Es gibt eine Ethno-Avant-garde" in *Frankfurter Rundschau,* 13 May 2007. Leslie A. Adelson analyzes other strands of German-Turkish avant-garde connections. Leslie A. Adelson, "Experiment Mars, Turkish migration, and the Future of Europe," in *Ethnic Europe: Mobility, Identity, and Conflict in a Globalized World,* ed. Roland Hsu (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 206. Another division challenged by Zaimoglu is the one between tradition and modernity, where tradition would be associated with an inside (the covered Muslima) and modernity with an outside. More on this division see Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies,* 101.

historical avant-garde in Europe at its fore and tends to disregard non-Western practices.[505]

The staged production shows the "virgins" "unveiling" themselves in a container-like space, which is reminiscent of the so-called container art.[506] The sonic background against which the initial motions of the "virgins" unfold, as they stand with their back to the audience, is electronic music. The sound slowly decreases in intensity and vanishes as the characters turn to the audience and prepare to speak. The music's looping effect, determined by its containment in a closed space, creates a sensation of uncanniness, which seems "half ghost, half machine." [507] The nude-like outfits worn by the "black virgins" give them an androgynous quality and their appearance first seems almost ghost-like. Yet, instead of nourishing scopophilic desires and allowing themselves to be transformed into uncanny objects of fantasy, the "black virgins" turn to offensive words as sonic masks. From within the container, the "virgins" project their voices unto the audience. They are enabled to this play of physical and symbolic masks by techniques of theatricalization, through which they

---

[505] The collection *Diasporic Avant-Gardes* (ed. Carrie Noland and Barrett Warren), which does not include any references to Asian or South Asian (avant-garde) diasporas, questions the integration of African American music within a postwar European avant-garde. The limitation of this anthology, in my view, is that it does not see any possible points of confluence between a Western avant-garde and the Creole and or other poetic idiolects elaborated by an African diapora. Zaimoglu's notion of "ethno-avant-garde" opens the path for a non-Western form of feminist interpretation, as will become clear from my detailed reading of *Schwarze Jungfrauen.*

[506] Container art is a world traveling concept of art that makes use of the container as a "fetish of the modern age." Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm cited in Alison Kilian, "'A Fetish of the Modern Age:' Container Art Examines Life in a Globalized World," in *Spiegel Online* June 9, 2011, accessed on March 28, 2013. The exclusionary space of the container has also inspired artists such as Christoph Schlingesief for artistic experiments to express xenophobia, an unmastered Nazi past as well as the Austrian extreme right politics of the time. See Richard Langston's analysis of *Bitte liebt Österreich,* in *Visions of Violence,* 229-256. The verb "unveiling" has been used by one of the commentators of the play and cited in Breger, Ibid., 235. Volkmar Dräger, "Verstörende Abrechnung: 'Schwarze Jungfrauen' entschleiern sich im HAU 3." *Neues Deutschland* 23 March 2006: 23.

stage their own relation with the audience in the form of apostrophe and free indirect speech.[508] For instance, the "virgin" in the sixth monologue tells the story of her emotional roller coaster and conversion to Islam as she notes that her unconventional behavior is not tolerated by fundamentalists. In the conclusion of her speech, she addresses an imagined audience, whose "screams" in protest (*Geschrei*) she overpowers through invective:

> Nackt ist nicht gleich ungläubig, hab ich ihnen gesagt, und voll bandagiert ist nicht   gleich Gott total unterworfen. Da gab's ein grosses Geschrei, sie lassen sich nichts von ner Halbgläubigen sagen, haben die beiden gerufen. Ich liess sie in Ruhe, diese Bauerntöchter halten sich an den Dorfislam des   Vaters, also können mich am Arsch lecken. Weisst du, was ich glaube? (52)

In the monologue that was not included in the staged version, a "virgin" uses abusive speech in order to indicate that she does not allow her body to conform to anybody's desire. She is against the "play of the inhibited," (50) by which she refers to passive followers of Islam, who conform to old-fashioned rules. When this Muslim declares in conclusion to her monologue "ich bin unspektakulaer," (50) she implicitly anticipates and defies a patriarchal desire that associates women with spectacle and masquerade.[509] She enacts this defamiliarization not through physical motion but through paradoxical speech:

> Ich bin vorschriftsmässig gekleidet, es schaut nicht ein einziges Haar heraus, und wer mich kennt, weiss, dass ich mich nicht blind an die Kleiderordnung halte. Ich habe lange daran nachdedacht und erst dann   das Schamtuch aufgelegt, und ich bin stolz darauf. (...)

---

[507] Simon Reynolds defines "post-rock" as "androgynous and racially indeterminate: "half ghost, half machine." Simon Reynolds, "Post-Rock," in *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern* Music, ed. Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner (London: Continuum, 2005), 358-361.

[508] For an analysis of theatricalization as interwoven with narrative, see Breger, *An Aesthetics of Narrative Performance,* 234.

[509] See, for instance, the preface in Friedrich Nietzsche, and Marion Faber, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

> Die toleranten Arschlecker sind mir ein Greuel, die schwulen Modegrafen hasse ich wie die Pest. Ich bin draussen. (...) Ich kann dieses Spiel der Enthemmten nicht ernst nehmen. Ich gehe meinen Weg. Ich bin völlig unspektakulär. (50)

This ultimate refusal of theatrical consumption is consistent with the play's subtle critique of the visual. *Schwarze Jungfrauen* relies on visual and narrative elements in order to disavow them. Although this monogue was not used in the final staging of the play, the notion of "non-spectacularity" is also emphasized by the convert to Islam, who declares on stage "ich bin kein Spektakel." The disavowal of spectacle is also mediated through the increased value of listening: in the staged production, the "black virgins" do not explicitly communicate with each other, yet they seem to listen to each other's speech through the container walls and further the conversation. Another mode of disavowing "woman" as mask is through the multiple speeches that the virgins deliver on the veil and the politics associated with it. The woman in a wheelchair wears a "carnival mask" while she declares that "the veil is my honor" (54). [510] What she implies is that she will keep her dignity as long as her sexual practices will not disturb anybody. By "Mundsex" she refers to oral sex but also possibly indicates a vocal mode of resistance against a preconceived Islamic identity. Such resistance takes place when a fellow Turkish woman tells her that she holds Christianity and the Enlightenment in awe. Besides vocally contesting the criticism of Islam by so-called emancipated Turkish women, the woman in the wheelchair puts an emphasis on her alleged veiled monstrosity and exacerbated sexuality: "Privat bin ich ein Krüppel, sexuell bin ich eine Sau, die davon träumt, dass der fremde Mann in ihre Intimsphäre eindringt. (...) Further, she mimics the voice of

the male nurse, who publicly announces her diformity: (...) meine Damen und Herren, kommen Sie doch rein und werfen Sie einen Blick auf unser verhülltes Monster im Gestell, ihr Gesicht lebt, der Rest ist tot, wir zeigen Ihnen, welche Kunststücke unser Monster mit ihrem Gesicht vollbringen kann" (53). The invitation for the public to get into the container space and contemplate the moves of the veiled face is suggestive of ethnographic observation. What the audience hears is a moment of transgression in which a taboo on the visual is lifted through sound. As the virgin reproduces the voice of the male nurse inviting the public to contemplate her monstrosity, she is drawing awareness to a prohibited and punitive act, which she is echoing through the voice of the male nurse speaking in her name.

In order to analyze the politics of the veil and the function of speech and sound in *Black Virgins,* I will return to Katrin Sieg's notion of "ethnic drag." Sieg explains it as a technique of "ventriloquizing" the voices of Others on German postwar stages, while appropriating their bodies.[511] In her analysis of Brecht's significance for contemporary German performance of "ethnic drag," Sieg points out that a Brechtian gesture of defamiliarization resonates with performances in "drag." Yet, while the moment of alienation that Sieg sees as intrinsic to her notion of ethnic drag signifies a moment of insight or visibility of social relations, the "black virgins'" use of symbolic and visible masks distinguishes itself from the Brechtian *gestus,* which is basically conceived as a visual construct. A Brechtian frame of analysis might well prove useful for a feminist Brechtian interpretation of this play as scopic empowerment and expression of critical consciousness. This is because *Schwarze Jungfrauen* uses from Brecht's arsenal what feminist theater studies scholar Elin

---

[510] All translations are my own.

Diamond calls the transformation of the "to-be-looked-at-ness" into a "looking-at-being-at-looked-ness."[512]

Entrapped in their superimposed cointainer spaces that remind one of prisons but also of windowcases from where prostitutes lure their customers or of vitrines where mannequins are exposed, "the virgins" are on scandalous display. From within these visual structures, they humorously deny the appetite for carnival of the multicultural society as they remove their ethnic attire in the very beginning of the staged production yet put on different types of masks, most of them verbal ones.[513] They also show a degree of mobility, as they move through spaces, from the upper to the lower or central level of the container space, and permutate their positions.The speech and sound effects present in the play are partially accounted for from a Brechtian perspective. As Erol Boran notes, commenting on the so-called Brechtian turn in Turkish performance, Brechtian theater practice was mostly used for creating comedic rather than socially critical effects in such performances.[514] Yet sound and speech serve aspects that possibly transcend Brechtian theory, which notably did not seek to account for the role of race. [515] Is the complex relation to visuality entertained by *Schwarze Jungfrauen* a mode of accounting for a non-visual staging of race? Thematic references to "race" in the play seem foremost related to the relation of

[511] Katrin Sieg, *Ethnic Drag,* 86.

[512] Elin Diamond, "Brechtian theory/feminist theory," in Elin Diamond, *Unmaking Mimesis: Essays on Feminism and Theater* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 52.

[513] Katrin Sieg has drawn attention to the possible polemic engagement of the play with the carnivalization of ethnic identities, which is reminiscent of the ethnic shows staged in the zoos between the 1870s and the 1920s. As Sieg indicates, the place of colonial subjects was taken after 1901 by look-alikes. Another possible reference related to carnivalization of ethnic minorities is the German Africa show, staged with subjects from the former colonies and sponsored by the National Socialist State. See Elisa von Joeden-Forgey, "Race Power in Postcolonial Germany: The German Africa Show and the National Socialist State, 1935-1940," in *Germany's Colonial Pasts,* 167-188.

[514] See Erol M. Boran, *Eine Geschichte des Türkish-Deutschen Kabaretts,* Dissertation, Ohio State University, 2004, 206.

Islam to anti-Semitic thought. In the third monologue, the "virgin" compares her Turkish suitor with a Jew and uses references to anti-Semitic clichés: "Ja ich hatte diese perversen Gedanken während er sprach und Hände rang wie n Jude der n gutes Geschäft gemacht fehlten ihm nur noch die Schläfenlocken für ihn wars ein Geschäft für mich wars blutiger Ernst" (47). The perspective is of a radical Muslim, and her thoughts are transcribed as heard. Sex is at the center of this transaction, but the identification of the Turk with the Jew points to ascriptions of anti-Semitism to radical Islam. Are there other aspects of race in the text that emerge through a disavowal of visuality?

A return to Sieg's term "ethnic drag" also proves useful here. By "ethnic drag," Sieg refers in the first place to deep seated histories of racial and colonial violence, "the racial violence encoded in colonial fantasies."[516] In analyzing the effect of "ethnic drag" on spectators, Sieg uses a visual term that denotes prohibition: drag instructs spectators "how not to see." On such effect, Sieg writes: spectators are told "how not to see the power of property relations that underwrite constructions of nationality even after race was elided from official discourses."[517] While Sieg's terminology relies on the function of the visual, the prohibition on seeing and the reliance on ventriloquized speech signal how the term could prove important not only from a visual perspective, as emphasized by Sieg, but also from an aural one, expressed through the sound poetics of the play as subaltern speech and dissident play. The monologues bring forth performative strategies and modes of speech that

---

[515] Sieg criticized Brechtian theory for its "unhistorical approach to race" as well as its separate treatment of racism and fascism. Sieg, *Ethnic Drag*, 64.
[516] Sieg, *Ethnic Drag*, 26.
[517] Sieg, 86.

justify veiling *or* unveiling in the making of speaking and resistant Muslimas. Their voices come from the underground, play with cliché, and grate against container walls as they refuse themselves to easy decodification. When telling her story of hiding in the Berlin underground, the "virgin" in the sixth monologue describes her sexual tribulations and experiments as she prohibits the listener from drawing quick conclusions: "Nicht, was du denkst" (50). This play with appearance and essence is exacerbated in the fourth monologue (which was not staged), in which the "virgin" mimics the Heil Hitler in front of an asylum seeker. In her mind, the gesture is meant to unmask the Nazism permeating German society. Since in new political constellations Islam is often reported to be linked to fascism, the virgin's radical statement inverts the terms of the guilt equation and considers fascism a contemporary state in German society instead.[518] The discourse proposed by the radical "virgin" changes the perspective on subaltern and racialized speech.

In *Ethnic Drag,* Sieg coins the term "antifascist drag" to refer to a "leftist/feminist identification with victimized, oppressed, and insurgent people as devoid of subjectivity, mute, incapable of representing themselves and potentially hostile."[519] In her analysis of *Schwarze Jungfrauen*, Katrin Sieg expands and refashions her earlier concept of ethnic drag as a practice based on the symbolic violence of performed substitutions into a notion that accommodates "new,

---

[518] Sieg gives an account of feminist voices raised against Islamo-fascism such as Oriana Fallaci's or Alice Schwarzer's, "Die falsche Toleranz," in *Die Gotteskrieger und die falsche Toleranz* (Köln: Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 2002).

[519] Sieg, *Ethnic Drag,* 154. To refer to Europe's "internal contradictions," she prefers to use the term "postnational" rather than transnational. Ibid., 184.

cosmopolitan forms of postnational belonging and European settlement."[520] Sieg relates "antifascist drag" to forms of feminist protest in the 1960s, which interpreted fascism as a manifestation of a patriarchal discourse; from a contemporary perspective, Sieg sees this generic fight against fascism translated into the feminist denunciation of "Islamo-fascism." However, as Sieg highlights, such oppositions to fascism originate in the discourse of a Western form of feminism, which does not take into account aspects of race, other than as "white gaze." Another definition of "anti-fascist drag" offered by Sieg addresses a perfunctory understanding of race as "reading race mimetically off of an outsider's body" (173); through this statement, Sieg indicates that non-Western feminists have been objects of a racialized discourse, otherwise designated as "the white gaze" that stifled their speech in utilitarian constructs such as the "native informant."[521] In her first analysis of antifascist drag from *Ethnic Drag*, Sieg emphasized a criticism of race whose mission is to transform abjection into a type of spiritual triumph tied to the white body. Such definitions of anti-fascism as linked to racism signal their embeddedness in visuality and the definition of race in visual terms. If we focus on the meaning of "black" in the play, other possible associations beyond the visual emerge. Such a perspective would expand Sieg's, who provides a reading of the play as relying on "tropes of documentary, factual authenticity" that contain their "new truths" (Sieg, 86). Sieg opposes such mode of realism to other interpretations of Turkish thought based on

---

[520] Katrin Sieg, "Black Virgins: Sexuality and the Democratic Body in Europe," 147-185. However, in this essay Sieg seems to reduce all ethnic drag to a violent imposition of ethnicity. In her book, *Ethnic Drag*, by contrast, some forms of ethnic drag are considered subversive. See, for example, Sieg's account of Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Karagöz in Alamania.*
[521] Sieg, "Black Virgins: Sexuality and the Democratic Body in Europe," 168.

imaginative modes of affiliation.[522] Sieg concludes her analysis with the remark that

the play demonstrates that there are no privileged victims of German racism, but she

focuses rather on German racism and on Turks and Jews as its most probable victims.

An analysis of the meaning of "black" in the play not only expands our understanding

of racism but also provides a possible interpretation for the significance of speech and

sound in *Schwarze Jungfrauen.*

     A postcolonial reading of this play emerges as an aural reading if we consider

the play as a problematization of what Leela Ghandi calls postcolonial theory's

"uneasiness with nationalist discourses" whenever they announce themselves as "the

only legitimate mouthpiece for native women."[523] Ghandi engages in her reading with

Fanon's work on colonial women and the Algerian veil during the 1960s' war of

liberation, which Fanon interprets as a strategy of political resistance. Yet, as Ghandi

also notes, in Fanon's text women do not speak for themselves but are rather the

subject of a touristic gaze or male auctorial perspective. [524] Meyda Yegenoglu, who

also analyzes Fanon's work on the veil, does not subscribe to the postcolonial stance

of "letting the native speak" and refrains altogether from "letting the truth of the

native be heard," in the name of a deep skepticism of the metaphysical notion of truth

(122).[525] Ironically, in Yegenoglu's work, a strict focus on speech as an expression of

truth leads to the paradox of postcolonial women never coming to speech. Zaimoglu

thematizes the veil as a subversion of power and but, unlike Fanon, lets the play's

"black virgins" redefine the veil and speak from the margins of society. The women's

---

[522] Ibid, 86. Sieg mentions Homi Bhabha and Leslie Adelson as the proponents of this interpretation.
[523] Leela Ghandi, *Postcolonial Theory,* 95.
[524] Ibid., 94.
[525] Meyda Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies,* 59, 122.

deliberate veiling or unveiling does not seem to be related to a patriarchal, a revolutionary or a nationalistic rule but relates instead to women's will and voice. In the end of the NDR manuscript, the play reaffirms the characters' awareness of their marginality, when they ask as a chorus:"who is afraid of the black virgin, who is afraid of us?"[526] In the staged production, the character of the student takes on this collective voice, while the other "virgins" appear in an upper space of the container, on the background of gritty electronic sound.

While black in this play relates in an obvious sense to forms of clothing associated with the Muslim veil, the other possible implication of the term alludes to the shifting signifier of blackness and race in anti-racist feminist activism in Germany since the 1980s and especially in the 1990s.[527] If the *Kanaks* from *Kanak Sprak* perform in blackface and extend the limits of conventional representation of Turkish immigrants, blackness and the veil signify in *Schwarze Jungfrauen*, one could say, on two levels. One is the veil as a black material object; the other is the veil as mask leading to a double disguise, that is to say, through the density of blackness and through veiling. This latter meaning points to an interpretation of the veil as a disruption of hegemonic practices of signification, disruption that has women at the

---

[526] NDR unpublished manuscript, Hörspiel nach dem gleichnamigen Theaterstück von Feridun Zaimoglu und Guenter Senkel (NDR Produktion 2007), 19.

[527] Afro-German activists of color gathered together in the early 1980s with the encouragement of African American activist Audre Lorde, who held a workshop on African-American female poetry in Berlin. In 1986, the first anthology of Afro-German women followed: *Farbe Bekennen: Afro-Deutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte* (Berlin: Orlanda Frauenverlag, 1986) [*Showing Our Colors. Afro-German Women Speak Out*], ed. May Opitz, Katharina Oguntoye, Dagmar Schultz, trans. Anne V. A. Adams (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1986). As Fatima El-Tayeb notes in her book on *Schwarze Deutsche: Der Diskurs um "Rasse" und Nationale Identitaet 1890-1933*, a deeply engraved racism, of which German Antisemitism was but a part, prevented the recognition of Black Germans' existence. The statement "Es konnte doch nicht sein, dass es uns nicht gab" is at the forefront of the anthology *Talking Home*, published in 1995 by queer women of color living in Germany. That anthology proposed a definition of queer that meant, among others, not to obey prescribed role models.

forefront of a revolution in social meaning. Women putting on these black masks might offer a counter-offensive to Frantz Fanon's project of cross-racial identification, in which masquerade plays a conventional role and in which black men and women take on white masks. In Fanon's work blacks take on white masks as in *Black Skins, White Masks*, or veiled women perform European selves as in *Dying Colonialism*.[528] However, *Schwarze Jungfrauen* does not simply let Turkish subjects take on white masks to invert a binary logic. The "black virgins" do not take on black masks through cross-cultural impersonation without problematizing their own status. The veil is constantly on center stage being interpreted and performed. According to Fanon, as Diana Fuss notes, Fanon is sympathetic towards black men taking on white masks but measures black women's disguise against criteria inherited from an essentialist model of representation of black women.[529] Whereas Fanon characterizes Algerian women's masked status as natural (by contrast to practices of Western European women), as Fuss details, he also defines masquerade as inherent to black femininity.[530] *Schwarze Jungfrauen* reverses Fanon's notion of masquerade not only by playing with the mysterious referent of black masks, but also by transforming masquerade from a notion inherent to femininity to one subversive of it. [531]

---

[528] Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism,* trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, Inc. 1965).

[529] Diana Fuss, *Identification Papers* (London: Routledge, 1995), 154.

[530] Fanon refers to the "natural character of feminine disguise," practiced by Algerian women in opposition to European women's recognizable art of dissimulation. Frantz Fanon, *Dying Colonialism*, 50. Although Fuss distinguishes between mimicry as subversive anti-colonial weapon and masquerade as unconscious mimetism, the attitude of Algerian women displays features of both. Fanon's use of masquerade implies, however, a conscious identification with a role.

[531] This notion of subversiveness is similar to how Katrin Sieg defines Brechtian estrangement, which aims to "subvert, resist, and transform the social order." Katrin Sieg, *Ethnic Drag,* 12. Sieg's ethnic drag seeks to tend to the "absence of language about a memory of racial masquerade in Germany," which in her view points to the "insufficient integration of past experiences into a postwar national consensus." (8) Diana Fuss, *Identification Papers,* 146. Fanon's use of masquerade implies, however, a conscious identification with a role.

One dimension of subversion is apparent in the play's reinterpretation of the veil as *bad hijab* (Spivak) through which women play with the notion of both oppression and emancipation, as when one virgin declares the veil as shameful to take on, a "Schamtuch" (50), but also confesses herself proud of it. *Bad Hijab* is compared by feminist critic Nima Naghibi with the figure of catachresis, as outlined by postcolonial critic Spivak. In Naghibi's interpretation, the bad hijabi is a "metaphor without an adequate referent", in essence, a catachresis unsettling both Western and non-Western feminist postcolonial discourse by mocking binary oppositions of "veiling/unveiling" while playing on Orientalist representations.[532] *Bad Hijab* reforms the figuration of Oriental woman as corporeal metaphor or synechdoche.[533] For purposes of my analysis, I use "bad hijab" as a form of practising "new realism" in the sense of *Kanak Sprak's* use of "blackface": as vocal play of the oppressed subject with the very mask of marginality. Blackface here does not rely on a logic of substitution but rather exacerbates it. In my view, the play does not substitute one essentialist mode through another in the sense of an "anti-racist racism" but performs and subverts essentialism in a vocal fashion through its references to Anti-Semitism, fanaticism or political incorrectness. It is this logic of disidentification, of suggested but not quite inversion that the play draws its power from. Zaimoglu and Senkel's experiment in masquerade not only requires an interpretive apparatus aware of colonial and postcolonial legacies but also raises awareness to complex interweavings of gender, race and religion in contemporary contexts.

---

[532] Nima Naghibi, *Rethinking Global Sisterhood: Western Feminism and Iran* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 71-72. The article by Spivak referred by Naghibi is "Who Claims Alterity?" in *Remaking History,* ed. Barbara Krüger and Phil Marian (Seattle: Bay Press, 1989), 269-92.
[533] See Hsu-Ming Teo, "Femininity, Modernity, and Colonial Discourse," in *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire,* ed. Helen Gilbert and Anna Johnston (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 180.

Referring to the black virgins, the German convert to Islam characterizes them as "black noise" (55) and thus highlights their dissonant status within mainstream society. Interestingly, this German convert becomes included in their rank not as she opens herself to "the black virgins" but as she blocks her ears from their unconventional speech, which she equals with noise: "Meine Ohren sind versiegelt, ich bin unempfindlich gegen den schwarzen Lärm (55)." Her statement recalls the self-protective and enlightened gesture of Odysseus' companions who, at Odysseus' command, seal their ears with wax in order to preserve their sense of hearing when passing through the straits of Scylla and Charybdis. The relation between the German convert and the other representatives of Muslim faith is defined in sonic terms as voluntary deafening to their sound. If the German convert stands for the Western perspective, then her embrace of non-Western practices seems to be sonically conditioned. As shown by this conditioned conversion, the "noise" of the "black virgins" pertains to a dimension that is best rendered by the play's staged electronic interpretation of noise. In the end of the play, after the student asks the question "who is afraid of the black virgin," the group of "virgins" appears in silence in a niche of the container above the level occupied by the student.[534] The sound recedes gradually in the background, and a silent play of lights shows the "virgins" permutating their positions in the container space. The question of the student about "who is afraid of the black virgin" is meant to linger in the ears of the public and resonate in the space of the container, since no deliberate deafening can provide closure to such question. As Breger observes, the question recalls racial fears of colonial history expressed through a question such as "who is afraid of the black man,"? yet this question also

---

[534] The staged production assigns this question to the student, unlike the NDR script, where the it is the

articulates something else.[535] The rhetoric of this question inserts itself into an ad-hoc community of viewers and listeners in the guise of the disruptive principle of the heterolingual address. This principle creates and asserts the non-homogeneity of a community. It is in this failure to achieve homogeneity that new material conditions for listening emerge.

<div align="center">***</div>

In her analysis of *Schwarze Jungfrauen,* Katrin Sieg compares the music of the staged production to Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind.*[536] Writing on the creation of the stranger in the postcolonial world, Sara Ahmed uses Spielberg's musical theme to comment on the reduction of alien language to music, in an effort orchestrated by humans to interpret alien speech in an effort to move into their world. The purpose of Ahmed's analysis is to conceptualize how aliens or strangers are created in the contemporary world through simplifying mechanisms of difference and recognition pertaining to either multiculturalism or postcolonialism.[537] For Ahmed, the theme of the benevolent encounter is a recurrent motif of colonialism, circulated through post-colonialism's simplified narratives of closeness and distance. The fact that music recedes into the background in the very last scenes of the staged production of the play could be interpreted as a triumph of heterolingual address over external attempts at decipherment through music. Such simplified attempts at reductive understanding through harmonization and music are also resisted by "Kanak

---

chorus of the virgins that raises it.
[535] See Claudia Breger's analysis of this question in Claudia Breger, *An Aesthetics of Narrative Performance,* 239.
[536] Katrin Sieg, "Black Virgins: Sexuality and the Democratic Body in Europe," 178. Sieg makes this observation without speculating further.

Sprak." As I have demonstrated in my analysis, "Kanak Sprak," this strange idiom, does not easily let itself be decoded as music or even as alien language. Both *Kanak Sprak* and *Schwarze Jungfrauen*, as I have argued in my chapter, serve to resituate the language of the Turks from conventional subaltern speech to a source of resonant, aural, imaginative relations with histories of colonialism in the Caribbean. Thus my chapter has expanded the findings of an anthology such as *Der Black Atlantic,* in which Caribbean and German relations were juxtaposed rather than brought in conjunction. The encounters highlighted by both *Kanak Sprak* and *Schwarze Jungfrauen* are not failed encounters as those outlined by Ahmed, but imagined encounters meant to unsettle structures of subjection through sound and performance. In this regard, my use of Rey Chow's term "who plays" rather than "who speaks" has also served to unsettle the potentially unidirectional tone of "who speaks." Zaimoglu's figure of the *Kanak*, which echoes racialized colonial histories within African-American and Afro-Caribbean traditions of sound, engages a changing national culture as it becomes increasingly transnational and defines itself through sound and performance.

The next chapter will demonstrate a mode of contesting the lines of the nation from a different perspective. Thomas Kling is a poet who declares himself a literary historian and who is particularly invested in avant-garde tradition and practice. My chapter will explore the significance of Kling's sound practices in the wake of reunification.

---

[537] Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality* (Routledge: London and New York, 2000), 4.

CHAPTER 4

THOMAS KLING AND AESTHETIC LEGACIES OF SOUND

Resonant Paradigms

Contemporary poet Thomas Kling (1947-2005) started his career at the Ratinger Hof in Düsseldorf, which was the center of the new artistic scene at the end of the 1970s in West Germany and where *Aktions*-artist and prominent postwar performer Joseph Beuys had performed. In the 1980s, Kling recited his early poems there, accompanied on drums by his artist colleague Frank Köllges.[538] In Kling's own estimation, this practice of blending music and recitation was a novel occurrence in the late 1970s and achieved popularity only in the 1990s.[539] In an interview, however, Kling minimized the role played by live performance in his early work and stated that his shows at Ratinger Hof consisted of *staged* O-tones for the most part and not of live sounds.[540] Kling's relation to live sound, whose importance in his early aesthetics he downplayed, became an important component of his post-1989 aesthetics. In his work from the 1990s he consistently characterized his artifacts as "Sprachinstallationen." With this term, Kling indicated the interactive component of an artistic installation as well as its linguistic and performative value. Are Kling's linguistic and performative constructs new defining moments for post-1989 aesthetics? To what extent does Kling, whose earliest poetic release dates from the mid-1980s, but who published most of his work in the 1990s, account for a change of

---

[538] Helmut Böttiger, "Thomas Kling. Die wunderbare Rampensau," in *Nach den Utopien*: *Eine Geschichte der deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Wien: Zsolnay, 2004), 244-250. See also Thomas Kling, *Itinerar* (Frankfurt am Main: Edition Suhrkamp, 2006), 18.
[539] Thomas Kling, *Botenstoffe* (Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 2001), 31.
[540] Thomas Kling, *Botenstoffe,* 212.

paradigms in German poetry since 1989, including the practice of poetic performance? Is he representative of new aesthetic forms after 1989? In trying to answer these questions as well as explore types and forms of resonance in his poetic work, this chapter will consider his poetry, essays and poetic performances on both CD and stage.[541]

If literary novelties in prose since 1989 have been widely analyzed, the lyric realm has not enjoyed comparable attention and recent anthologies on contemporary literature do not reserve much space for poetry.[542] Critical opinions about the extent and degree of changes since 1989 in the poetic field have differed to various degrees. Michael Braun's anthology *Das verlorene Alphabet* characterizes the 1990s and their reflection in German lyric as a decade of continuities and differentiations rather than one of ruptures and radical destruction.[543] Hermann Korte's 2004 *Deutschprachige Lyrik seit 1945* does not mention a turn in the sense of a literary *Wende* corresponding to a political one but sees rather a paradigmatic change in German lyric since 1990; he argues that this change of paradigms was not conditioned by political events but

---

[541] Kling's collected volumes were published by Marcel Beyer and Christian Döring in 2006, a year after the death of the poet. *Gesammelte Gedichte*, ed. Marcel Beyer and Christian Döring (Köln: DuMont Literatur und Kunst Verlag, 2006). I will additionally consider the CDs accompanying the volumes *Fernhandel* (1999) and *Sondagen* (2002), the volumes of essays *Botenstoffe* (2001), *Itinerar* (1997) and the poetry collection edited by Kling, *Sprachspeicher 200 Gedichte auf deutsch vom achten bis zum zwanzigsten Jahrhundert* (Köln: DuMont, 2001), 310.

[542] For instance, Stuart Taberner's anthology about German Literature of the 1990s does not discuss poetry at all. Stuart Taberner, ed. *German Literature of the 1990s and beyond* (Rochester/NY: Camden House, 2005).

[543] "Am Ende des Jahrhunderts lauern keine poetischen Revolutionen mehr auf ihren triumphalen Auftritt; es dominieren die Reprisen, Rekonstruktionen, Übermalungen und kunstvollen Fortschreibungen. Und auch das Jahr 2000 wird, sofern nicht alle Zeichen trügen, keine Stunde Null für die Lyrik sein. Die neunziger Jahre in der Lyrik sind ein Jahrzent der Kontinuitäten und Ausdifferenzierungen, nicht der Brüche und Nullansagen; wir entdecken in den Gedichten mehr Wiederholungen und Anverwandlungen denn Revolten und Aufbrüche." *Das verlorene Alphabet: Deutschsprachige Lyrik der neunziger Jahre*, ed. Michael Braun und Hans Thill (Heidelberg: Wunderhorn, 1998), 205.

rather by intrinsic literary processes that reached their apotheosis in the 1990s.[544]

According to Korte, these processes had perception at their center, both as a motif and

as a poetic method for reflecting medial changes in the 1990s.[545] In his analysis, Korte

contrasts the function of perception in the 1990s with the distance taken by the poetic

"I" from society in the poetics of *Neue Innerlichkeit* in the 1970s, or in forms of

Betroffenheitslyrik. According to Korte, the latter thematized private, national and

international catastrophes. "Perception," as Korte defines it, is intricately related to

media effects. I propose to focus on the impact of "perception" in Kling's poetry from

a media and socio-political perspective, which I term "poetic resonance." I understand

poetic resonances not only in the sense of poetic influence, but rather as analytic

references that highlight media effects and also raise questions about the importance

of geo-politics in Kling's work.

Regarding the *Wendejahr* 1989/1990, Kling interprets it, in Eric Hobsbawm's

terms, as the end of the short twentieth century and posits a number of consequences

from the shift.[546] The most important change he identifies is the end of a forced

national reception of contemporary German lyric ("eine forciert national fokkusierte

Rezeption der zeitgenössischen Lyrik").[547] Despite critical voices and collections of

---

[544] Hermann Korte, *Deutschsprachige Lyrik seit 1945*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart/Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 2004), 256-257. On a separate note, Korte acknowledges that the literature of GDR took a new form and shape while some of its authors refocused their protest from Communism to Capitalism.
[545] This critic explains the altered paradigms by pointing to the genealogy of preceding periods, in which perception was a process that contributed to the forming and enriching of a poetic "I." The same argument is made by Karen Leeder, "'Schreiben am Schnittpunkt': The Place of Contemporary German Poetry," *Schaltstelle: Neue deutsche Lyrik im Dialog.* ed. Karen Leeder (Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi), 2007), 1-30.
[546] Thomas Kling, *Sprachspeicher*, 310. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Age of extremes: the short twentieth century; 1914 – 1991*, Reprint (London: Abacus, 1997).
[547] The entire citation reads as follows: "In den 90ern—und für das 90er-Jahre-Gedicht—ist von verschiedenen Seiten der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft, mir aus der zeitgeschichtlichen Bedeutung allerdings verständlich, eine forciert national fokussierte Rezeption der zeitgenössischen deutschsprachigen Lyrik zu beobachten, die, vielleicht gar nicht mal beabsichtigt, doch das Primat des

poems that rather take the *Wende* and reunification as a pretext for the reinstatement of the genre of the German poem (*Deutschlandgedicht),* Kling calls for a poem and poetry that encompass voices and spaces beyond German national space. Therefore, he suggests a renewed focus on Austrian lyric , but he implies a broader opening, in practice and theory, of the national terrain of lyric made in Germany to many more international tonalities. His representation of lyric is that of a *melting pot* of sounds of a society, the sounds of which the poet is called to "prepare" for incorporation into verse.[548] Furthermore, Kling's work, I argue, not only problematizes a change of paradigms in German poetry through a challenge of literary trends from the earlier decades of *New Subjectivity* and *Betroffenheitslyrik*, but also puts in question *the German poem* through a reappraisal of pre-and postwar transnational avant-gardes and their transnational legacies.[549] Through his use of sound and performance, Kling

---

ausschliesslich in Deutschland geschriebenen Gedichts reinstallieren zu müssen glaubt: so geschehen in Harald Hartungs der Vollzähligkeit gewidmeten Anthologie "Jahrhundertgedächtnis" oder im von Walter Hinck herausgegebenen Interpretationsband "Gegenwart II"—bei beiden taucht *nicht ein* Gedicht aus Österreich mehr auf, was, sagen wir es abgekürzt, heute auf Wettbewerbsverzerrung hinausläuft." *Sprachspeicher,* 310. By contrast to the verb "reinstallieren," which asserts here a dogmatic relation to a notion of primordial national unity, Kling's *Sprachinstallationen* seem, in the poet's understanding and practice, to do the opposite, and dissolve rather than reassert the parameters of national language.

[548] "Ein Schnelles Summen," in *Botenstoffe*, 203. "Ich wende meine Aufmekrsamkeit schon einem geographischen Geschichtsraum zu, wo es für mich dann egal ist, ob es das Rheinland ist als deutsches Thema, was aber im 'mittel rhein' ja auch schon wieder in einem kulturhistorischen Rundumschlag gezeigt wird, was das für ein melting pot gewesen ist. Und genauso interessiert mich jede andere Land- oder Stadtschaft." The metaphor of the melting pot is somewhat infelicitous as it indicates the unifying voice of a poet who merges all the possible influences into one main voice. This problematic formulation is also echoed by Kling's desire to constitute a corpus of poems which would resemble Herder's *Sammleransatz* of songs (*Gesammelte Gedichte*, 223). Herder coined the syntagm about the genius of language as the genius of the literature of one's nation —a metaphor which incorporates nationalities rather than distinguishes them. See Johann Gottfried Herder, "Über die neuere deutsche Literatur (1766/67)," in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernhard Suphan, Bd. I (Berlin: Wiedemann, 1877-1913). What Kling retains from Herder seems, rather, his work on onomatopoetic theory, which likely inspired the historical avant-gardes.

[549] The German poem I am referring to echoes the "German question," as it re-emerged after November 1989. Patrick Stevenson, who situates it in relation to language, defines "the German question" as a mixture of two tendencies: the apparent convergence of two German states towards a new type of maturity, on the one hand, and the embrace of a form of "atavistic Germanness," on the other. Patrick Stevenson, *Language and German Disunity: A Sociolinguistic History of East and West in Germany, 1945-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 16.

not only rewrites and reinterprets an avant-garde legacy for the present; he also situates his work since the *Wende* within the frame of what he considers an epoch of *Restauration*.[550] Within this model of restoration, which is not necessarily one of continuity, Kling sets the legacy of literary models such as Paul Celan and H.C. Artmann against influential postwar authors such as Bertolt Brecht and Gottfried Benn, whose traditions he claims to challenge and revise. In this chapter I will address in particular the Benn-Celan coordinates of influence and their productive dialogue with what I regard as Kling's interest in the sonic component of the avant-garde.

Metaphors of stagnation and apocalypse as well as lyric formalism and emphasis on a private lyrical sphere in German poetry of the late 1970s and 1980 have been catalogued as "Anti-Avant-Garde."[551] This ostensible shift towards an "Anti-Avantgarde" is described by Luc Ferry in terms of an exhaustion of the aesthetics of modernity as an aesthetics of *innovatio* in a global context.[552] By using a musical metaphor borrowed from Vassily Kandinsky's and Arnold Schönberg's correspondence, Ferry suggests that the early avant-gardes' fears of a shift from

---

[550] See "Augensprache, Sprachsehen," in *Botenstoffe*, 223. It is worth noting that "Restauration" is the word used by the Bielefelder Colloquium *Neue Poesie*, a group of transnational poets founded in the late 1970s, to describe its fight for the dissolve of ideological remnants present in various languages and to fight "die Restauration des Ideologischen." For the group, the imperative of the purification of language means to provide an internal critique of particular linguistic forms from within a language. See Thomas Kellein und Jörg Drews, ed. *Neue Poesie: 20 Jahre Bielefelder Colloquium* (Bielefeld: Kunsthalle Bielefeld, 1997), 18. In Kling's usage, "Restauration" retains an ambiguous quality. In the German context, *Restauration* could well also refer to Konrad Adenauer's postwar restructuring of West Germany, while retaining National Socialist structures in place.

[551] See Alexander von Bormann, "Die Rückwendung zur Formtradition in der Lyrik der 80er Jahre," in *Duitse Kronieck*, 34/3 (1984): 2-12.

[552] Luc Ferry, *Homo Aestheticus: The Invention of Taste in the Democratic Age,* trans. Robert de Loaiza (Chicago: Univ of Chicago Press, 1993), 193. Ferry relies on Octavio Paz's study of modern poetry and this poetry's alleged decline in political and ideological impact. Ibid., 196. This assessment is also reinforced by Hal Foster, who notes that twentieth –century avant-garde challenged dominant aesthetic modes, while the avant-garde in the 1950s and the 1960s became institutionalized. The period

pictorial and musical dissonance to consonance were reached in substance in the 1970s and 1980s.[553] The boisterous aesthetic inspired by punk and drums in Kling's early poetics is the sign of an early attempt to put an end to reconciliation with the ostensible harmony of the 1980s. Through his poetic and theoretical reappraisal of the early twentieth-century avant-gardes and reevaluation of experiments with language and sound after World War II, Kling points to an aesthetics of *innovatio* that recontextualizes, I argue, the poetic landscape of the 1990s. It remains to be determined if the innovation he proposes reveals both an aesthetic and a geopolitical component and how this is reflected in his poetry.

Kling's poetry emerges in a decade when the decline of the avant-gardes had been proclaimed anew. Critics such as Gerhard Falkner ascribe the decreasing impact of the avant-gardes in the present to the profound shift from a period of technological innovation, peculiar to the early avant-gardes, to one of information technologies. Since the first avant-gardes had been the critical bastions of industrialization and reflected the fragmentation of everyday life at the hands of technology, the new era of communication as connection and information seems no longer to correspond to the original avant-garde impulse to reflect a dispersed and pulverized universe.[554] However, Falkner limits his analysis of so-called decay to the distinction between the industrial and the technological age and does not analyze the possible implications of the *Wende* for such divisions. Nor does Falkner take into account the role of other

---

after 1970 is described by Foster in relation to the avant-garde as a time when the avant-garde reflected on its own institutionalization.

[553] Luc Ferry, *Homo Aestheticus,* 199. Ferry cites the correspondence between Kandinsky and Schönberg from January 18, 1911.

[554] Gerhard Falkner, "Baumfällen: Zur Phänomenologie des Niedermachens in der deutschen Literaturkritik am Beispiel Michael Brauns und des Bandes "Lyrik von Jetzt," *Ndl*, 2 (2004): 121-31.

types of historical and poetic resonances between the German past and the present, and their role in defining a post-reunification aesthetics. Since the *Wende,* artists have proposed the notion of a retro-avant-garde, or avant-garde that looks into the past.[555] Does Kling's work create alternative structures to this type of retro-avant-gardism?

Sprachinstallationen and Performance: the Avant-Garde in the 1990s

In his essay "Zu den deutschsprachigen Avantgardes," the first entry in Kling's collection of essays entitled *Botenstoffe* (2001), the poet provides a cross-historical vision of the avant-gardes by focusing in particular on the aesthetic practice of the Dadaists and their simultaneous poetic performances. In Kling's estimation, concrete poets in the 1960s relaunched Dadaist art, while the Dadaists also inspired the punk and pop movements in the 1960s and the 1970s. Moreover, Kling acknowledges the Dadaists as a major source of inspiration for the rise of the performative poem in the 1990s, and refers in particular to Hugo Ball's pioneer understanding of the poem as a medial reality.[556] Kling credits the Dadaists Walter Serner, Hans Arp, or Richard Huelsenbeck as forerunners of "Simultantext" and early forms of performance, and highlights the relevance of their practices in particular on

---

[555] See Inke Arns, "Irwin Navigator: Retroprincip 1983-2003," *Irwin: Retroprincip 1983-2003,* ed. I. Arns (Frankfurt: Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, 2003).

[556] Gert Mattenklott quotes Ball's statement "all world turned medial" ("alle Welt ist medial geworden"), from *Flucht aus der Zeit*, ed. Bernhard Echte, Zürich 1992, 156f) and analyzes it in the context of a performative aesthetics from Mallarmé to Einstein. In Gert Mattenklott, "Performative Ästhetik zwischen Mallarmé und Einstein," in *Kulturen des Performativen,* ed. Erika Fischer-Lichte, Doris Kolesch, Paragrana Band 7 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998), 165-177. In 1916 Ball announced to have discovered the genre of *Lautgedichte* (phonetic poems) or verses without words. Hugo Ball, *Flight out of Time: A Dada Diary (*NY: Viking University Press, 1974). According to Michael Lentz, possible precursors of Ball might be considered Paul Scheerbart's first sound poems "Kikakokù!" or "Ekolaraps" (1897), Christian Morgenstern's "Das grosse Lalulà" (1905), Henri-Martin Barzun's poems (poème polyphonique, poésie vocale) from 1912/13, the sa-um of the Futurists (1912/13) and

"contemporary forms of communication technologies."[557] Kling's essay symbolically resurrects Ball as a prophetic presence, who "bespeaks the erased audio trace of all languages, living and dead ("Der Dichter spricht, lallt, röhrt: eigentlich spricht er die gelöschte Tonspur aller Sprachen, der lebenden wie der toten")."[558] It is worth reminding readers here that the historical Ball, the inventor of "poems without words," regarded as his poetic mission to return to the "innermost alchemy of the word" in order to denounce the corrupted language of journalism. Ball's theory of "grammologues," magical floating words and resonant sounds, is one of the earliest on poetry as sound poetry.[559] In the essay, Kling calls Ball's staging of the poem as performance and event, Ball's *Sprachinstallation.*[560] This representation of the poem as sonic work and as art work, as artistic installation and sound performance is constitutive of Kling's own performative and poetic practice. Kling would start calling himself, from the late 1980s onwards, a *Sprachinstallateur*, and initiate his poetic improvisations first in multilingual form.[561] With his notion of *Sprachinstallation,* Kling provides a possible alternative to the *Konstellationen* of

---

finally Luigi Russolo's "L'arte dei rumori" and his *Intonarumor*i instruments. See Michael Lentz, *Lautpoesie/-musik 1945,* Band 1, 100ff.

[557] Thomas Kling, *Botenstoffe,* 17.

[558] Thomas Kling, "Zu den deutschsprachigen Avant-gardes," in *Botenstoffe,* 20-21.

[559] Its origins lie in theories of onomatopoetic language proposed by Giambattista Vico and Johann Gottfried Herder. On Vico's theory of the origin of language out of onomatopoeia see *The New Science,* trans. Thomas Goddard and Max Harold Frisch (NY: Anchor Books, 1961), 107. See also Johann Gottfried Herder, *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1772). However, as I will show, Kling's use of sounds is different from Herder's understanding of them as anchored in a national language.

[560] *Botenstoffe*, 19. In *Botenstoffe* Kling gives another explanation of his choice of *Sprachinstallateur* and motivates it politically, in response to the alleged erasure of the "Dichter" terminology in the wake of 1968.

[561] *Botenstoffe,* 28. See, for instance, the advertisement about an early Sprachinstallation performance in three languages (Swedish, German and Finnish), which carries the Finnish title Språkinstallation. In Thomas Kling, *Das brennende Archiv: Unveröffentlichte Gedichte, Briefe, Handschriften und Photos aus dem Nachlaß,* ed. Norbert Wehr and Ute Langanky (Suhrkamp: Berlin, 2012), 26.

concrete poets, which were conceived mainly as visual artifacts (*Seh-und Gebrauchsgegenstände*).[562]

In his essay on the German-speaking avant-gardes, Kling not only adopts Ball's particular staging of the poem as a sound event but also expands on the Dadaist's efforts to undermine a national reception of poetry. In an effort to oppose a national reception of his anthology *Cabaret Voltaire,* Ball collected contributions from Austrians, Dutch, French, Italian, Polish, Romanians, Russians, and *Heimatlosen*.[563] A similar effort to address a large audience irrespective of its origins was orchestrated by Ball in the city of exiles, Zurich, during evenings of sound and performance in the homonymous Cabaret Voltaire circa 1916. Ball retained the peculiarity of each singular contribution in a foreign language to be part of the Dadaist aesthetics. Ball's project is slightly different from Dadaist experimentor Kurt Schwitters and his project of an art characterized by *Übernationalität*, not anchored in any specific country.[564]

The distinction between the regional and the international as featured by the avant-garde is at the source of Kling's polemic against Hans Magnus Enzensberger, highlighted in the same essay. "Zu den deutschsprachigen Avantgardes" takes issue with Enzensberger's essay on the "Aporien der Avantgarde" (1962) and also with

---

[562] See Eugen Gomringer,"Vom Vers zur Konstellation," in *Zweck und Form einer neuen Dichtung*, 1954. The term concrete poetry goes back to Theo von Doesburg's and Hans Arp's definition of concrete art as opposite to abstraction, and characterized by an emphasis on lines, surfaces, spaces and colors rather than figurative associations. See Raoul Schrott, *Fragmente einer Sprache der Dichtung: Grazer Poetikvorlesung* (Wien: Literaturverlag Droschl, 1997).

[563] Hugo Ball, *Cabaret Voltaire: Recueil littéraire et artistique,* cited in Hubert von Berg, "'Übernationalität' der Avantgarde." In *Der Blick vom Wolkenkratzer, Avantgarde-Avantgardekritik-Avantgardeforschung*, ed. Wolfgang Asholt and Walter Fähnders (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 263.

Enzensberger's dismissal of the term.[565] Enzensberger' essay denounces the avant-garde's ostensible quest for the new as conformism with capitalist industry and its means of production, and also decries the absolute artistic mission of the avant-garde as unrealistic, and undermined by its reliance on means of production.[566] However, Enzensberger's views on poetry are not represented in this essay on the alleged aporias of the avant-garde. They feature in two other works by Enzensberger, the anthology *Das Museum der modernen Poesie* and his essay, "Weltsprache der modernen Poesie." Here Enzensberger develops a view of poetry indicative of two apparently conflicting tendencies. In *Das Museum der modernen Poesie* (1961) Enzensberger highlights modernist poets from thirty-five countries active between 1910-1945 in an attempt to reconstruct a poetic world language (*poetische Weltsprache*) and to depict an advanced modernist poetry constituting a museum of world literature. In the earlier essay, "Weltsprache der modernen Poesie" (1960), Enzensberger concedes that modern poetry in many tongues entails an anchoring in the regional rather than a liberation from the constraints of the national.[567] By indirectly engaging with Enzensberger's dilemma of the regional versus the national, expressed in his essays written during the Cold War, Kling pursues a subtle intertextual mediation on issues of globalization in the context of German reunification. The reunification raised questions about nation, national culture, and

---

[564] Hubert von Berg, "'Die Übernationalität' der Avantgarde-(Inter)nationalität der Forschung: Hinweis auf den internationalen Konstruktivismus in der europäischen Literatur und die Problematik ihrer literaturwissenschaftlichen Erfassung," in *Der Blick vom Wolkenkratzer,* 267-271, (260).

[565] Thomas Kling, "Zu den deutschsprachigen Avantgardes,"*Botenstoffe*, 10.

[566] Hans Magnus Enzensberger,"Die Aporien der Avantgarde," in *Einzelheiten II: Poesie und Politik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984), 50-80.

[567] Hans Magnus Enzensberger, ed., Nachwort, *Museum der modernen Poesie* (Frankfurt/ Main 1980, 773); Hans Magnus Enzensberger,"Weltsprache der modernen Poesie," in *Einzelheiten II: Poesie und Politik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984), 20.

German identity, while globalization intensified these questions.[568] What Kling achieves in retrieving the resources of the avant-gardes is a return to an original internationalism as advanced by Ball or Schwitters, which becomes important in today's context of the global that pivots on the local.

In the following I will investigate to what extent Kling fulfills his theoretical agenda in poetic terms and examine how his theoretical references to the early avant-gardes and the neo-avant-gardes influence his own poetic practice. In models of the sound poem and the acoustic poem or *poésie sonore*, Kling explores various possibilities for poetry in the 1990s, and relies on a model of the poem as mediation and transmission, which he borrows from the Dadaists.[569] The idea of the poem as mediation is a result of Kling's own stance towards two major approaches to sound in poetry: sound poems before Word War II and acoustic poetry or *poésie sonore* after Word War II.[570] If the sound poem was claimed as a Dadaist invention between the World Wars, *poésie sonore* was defined by Henri Chopin, one of the first to experiment with the tape recorder in the 1950s, as "made for and by the tape recorder," as a "matter of vocal microparticles rather than the Word as we know it, as far as the art of the voice and the mouth are concerned, and this art can be more easily codified by machines and electricity, and also by electricity, than by any means

---

[568] See the debate on the role of the nation between Karl Heinz Bohrer and Ulrich Greiner, triggered by the publication of an article by Bohrer in Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung from January 13, 1990 with the title "Warum wir keine Nation sind: Warum wir eine werden sollten," in Frank Thomas Grub, *"Wende" und "Einheit" im Spiegel der deutschsprachigen Literatur: ein Handbuch* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003), 179-185. On German literature and globalization, the most important early anthologies are Stuart Taberner, ed. *German Literature in the Age of Globalization* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press, 2004) or Andreas Gardt, Bernd-Rüdiger Hüppauf, ed. *Globalization and the Future of German* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004).

[569] "das Gedicht wird *Sendefläche*," in *Botenstoffe*, 21.

proper to writing."[571] In the German-speaking space, Ernst Jandl introduced the

concept of *Lautkompositionen* and *Sprechgedichte* to describe Chopin's experiments

and make them accessible to the German public.[572] Whereas the early sound poets

would operate with a notion of sound as effect produced on the text level, the

practitioners of *poésie sonore* would use the tape recorder to back up their

compositions. Kling integrates into his practice both of these traditions of sound and

relates them to the present of transnational and global flows in their relation to old and

new media. Kling's practice of *Sprachinstallation* is close to Steven Cranston

Ruppenthal's definition of sound poetry elaborated in his *History of the Development*

and Techniques of Sound Poetry in the Twentieth Century in Western Culture as sonic

art that treats the speaking voice as an instrument of artistic communication.[573]

Ruppenthal further comments:

> The parameters that the artists working in this medium (sound poetry) deal
> with are similar to those which a composer of music will manipulate in a
> composition-the basic parameters of any sonic occurrence: pitch, timbre,
> dynamics, density or texture, temporality or duration, and spatiality. (…) The
> manner in which the sound poet achieves sounds in performance is by treating
> each vocal mechanism as a separate instrument. These mechanisms include
> vocal cords, the resonating chamber of the mouth, the teeth, the lips, the
> tongue, and the inhalation and exhalation of the air through the nose.[574]

---

[570] For a more detailed discussion of this division see Steve Caffery, "From Phonic to Sonic: The Emergence of the Audio-Poem," in *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies,* ed. Adalaide Morris (Chapel Hill and London: The University of Chapel Hill Press, 1997), 149-168.

[571] Henri Chopin, "Open Letter to Aphonic Musicians" published in *REVUE OU, Cinquième Saison no 33,* revue de poésie evolutive. Sceaux 1967, 11, cited in Michael Lentz, *Lautpoesie/-musik nach 1945*, 156.

[572] See Michael Lentz, *Lautpoesie/-musik nach 1945*, 132.

[573] Ibid.

[574] Stephen Cranston Ruppenthal, *History of the Development and Techniques of Sound Poetry in the Twentieth Century in Western Culture*, Dissertation, 1975, 6-9, cited in Michael Lentz, *Lautpoesie/-musik nach 1945*, 79.

As we will see, Kling's art reflects in part this definition of sound poetry, since his poems include parts for the voice as the organ of sound production, but they also keep vivid the semantic component which is described as optional by Ruppenthal. Ruppenthal's definition of sound poetry reflects in turn the early pattern of sound poetry and its notion of live performance without insisting on sound as rhetorical effect in the text. Such a definition which focuses rather on the modulating of voice, distinguishes itself radically from the notion of *poésie sonore*. As I will show, Kling's novelty resides precisely in his poetic enactment of modalities of sound poetry before and after Word War II and in their anchoring within the new mediatic and political context since 1989. His practice seems affine to that of the group of experimental poets Bielefelder Colloquium *Neue Poesie* that had set on not working "in the language" (in der Sprache) but "with the language" (mit der Sprache).[575] The group also explicitly expressed its desire to react to the changing times through poetry:

> wenn man auf neue veränderte Zeitverhältnisse reagiert, (…) sich auch die Schreibtechniken ändern muessen, und daher haben sie eine ganze Reihe verschiedener solcher Schreibtechniken entwickelt. Das geht hin bis zum Bildgedicht oder Plakatgedicht, es geht rüber zur Musik.[576]

According to this collective statement, music seems to be the ultimate goal of the Bielefelder poetic actions, a group to which the anthology on the Colloquium for Neue Poesie also assigns Kling, along with poets from earlier generations such as Oskar Pastior or Friederike Mayroecker. What is typical of the Kling sound and how does he modify traditions of sound poetry in a post-1989 context?

---

[575] Thomas Kellein und Jörg Drews, ed. *Neue Poesie: 20 Jahre Bielefelder Colloquium* (Bielefeld: Kunsthalle Bielefeld, 1997), 14.

[576] Ibid.,14.

Avant-garde Traditions and Kling's Performance Practice

In order to understand how Kling enacts and expands on traditions of sound poetry, I will first seek to reconstruct his allegiance to Dadaist techniques of sound and show how these practices blend into his own art and are sometimes supplemented by his understanding of media and performance. Hugo Ball in particular worked with what he considered an originary potential of orality, pre-linguistic, liberated at least in part from the printed word, and refocused the attention of his public on the listening component of a poetic experience. Paradoxically, these efforts to involve the audience were not guided by an interest in harmony but rather dissonance and cacophony. A common ground shared by Kling and the Dadaists is the principle of musical discord. Kling's experimentation with cacophonous effects is expressed by his dense consonantal associations and compressed sounds, where vowels are left out to simulate the flux of speech, but semantics are withheld. His poem "nordkaukasische konsonantn" from the volume "morsch," first published by Suhrkamp in 1996 and distinguished with the Peter Huchel Preis, is a play on sounds as tongue twisters.[577] The poem revolves around the name "kaukasus," a region known since 1991 for the Chechnyan conflict. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which culminated in 1991, the Caucasian provinces were proclaimed free except for Chechnya, which had to fight for national recognition. In more distant history, Caucasus, situated between the Caspian and the Baltic Sea and at the border between Europe and Asia, was one of the war sites in World War I and the place where the Ottoman and the Turkish Empires clashed over supremacy in a war that would lead to the dissolution of both

---

[577] Thomas Kling, *Gesammelte Gedichte* 1981-2005, 508.

empires. By playing with sounds, the poem highlights an apparent dissolution of territory as dissolution of language. The poem reads as follows:

> felsn stündn im kaukasus? im
> kaukasus stehn hohe felsn.
>   vor
> kurzem nie den namen noch gehört, so
> brecher, zungn-, zeugnbrecher. brech
> mir die zunge ab noch, zischn, sag ich,
> sacht die gattin.
>
>   transporte, gar nicht
> deklarierte holztransporte: sargholz;
> holz, das schläft. oder gleich räum-
> panzerstimmen, kettngesang, der di
> zerteiltn zusammenschiebt; erdmassn
> drauf. eisern. es stiemt.
>   sechs trinkn
> kühlwasser; atemlos der funk, atemlose
> empfänger. ICH KANNS NICH AUSSPRECHN/
> totngestiem. und wespn. wespn!
> di von lebern fressn.

The poem starts with a rhetorical question that opens up a chiastic space, in which words are repeated in reverse order. This question probes the origin of the little known region in the Caucasus. The past subjunctive "stündn" introduces a tone of uncertainty, which is echoed through the verb in the present: "felsen stündn im kaukasus? im kaukasus stehen hohe felsn." Several voices in the poem use indirect speech and vary between the first and the third person: "sag ich," "sacht die gattin." These forms, one in high German and the other one in dialect, also replicate one another via dialectal sound variations. The pronouns in the first and third person create an associative logic that is reflected in both spelling and meaning: "zungn-, zeugnbrecher." These tongue twisters, the displaced "zungenbrecher," reflect a grey zone of meaning, which pivots on the violence of "brechen": "abbrechen" (as in

262

"brech mir die zunge ab"), and "zungn-, zeugnbrecher." Both the possibility of bearing witness, "the zeugnbrecher" as well as the live confession are rendered powerless by twisting the tongue, "zungn-brecher." The poem detaches words from their roots, and unsettles meaning, the first step of which is the removal of vowels. The violence of distortion of meaning is replicated through the word "transporte" in the third section of the poem. "Transporte" perpetuates the confusion of tongues and fizzling sounds (zischn) in the first part of the poem. The word connotes the displacement of people and goods, and carries with it murderous associations with World War II death transports to concentration camps; in the poem, "holztransporte" (transports of wood) are equated with "sargholz" (wood for coffins). The wooden material "holz" literally resounds through its symbolic equation with "räum-/panzerstimmen" and "kettngesang." In both cases, musical nuances are associated with war, voices of tanks (panzerstimmen) and the hymn of handcuffs (kettngesang). These imaginary dissonant sounds are responsible for bringing together the divided (di zerteiltn). However, this unification of the scattered is not rendered as the harmonic "es stimmt" but rather spelled as "es stiemt," and offering a possibly ironic twist on proper spelling as well as on unification as epic harmonic synchronization. The third part of the poem displays a different form of communication, a different type of transport that occurs via (radio) sound waves: "atemlos der funk, atemlose/empfänger." The word "atemlos" (breathless) points to failed communication: both the radio message "der funk" and its potential recipients seem out of breath. The lack of breath is literally rendered through the capitalized ICH KANNS NICH AUSSPRECHN. Is this drama of pronunciation related to the fate of nordcaucasian consonants themselves, symbolically elided in historical processes

after reunification? The poem ends with an apocalyptic moment, in which wasps feed on livers. The "wespn" conclude the poem on a performative note, expressed through an exclamation sign. If the dadaist "poem of vowels" offered liberties of experimentation with sound as association in an extra-territorial space, in this poem, the accumulation of consonants exposes the absence of vowels as possible deprivation of free speech: "ICH KANNS NICH AUSSPRECHN." [578] The fact that rhyme itself, "wespn/fressn," relies on the elision of vowels, shows an imbalance between consonantal presence and vowel loss. The impossibility of pronunciation points to a flawed transport between the past and a new, non-harmonic, vowel-deprived reality of language.

In the series of poems "Eine-Hombroich Elegie," the second of twenty-one short elegies features "bees" as a symbol for language relations after reunification. By contrast to "wasps," the anthropomorphized bees in this poem have a positive connotation, and are integrated into the substance of language, as shown by the composite "bienensprachlich."

 die bienen, von den graugesehenen wiesen,
heimwärtsbretternd, zu der bienenbude,
um dort einlasskontrolle zu passieren. um
tänze aufzuführen, was bienensprachlich,
honigalphabetisch etwas übermitteln soll.
sang. berührt zuletzt, yakutischer schamane,

das rote eisen mit der zunge. zunge aber-
irgendetwas läuft schief—erstrahlt nur kurz und
ist verbrutzelt—stinkt vor sich hin, erbärmlich.
von winter-vitaminen, motorschlitten, kann

---

[578] See Marcel Janco's definition of the poem of vowels in relation to Tristan Tzara's poetic practice. Henri Behar (ed.), Tristan Tzara, *Oeuvres Complètes,* Tome I (1912-1924) (Paris: Flammarion, 1975), 721.

wilde rede, bienenrede, *-ie, -ede*
-ein. vielleicht von schwarzem rachen.[579]

     Kling takes the model of a classic lyric poem, the elegy and its bucolic themes, and stages an unsettling landscape caught in spatial and acoustic motion. Yet it is noise and not bucolic harmony that constitutes the substance of the poem. The protagonists, "die bienen" return "home" bombing down the road in their vehicles ("heimwärtsbretternd) in order to be granted permission to enter their own country. The episode possibly alludes to the period immediately following the fall of the Berlin Wall, when the access of GDR citizens through the check points of the Federal German Republic was still controlled despite the official opening of the borders: "um/tänze aufzuführen, was bienensprachlich,/honigalphabetisch etwas übermitteln soll." Kling uses the dance analogy to express the euphoria people felt after the opening of the wall, and he coins the unusual composite "honigalphabetisch," which he adds to an established syntagm, "bienensprachlich." If the language of the bees had already been used by Herder to refer to national language, the term "honigalphabetisch" suggests, through a neologism, a linguistic rearrangement. The presence of the verb "übermitteln" in conjunction with both "bienensprachlich" and "honigalphabetisch" refers to a form of transfer. On the textual level, this transfer from one form of language to the other occurs through an abrupt twist in tone. The shaman's voice interrupts the original language of improvisation and this interruption's solemn tone is rendered by the isolated verb "sang." Unlike epic forms in which it accounts for prophetic announcements, the shaman's speech in this context

[579] Thomas Kling, *Gesammelte Gedichte,* 805. The series of poems were published in the volume *Sondagen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002). This volume also had a CD attached.

is impaired by a "red iron," which he touches first as an assertion of power. The bee speech in the beginning of the elegy literally dissolves into clusters of sounds "-ie – ede –ein" and yields unintelligible word fragments released by a throat scorched by smoke, as in "von schwarzem rachen." For Ball, a similar principle of word decomposition would stand as a refusal of national identification with word fragments functioning as remnants of syntax. These fragmented sounds are a possible allusion to the absence of a coherent discourse in the sense of a "bee language" as envisioned by Herder.[580] Kling gives here hints that he is not writing another *German poem* after the national unification to celebrate the newly formed nation in harmonious bee language but encodes instead a message about the nation as dispersion into fragmented words that highlight vowels and consonants as linguistic potentialities. In both Dadaism and Futurism Kling finds his sources for the fragmentation of language as new potentiality. Dada's reimagination, via plays on sounds, of the community of the nation-state into a multilingual and non-national one, included, as Martin Puchner states, "sound poetry not appropriated by a linguistic code."[581] Futurism, on the other hand, proposed a trans-rational, trans-sensible language, the *zaum,* which also relied on a desagregation of language.[582] Kling's adoption of conventions from a Dadaist or Futurist aesthetic unsettles the linguistic projection of a reunified semantic whole after the national reunification. With his focus on the "brennstabmhafte der sprache" Kling

---

[580] While the notion of a bee language has been discussed by Herder and others, the idea of a "bee dance" dates back to Aristotle and in modern times has been explored in detail by scientist Karl von Frisch. See "Das Rätsel der Bienentänze," in *Die Zeit online,* 23. 5. 1986, Nr 22.

[581] Martin Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution:Marx, Manifestos, and the Avantgardes* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 136.

[582] The term "zaum" is a variation of Sa-um. The term was first mentioned in Aleksej Kruçenych's Deklaracija slova kak takovogo (Declaration of the word as such) in April 1913 and his first poem in "zaum" was composed in 1912. See Lenz, *Lautpoesie/-musik nach 1945,* 106. In his definition of zaum from *Itinerar,* Kling uses the same word "Zerlegung" to describe linguistic operations present in the "brennstabmhafte der sprache" and in zaum. See Kling, *Itinerar,* 33.

emphasizes a fragmentation of language, which is consistent with the dissolution of language in zaum poetry. Yet, such deconstruction of language also highlights for Kling a form of corporeality of language by splicing it into fragments: "das Zerlegen, *um zu rekonstruieren.*"[583] For Kling, the use of this fragmented language in the sense of a fragmented body marks off an aesthetic twist, which he considers defining for the transition from the 1980s into the 1990s. [584] Kling's poetic agenda could thus be considered critical, in particular through its focus on the body of words as body of language, of the political agenda of unification as linguistic unity.[585]

The first poem of the cycle *brennstabm* is entitled "di zerstörtn. ein gesang." Kling sets his poetic stage in the trenches of a war landscape and lets a poetic "I" speak in the name of a "wir": "so war ich deutscher, serbe,/franzose; wir wir wir." This programmed simultaneity of voices recalls the genre of simultaneous poems invented by the Dadaists. According to the definition provided by Hugo Ball in his *Dada Diary*, in a simultaneous poem, "the willful quality of an organic work is given powerful expression, and so is its limitation by the accompaniment." Ball further states that in this genre "noises (an *rrrrr* drawn out for minutes, or crashes, or sirens, etc.) are superior to the human voice in energy."[586] In Kling's poem, voices unified under the omnipresent "wir" merge on paper, and, as I will show, noises are rendered by amalgamations of consonants rather than by onomatopoeia and words drawn from various languages as in the Dadaist model. Instead of featuring various languages as

---

[583] Thomas Kling, *Itinerar* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), 25.
[584] See "Flaggensignal zur zweiten Auflage," in *Gesammelte Werke,* 936.
[585] Such a tendency contrasts with the one of his generational colleague, Durs Grünbein, who has been celebrated for being one of the poets of reunification, as well as for his interest in the figuration of the body in the poem.
[586] Hugo Ball, *Flight out of Time,* 57.

in the Dadaist model, the poem unites them through the repetition of the pronoun "wir." The poem is written from the perspective of a collective "wir," with the exception of fourth sequence, in which an "I" makes its appearance. The subtitle of the poem discloses it as a play for voices, *ein Gesang*. The poem has been included, in fact, on the CD that accompanies the volume *Sondagen,* to which *brennstabm* belongs. To suggest the variation in tone, also rendered through the poet's recitation on CD, the poem varies letter sizes, uses exclamation marks, parantheses and other mathematical notations to suggest an intensified rhythm of speech:

2

WIR LAGEN IN GROBEN GEGENDN. WIR PFLANZTN
TOD. WIR PFLEGTEN DEN GESANG/WIR AUF-
PFLANZER VON EWIGEM MOHN/DER SCHOSS
AUS UNSERN HÄUPTERN UNS IN DEN GESANG
DAS NANNTN WIR: *herzumlederun'!+ schrienz,*[587]

The last words in this stanza are italicized and set against the capitalized words in the rest of the stanza also through the use of apostrophe and exclamation points. In recitation, Kling sets off these last words through powerful vocalization. In the next stanza, the repetition of "wir" reiterates the sense of a community which is still looking for unity: "wir sind noch WIR WAREN UNTER DER/WEISZN (*jiddisch, di mond*) da waren wir,/DAS WARNEN WIR. UMSONST-GESANG." This community seems to dissolve itself along racial lines, as signaled by the reference to a "jiddisch" otherness or by internal differentiations within a community, "WIR WAREN UNTER DER/WEISZN." The line "so war ich deutscher, serbe, franzose," on the other hand, creates a community that transcends the separation of

---

[587] Thomas Kling, *Gesammelte Gedichte*, 195.

powers in World War I, and is cemented through "gesang." The eighth section of the poem emphasizes a theater of war, in which the protagonists, just as in the simultaneous Dadaist poem, sing in a chorus. Their song accompanies words used as projectiles, that is, marked through punctuation as independent unities. Such words, followed by periods, are recited on the CD at a rapid pace: "kaliber," with its violent connotation of war, and "history," which is repeated once at the beginning and end of the cycle.

> WIR SCHWOREN auf unsre schrapnelle, blikkn
> aus schwer zerlebtn trauma-höhlen auf unsre lebnzz-
> geschichte.
> kaliber.   korps-chor: ("WIR HÖRTN
> kaliber.   DI ENGLEIN
> kaliber.   SINGEN")
> geschichte.

The musical-like notation on the left-hand side of the poem announces the destructive power of war through word repetitions, whereas the chorus on the right side consists in a quotation from a liturgical hymn, a form of "found" sound, recollected from the labyrinths of memory: "WIR HÖRTEN DIE ENGLEIN SINGEN." Unlike in the Dadaist poems, the sounds of war in this poem are largely quotational and not rendered in a "live" manner. The last stanza ends on a nightmarish note, accentuated by the sounds of grenades as in "handgranatnsplitter." The actuality of war is suggested through intertextual references to Austrian poet Georg Trakl and calamitous experience of World War I.[588] The war is rendered acoustically present

---

[588] Some of the Trakl references comprise the word "*die weiße,*" used by the poet to refer to his sister figure or references to silence as in "blikkn/aus schwer zerlebtn trauma-höhlen auf unsre lebnzz-/geschichte."

through verbal references to the resounding roar of cannons "geschüzzdonner, knarrt." In the text, the suggestion of this traumatic continuity of war is expressed through repetition, exclamation points and points of suspension. Kling's choice of the sounds of war and poetic sound practices developing around World War I has two possible reasons: one is motivated by the historical avant-gardes' use of sound poetry to recreate a world in fragments, the other finds its justification in the dissolution of empires triggered by World War I, and the particular meaning of this end in the context of a post-1989 poetic aesthetics after reunification. The insistence of the poem on a collective "wir" shows the fragile nature of national unity rather than reasserts it. With this poem of "the maimed," (*di zerstörtn*) Kling reflects on the nature of memory and establishes links between historical events across traumatic sounds staged in a theater of war. On the CD, the poet uses his voice to perform the polyphonic nature of such war landscapes. Through an insistent focus on a "wir," Kling challenges in performance not only the meaning of alleged unity at a time of post-1989 transformation but also contests presumptions of cohesion between spectators and artists.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Through a focus on text as performance and the performance of text, Kling echoes recent theories of performance that claim a shift from text to performance took place in the 1990s. Erika Fischer-Lichte, a leading theorist of theater studies, emphasizes in her *Ästhetik desPerformativen* a shift in the field of cultural studies from the understanding of "culture as text" in the 1980s to culture as performance in the 1990s. Fischer-Lichte sees in this shift a revival of the performative turn of the

1960s, when artists started to create works as events, and redefined barriers between author and text, between author, history and the public.[589] According to Fischer-Lichte, what was known as speech act theory in the 1960s rose to prominence in the 1990s as especially relevant in ways that transcended language philosophy and turned critical attention from speech acts as linguistic acts to speech acts as embodied performances. Hence, Kling's belief in the "the use of all possible media" in the artistic process is not to be regarded as a singular phenomenon but rather as consistent with a contemporary impulse to conceive of forms of art other than theater as performance.[590] Moreover, one aspect that unites his aesthetic beliefs and the aesthetic of the performative is his reference to the early avant-gardes and the neo-avantgardes as sources of his inspiration. Fischer-Lichte's theory of performance likewise relies on groundbreaking examples of performance, from Futurist evenings to Dadaist events, to works by FLUXUS artists, whose common element is a revitalized rapport between artists and spectators. A text such as F.T. Marinetti's *Das Varieté-Theater* (1913) is thus, in Fischer-Lichte's view, a founding text of contemporary performative aesthetics. *Das Varieté-Theater* envisions its spectators as suffering a series of shocks as a result of happenings on stage. Similarly, FLUXUS artists in the US, Japan, Austria or Germany in the 1960s, through their ritualistic practices often involving symbolic crucifixions or resurrections and even acts of sadism strived to induce

---

[589] Fischer-Lichte writes: "Statt Werke zu schaffen, bringen die Künstler zunehmend *Ereignisse* hervor, in die nicht nur sie selbst, sondern auch die Rezipienten, die Betrachter, Hörer, Zuschauer involviert sind." Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Ästhetik des Performativen* (Suhrkamp: Frankfurt, 2004), 29. Elsewhere in this text Fischer-Lichte considers the aesthetics of the performative as a necessity for all arts, not only theater. She identifies new dimensions of performance in the 1990s, in particular through the aestheticization of forms of public action such as the Love Parade or das Karneval der Kulturen. For Fischer-Lichte, another element that distinguishes performance in the 1990s is an element of crisis or limit experience, which is no longer the desired outcome of a performance, as it used to be since the early twentieth century, but rather its precondition. See *Ästhetik des Performativen,* 316, 343.
[590] Thomas Kling, *Itinerar,* 15.

feelings of humiliation and repugnance in their spectators. All these practices have in common, as Fischer-Lichte points out, a desire to defy interpretation as pursued through common hermeneutic or semiotic filters, and to draw attention instead to the material status of the artistic product. One of the features mentioned by Fischer-Lichte as signaling the materiality of the work of art is the production of sound, with both spectators and artists in the role of creators. Little can counter the permeation of sound, which breaks through bodily barriers, as Fischer-Lichte explains: "Der Körper kann zum Resonanzkörper für die gehörten Laute werden, mit ihnen mitschwingen; bestimmte Geräusche vermögen sogar lokalisierbare körperliche Schmerzen auslösen."[591] Sound is only one component among other strategies that contribute to the production of materiality on stage, but it is certainly an indelible component of the stage as both space of the gaze (*Schau-Raum*) and space of the ear (*Hör-Raum*).[592]Alternatively, a similar invasive material effect is achieved when the movement of the body of the artist poet or reciter stirs a physical reaction in the spectator or listener.[593] In the case of literary readings, for instance, the attention of the listener is drawn repeatedly to the timbre, volume, and intensity of the reciter's voice.

But how similar is Kling's practice to this model of performance? In an interview with Jürgen Balmes, Kling labels the 1990s as a decade of staged O-tones,

---

[591]Fischer-Lichte, *Ästhetik des Performativen,* 207.

[592]Compare Fischer-Lichte, *Ästhetik des Performativen,* 210. Among the major inventions of the avant-gardes Fischer-Lichte also counts the transformation of the stage and the ensuing rapport with the spectator, a rapport inspired by the medieval market place or the kabuki theater.

[593] Vsevolod Meyerhold, one of the first theorists of performance as embodiment, calls this phenomenon "reflektorische Erregbarkeit." Vsevolod Meyerhold, "Der Schauspieler der Zukunft und die Biomechanik,"74ff. See also Fischer- Lichte, *Ästhetik des Performativen,* 138.

meaning the formal enactment of sounds on stage.[594] Through his practice of staging sonorities, Kling makes a leap from his earlier poetic performances, which were accompanied by drums, and initiates a type of performance embodied exclusively by voice, articulation and modulation. Kling claims that he is willing to work with "Rückblenden, Vorblenden, Loops and Zooms," from the cinematic repertoire and transpose them into poetry. Yet he wants to do all this via the sounds of language.[595] His poetic practice, in particular his engagement with models of poetic theory since 1945, through which he implies a direct interaction with the audience, will only partially account for this claim.

<center>***</center>

The cycle of poems "vogelherd mikrobukolika" from the volume *morsch* is a work that combines an allegiance to the avant-gardes with an exploration of sound through various media channels, cinematic, theatrical, digital, radiophonic. The long poem was inspired by Alfred Edmund Brehms's nineteenth-century treatise on birds, *Brehms Tierleben.* Composed in twelve parts with a preliminary sequence called *vorwerk*, the poem has as one of its mottos a quotation from Austrian performance poet Reinhard Priessnitz. It reads: "die rede, die in die schrift flieht, kein entkommen" (473). Through this reference to speech animating writing, the poem announces from the start its treatment of writing as a medium of aurality. It indicates, in Veit Erlmann's sense, both "the materiality of perception" and "the conditions that must be

---

[594] "Ein schnelles Summen," in *Botenstoffe.* 212. This statement seems to follow up on an earlier one, where he declares the performances at the Ratinger Hof to have involved staged O-tones in many cases.
[595] "Graz und Gedächtnis" in *Botenstoffe*, 107. The fact that he is envisioning his early poetic performances also as staged O-tones might be a post-factum effort to unify his practice and theory.

given for something to become recognized, labeled and valorized as audible in the first place."[596] Although Kling referred to this poem as a "reconstruction of seeing," the sound effects in the poem point rather to a reconstruction of sonorities of a Cold War landscape.[597] The poem negotiates aspects of sound and vision by integrating cinematic and theatrical directions within its texture: "folgn," or "BLENDUNG."[598] The reference to language as linguistic wire (*Sprachdraht*) alludes to the wire separating the two Germanies but also to a form of digital communication that unites the two wired dimensions. The separation is reinforced by references to arrested vision, which is divided in "sehbereich(e)" or "nullbezirke" and highlights, despite visual separation, the primacy of sound as a medium of communication, expressed through a type of universal language ("lengua, lengua"). The second section of the poem highlights a digitalized landscape (*eingescannter hain*), which becomes the place where the birdtrap (*vogelherd*) is installed. The purpose of the *vogelherd* is to separate but also to unite sights (*blickverne-tzungn*). The composite "blickvernetzungen" is spelled in the poem so as to denote both "ferne" (distance) and "vernetzung" (connection), while also allowing for an an additional reading in which the emphasis could fall on tongues "tzungn" (tongues) separated by visual distance ("blickverne"). The composite "blickverne-/tzungn" is divided by enjambement, a technique often used by Kling to break a syntactic unit (phrase, clause or sentence) by the end of the line or between two verses. Kling describes enjambement in analogy with electronic media's mode of operation with language in terms of "Dehnung als

---

[596] Jonathan Sterne ed., *The Sound Studies Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 8.
[597] *Botenstoffe*, 220. *Sprachsehen*, which Kling defines as his cultural historical enterprise of diving into cultural and linguistic history, is not only visually motivated. Kling himself refers in one place to it as "rhythm." "Augensprache, Sprachsehen," In *Botenstoffe*, 216.

Zerdehnung" (destruction through stretching) and thus suggests a link between his use of enjambement as a correlate for digitalized language.[599] The visual separation of the Cold War landscape highlighted in the poem and the physical demarcation of the implied wall of separation as "sehbereich" are united by the sounds of language "lengua, lengua." Since the language featured in this particular line is Spanish, the moment of separation through a border could apply to other forms of spatial division united by the sounds of language. While birds are not "heard" in the poem, the fourth part of the cycle is the only one that reproduces their actual "sounds." This third part in the poem is described by Kling as an "ornithological poem," most likely as an allusion to the presence of bird sounds in its composition. Yet, these sounds are quoted and not broadcast live:

ZIPFEL, wacholdersträucher, menschnleere,
alles wi gefälscht. und irgend zielfunk,
richtfunk zugeschaltetn widertons:

hüid"   ". mit unbeschreiblicher anmut
"karr"   wechseln sanftflötende strophn
"hüid"   mit schmetternden, klagende mit
"rähh"   fröhlichen, schmelzende mit wir-
"tak"   belnden; während die eine sanftan-
"fiid"   fängt, nach und nach an stärke zu-
"kroäk"   nimmt und wiederum ersterbend
"tzezeze" endigt, während in der anderen rei-
"terterter" he noten mit geschmackvoller härte
            hastig angeschlagen und melancho-
            lischste, den reinsten flötentönen
            vergleichbare, sanft in fröhlichere,
            verschmolzen. die pausen (pauza=
            ruhe) zwischen den strophen erhöhen
            die wirkung dieser bezaubernden
            melodien."

---

[598] The word "Blendung" and its metamorphic effect is strongly reminiscent of fading (Überblendung), one of the techniques Kling claims to have inherited from silent film. *Botenstoffe,* 115.
[599] *Botenstoffe*, 212.

The bird sounds in quotation marks are not live sounds, but O-tones, described in the poem as dissonant tones broadcast by the radio (*richtfunk zugeschaltetn Widerton*). Since the alleged bird language is present on the left-hand side of the poem, the phrases on the right side could be interpreted as translations of this fictitious language. While this bird-like language is rendered through repetitive words, sibilants and plosives, the phrases on the right side do not have the character of an ornithological treatise but rather of a manual of poetic composition. Since the last words of the preceding stanza were "lengua, lengua," it is significant that this third part of the poem starts with the capitalized word ZIPFEL, earlobe. It is as if the forbidden language is transmitted through an earlobe despite visual distances marked by "blickverne-tzungn." The combination of euphony and dissonance representative of the "bird language" in the left column finds its correlate on a semantic level through descriptions of poetic composition in musical terms. The principle of this poetic composition is the alternation between high and low pitched-sounds, harmony and dissonance: "wechseln sanftflötende strophn/mit schmetternden, klagende mit/fröhlichen, schmelzende mit wir-/belnden (...)." This alternation of high and low tonalities in the making of the poem distinguishes itself from the Platonic differentiation of the good poet as one who "keeps within a single harmony" and the bad poet as the one "who will attempt to present the role of thunder, the noise of wind and hail, or the creeking of wheels, and pulleys, and the various sounds of flutes; pipes, trumpets and all sorts of instruments: he will bark like a dog, bleat like a sheep, or crow like a cock."[600] By contrast to Plato, the poem presents a compromise solution. Read in a political key, as meditation on the Cold War, the alternation of

---

[600] Plato, *The Republic* (98; 3397), as quoted in Wai Chee Dimock, "A Theory of Resonance," in

harmony and dissonance in this poem reads as a possible tension between two modes of making poetry as two modes of world-making. Read in a poetic-aesthetic key, the poem highlights the figure of dissonance in Hugo Friedrich's sense, as a modernist tension that is there to be solved poetically, rather than maintained through cacophony and "widerton." [601] Such a tension mirrors the clash between a "modernist" understanding of lyric as dissonance, and a premodern relation of consonance between language and meaning. Yet the premodernist-modernist tension echoed in this poem is also consistent with the avant-garde refusal to give in to a harmonious resolution of aesthetic conflict, expressed in musical terms. The terms of the cacophony are best rendered in the alleged bird language.

Kling's bird language composition shares elements with Dadaist simultaneous poems, where phrases are recited contemporaneously by several speakers, and bears a striking resemblance to *Sprechduette* in the sense cultivated by Gerhard Rühm, where two speakers simultaneously articulate an onomatopoeic text and a narrative text.[602] Rühm's own ornithological poems, poems in bird voices inspired by the natural history of Johann Matthäus Bechstein, might have served as a source for Kling.[603] In 1977, Rühm, a co-founder of the Wiener Gruppe in the 1950s, introduced the notion

---

PMLA, 112. 5 (Oct. 1997): 1066.

[601] In his book *Die Struktur der modernen Lyrik* (1956)*,* Hugo Friedrich uses the term dissonance to refer to the inner tensions of modern lyric. Friedrich's idea of dissonance is seeded in Igor Stravinsky's musical practice, which considers dissonant tensions purely formal. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Friedrich's idea of dissonance does not accommodate the avant-gardes. Friedrich mentions the historical avant-gardes only briefly in the end of his book. Hugo Friedrich, *Die Struktur der modernen Lyrik von Baudelaire bis zur Gegenwart* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1956).

[602] *Sprechduett* is a variation of *Sprechgedicht*, which is Ernst Jandl's invention.

[603] For the reference to Rühm see Klaus Rahm, "Kein wirklicher Kampf gegen die Wirklichkeit," in *Das Tempo dieser Zeit ist keine Kleinigkeit: Zur Literatur um 1918*, ed. Jörg Drews (Munich: *Edition Text+Kritik*, 1981), 15.

of "auditive Poesie."[604] According to Rühm, auditive poetry is distributed by means of acoustic media and addresses auditive perception but also emphasizes expressive gestures as conveyed by voice. Rühm would later refine this definition of *auditive poesie* in his "botschaft an die zukunft" (1988) and define the two earlier separated areas of "live vortrag" and "tonbandeinspielung" as equally significant components of "auditive poetry."[605] Rühm's "botschaft an die zukunft" and his reference to live and recorded media as equal components of auditive poetry have a partial echo (only partial, since Kling is ultimately reticent towards "sprachverzerrer") in Kling's poetic practice.[606] In effect, the bird poem, the third part on *vogelherd mikrobukolika* can be read along two coordinates, a narrative one and a purely acoustic one. By comparison to Rühm, Kling's novel enterprise resides, at least in this third section of the poem, in the combination of three types of messages or media: bird song, *ars poetica,* as

---

[604] See Lentz, *Lautpoesie/-musik nach 1945*, 132. Regarding the Wiener Gruppe see Bianca Theisen, *Silenced Facts: Media Montages in Contemporary Austrian Literature* (Rodopi: Amsterdam/NY, 2003), 5. Members of the Vienna Group (Gerhard Rühm, Konrad Bayer, Friedrich Achleitner, Oswald Wiener, Hans Carl Artmann), a literary group formed in the 1950s, experimented with different, non-literary media (the white page, analog communication of the body in performance) or montage patterns from everyday language. Central to their literary practice is the question of reference; language ends up pointing self-referentially at the very process of reference, while revealing the bare grid of paradigmatic, syntagmatic, phonological, or morphological differences.It is noteworthy mentioning that the first auditive recordings of concrete poetry, titled "konkrete poesie/sound poetry/artikulationen" were made in 1966. The recordings foregrounded the commonalities between the two genres, which both played on the materiality of words.

[605] "der menschliche sprachlaut ist eine noch unmittelbarere, ursprünglichere ausdrucksform als die linie, die ja nur spur einer geste ist. jeder mensch bringt in verschiedenen emotionalen situationen unzählige differenzierterste laute hervor, die auch ganz unabhängig von ihnen aufgesetzten begriffen, einfach als "musikalische" ausdrucksgesten, unmittelbar "verständlich" wirken; jeder kennt sie aus eigener erfahrung, und sie sind in allen sprachkulturen gleich. die menschlichen sprachlaute bilden ein internationales ausdrucks-"vokabular" das buchstäblich für sich selbst spricht. man kann aus diesen vielfältigen, weit über den jeweils von den nationalsprachen genutzten bereich hinaus sich anbietenden lauten künstlerische gebilde formen, man kann sie ver-dichten, vereinzeln, neu ordnen, man kann sie vervielfachen und-die technischen mittel stehen uns heute zur verfügung-verlängern, verzerren, transformieren; sie bilden das unmittelbarste und menschlichste gestaltungsmaterial, mit dem der künstler arbeiten kann. die laut ist für mich nicht das ende einer poetischen entwicklung, sondern eine ihrer aufregendsten und vielversprechendsten konsequenzen. ihre eigentliche entdeckung hat eben erst begonnen." Gerhard Rühm, *botschaft an die zukunft: gesammelte sprechtexte* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988), 9.

[606] See the interview with Hans Jürgen Balmes and Urs Engeler, "Ein schnelles Summen," in *Botenstoffe, 215.*

represented by the instructions on how to make poetry, and the "zielfunk" or "richtfunk" as mediator and reflector of the first two. The whole poem turns out in the end to be about mediation, about how a bird trap turns into a technological and performative installation ("WIR INSTALLIERN HIRN VOGELHERD"). Kling's notion of installation in this text does not refer to human performance, but rather to mediation of the human through animate and inanimate (technological) means. However, his text shows, through a focus on technological filters and transmitters, Kling's productive operation with the avant-garde legacy in postwar sound performance, which he models on forms of prohibition in the Cold War.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In his account of new literacies after the fall of the Wall, Jonathan Monroe focuses in particular on categories of reading and writing in building what Monroe calls a form of "apposition" as alternative to the oppositional categories of the Cold War.[607] Although Monroe pays attention in particular to reading and writing, his notion of "intervalic literacy," a form of writing "between voice-based ethnopoetics and writing-based concrete poetry" is worth exploring for its potential to offer an alternative to reading and writing as privileged categories of analysis. Even if Monroe mentions coming into play in the process of lyric reception, he prefers to focus on the shift from the discursive constraints of the Cold War to alternative literacies developing in its aftermath. Another alternative would be to focus on the category of performed and performative language, which could highlight hearing in apposition to reading and writing and envision the reader as listener but also as performer.

One of Kling's definitions for *Sprachinstallation* is a desire to modulate speech spaces with the voice: "Sprach-Räume mit der Stimme gestalten, Sprache mit der Stimme der Schrift gestalten."[608] As he notes in "Sprachinstallation 2," throughout the years, "Sprachinstallation" came to define on a larger scale any literary-multimedial event with poetic recitation at its center.[609] He seems, however, to take distance himself, at least in theory, from a multimedial-event that would obscure poetic recitation. As proven by his performance during the long night of the poets (*Lange Nacht der Poesie-ExplosivLaute* from 2000), sonic effects are the product of a contortion of voice. This understanding of the poetic act would justify the notion of the poem as mediation and transmission on page and on stage rather than as multimedial event. However, he contradicts this position as he goes on to stage one of his poems as a multimedial event. In Kling's *Hörstükk*, based on the cycle of poems "TIROLTYROL. 23-teilige landschafts-photographie" from the volume *brennstabm* voices, instruments and their echoes succeed one other and introduce the poetic recital. The name of the production, "Hörstükk," points to *Hörspiel*, a genre originated during the Weimar years (1924), which relied both on inner monologue and dialogue and, after years of National Socialist *Gleichschaltung* and use by the propaganda apparatus, experienced a revival in its literary form during post-war in

---

[607] Jonathan Monroe, "Avant-garde poetries after the Wall," *Poetics Today* 21:1 (Spring 2000): 95-110, (104).

[608] *Itinerar*, 59.

[609] "Kurz, ich bezeichnete das, was ich unter Lesung verstand, früh als Sprachinstallation; auf einem copyzierten flyer taucht das Wort 1986 in Vaasa/Westfinnland auf, wo ich eine Zeitlang lebte und ein paar Auftritte hatte; Sprachinstallation, gleich dreisprachig, Schwedisch und Finnisch kamen dazu. Im Lauf der Jahre ist das Wort herumgekommen und wurde auch anderenorts benutzt—von anderen Autoren, für literal-multimediale mit live gesprochener dichterischer Sprache gekoppelte events, beispielsweise (…)." In "Sprachinstallation 2" in *Itinerar*, 19.

Austria and especially in West Germany.[610] Known after WWII as "das Neue Hörspiel" the audio-play, which carried elements of the earlier unpopular *Geräuschhörspiele* (plays on noises), reemerged as it shifted from a play on voices into a play with acoustic material.[611] "Das neue Hörspiel" subsequently developed under the influence of phonetic poetry and collage, and was followed by the variety of the *O-Ton-Spiel*, a play without a written script, based on recorded sounds, the purpose of which was to bring to light and to speech groups not normally heard, among others.[612] Kling's *Hörstükk,* based on *brennstabm* (1991), was devised in 2003 after the poet had completed the recordings for *Fernhandel* (1999) and *Sondagen* (2002). The play as such might be said to represent a new stage in Kling's poetic vision, both because Kling chooses a new genre and because he seems to return to his work with O-töne in the late 1970s. Not a pure "O-Ton-Spiel," since the play includes only instrumental music rather than recorded voices, the poem relies instead on a succesion of voices and episodes from different centuries, enacted through Kling's performance. Articulated out of bits and pieces, *Hörstükk* is meant to unsettle the audience and transpose it into a historical and poetic whirlwind. Tirol and and its echo (TirolTyrol) articulate a sound panorama which paradoxically relies on the poetic genre of ekphrasis. In performance, the poetic voice flanked by instrumental sounds enacts poetic ekphrasis by transposing image into motion. The tableau "vanitas. gletscheraugn" relies on internal rhymes as it presents in poetic fashion the life of a man who loved his "heimat" and died in Second World War in the "land of the

---

[610] Stefan Bodo Würffel, *Das deutsche Hörspiel* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1978). Würfel interprets the shift in interest from feature-film to *Hörspiel* in the 1950s as a symptom of development of new modalities of hearing in the aftermath of National Socialism, which point to a more internalized mode of reception, 77.
[611] Ibid., 148.

enemy." What is symbolically tied in the beginning of this poetic sequence through patriotic love (*verband*) is dissolved through war and death (*zerriß*). Note the identification of the neutral poetic voice with an implicit nationalism unabated by the passing of time:

> (exitus 1941)
> sein lebn und strebn/ver
> bandn sich nur,/den liebn
> der heimat berg akker und
> flur/darum war er so hart/
> als zerriß dieses band,/durch
> den krieg und sein/sterbn
> im feindesland

Kling's poem articulates itself as a polylingual cluster of voices, which should not be confused with multilingualism.[613] The poet's understanding of polylingualism reflects a weaving in of voices that, with little exceptions, do not speak in foreign tones, but create a type of internal resonance that relies on colloquialisms, quotations, eavesdropped conversations or readings of memorial stones. Through a rememoration of victims of World War I and II or of heroes of national liberation wars such as Tyrol's national hero Andreas Hofer, Kling deconstructs the meaning of patriotism in old and new spaces. The section called "milder kaiserkaiser" describes the sorrow of a father who lost his sons in (presumably) World War I: "Meine söhne ehrenkroize, pauschales krixge-/fangenschaft untergegangne kaiserjäger wild/bach-wildbach-sommerfrische!, weswegn jene/-kette jener gipfel zuzüglich vielendertra-/genden tannz sofortlichst dekoriert gehört (278)." The message of the father about "Meine

---

[612] Ibid., 175.

[613] "Gedichte sind hochkomplexe ("vielzüngige," polylinguale) Sprachsysteme," *Itinerar* 55.

söhne ehrenkroize" deplores the impossibility of any medals of honor to compensate for the living. Part 15, entitled "schwarzgelbes stirn," highlights sonic effects in a post-war landscape.

> band (rauscht), ein rauschen da/hintn
> ein weißes, das, tannenbe-/
> pelztes rauh WODAWIL.. WODAWILBA, rau-
> chende massive (eingenebelt) breitere na-
> tur; WODAWIL!, NATURBREITE GERADEZU! durchs
> rauschn, den kamm durch di stirn den berg-
> kamm durchs haar, tannensäge durch den nebel;
> sägtn di nebel unsichtbaren zahnz den grad? das band?
> stalinrote wanderwegmarkierung (tannenbanderole),
> säge di den nebel sägt und rauschn, eine weite..
> WODAWILBA[614]

 The acronym WODAWILBA is likely the title of a German *Heimat* film from the 1950s, *Wo der Wildbach rauscht.*[615] Through repetition and word variations, the meaning of the original *Heimatfilm* dissolves. If the title of the poem points to the Habsburgian symbols "black-yellow" the end of the poem points, self-referentially, to a "stalinred" orientation sign. In the conversion of colors, from the Habsburgian "black-yellow" to the "Stalin red," the poem indicates changing directions in the postwar understanding of the nation, following Stalin's influence in East Germany. In performance, the repetitions of WODAWILBA dissolve the *Heimat* integrity and banal description of nature through Kling's recitation, the integrity of which is interrupted in turn by sounds of cutting instruments, bells, and other synthesized sonic occurrances. If examined closely in the way they are performed, the poems in this cycle can be considered a series of *Sprechgedichte,* which establish unusual

---

[614] "schwarzgelbes stirn," in Thomas Kling, *Gesammelte Werke,* 279.
[615] See Daniela Strigl, "Kling in Wien: Zu einem literarischen Myzel," in Frieder von Ammon, Peer Trilcke and Alena Scharfschwert, ed. *Das Gellen der Tinte: Zum Werk Thomas Klings* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2012), 108.

associations between descriptions of nature, in this case, of nature that is meant to increase the pride of the nation, and their audio translations. *Gemaeldegedicht, Schruns*, for instance, details the episode of a soldier dead for the "Vater-/land," only to mention later, flashwise, "passcontrolls" [ausweiskontrolle] and "martyrdom," [marterzeug], followed later in the text by a humorous allusion to a "HIMMLISCHE BAHNPOLIZEI." All these references to borders suggest the futility of wars and national expansion and culminate in dialectal jest in the form of a curse that is *transcribed* for effect "gedt hin ier Vermaledeite." History is played upside down in this poem written as a sequence of *Sprechgedichte.* Like Monroe's discussion about modes of writing poetry in the wake of the fall of the Wall, Kling thematizes here a modality of a dramatic concoction of genres, rendered interactive through simulated historical dialogues. His permutations are not the visual permutations of concrete poets but are rather permutations of historical events rendered sonorous through plays on vowels and consonants. Over the many tableaux of the poem, vowels are elongated (as in "reinmoonbooted") or elided (g-/troffenen), while words are many times spelled differently in order to elicit an increased sonic effect (as in "letzzter, hizze:), other words are transcribed phonetically (bl vom/blizz erschla). Kling's enterprise as a "landscape photographer" develops into a historical polyphonic panoramic action, which suppresses images and replaces them through vocal and instrumental sound. As with the *Lautaggregate* of sound poet Carlfriedrich Claus, the voice preserves its emotional and dialectal characteristics.[616] Kling ostentatiously imitates dialectal inflections in his vocal rendition of images. With him, however, the dialectal is always employed in order to project the regional into a wider arena of communication

---

[616] Michael Lentz, *Lautpoesie/-musik nach 1945*, 60.

and literary-historical and aesthetic exchange. What is the function of media in this poem? In Stefanie Harris's assessment of the role of new media in the late twentieth century, in contrast with earlier forms of media, which were more concerned with the specificity of the medium itself, new media also reflect on socio-political dimensions.[617] Kling' use of new media in this particular poem seems to underscore this aspect, and thus complement his script. Moreover, his overall understanding of his poems as "Sprachinstallationen" presents performance as a form of relation with an audience but also with a historical past and present. Specifically, Kling's poetic aesthetics is built in implicit dialogue with the postwar German poetic landscape. In his poetic statements, Kling contrasts the agenda of Gruppe 47, the barometer of artistic revival after World War II, with forms of experimentation in Austria, as represented by the poetry of H.C. Artmann and the Wiener Gruppe.[618] By contrast to Austrian experimentalism, as Kling argues, Gruppe 47 cultivated artistic policies that included resistance to experimentation and a social engagement of a realist type.[619]

Kling locates in the 1990s a renewed interest in lyric as performance and a heightened sensitivity for performance. Kling's method of establishing a connection between poet and audience unfolds along two coordinates. One claims to return to earlier forms of poetry such as chant, which preserve the rhythm and atmosphere of the body and stage a dialogue with the self as a dialogue with the world. The other one is a form of "technological" lyric, where the poet plays freely with the effects of a

---

[617] Stefanie Harris, *Mediating Modernity: German Literature and the "New Media, 1895-1930* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 20.

[618] See Thomas Kling, "Wiener Vorlesung zur Literatur," in *Botenstoffe* (Köln: DuMont Verlag, 2001), 70-76.

[619] See *Die Gruppe 47,* Sonderband Text+ Kritik, ed. Heinz Ludwig Arnold (Munich: Richard Boorberg Verlag, 1987).

tape or video recorder, and draws the audience into a media-engendered conversation. Furthermore, he is especially concerned with performance as vocalization and enactment of texts, which he calls the *Actio der Sprache.*

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

If one wants to give poetry a chance after 1989, Kling wrote, one has to overcome Gottfried Benn's model and adopt Paul Celan's recommendation for poetry.[620] Since Kling's comment is laconic, we need to expand on the importance of these models and also on the exact way Kling intersects with them. His polemics with Benn, which involves recognition as well, does not direct itself exclusively against Benn's so-called cold aesthetics and inspiration through scientific, ethnological and psychiatric knowledge and its alleged impact on some of Kling's generational colleagues such as Grünbein.[621] Rather, Kling's remark (and his alleged practice of performance) refers critically on the one hand to Benn's postwar impact despite his National Socialist involvement and on the other hand engages a polemic with the model of so-called monologic lyric offered by Benn in his Marburger Speech "Probleme der Lyrik" in 1951. The speech, written by Benn on his way to back to public grace and conceived in celebration of modernism, was well received by Theodor Adorno, T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden.[622] Benn's piece highlighted the literary-historical importance of a "neutönende Dichtung," by which he meant in particular French lettrism, August Stramm, Kurt Schwitters, and their power to bring to light "das Röcheln, das Echo, das Zungenschnalzen, das Rülpsen, den Husten und das laute

---

[620] See "Augensprache, Sprachsehen," in *Botenstoffe*, 223.
[621] Ibid., 95.

Lachen."[623] It appears that Kling and Benn find a common path not expressly via mutual literary influence, but rather through their similar concerns with the status of lyric at important turning points in literary history, postwar and 1989.[624] Nevertheless, the two poets seem to clash in the way they conceive of the ultimate destination of their poems: destined for private reading, "eine anachoretische Kunst" in Benn's words, or for the stage.[625] Although Kling credits Benn as one of his literary models while clashing with him, he declares Benn's belief in the poem as "Lese-gedicht" to be obsolete.[626] For Kling, the future belongs to the "Vortragsgedicht," the poem made to be recited on stage. According to Benn, the reader is a negligible authority. While the poet leads a form of monologue ("Selbstgespräch,") the poet perpetually engages and listens to an "inner voice."[627] Further in his speech, Benn launches the hypothesis of an impossible dialogic character of language. It remains an open question whether his belief in the modern poem as a form of "monologic art" and poetic austerity is meant to exculpate sins associated with forms of live transmission in the Third Reich or if Benn's monologic "I" is simply an extension of the monomaniac "I" that comes through in his writings from the early years of the Weimar republic: "Das moderne Ich" (1919), "Das letzte Ich" (1920) and "Epilog und lyrisches Ich" (1921/1927).[628]

---

[622] See Helmuth Lethen, *Der Sound der Väter* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 2006), 262.

[623] Gottfried Benn, *Probleme der Lyrik* (Wiesbaden: Limes Verlag, 1951), 11.

[624] Kling acknowledges Benn's influence in *Botenstoffe* (233) and *Itinerar* (22).

[625] Ibid., 14.

[626] See "Probleme der Lyrik", 44, where Benn does not consider the modern poem "vortragsfähig." See also Kling's comment on this passage in *Itinerar,* 63. Benn also says the following about the modern poem: "Ein modernes Gedicht verlangt den Druck auf Papier und verlangt das Lesen, es wird plastischer durch den Blick auf seine äussere Struktur, und es wird innerlicher, wenn sich einer schweigend darüber beugt" (45).

[627] See Marcel Beyer's comment on "Probleme der Lyrik" in *Nonfiction* (Köln: DuMont, 2003), 231.

[628] Regarding the association of poetry with National Socialism see Cornelia Jungrichter, *Ideologie und Tradition: Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Sonett-Dichtung* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1979) , Jay W. Baird, *Hitler's war poets: literature and politics in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008). The argument of a self-imposed monological character of lyric in the aftermath of the Holocaust

Against the model of a poem directed at oneself, written almost in defiance of any form of public interaction, Kling envisions a poem as embodied vocal performance. Kling's staging of a *Hörstükk* might be further proof of his desire to revive forms of performance crippled by National Socialism.[629] Benn's monologic model of lyric was also overthrown by Celan in his "Meridian" (1960), where Celan formulates his belief in the dialogic poem as opposed to the absolute one (Benn) or to the Mallarmean poem of words and not feelings.[630] However, Celan's understanding of dialogism is famously not directed at an Other as a physical audience, as metaphysical counterpart or as subjectivity generated in the poem.[631] In his essay on Celan, Kling also rejects Celan's aura as that of a "hermeticist," and argues that Celan's reception should focus more intensely on Celan's use of dialects as modes of dynamization of lyric. [632]

Yet, Kling distances himself from his own models in a few important aspects. His preference for Dadaism, sound poetry, as well as concrete audio-visual poetry

is taken up by Beyer in "Thomas Kling: Haltung" in *Nonfiction*. Regarding Benn's monomaniac "I" during the Weimar years, see Lethen, *Der Sound der Väter,* 84.

[629] Check Fischer-Lichte for implications on performance and Nazism. Radio was part of the propaganda apparatus of the Third Reich, *Ästhetik des Performativen*, 85. Die "Gleichschaltung des Hörspiels nach 1933," in Stefan Bodo Würffel, *Das deutsche Hörspiel* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1978).

[630] See Hermann Korte, "Säulenheilige und Portalfiguren: Benn und Celan," in *Schaltstelle: Neue Lyrik im Dialog*. Karen Leeder ed. (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2007), 109-137. The direct polemic with Benn might be signaled by the following lines from "Der Meridian": "Das absolute Gedicht-nein, das gibt es gewiss nicht, das kann es nicht geben!" See the annex to the "Meridian" for the reference to Mallarmé from Celan's notes for the speech (228). Celan contrasts "Dichtung" and "Lyrik" (Lyrik is used by Benn). For a discussion of Celan's engagement with Benn see Judith Ryan, "Monologische Lyrik: Paul Celans Antwort auf Gottfried Benn" in *Jahrbuch für deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur*, Bd II (1971): 260-282. See also Agis Sideras, *Paul Celan and Gottfried Benn: Zwei Poetologien nach 1945* (Würzburg: Königshausen&Neumann, 2005). For a discussion of Benn's impact on postwar lyric theory, including Enzensberger's and Gomringer's see Peter Uwe Hohendahl, "Gottfried Benn und die deutsche Lyriktheorie nach 1945" in *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft,* 24 (1980): 369-398.

[631] See the famous lines: "Das Gedicht will zu einem Anderen, es braucht dieses Andere, es braucht ein Gegenüber. Es sucht es auf, es spricht sich ihm zu. Jedes Ding, jeder Mensch ist dem Gedicht, das auf das Andere zuhält, eine Gestalt dieses Anderen. "Der Meridian, Endfassung" in Paul Celan, *Der Meridian: Endfassung-Entwürfe-Materialien*, ed. Bernhard Böschenstein and Heino Schmull, Tübinger Ausgabe (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1999), 9.

[632] For this reference see Thomas Kling, "Sprach-Pendelbewegung: Celans Galgen-Motiv," in *Text+Kritik*, 9 (2002): 25-37.

does not find any echo with Benn or Celan. Benn, as we know, had embraced Expressionism in his pre-World War II years, while Celan had been exposed to Surrealism through his stays in Romania and France. While Benn would overcome his Expressionist roots, Celan would distance himself from Surrealism and also from the concrete poets by declaring himself "abstract" in contrast to their concreteness.[633] The fact that Kling situates his poetological perspective within the post-1989 framework speaks against the claim articulated by critics such as Hermann Korte, for instance, that Kling is symptomatic for a paradigmatic change which initiated in mid-1980s and reached its peak in the 1990s. Kling's statement about a chance for poetry after 1989 is all the more surprising since the poet himself situates his own beginnings in his experiments with performance from the late-1970s and 1980s and seems to credit the mid-1980s with a new approach to performance. It is worth noting, though, that Kling's understanding of performance changed around the time, into what he calls the essence of the poem as "Sprachinstallation *vor* der Sprachinstallation."[634] Although the poem, whose transformation through live performance he embraced from the beginning, tended to turn into a complete multi-media installation in the 1990s, Kling preferred to mirror similar experimental effects through the force of verse and not technology. While he might have triggered a change of paradigms between the late 1970s and mid-1980s, at a time when the avant-gardes were trying to rehabilitate themselves, Kling initiates a new stage in his lyric production, which he then implicitly locates in the period after 1989. His lyric is innovative precisely through his

---

[633] Clarise Samuels, *Holocaust Visions: Surrealism and Existentialism in the Poetry of Paul Celan* (Columbia: Camden House, 1993), 30-31. Another aspect of Celan's poetology for which Kling does not account is Celan's polemic with the poetry in his times as showing "eine starke Neigung zum Verstummen."

recontextualization of *innovatio* in the explicit footsteps of the Dadaists and the productive reevaluation of poets from the Wiener Gruppe such as Rühm, especially through the exploration of the latter's *botschaft an die zukunft* and forms of experiment with sound. Kling's recontextualization of *innovatio* occurs through a method that both performs and dramatizes earlier aesthetic models, as well as embeds them in a narrative context while, paradoxically, retaining the form of a *Sprechgedicht*. In other words, both performance and performativity, sounds and the self-conscious form of performance enacted through O-tones come to the fore in his poetry. The context of poetic dialogue (with the audience, with his literary models from medieval minstrels to contemporary poets) is the geopolitical landscape after 1989, in which Kling pleads for a deconstruction of the German national poem through an analysis of instances that challenge, sonically, the integrity of the nation. His lyric subtly thematizes the changes in the understanding of lyric since 1945 through Benn or Celan, but Kling also exposes other aesthetic concerns that emerged in the 1960s with the so-called performative turn. This turn was revived in the 1990s, leading to renewed consideration of borders between artist and audience and raising questions about forms of self-referentiality and mixed media. Kling anchors these questions in the new context since reunification through an exploration of the role of the poem since 1989, the role of the nation and the role of the reader of poetry as listener (also of history) after old forms of opposition that had accompanied the avant-gardes through the Cold War had collapsed. Kling's reevaluation of the poetic avant-gardes maintains the tension of cacophony as tension of unsolved dilemma between

---

[634] *Itinerar*, 20.

Sprachinstallation as live and/or staged event, performance and/or reflection on performance. Ultimately, such tensions constitute an aesthetic of relation established in the contemporary world.

The new lyric panorama has understandably evolved since Kling made his appearance. Yet his poetry, written at a time when theories about poetry were pointing in the direction of lyric as "neue Schlichtheit" and "Lyrik von Jetzt" show the intricate connection between poetological platforms at the turn of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first.[635]

The case study of Thomas Kling's selected essays and poems brings into focus the poetological roots of contemporary multi-medial performance and offers a particular approach to both multi-mediality and multilingualism. Kling explores the notion of multi-mediality by investing the body of the poem itself with medial powers. The poet creates his own version of multilingualism by focusing on intra-lingual processes of dialect that allow him to dialogue with a tradition of language and performance established since the 1960s by the Vienna Group. Kling's notion of "polylingualism" presupposes the poet speaking in voices. Kling's poetry, in particular his practice of performance in tribute to Dadaism, challenges, through fragmented sound, the alleged unity of the German nation in the wake of 1989. By focusing on sound, I offer an alternative to analyses that highlight Kling's technological fetishism or his use of the poetic archive.

CONCLUSION

Commenting on ties between contemporary art and the historical avant-gardes, art critic Nicholas Bourriaud suggests that such a relation is possible only through a "far-reaching ecological transformation of subjectivities."[636] His focus on ecological dimensions of art that "represents, produces or prompts inter-human relations," as Bourriaud defines relational art, offers a possible alternative to retro-utopias, the term commonly used to characterize the avant-garde of the 1990s.[637] The notion of resonance I have articulated and contextualized throughout this dissertation relies on a similar premise of inter-relationality, yet instead of focusing on subjectivities alone the operative notion of resonance here also takes into account the bodies (of objects, of poems, of national communities) as resounding entities. Through the filter of sound, I have sought to uncover and listen closely to historical shifts obscured in discourses of reunification and globalization; such obscured moments represent incongruencies in the political and cultural myth of German reunification. As I have shown in my analysis of Thomas Kling's work, fissures in the putative whole of reunification manifest as aspired, compressed, and ultimately fragmented poetic bodies of sound. Other such obscured yet volatile moments index colonial, fascist, and communist legacies of sound. In Marcel Beyer's work, colonial legacies of sound make a textual reappearance in the period after reunification. My analysis of *Black Virgins* (Zaimoglu and Senkel) evidences another conjunction, this time between enlightened rationality and religion. If this play itself analyzes intersections between

---

[635] Erk Grimm, "Die neue Schlichtheit in 'Lyrik von Jetzt': Poetische Diskursverschiebungen in der deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsdichtung nach 2000," in Karen Leeder, ed. *Schaltstelle: Neue Deutsche Lyrik im Dialog* (Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 2007), 479-504.
[636] Nicholas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2002), 95.

sounds of lived Islam and an official beat of German *Leitkultur*, Zaimoglu's *Kanak Sprak* thrives on the clash between official ethnographic modes of analysis and the emergence of voices that refuse to be relegated to subaltern times and spaces. In *Kanak Sprak,* as I have shown, "sounding back" creates the post-1989 subject by re-arranging axes of historical time and cultural space. My particular analytical contribution here rests on an incipient dialogue between Black German Studies and Afro-Caribbean Studies. In the work of Herta Müller and Oskar Pastior, conflict between poetic subjectivity and state control manifested as secretive dialogues of experimental nature, which borrowed in particular from the Dadaist Romanian tradition of the absurd. The intersection between Pastior's suppressed voice and Müller's literary rewriting of his memoirs creates untimely links and subjectivities that contest official histories of both the postwar period and the post-communist era.

As this dissertation has demonstrated, in German literature since 1989 the concept of resonance evolves along four coordinates. One is a form of contemporary resistance to the destruction of culture and art wrought by fascism and communism (as reflected in the poetic work of Thomas Kling and Marcel Beyer, for example). Another coordinate marks resistance to the post-utopian art of Stalinism. The sound poetry of Oskar Pastior speaks to this legacy, as does Herta Müller's productive engagement with Pastior's work in the post-communist West. A third coordinate comes to the fore at intersections between critiques of ethnography and deployment of Surrealism as aesthetic practice. Such intersections are featured prominently in the work of both Herta Müller and Feridun Zaimoglu to resist hegemonic cultures of totalitarianism and assimilationism. A fourth coordinate reinterprets postcolonial and

[637] Ibid., 112.

subaltern studies in new venues, at the conceptual and resonant intersection between twentieth-century anti-colonial movements in the Caribbean and contemporary activist and poetic practices of resistance on the part of German-Turkish authors. The four coordinates I have enumerated also bear on memory and Holocaust studies, post-communism studies and avant-garde studies in relation to German studies, largely through consideration of a poetics of sound for which the trope of resonance is key.

The trope of resonance offers a heuristic tool for looking beyond a multilingual aesthetics of sound to interpret the poetics of the 1990s in German-speaking cultures. Unlike prior analyses that also question the proclaimed unity of the nation in the post-1989 German-speaking world, I focus on avant-garde practices by minority and mainstream writers alike to displace dichotomous structures of identity, language and literary tradition. By showing possible intersections between German experimental prose and non-Western experimental practices, I argue that the purported death of the avant-garde has always been conditioned by a Eurocentric perspective, which excluded vital voices and sounds related to race, gender, and religion.[638] If, with *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy similarly sought to establish a counter-moment to European modernity, Zaimoglu investigates modes of address that disrupt the canonical flow of representation and differentiation of "migrant" writers in Europe by not providing a counter-moment but rather by engaging multiple directionalities of subaltern speech. Zaimoglu's work in particular articulates the usefulness of performance and noise for building communities across languages,

---

[638] See Matei Calinescu, "Avant-Garde, Neo-Avant-Garde, Post Modernism: The Culture of Crisis," *Clio* 4.3 (1975). Benjamin Buchloh, *Neo-Avant-Garde and Culture Industry* (2000). Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1984).

disciplinary methodologies and geographical locations. My focus, however, is not on the linguistic phenomenon of multilingualism but on the transnational phenonemon of creolization as a technique of cultural experimentation rather than social identity in any fixed categorical sense.

This study makes critical "soundscapes" in contemporary literature accessible to scholarly evaluation. In Murray Schafer's understanding, a soundscape is "any portion of the sonic environment regarded as a field of studies," but, as Jonathan Sterne indicates, a soundscape can also be understood as a social concept to "describe the field of sounds in a particular space, or an entire culture," in what Sterne calls a "total appreciation of the sonic environment." [639] My more limited claim is that spatialized soundscapes are relevant for a poetics of resonance. Motion transforms space, which is not just a container but a place where bodies resonate. My analysis of resonance in contemporary German poetry, history and aesthetics unsettles and highlights the value of literary experiment with sound in the present. This experimentation refigures the legacy of the historical avant-gardes and twentieth-century politics too. This dissertation has proposed further directions in the study of resonance and race, as they become transnationalized in spaces of sound and performance.

---

[639]Murray Schafer, *The Tuning of the World*, 274. Jonathan Sterne, *The Sound Studies Reader*, 92.

WORKS CITED

Adelson, Leslie A. *Making Bodies, Making History: Feminism & German Identity*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993. Print. Modern German Culture & Literature.

---. "Touching Tales of Turks, Germans, and Jews: Cultural Alterity, Historical Narrative, and Literary Riddles for the 1990s." *New German Critique: An Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies* 80 (2000): 93–124. Print.

---. *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Toward a New Critical Grammar of Migration*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Print. Studies in European Culture and History.

---. "Experiment Mars: Contemporary German Literature, Imaginative Ethnoscapes, and the New Futurism," *Über Gegenwartsliteratur: Interpretationen und Interventionen*, ed. Mark W. Rectanus (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2008), 23-49. Print.

Adorno, Theodor W. *Noten Zur Literatur*. Frankfurt am Main ,: Suhrkamp, 1974. Print. His Gesammelte Schriften,.

Adorno, Theodor W., and Rolf Tiedemann. *Notes to Literature*. 2 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. Print. European Perspectives.

Agamben, Giorgio, and Daniel Heller-Roazen. *Homo Sacer*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998. Print.

Agamben, Giorgio. *Remnants of Auschwitz: the Witness and the Archive*. New York: Zone Books, 1999. Print.

Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-coloniality*. London; New York: Routledge, 2000. Print.

Akçam, Dursun. *Alaman Ocagı: Türkler Almanları Anlatıor ; Türkisch-Deutsch = Deutsches Heim - Glück Allein : Wie Türken Deutsche Sehen*. Göttingen: Lamuv-Verl, 1993. Print.

Ames, Eric, and Sander L. Gilman. *Germany's Colonial Pasts*. Lincoln [u.a.]: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2005. Texts and Contexts Series.

Ammon, Frieder von, Peer Trilcke, and Alena Scharfschwert. *Das Gellen der Tinte: zum Werk Thomas Klings*. Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2012. Print.

Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. London; New York: Verso, 2006. Print.

Arndt, Susan. *Exophonie: Anders-Sprachigkeit (in) Der Literatur*. Berlin: Kulturverl. Kadmos, 2007. LiteraturForschung.

Arnold, Heinz Ludwig. *Die Gruppe 47: ein kritischer Grundriss*. München: Edition Text + Kritik, 1987. Print.

Art, David. *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Print.

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*. London; New York: Routledge, 1989. Print. New Accents.

Asholt, Wolfgang, and Walter Fähnders. "Der Blick vom Wolkenkratzer: Avantgarde, Avantgardekritik, Avantgardeforschung." Rodopi, 2000. Print.

Augoyard, Jean-François, and Henry Torgue. *Sonic Experience: a Guide to Everyday Sounds*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005. Print.

Auteri, Laura, and Margherita Cottone. *Deutsche Kultur Und Islam Am Mittelmeer: Akten Der Tagung; Palermo, 13. - 15. November 2003*. Göppingen: Kümmerle, 2005. Göppinger Arbeiten Zur Germanistik / Göppinger Arbeiten Zur Germanistik.

Baird, Jay W. *Hitler's War Poets: Literature and Politics in the Third Reich*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Print.

Ball, Hugo. *Flight Out of Time: a Dada Diary*. New York: Viking Press, 1974. Print.

Basu, Dipannita, and Sidney J Lemelle. *The Vinyl Ain't Final: Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Popular Culture*. London: Pluto, 2006. Print.

Bathrick, David. *The Powers of Speech: the Politics of Culture in the GDR*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. Print. Modern German Culture and Literature.

Baugh, Bruce. *French Hegel: From Surrealism to Postmodernism*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Print.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989. Print.

Behrendt, Eva, and Franz Wille. "'Wir Haben Mit Unseren Mündern Ihre Melodien Gepfiffen'." *Theater Heute* 49.7 (2008): 46–49. Print.

Benjamin, Walter et al. *Selected Writings*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard

    University Press, 1999. Print.

Benn, Gottfried. *Probleme der Lyrik*. Wiesbaden: Limes Verlag, 1951. Print.

Berger, James. *After the End: Representations of Post-apocalypse*. Minneapolis:

    University of Minnesota Press, 1999. Print.

Besslich, Barbara, Katharina Grätz, and Olaf Hildebrand. "Wende des Erinnerns?:

    Geschichtskonstruktionen in der deutschen Literatur nach 1989." E. Schmidt, 2006.

    Print.

Beuys, Joseph, and Caroline Tisdall. *Joseph Beuys*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1979.

    Print.

Beyer, Marcel. *Erdkunde: Gedichte*. Köln: DuMont, 2002. Print.

---. *Flughunde: Roman*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995. Print.

---. *Nonfiction*. Köln: DuMont, 2003. Print.

Beyer, Marcel, and Alan Bance. *Kaltenburg*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012.

    Print.

Beyer, Marcel, and John Brownjohn. *The Karnau Tapes*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997.

    Print.

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London; New York: Routledge, 1994. Print.

Bial, Henry. *The Performance Studies Reader*. London; New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Bloch, Ernst. *Erbschaft dieser Zeit*. 14. und 15. Tsd. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1985.

   Print. Bibliothek Suhrkamp.

Blümner, Rudolf, and Marcel Beyer. *Der Stuhl, Die Ohrfeige und anderes literarisches*

   Kasperletheater: Stücke aus dem "Sturm." Siegen: Univ.-Gesamthochsch., 1988.

   Print.

Blyden, Edward Wilmot, and Hollis Ralph Lynch. *Selected Letters of Edward Wilmot*

   Blyden. Millwood, N.Y.: KTO Press, 1978. Print.

Boran, Erol M. "Eine Geschichte Des Türkisch-deutschen Theaters Und Kabaretts." 2004.

   Google Scholar. Web. 9 May 2013.

Bormann, Alexander von. "Die Rückwendung Zur Formtradition in Der Lyrik Der 80er

   Jahre." *Duitse Kroniek* 34.3 (1984): 2–12. Print.

Böttiger, Helmut. *Nach den Utopien: eine Geschichte der deutschsprachigen*

   Gegenwartsliteratur. Wien: Zsolnay, 2004. Print.

Bozzi, Paola. *Der Fremde Blick: Zum Werk Herta Müllers*. Würzburg: Königshausen &

   Neumann, 2005. Print.

Bower, Kathrin. "Serdar Somuncu: Reframing Integration Through a Transnational Politics

   of Satire." *The German Quarterly*. 85.2 (2012): 193-213. Print.

Brandt, Bettina. "Schnitt Durchs Auge. Surrealistische Bilder Bei Yoko Tawada, Emine

   Sevgi Özdamar Und Herta Müller." *Literatur und Migration* (2006): 74–84. Print.

Brathwaite, Edward Kamau. "Caliban, Ariel, and Prospero in the Conflict of Creolization:
A Study of the Slave Revolt in Jamaica in 1831–32." *Annals of the New York
Academy of Sciences* 292.1 (1977): 41–62. Print.

Brathwaite, Kamau. *History of the Voice: the Development of Nation Language in
Anglophone Caribbean Poetry*. London: New Beacon Books, 1984. Print.

Braun, Michael, and Hans Thill. *Das verlorene Alphabet: deutschsprachige Lyrik der
neunziger Jahre*. Heidelberg: Wunderhorn, 1998. Print.

Breger, Claudia. *Aesthetics of Narrative Performance: Transnational Theater, Literature,
and Film in Contemporary Germany*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012.
Print.

Breton, André. *Misère de la poésie: "L'affaire Aragon" devant l'opinion publique*. Paris:
Éditions Surréalistes, 1932. Print.

Breton, André, and Philip Provenance Kaplan. *Misère de La Poésie: "L'affaire Aragon"
Devant L'opinion Publique*. Paris: Editions surréalistes, 1932. Print.

Briegleb, Klaus, and Sigrid Weigel. *Gegenwartsliteratur seit 1968*. München: C. Hanser,
1992. Print.

Brümann, Ina M. *Apollinaire Und Die Deutsche Avantgarde*. Hamburg: Krämer, 1988.
Print. Wissenschaft Aktuell.

Brundage, W. Fitzhugh. *Beyond Blackface: African Americans and the Creation of
American Popular Culture, 1890-1930*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina
Press, 2011. Print.

Buchloh, Benjamin H. D. *Neo-avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975*. 1. paperback. Cambridge, Mass. u.a.: MIT Press, 2003. Print. <> October Book.

Buck-Morss, Susan. *Dreamworld and Catastrophe the Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 10 May 2013.

Buck-Morss, Susan. *Hegel, Haiti,; and Universal History*. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009. Print. Illuminations.

Buden, Boris. *Zone des Übergangs: vom Ende des Postkommunismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009. Print.

Bürger, Peter, Michael Shaw, and Jochen Schulte-Sasse. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 2006. Print.

Buhr, Gerhard. *Paul Celan, "Atemwende": Materialien*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1991. Print.

Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.

---. *Excitable Speech: a Politics of the Performative*. New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.

Călinescu, George, and Al Piru. *Istoria Literaturii Române: de La Origini Pînă În Prezent*. Ediția a II-a, revăzută și adăugită. București: Minerva, 1982. Print.

Călinescu, Matei. *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1987. Print.

Campos, Haroldo de, Antonio Sergio Bessa, and Odile Cisneros. *Novas: Selected Writings*.

　　Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2007. AGM Collection.

Campt, Tina M. "DIASPORA SPACE, ETHNOGRAPHIC SPACE." *Globalization and*

　　Race: Transformations in the Cultural Production of Blackness (2006): 93. Print.

Celan, Paul. *Collected Prose*. Manchester: Carcanet, 1986. Print.

Celan, Paul, Bernhard Böschenstein, Heino Schmull, Michael Schwarzkopf, et al. *Der*

　　Meridian: Endfassung, Entwürfe, Materialien. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999.

　　Print.

Celan, Paul, Bernhard Böschenstein, Heino Schmull, and Pierre Joris. *The Meridian: Final*

　　Version--drafts--materials. Stanford, California.: Stanford University Press, 2011.

　　Print. Meridian, Crossing Aesthetics.

Cernat, Paul. *Avangarda Românească Și Complexul Periferiei: Primul Val*. București:

　　Cartea Românească, 2007. Print. Critică & Istorie Literară.

Cheeseman, Tom. "Polyglot Politics. Hip Hop in Germany." *Debatte* 6.2 (1998): 191–214.

　　Print.

Cheesman, Tom. "Akcam-Zaimoğlu-'Kanak Attak': Turkish Lives and Letters in

　　German." *German Life and Letters* 55.2 (2002): 180–195. Print.

---. "Talking 'Kanak': Zaimoğlu Contra Leitkultur." *New German Critique: An*

　　Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies 92 (2004): 82–99. Print.

Chin, Rita C. K. *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009. Print. Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany.

Chion, Michel. "Dissolution of the Notion of Timbre." *differences* 22.2-3 (2011): 235–239. Print.

Chow, Rey. *Writing Diaspora Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 9 May 2013.

Clifford, James. *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge, Mass. u.a.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1988. Print.

Convegno "Animali, angeli, Giovanni Manetti, and Alessandro Prato. "Animali, angeli e macchine." ETS, 2007. Print.

Cooke, Paul. *Representing East Germany Since Unification from Colonization to Nostalgia*. Oxford, UK; New York, NY: Berg, 2005. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 9 May 2013.

Cox, Christoph, and Daniel Warner. *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. New York: Continuum, 2004. Print.

Currid, Brian. *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006. Print.

Dällenbach, Lucien, Christiaan L. Hart Nibbrig, and Edmund Jacoby. *Fragment Und Totalität*. Erstausg. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984. Edition Suhrkamp.

Daston, Lorraine, and Peter Galison. *Objectivity*. New York; Cambridge, Mass.: Zone

> Books; Distributed by the MIT Press, 2007. Print.

Demers, Joanna Teresa. *Listening through the Noise: The Aesthetics of Experimental*

> *Electronic Music*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. Print.

Diamond, Elin. *Unmaking Mimesis: Essays on Feminism and Theater*. London; New York:

> Routledge, 1997. Print.

Dickinson, Kristin, Robin Ellis, and Priscilla D. Layne. "Translating Communities:

> Rethinking the Collective in Feridun Zaimoglu's Koppstoff." *TRANSIT* 4.1 (2008): n.
>
> pag. Print.

Dimock, Wai Chee. "A Theory of Resonance." *PMLA: Publications of the Modern*

> *Language Association of America* 112.5 (1997): 1060–1071. Print.

Dittberner, Hugo et al. *Mit der Zeit erzählen? fragt er Marcel Beyer, Heiner Egge, Gundi*

> *Feyrer, Toko Tawada: das zweite Buch*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 1994. Print.

DJ Spooky That Subliminal Kid. *Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music and Culture*.

> Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008. Print.

Drews, Jörg. *Das Tempo Dieser Zeit Ist Keine Kleinigkeit: Zur Literatur Um 1918*.

> München: Ed. Text + Kritik, 1981. Print.

---. "Das Tempo dieser Zeit ist keine Kleinigkeit: zur Literatur um 1918." Edition Text +

> Kritik, 1981. Print.

Dunker, Axel. *(Post-)Kolonialismus Und Deutsche Literatur: Impulse Der Angloamerikanischen Literatur- Und Kulturtheorie*. Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2005. Print.

El-Tayeb, Fatima. *Schwarze Deutsche: der Diskurs um "Rasse" und nationale Identität 1890-1933*. Frankfurt/Main; New York: Campus, 2001. Print.

El-Tayeb, Fatima. *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*. Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota Press, 2011. Difference Incorporated.

Emmerich, Wolfgang. "Affirmation-Utopie-Melancholie: Versuch Einer Bilanz von Vierzig Jahren DDR-Literatur." *German Studies Review* 14.2 (1991): 325–344. Print.

Enwezor, Okwui. *Créolité and Creolization:: Documenta 11*Platform3*. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2003. Print.

Enzensberger, Hans Magnus. *Einzelheiten II: Poesie und Politik*. [Frankfurt am Main]: Suhrkamp, 1984. Print.

---. *Museum der modernen Poesie*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980. Print.

---. *Zig Zag: the Politics of Culture and Vice Versa*. New York: New Press, 1997. Print.

Erb, Andreas, Hannes Krauss, and Jochen Vogt. "Baustelle Gegenwartsliteratur: die neunziger Jahre." Westdeutscher Verlag, 1998. Print.

Erber, Pedro. "Contemporaneity and Its Discontents." *Diacritics* 41.1 (2013): 36-56. Print.

Erlmann, Veit. *Reason and Resonance: a History of Modern Aurality*. New York Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books; Distributed by MIT Press, 2010. Print.

Fabian, Johannes. *Power and Performance: Ethnographic Explorations through Proverbial Wisdom and Theater in Shaba, Zaire*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990. Print. New Directions in Anthropological Writing.

---. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. Print.

Fachinger, Petra. *Rewriting Germany from the Margins: "Other" German Literature of the 1980s and 1990s*. Montreal, Que: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.

Falkner, Gerhard. *Baumfällen. Zur Phänomenologie Des Niedermachens in Der Deutschen Literaturkritik Am Beispiel Michael Brauns Und Des Bandes "Lyrik von Jetzt."* Ndl, 2004. Print.

Fanon, Frantz. *A Dying Colonialism: Translated from the French by Haakon Chevalier. with An Introd. by Adolfo Gilly.* New York: Grove Press, 1965. Print.

---. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Harmondsworth,: Penguin, 1967. Print.

Fanon, Frantz, and Charles Lam Markmann. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, 1968. Print.

Ferry, Luc. *Homo Aestheticus: The Invention of Taste in the Democratic Age*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993. Print.

Fest, Joachim C. *The Face of the Third Reich: Portraits of the Nazi Leadership*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1970. Print.

Fischer-Lichte, Erika. *Ästhetik des Performativen*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004. Print.

Fischer-Lichte, Erika, and Forschungszentrum für Historische Anthropologie. *Kulturen des Performativen*. Berlin: Akad.-Verl., 1998. Print.

Fitzpatrick, Matthew P. "The Pre-history of the Holocaust? The Sonderweg and Historikerstreit Debates and the Abject Colonial Past." *Central European History* 41.3 (2008): 477–503. Print.

Föger, Benedikt, and Klaus Taschwer. *Die andere Seite des Spiegels: Konrad Lorenz und der Nationalsozialismus*. Wien: Czernin-Verl, 2001. Print.

Foster, Hal. *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*. 2nd ed. London: Thames & Hudson, 2011. Print.

---. *The Return of the Real: The Avant-garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996. Print.

Freud, Sigmund. "Die Frage Der Laienanalyse in Die Psychoanalyse." *Gesammelte Werke-Chronologisch geordnet* (1926): n. pag. Print.

Freud, Sigmund, and Albert Dickson. *Art and Literature: Jensen's Gradiva, Leonardo Da Vinci and Other Works*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985. Print. Pelican Freud Library.

Friedländer, Saul. *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution."* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992. Print.

---. "Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the 'Final Solution'." Harvard University Press, 1992. Print.

Friedrich, Hugo. *Die Struktur der modernen Lyrik von Baudelaire bis zur Gegenwart.* Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1956. Print.

Friedrichsmeyer, Sara, Sara Lennox, and Susanne Zantop. *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and Its Legacy*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998. Print.

Fritzsche, Peter. *Life and Death in the Third Reich*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008. Print.

Fuchs, Anne, Kathleen James, and Linda Shortt. *Debating German Cultural Identity Since 1989*. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2011. Print.

Fuss, Diana. *Identification Papers*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.

Gandhi, Leela. *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*. Columbia University Press, 1998. *Google Scholar*. Web. 9 May 2013.

Gardt, Andreas, and Bernd-Rüdiger Hüppauf. *Globalization and the Future of German: With a Select Bibliography*. Berlin; New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2004. Print.

Geier, Andrea, and Thomas Anz. *Konkurrenzen, Konflikte, Kontinuitäten: Generationenfragen in Der Literatur Seit 1990*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009.

Gilbert, Helen, and Anna Johnston. *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire*. New York: P. Lang, 2002. Print.

Gilfillan, Daniel. *Pieces of Sound German Experimental Radio*. Minneapolis: University of
  Minnesota Press, 2009. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 9 May 2013.

Gilman, Sander L. *On Blackness Without Blacks: Essays on the Image of the Black in
  Germany*. Boston, Mass.: G.K. Hall, 1982. Print.

Gilroy, Paul. *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line*.
  Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000. Print.

---. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard
  University Press, 1993. Print.

Gilroy, Paul, Tina Campt, and Fatima El-Tayeb. *Der Black Atlantic*. Berlin: Haus der
  Kulturen der Welt, 2004. Print.

Glajar, Valentina Nicoleta. "Communism, national socialism, and imperialism: East
  Central Europe in German-language literature: Herta Müller, Erica Pedretti, and
  Gregor von Rezzori." 1999 : n. pag. Print.

Glissant, Édouard. *Le Discours Antillais*. Paris: Seuil, 1981. Print.

Glissant, Édouard, and J. Michael Dash. *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*.
  Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989. Print. CARAF Books.

Glissant, Édouard, and Betsy Wing. *Poetics of Relation*. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan
  Press, 1997.

Göktürk, Deniz. *Turkish Delight-German Fright: Migrant Identities in Transnational Cinema*. University of Oxford. Transnational Communities Programme, 1999. *Google Scholar*. Web. 9 May 2013.

Goldiş, Alex. *Critica în Tranşee: de La Realismul Socialist La Instaurarea Autonomiei Esteticului: (1948-1971)*. Bucureşti: Cartea Românească, 2011. Print.

Gomringer, Eugen. *Der Sonette Gezeiten = The sonnets' tides*. Dozwil: Edition Signathur, 2009. Print.

Gomringer, Eugen, and Markus Marti. *Eines Sommers Sonette = A summer's sonnets*. Dozwil: Edition Signathur, 2008. Print.

Grimm, Reinhold, and Hermann Jost. *Basis: Jahrbuch für deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur. Bd. II*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1971. Print.

Groys, Boris. *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992. Print.

Grub, Frank Thomas. *Wende und Einheit im Spiegel der deutschsprachigen Literatur: ein Handbuch*. Berlin; New York: W. de Gruyter, 2003. Print.

Gumbrecht, Hans U. *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2004. Print.

Gumpel, Liselotte. *"Concrete" Poetry from East and West Germany: the Language of Exemplarism and Experimentalism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976. Print. Yale Germanic Studies 6.

Hamner, Robert D. *Critical Perspectives on Derek Walcott*. Washington, D.C.: Three

    Continents Press, 1993. Print.

Harding, James Martin. *Not the Other Avant-garde: the Transnational Foundations of*

    Avant-garde Performance. Ann Arbor: The Univ. of Michigan Press, 2006. Theater--

    theory / Text/performance.

Harding, James Martin, and John Rouse. *Not the Other Avant-garde the Transnational*

    Foundations of Avant-garde Performance. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press,

    2006. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 10 May 2013.

Hayles, Katherine. *My Mother Was a Computer: Digital Subjects and Literary Texts*.

    Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. Print.

Herder, Johann Gottfried. *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache, welche den von*

    der Königl. Academie der Wissenschaften ... gesezten Preis erhalten hat. Berlin, 1772.

    Print.

Herder, Johann Gottfried, and Lambert Schneider. *Plastik. Einige Wahrnehmungen über*

    Form und Gestalt aus Pygmalions bildendem Traume. Köln: Hegner, 1969. Print.

Herf, Jeffrey. *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys*. Cambridge, Mass.:

    Harvard University Press, 1997. Print.

---. *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third*

    Reich. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

    Print.

Herrmann, Meike. *Vergangenwart: Erzählen vom Nationalsozialismus in der deutschen Literatur seit den neunziger Jahren*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2010. Print.

Hilbig, Wolfgang. *"Ich": Roman*. Frankfurt am Main. Allemagne: S. Fischer, 1993. Print.

Hine, Darlene Clark, Trica Danielle Keaton, and Stephen Small. *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. Print. The New Black Studies Series.

Hobsbawm, Eric. *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991*. London: Abacus, 1997. Print.

Hohendahl, Peter Uwe. "Gottfried Benns Poetik Und Die Deutsche Lyriktheorie Nach 1945." *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 24 (1980): 369–398. Print.

Hooks, Bell. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989. Print.

Horkheimer, Max, Theodor W Adorno, and Gunzelin Schmid Noerr. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002. Print.

Hornstein, Shelley, and Florence Jacobowitz. *Image and Remembrance: Representation and the Holocaust*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. Print.

Howard, Mary. *Interkulturelle Konfigurationen: zur deutschsprachigen Erzählliteratur von Autoren nichtdeutscher Herkunft*. München: Iudicium, 1997. Print.

Hsu, Roland. *Ethnic Europe: Mobility, Identity, and Conflict in a Globalized World*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2010. Print.

Hüppauf, Bernd. "Moral oder Sprache: DDR Literatur vor der Moderne," in *Literatur in der DDR: Rückblicke,* special issue (München: Text+ Kritik, 1991). Print.

Huyssen, Andreas. *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003. Print.

Ionesco, Eugène. *Note şi Contranote*. Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1992. Print.

Ionesco, Eugène, Mariana Vartic, and Aurel Sasu. *Război Cu Toată Lumea: Publicistică Românească.* 2 vols. Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1992. Print.

Jackson, Margaret Ruth, and Michael B Bakan. "The Poets of Duisburg Risk and Hip-hop Performance in a German Inner City." 2010. Web. 9 May 2013.

Jandl, Ernst. *Für Alle*. Darmstadt; Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974. Print.

Johannsen, Anja K. *Kisten, Krypten, Labyrinthe: Raumfigurationen in der Gegenwartsliteratur: W.G. Sebald, Anne Duden, Herta Müller*. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2008. Print. Lettre.

Johnson, Marysia. *A Philosophy of Second Language Acquisition*. New Haven: Yale University Press,, 2004. Yale Language Series.

Jonathan, D. Culler. "Philosophy and Literature: The Fortunes of the Performative." *Poetics Today* 21 (2000): 503–519. Print.

Jules-Rosette, Bennetta. *Black Paris: The African Writers' Landscape*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998. Print.

Jünger, Ernst. *Blätter und Steine*. Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1943. Print.

Jungrichter, Cornelia. "Ideologie und Tradition: Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Sonettdichtung." 1979 : n. pag. Print.

Kacandes, Irene. *Talk Fiction: Literature and the Talk Explosion*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001. Print. Frontiers of Narrative.

Kahn, Douglas, and Gregory Whitehead. *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-garde*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992. Print.

Kellein, Thomas et al. "Neue Poesie: 20 Jahre Bielefelder Colloquium." Edition H. Mayer, 1997. Print.

Kennedy, Michael D. *Envisioning Eastern Europe: Postcommunist Cultural Studies*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1994. Ratio.

Khanna, Ranjana. *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003. Print.

Kien Nghi, Ha. *Re/visionen: Postkoloniale Perspektiven von People of Color Auf Rassismus, Kulturpolitik Und Widerstand in Deutschland*. 1. Aufl. Münster: Unrast-Verl., 2007. Print.

Kleinberg-Levin, David Michael. *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. Print.

Kling, Thomas. *Botenstoffe*. Köln: Dumont, 2001. Print.

---. *Das brennende Archiv: unveröffentlichte Gedichte, Briefe, Handschriften und Photos aus dem Nachlass sowie zu Lebzeiten entlegen publizierte Gedichte, Essays und Gespräche*. Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2012. Print.

---. *Itinerar / Thomas Kling*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1997. Print.

---. "Sprach-Pendelbewegung: Celans Galgen-Motiv." *Text + Kritik: Zeitschrift für Literatur* 53-54 (2002): 25–37. Print.

---. *Sprachspeicher: 200 Gedichte auf deutsch vom achten bis zum zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*. Köln: DuMont, 2001. Print.

Kling, Thomas, Christian Döring, and Marcel Beyer. *Gesammelte Gedichte 1981-2005*. Köln: DuMont, 2006. Print.

Klüger, Ruth. *Weiter Leben: Eine Jugend*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 1992. Print.

Korte, Hermann. *Deutschsprachige Lyrik seit 1945*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2004. Print.

Koselleck, Reinhart. *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik Geschichtlicher Zeiten*. 1. Aufl. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989. Print. Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft.

Krauss, Rosalind E. *The Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991. Print.

Kristeva, Julia, and Leon S Roudiez. *Powers of horror: an essay on abjection*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982. Print.

Kruger, Barbara, Phil Mariani, and Dia Art Foundation. *Remaking History*. Seattle: Bay
Press, 1989. Print.

Kunze, Reiner. *Deckname "lyrik": Eine Dokumentation*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer
Taschenbuch Verlag, 1990. Print.

LaBelle, Brandon. *Acoustic Territories Sound Culture and Everyday Life*. New York:
Continuum, 2010. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 10 May 2013.

LaCapra, Dominick. *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma*. Ithaca: Cornell
University Press, 1994. Print.

Landy, Joshua, and Michael T Saler. *The Re-enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in
a Rational Age*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009. Print.

Langbehn, Volker Max. *German Colonialism, Visual Culture, and Modern Memory*. New
York [u.a.]: Routledge, 2010. Routledge Studies in Modern European History.

Langbehn, Volker Max, and Mohammad Salama. *German Colonialism: Race, the
Holocaust, and Postwar Germany*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.
Print.

Langston, Richard. *Visions of Violence: German Avant-gardes after Fascism*. Evanston,
Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2008. Avant-garde & Modernism Studies. Print

Larrier, Renée. "'Crier/Ecrire/Cahier': Anagrammatic Configurations of Voice in
Francophone Caribbean Narratives." *French Review* 69.2 (1995): 275–283. Print.

Leeder, Karen J. *Schaltstelle: neue deutsche Lyrik im Dialog*. Amsterdam; New York, NY: Rodopi, 2007. Print.

Lentz, Michael. *Lautpoesie/-musik nach 1945: eine kritisch-dokumentarische Bestandsaufnahme*. Wien: Edition Selene, 2000. Print.

Lethen, Helmut. *Der Sound der Väter: Gottfried Benn und seine Zeit*. Berlin: Rowohlt, 2006. Print.

Levi, Primo, and Primo Levi. *Survival in Auschwitz: the Nazi Assault on Humanity*. First Collier Books. New York: Collier Books, 1961. Print.

Levy, Daniel, and Natan Sznaider. *The Holocaust and memory in the global age*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006. Print.

Lichau, Karsten. *Resonanz Potentiale einer akustischen Figur*. Paderborn: Fink, 2009. Print.

Lionnet, Françoise, and Shumei Shi. *Minor Transnationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Print.

---. *The Creolization of Theory*. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2011. Print.

Loentz, Elizabeth. "Yiddish, Kanak Sprak, Klezmer, and HipHop: Ethnolect, Minority Culture, Multiculturalism, and Stereotype in Germany." *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 25.1 (2006): 33–62. Print.

Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988. Print.

MacClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. New York [u.a.]: Routledge, 1995.

Marx, William, and Université Jean Moulin. "Les arrière-gardes au XXe siècle: l'autre face de la modernité esthétique." Presses universitaires de France, 2004. Print.

Mathews, Harry, and Ulf Stolterfoht. "Oskar Oulipotisch." *Text + Kritik: Zeitschrift für Literatur* 186 (2010): 47–49. Print.

Melamed, Jodi. *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2011. Print.

Melas, Natalie. "Untimeliness, or Négritude and the Poetics of Contramodernity." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 108.3 (2009): 563–580. Print.

Mersch, Dieter. *Ereignis und Aura: Untersuchungen zu Einer Ästhetik des Performativen*. 1. Aufl., Orig.-Ausg. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002. Print. Edition Suhrkamp.

Meyerhold, Wsewolod E. "» Der Schauspieler Der Zukunft Und Die Biomechanik «." *Theaterarbeit 1917-1930* (1917): 72–76. Print.

Miller, Karl Hagstrom. *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow*. Durham [NC]: Duke University Press, 2010. Print.

Miller, Nancy K., and Jason Daniel Tougaw. *Extremities: Trauma, Testimony, and Community*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002. Print.

Mitchell, Tony. *Global Noise: Rap and Hip-hop Outside the USA*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 2001. Music / Culture.

Modlinger, Martin, and Philipp Sonntag. *Other People's Pain: Narratives of Trauma and the Question of Ethics*. Oxford u.a.: Lang, 2011. Cultural History and Literary Imagination.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade et al. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991. Print.

Monroe, Jonathan. "Avant-Garde Poetries after the Wall." *Poetics Today* 21.1 (2000): 95–128. Print.

Müller, Heiner. *Theater-Arbeit*. Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1975. Print.

Müller, Herta. *Der Teufel Sitzt Im Spiegel: Wie Wahrnehmung Sich Erfindet*. 1. Aufl. Berlin: Rotbuch, 1991. Print.

Müller, Herta. *Der Wächter Nimmt Seinen Kamm: Vom Weggehen Und Ausscheren*. 1. Aufl. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1993. Print.

---. *Die Blassen Herren Mit Den Mokkatassen*. 1 vols. München: C. Hanser, 2005. Print.

---. "Gelber Mais Und Keine Zeit." *Text + Kritik: Zeitschrift für Literatur* 186 (2010): 15–26. Print.

---. *Hunger Und Seide: Essays*. 1. Aufl. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1995. Print.

---. *Immer Derselbe Schnee Und Immer Derselbe Onkel*. München: Hanser, 2011.

---. *In Der Falle*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1996. Print. Bonner Poetik-Vorlesung.

Müller, Herta, and Renata Schmidtkunz. *Ich Glaube Nicht an Die Sprache: Herta Müller Im Gespräch Mit Renata Schmidtkunz*. Klagenfurt: Wieser, 2009. Print. Gehört Gelesen.

Muñoz, José Esteban. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York University Press, 2009. Print.

---. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. Minneapolis u.a.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1999. Print. Cultural Studies of the Americas / Cultural Studies of the Americas.

Murray, Timothy. *Digital Baroque: New Media Art and Cinematic Folds*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008. Print.

Nader, Andrés Jose. *Traumatic Verses: on Poetry in German from the Concentration Camps, 1933-1945*. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2007. Studies in German Literature, Linguistics and Culture.

Naghibi, Nima. *Rethinking Global Sisterhood Western Feminism and Iran*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 9 May 2013.

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *Beyond Good and Evil.* New York: Carlton House, 1930. Print.

---. *The gay science: with a prelude in German rhymes and an appendix of songs*. Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Print.

Noland, Carrie. *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/producing Culture*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009. Print.

---. "Red Front/Black Front: Aimé Césaire and the Affaire Aragon." *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism* 36.1 (2006): 64–84. Print.

Noland, Carrie, and Barrett Watten. *Diasporic Avant-gardes: Experimental Poetics and Cultural Displacement*. New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.

---. *Diasporic Avant-gardes: Experimental Poetics and Cultural Displacement; [papers of the 2004 Conference]*. New York, NY [u.a.]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Nubert, Roxana. "Zwischen Kritik Und Affirmation: Die Aktionsgruppe Banat. Beiträge Zur Rumäniendeutschen Literatur in Den 1970er Jahren." *Acta Germanica: Jahrbuch des Germanistenverbandes im Südlichen Afrika* 38 (2010): 146–164. Print.

Oguntoye, Katharina, May Ayim, and Dagmar Schultz. *Farbe bekennen: afro-deutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte*. Berlin: Orlanda Frauenverlag, 1986. Print.

Öhlschläger, Claudia, Lucia Perrone Capano, and Vittoria Borsò. *Realismus Nach Den Europäischen Avantgarden: Ästhetik, Poetologie Und Kognition in Film Und Literatur Der Nachkriegszeit*. Transcript Verlag, 2012. Print.

Oliva, Mirela. *Das innere Verbum in Gadamers Hermeneutik*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009. Print.

Pană, Saşa, and Ion Pop. *Sadismul Adevărului*. Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2009. Print. Avangarda.

Partridge, Damani J., and ebrary Inc. *Hypersexuality and Headscarves Race, Sex, and Citizenship in the New Germany*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press,, 2012. New Anthropologies of Europe.

Pastior, Oskar. ... *Was in Der Mitte Zu Wachsen Anfängt*. München: Hanser, 2008.

> Werkausgabe / Oskar Pastior.

---. *Auskünfte von und über Oskar Pastior*. Bamberg: Arbeitsbereich d. Neueren Dt.

> Literaturwiss. an d. Univ., 1985. Print.

---. *Das Unding an Sich: Frankfurter Vorlesungen*. 1. Aufl., Erstausg. Frankfurt am Main:

> Suhrkamp, 1994. Print. Edition Suhrkamp.

---. *Der Krimgotische Fächer: Lieder U. Balladen*. Erstausg. Erlangen: Renner, 1978.

> Print.

---. *Höricht: Sechzig Übertragungen Aus Einem Frequenzbereich*. 3. Aufl. Spenge: K.

> Ramm, 1979. Print.

---. *Vokalisen & Gimpelstifte*. München: C. Hanser, 1992. Print. Edition Akzente.

Pastior, Oskar, and Klaus Ramm. *Jalousien Aufgemacht: Ein Lesebuch*. München u.a.:

> Hanser, 1987. Print.

Poggi, Christine. *In Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism, and the Invention of Collage*.

> New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992. Print.

Poggioli, Renato. *The Theory of the Avant-garde*. Cambridge, Mass.,: Belknap Press of

> Harvard University Press, 1968. Print.

Porter, Roy. *Rewriting the Self Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*. London;

> New York: Routledge, 1997. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 9 May 2013.

Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London; New York: Routledge, 1992. Print.

Puchner, Martin. *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestos, and the Avant-gardes.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006. Print.

Pugach, Sara Elizabeth Berg. *Africa in Translation: a History of Colonial Linguistics in Germany and Beyond, 1814-1945*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012. Print.

Puri, Shalini. *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Quayson, Ato. *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Rahier, Jean Muteba, Percy C. Hintzen, and Felipe Smith. *Global Circuits of Blackness: Interrogating the African Diaspora*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010. Print.

Ray, Gene et al. "Joseph Beuys, Mapping the Legacy." D.A.P.; John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, 2001. Print.

Reich-Ranicki, Marcel. *Frankfurter Anthologie: Gedichte Und Interpretationen Bd. 23 [...]*. 1. Aufl. Frankfurt am Main [u.a.]: Insel-Verl., 2000.

Richardson, Michael, and Krzysztof Fijalkowski. *Refusal of the Shadow: Surrealism and the Caribbean*. London; New York: Verso, 1996. Print.

Roach, Joseph R. *Cities of the Dead: circum-Atlantic Performance*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. Print. The Social Foundations of Aesthetic Forms.

Rode, Marc-Boris, and Marcel Beyer. *Auskünfte von und über Marcel Beyer*. Bamberg: Universität Bamberg, 2000. Print.

Romaine, Suzanne. *Language in Society: an Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. 2nd ed. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Print.

Rose, Tricia. *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. Middletown, Conn. u.a.: Wesleyan Univ. Press u.a., 1994. Print. Music, Culture.

Rosemont, Penelope. *Surrealist Women: an International Anthology*. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998. Print. The Surrealist Revolution Series.

Rosmarin, Adena. *The Power of Genre*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985. Print.

Rothberg, Michael. *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009. Print. Cultural Memory in the Present.

---. *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation*. Minneapolis u.a.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Rühm, Gerhard. *Botschaft an die Zukunft: gesammelte Sprechtexte*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988. Print.

Ruppenthal, Stephen Cranston. "History of the Development and Techniques of Sound Poetry in the Twentieth Century in Western Culture." 1975 : n. pag. Print.

Ryan, Judith. "'Deckname Lyrik': Poetry after 1945 and 1989." *Wendezeiten, Zeitenwenden: Positionsbestimmungen Zur Deutschsprachigen Literatur 1945-1995*. Ed. Robert (ed.) Weninger & Brigitte (ed.) Rossbacher. xvi, 259 pp. Tübingen, Germany: Stauffenburg, 1997. 37–54. Print. Studien Zur Deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur/Studies in Contemporary German Literature (SzdG): 7.

Said, Edward W. "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors." *Critical Inquiry* 15.2 (1989): 205–225. Print.

Sakai, Naoki, and Jon Solomon. *Translation, Biopolitics, Colonial Difference*. Hong Kong London: Hong Kong University Press; Eurospan distributor, 2006. Print. Traces: a Multilingual Series of Cultural Theory and Translation.

Samuels, Clarise. *Holocaust Visions: Surrealism and Existentialism in the Poetry of Paul Celan*. Columbia, SC, USA: Camden House, 1993. Print.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *"What Is Literature?" and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988. Print.

Schafer, R. Murray. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. Rochester, Vt.; [United States]: Destiny Books; Distributed to the book trade in the United States by American International Distribution Corp., 1994. Print.

Scherpe, Klaus R. *Die rekonstruierte Moderne: Studien zur deutschen Literatur nach 1945*. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. Print.

Schmitz, Helmut. *German Culture and the Uncomfortable Past: Representations of National Socialism in Contemporary Germanic Literature*. Aldershot, Hants, U.K.; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2001. Print.

Schönherr, Ulrich. "Topophony of Fascism: On Marcel Beyer's The Karnau Tapes." *Germanic Review* 73.4 (1998): 328–348. Print.

Schrott, Raoul. *Fragmente einer Sprache der Dichtung: Grazer Poetikvorlesung*. Graz: Literaturverlag Droschl, 1997. Print.

Schwarzer, Alice. *Die Gotteskrieger und die falsche Toleranz*. Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2002. Print.

Schwitters, Kurt et al. *Merz: In the Beginning Was Merz: from Kurt Schwitters to the Present Day*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2000. Print.

Seel, Martin. *Aesthetics of appearing*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005. Print.

Seidel-Arpacı, Annette. "Kant in 'Deutsch-Samoa' und Gollwitz: 'Hospitalität' und Selbst-Positionierung in Einem Deutschen Kontext." *Spricht die Subalterne deutsch* (2003): 195–212. Print.

Sell, Mike. *Avant-garde Performance & the Limits of Criticism: Approaching the Living Theatre, Happenings/fluxus, and the Black Arts Movement*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005. Print.

Senghor, Léopold Sédar, and Jean-Paul Sartre. *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache de langue française,*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969. Print.

Senocak, Zafer. *Das Land hinter den Buchstaben: Deutschland und der Islam im Umbruch*. München: Babel-Verl. Tulay, 2006. Print.

Seyhan, Azade. *Writing Outside the Nation*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001. Print.

Sideras, Agis. *Paul Celan und Gottfried Benn: zwei Poetologien nach 1945*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2005. Print.

Sieg, Katrin. "Black Virgins: Sexuality and the Democratic Body in Europe." *New German Critique: An Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies* 109 (2010): 147–185. Print.

---. *Ethnic Drag: Performing Race, Nation, Sexuality in West Germany*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. Print. Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany.

Shaw, Susan M, and Janet Lee. *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2009. Print.

Söder, Hans-Peter. "The Politics of Memory: History, Biography, and the (Re)-Emergence of Generational Literature in Germany." *European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms* 14.2 (2009): 177–185. Print.

Speier, Hans-Michael. *Celan-Jahrbuch. 6 (1995)*. Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1995. Print. Beiträge Zur Neueren Literaturgeschichte.

Spiridon, Monica, Ion Bogdan Lefter, and Gheorghe Craciun. *Experiment in Post-war Romanian Literature*. Pitesti: Editura Paralela 45, 1999. Print.

Spiridon, Olivia. *Untersuchungen Zur Rumäniendeutschen Erzählliteratur Der Nachkriegszeit*. 1. Aufl. Oldenburg: Igel, 2002. Print. Literatur- Und Medienwissenschaft.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999. Print.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, and Rosalind C. Morris. *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010. Print.

Stehle, Maria. *Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes*. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2012. Print. Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture.

Sterbling, Anton. *"Am Anfang War Das Gespräch": Reflexionen Und Beiträge Zur "Aktionsgruppe Banat" Und Andere Literatur- Und Kunstbezogene Arbeiten*. Hamburg: Reinhold Krämer, 2008. Print.

Sterne, Jonathan. *The Sound Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2012. Print.

Stevenson, Patrick. *Language and German Disunity: a Sociolinguistic History of East and West in Germany, 1945-2000*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.

Steyerl, Hito, and Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez. *Spricht Die Subalterne Deutsch?: Migration Und Postkoloniale Kritik*. 1. Aufl. Münster: Unrast, 2003. Print.

Taberner, Stuart. *German Literature of the 1990s and Beyond: Normalization and the Berlin Republic*. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2005. Print.

Teraoka, Arlene Akiko. *East, West, and Others: the Third World in Postwar German Literature*. Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1996. Print. Modern German Culture and Literature.

Theisen, Bianca. *Silenced Facts: Media Montages in Contemporary Austrian Literature*. Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2003. Print.

Tisdall, Caroline, and Joseph Beuys. *Joseph Beuys, Coyote*. München: Schirmer-Mosel, 1988. Print.

Trilling, Lionel. *Sincerity and Authenticity.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972. Print.

Tzara, Tristan, and Henri Béhar. *Oeuvres complètes. 1,, 1912-1924.* Paris: Flammarion, 1975. Print.

Tzara, Tristan, and Oskar Pastior. *Die Frühen Gedichte*. München: Ed. Text + Kritik, 1984. Print. Frühe Texte Der Moderne.

Urmuz, and Oskar Pastior. *Das Gesamte Werk*. München: Ed. Text u. Kritik, 1976. Print. Frühe Texte Der Moderne.

Vico, Giambattista. *The New Science of Giambattista Vico.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961. Print.

Wagner, Carmen. "Sprache Und Identität: Literaturwissenschaftliche Und Fachdidaktische Aspekte Der Prosa von Herta Müller." 2002 : n. pag. Print.

Wai, Chee D. "A Theory of Resonance." *Pmla*. 112.5 (1997): 1060-1071. Print.

Weber, Max, Hans Heinrich Gerth, and C. Wright Mills. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1946. Print.

Weheliye, Alexander G. *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-modernity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Print.

Weiss, Allen S. *Breathless: Sound Recording, Disembodiment, and the Transformation of Lyrical Nostalgia*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2002. Print.

Weninger, Robert, and Brigitte Rossbacher. *Wendezeiten, Zeitenwenden: Positionsbestimmungen zur deutschsprachigen Literatur, 1945-1995*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1997. Print.

Werkmeister, Sven. "Kulturen jenseits der Schrift: zur Figur des Primitiven in Ethnologie, Kulturtheorie und Literatur um 1900." 2010 : n. pag. Print.

White, Bob W. *Music and Globalization: Critical Encounters*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012. Print. Tracking Globalization.

Wichner, Ernest, Oskar Pastior, and Berliner Rathaus (Berlin Germany). *Versuchte Rekonstruktion: Die Securitate Und Oskar Pastior*. München: ET+K, Edition Text + Kritik, 2012. Print. Text + Kritik: Zeitschrift Für Literatur Sonderband,.

Wilder, Gary. "Race, Reason, Impasse: Césaire, Fanon, and the Legacy of Emancipation."
Radical History Review 90.1 (2004): 31–61. Print.

Williams, Raymond, and Tony Pickney. *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New
Conformists*. London England; New York: Verso, 1989. Print.

Wolf, Christa. *Was Bleibt: Erzählung*. Frankfurt am Main: Luchterhand Literaturverlag,
1990. Print.

Wolf, René. *The Undivided Sky: The Holocaust on East and West German Radio in the
1960s*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
Print.

Würffel, Bodo. *Das deutsche Hörspiel*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1978. Print.

Yeğenoğlu, Meyda. *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*.
Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Cambridge Cultural
Social Studies.

Yildiz, Yasemin. *Beyond the Mother Tongue the Postmonolingual Condition*. 1st ed. New
York: Fordham University Press,, 2012.

---. "Beyond the Mother Tongue: Configurations of Multilingualism in Twentieth-century
German Literature." 2006 : n. pag. Print.

Young, Robert. *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race*. London; New
York: Routledge, 1995. Print.

---. *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race*. London; New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.

Yue, Ming-Bao. "On Not Looking German Ethnicity, Diaspora and the Politics of Vision." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 3.2 (2000): 173–194. Print.

Zaimoglu, Feridun. *Kanak Sprak: 24 Mißtöne vom Rande der Gesellschaft*. Hamburg: Rotbuch Verl., 2004. Print.

---. *Liebesmale, Scharlachrot: Roman*. Hamburg: Rotbuch-Verl., 2000. Print.

---. "Schwarze Jungfrauen." *Theater heute.* 472006 (2006): 46. Print.

Zamora, Lois Parkinson, and Wendy B Faris. *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995. Print.

Zantop, Susanne. *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997. Post-contemporary Interventions.

---. "Kolonie and Heimat: Race, Gender, and Postcolonial Amnesia in Veit Harlan's Opfergang (1944)." *Women in German Yearbook: Feminist Studies in German Literature and Culture* 17 (2001): 1–13. Print.

Zelizer, Barbie. *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. Print.

---. *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001. Print.