Chapter 7

Remediating Opera: Media and Musical Drama in Adorno and Kluge

Throughout the decades-long span of his musicological criticism, Adorno took up problems of opera as indices of broader social changes in what we might call the musical public sphere: the spaces of public reception and critical discussion of musical works that organized the social experience of music and shaped its role in the cultural constitution and evolution of the European middle classes.[1] We can therefore, I would suggest, see opera as occupying an analogous position in Adorno's corpus of musical criticism to that of drama in Lukács's literary criticism: as a concentrated site where historical experience could be performatively mediated, rendering it graspable in terms of characters, their actions, and in the case of opera particularly, their desires and passions, in distilled, almost archetypal dramatic situations. For Adorno, however, the question of opera's changing public and hence its capacity to mediate historical experience was closely tied to problems of its *technical* mediation, including its evolving relations to mass media of production and reproduction from live performance in opera houses to its dissemination through radio, film, and sound recording. Adorno, moreover, also considers opera's mediations within the framework of what we could characterize, somewhat anachronistically, as an ecology of media, reflecting his underlying postulate that the differentiation of media is a dynamic and historically developing process and that individual media receive their significance not just immanently, through internal formal developments, but also relationally in their collisions and interactions with other media. Opera's constitutive musical, dramatic, and literary aspects—and the often-contradictory interactions between them—are brought into focus in his opera-critical writings, as are the artistic and social-institutional interactions of musical drama with media such as live theatre, the novel, radio, cinema, and television.

In the first part of this essay, I discuss Adorno's views on the technical remediation of opera, especially in its connection with the media of

radio and of sound recording.[2] I utilize the term "remediation" here in the sense given by Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin: "Our culture conceives of each media or constellation of media as it responds to, redeploys, competes with, and reforms other media. . . . No medium, it seems, can now function independently and establish its own separate and purified space of cultural meaning."[3] I go on in the second half to consider Adorno's ascription to opera of a key anticipatory role in forming the Culture Industry that would only later be fully consolidated and intensified by the sound recording and film industry, as Adorno and Horkheimer expounded in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. I concentrate here especially on the cinematic mediations of opera, highlighting Adorno's complex views on the various interactions of opera and film, in which he ambivalently identified progressive potentials. I conclude my discussion of Adorno by considering his more schematic and thoroughly negative judgment of television in the mediation of music, including the televisual presentation of opera. In a final section, I explore the rich intermedial work of Alexander Kluge, whose prolific writings, interviews, films, and television shows set the question of opera's mediations in a new light extending beyond the critical horizons set out by Adorno.

Adorno and the Mediations of Opera

Opera offered Adorno a particularly sensitive index of changes in the public sphere of music, precisely because by the 1920s and 1930s, when he was most actively engaged with opera listening and reviewing, the crisis of opera's public character was becoming ineluctable. Already in a 1930 essay entitled "New Opera and Public," Adorno noted that the opera represented the loneliest branch of new music, which at once registered a long-developing crisis in the nineteenth-century listening public and deepened it still further. If its isolation begins with modern forms and contents that disallow ready comprehension, the ultimate fate of contemporary opera nevertheless would be decided beyond the opera house, in the changing social relations threatening its traditional bourgeois public and offering tenuous hope for the formation of new publics, out of the working classes and white-collar workers. Yet the situation of the present was one of protracted uncertainty about opera's actual listener- and spectatorship. "The new opera," Adorno writes, "has up to now found its public even less than other new music."[4]

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, Adorno's prospect for opera to take on new public life had darkened. In his 1959 essay "Bourgeois Opera," he writes:

> To focus our thoughts about contemporary theater on opera is certainly not justifiable in terms of opera's immediate relevance. Not only has the crisis of opera been well known and persistent in Germany for thirty years (that is, since the time of the great economic crisis), not only have opera's place and function become questionable in society today, but beyond this . . . opera has come to seem peripheral and a matter of indifference.[5]

In his lecture on opera within the 1961/62 radio series that became his *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, Adorno raised opera to the level of a methodological problem in a sociology of culture that was based on hermeneutical readings of culture forms to gain insight into social functions and structures. Opera was a test-case for an artistic medium in which the relation between artistic form and social function had radically diverged, even disintegrated to the point of collapse, so that the presumption that an artwork bears a representational or figurative relation to social reality was being strained to its breaking point. Opera had become, in the terms of Lukács's early drama theory, "problematical" and "non-representative":

> A kind of chasm has opened between opera itself and present-day society, including those members it delegates to serve as an opera audience. . . . But in this chasm opera has made itself at home. . . . It offers the paradigm of a form that is incessantly consumed, although it has not merely lost its intellectual topicality but, in all likelihood, can no longer be adequately understood at all.[6]

Adorno unsparingly presents opera as a zombie-like form of culture, uncannily living on beyond the decease of its public function:

> The opera is one of the stopgaps in the world of resurrected culture, a filler of holes blasted by the mind. That operatic activities rattle on unchanged even though literally nothing in them fits any more, this fact is drastic testimony to the noncommittal, somehow accidental character assumed by the cultural superstructure. The official life of opera can teach us more about society than about a species of art that is outliving itself and will hardly survive the next blow. (83)

Opera, Adorno suggests, has ceased to bear any real aesthetic or social substance; precisely this vacancy makes it a poignant index of the social situation of art in contemporary society. Opera's unacknowledged posthumousness, its loss of any living correspondence with the real relations of society, is itself what demands social-critical interpretation. Richard Leppert thus summarizes Adorno's critical judgment about opera as "a broad polemic against the institutions of opera and opera music, as well as the consumption of opera, the last read through the actuality of audience antipathy to modern music (including opera) and its love affair

with endlessly restaged warhorses comprising the standard repertory."[7]

Early in his career, in his performance reviews, his debate with Benjamin about technical reproducibility, and his studies of music and radio for the Princeton Radio Project during his exile in the United States, Adorno extensively considered how musical experience was affected by its dissemination in live-performed and technically mediated forms. A direct extension of his radio music research, in turn, was his subsequent collaboration with Eisler on a study of film music, which is decisively shaped in its composition, its orchestration and recording, and its projection and reception by cinema's industrial apparatus. So too, the critique of Culture Industry that Adorno and Horkheimer articulated in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* took Adorno's research into radio and cinema music, along with his theoretical investigations into the reification of listening, as crucial background. Following his return to Germany after the war, Adorno would continue to devote critical attention to the changing experience of music under the pressure of cultural administration, cultural industry, and technical media such as recording, radio, and television.

While Adorno's critical and theoretical attention was trained most forcefully on instrumental music, opera certainly constituted an important secondary focus of his musicological work and thought. In his early music criticism for *Der Anbruch*, *Die Musik*, and other music-critical forums in the late 1920s and early 1930s, he commented on performances of historic and contemporary operas such as Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and *Don Juan*, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Meyerbeer's *The African Maid*, Verdi's *The Force of Destiny* and *Falstaff*, Wagner's *Lohengrin* and *Parsifal*, Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Busoni's *Faust*, Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* and *Turandot*, Strauss's *Elektra* and *The Woman Without a Shadow*, Berg's *Wozzeck*, Sekles's *The Ten Kisses*, D'Albert's *The Golem*, Pfitzner's *Palestrina*, Křenek's *Johnny Plays Up*, Hindermith's *Cardillac* and *News of the Day*, Janáček's *The Macropulos Case*, Brand's *Machinist Hopkins*, Antheil's *Transatlantic*, and Weill's *Mahagonny*, among many others.[8] In his 1929 review "Berlin Opera Memorial," Adorno vividly describes an avant-garde multi-media event at the Kroll Opera House in which Zemlinsky and Klemperer traded off conducting *Tales from Hoffmann*, with light and images provided by the former Bauhaus master László Moholy-Nagy.[9] Beyond such occasional pieces and reviews, one of Adorno's most important works dedicated to opera was his 1952 book on Wagner, much of which dated back to Adorno's original composition of the study in the 1930s. While his other musical monographs on Schoenberg and Stravinsky, Mahler, and Berg do not extensively discuss opera (with the slight exception of his

chapters on Berg's *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*), he nevertheless dedicated lengthy essays to Bizet's *Carmen*, to Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*, to the contemporary legacies of Wagner and Strauss, and to sociological questions of opera and its public.

Still, in the formative experience of his work on the sociology of listening for the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* and the Princeton Radio Project in the 1930s and 1940s, opera is not particularly foregrounded as a concern. In his important essay "On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression in Listening," excepting incidental mention of Berlioz and Wagner, the only significant reference to opera is to Mozart's *Magic Flute*, in which, Adorno claims, the utopia of merging enlightenment with light comic opera is achieved for the first and last time.[10] Similarly, among the various writings from the Princeton Radio Project, which were reconstructed by Hullot-Kentor as *Current of Music*, references to opera are relatively sparse. These include, for example, Adorno's drily ironic remarks on the NBC's *Music Appreciation Hour*, in which he chastises the prudish language with which the program "summarized" the plot of *Tristan and Isolde* as a moralistic matter of the ill-starred lovers trying to avoid adultery:

> *The Music Appreciation Hour* evokes the idea that they simply suffer, because for reasons of conventional morality they cannot get together. As a matter of fact, they do get together, and adultery is the presupposition of the whole *Tristan* plot. If one is afraid to speak about adultery, one should not speak about *Tristan*. One had better not even play it. The assumption, however, that an adolescent would not suspect the true story when faced with the plot of *Tristan* is absurd.[11]

More revealing, however, than such shots of critical wit is Adorno's own exposé for a music education radio course, "What a Music Appreciation Hour Should Be." Notably, he argues that the course's engagement with opera should be limited, because unlike with chamber and symphonic works, it would be more difficult to offer listeners a grasp of an opera as a whole:

> The second element [of the course] is *opera*, for example as found in the works of Bizet, Verdi and perhaps Wagner. . . . [H]owever, this material should not be foregrounded in the first course, primarily because here the educational aim would be in an understanding of opera as a unity, which can only be achieved in conjunction with real performances. For the moment we shall put the problem of opera on hold, but in certain cases fall back on operatic works that are characteristic in some other sense that is relevant to the course. (*Current*, 221)

Adorno alludes primarily to constraints of the radio medium for the music pedagogical purposes at issue: a short radio hour program would

allow only perhaps a single act of an opera, or a set of excerpts, but not an analysis of a full work.[12]

It is remarkable that Adorno does not mention here the New York Metropolitan Opera's weekly radio broadcasts of full opera performances, to which he had access as a listener and investigator and which could have mitigated, within the radio medium, the temporal limits of his projected music appreciation program. The Metropolitan Opera had in fact already begun irregular partial broadcasts of operas in 1910, but began delivering the first full broadcast performances in 1931 with Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* and Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, and from 1933 onwards carried mostly full-length performances.[13] Adorno does remark this broadcast series, but implicitly only to dismiss it as irreparably compromised. Thus in notes on what he labels a "propaganda publication of NBC," he quotes without further comment the following passage from the publication about the Saturday opera broadcasts, presumably as an egregious instance of American kitsch sensibility: "Among the social events of Honolulu are the radio opera breakfasts. . . . Rangers and cow punchers gather on Saturday afternoons at the Cody Museum in Wyoming (dedicated to the memory of Buffalo Bill) to hear the broadcasts from the stage of the Metropolitan" (*Current*, 469). The image of cowboys raptly listening in the Buffalo Bill Museum to "*Vissi d'arte*" proved a bridge too far into the American cultural wilds for the recently emigrated Adorno.

We can also see, however, in Adorno's sidelining of opera in his radio music studies a reflection of his theoretical concern with the reification, regression, and "deconcentration" of listening, which disintegrates the experience of musical form from within. What for Adorno was most troubling about the radio symphony was its atomizing of the elements of the symphony's integral form into quotation or image-like bits that allude to the work rather than experientially enacting it, through a live immersive presentation of its temporality, spatiality, and dynamics. "[T]hrough radio," Adorno writes—

> the individual elements of symphony acquire the character of quotation. Radio symphony appears as a medley or potpourri in so far as the musical atoms it offers up acquire the touch of having picked up somewhere else and put together into a kind of montage. What is heard is not Beethoven's Fifth but merely musical information from and about Beethoven's Fifth.[14]

It is arguable, however, that in their navigation of narrative plot and their striving after dramatic effect—albeit often in hackneyed or absurd ways—operas rarely exhibit the degree of musical unity and developmental shape that more autonomous instrumental music might achieve.

Adorno would, of course, also argue that instrumental musical form had reached its most encompassing synthesis in Beethoven's symphonies and that Beethoven's "late style," manifested in the late piano concertos and the *Missa Solemnis*, already exhibited the growing dissolution that would culminate decades later in free atonality. In opera, however, such thoroughgoing integration was the much later and exceptional accomplishment of Wagner and, in Adorno's view even more so, of Alban Berg. Thus, he describes *Wozzeck* as having carried "the art of transition much further than Wagner ever conceived possible," "to the point of pervasive mediation."[15] *Wozzeck*'s composition—

> is as articulated, explicated, and variationally developed as only great music is, as are the instrumental movements of Brahms or Schoenberg. It gains its autonomy from its own inexhaustible, self-renewing development, while those opera scores that divorce themselves from the scenic action and go their own unrestrained way threaten for that very reason to become monotonous and boring. . . . *Wozzeck* fulfills Wagner's demand that the orchestra follow the drama's every last ramification and thus become a symphony, and in so doing finally eliminates the illusion of formlessness in music drama. The second act is quite literally a symphony, with all the tension and all the closure of that form, and at the same time at every moment so completely an opera that the unaware listener would never even think of a symphony. (87)

In fulfilling and carrying further Wagner's aspirations for a musical drama that would exceed the conventional limitations of opera, *Wozzeck* rewards the sort of "structural listening" that Adorno directed towards Beethoven, Brahms, and Schoenberg. Yet Berg's is a late and singular accomplishment in musical-dramatic form, rising above and beyond the compositional flatlands of opera more generally.

Given Adorno's pedagogical aim to strengthen radio listeners' ability to listen with concentration and better apprehend music's formal development, then, the opera's long duration and less autonomous, looser form made it a problematic source of examples for his reformed musical appreciation program. Nor did the short-playing recording technology available in the 1930s support longer-duration structural listening. If anything, in Adorno's view, recordings reinforced the tendency towards fragmentation and reification of the excerpted part at the expense of the larger work. On short-playing records, operatic arias, duets, and overtures became more like hummable popular "hits" than synechdoches of larger musical structures. In the 1930s, Adorno saw no significant alternative or technical complement to live performances that might foster in the contemporary public a deeper musical understanding of opera.

As already noted, Adorno's perspectives on opera in his critical writings became increasing negative in the 1950s and 1960s. This makes

all the more surprising his late essay published in *Der Spiegel* in 1969, "Die Oper überwintert auf der Langspielplatte" (Opera hibernates on the LP),[16] in which he more hopefully considered the technological remediation of opera by means of long-playing records, which allow experience of musical works that is distinct from that afforded by live performance in opera houses, radio or television broadcasts, or even the short-playing records of earlier years. In this connection, Adorno notes that there are two senses to the word *Technik* in relation to music. The first has to do with compositional *techniques*, while the latter involves the technical apparatus by which the music is brought to its public, which in the contemporary period is increasingly administrative, technological, and entangled with extra-artistic commercial and financial dynamics: "industrial processes that are applied to music for the purpose of its mass dissemination" ("Opera and the Long-Playing Record," 283). Though different, Adorno argues, the two aspects of musical *Technik* also interpenetrate and influence one another. A change in the technology through which opera is disseminated may thus affect the experiential content of existing works as well as influence the composition and presentation of new works. In this light, Adorno entertains the hypothesis that the long-playing record might remediate opera in a way that would renew or at least preserve the genre's living musical and dramatic content, countervailing the contemporary disintegration of the opera-listening public and the growing obsolescence of traditional forms of reception.

The key features of long-playing records that Adorno sees as nothing short of "revolutionary" are their capacity to register and reproduce long-duration works in full and their potential, hence, to constitute an archive or "museum" of integral works that can be accessed repeatedly and at will. These features help overcome the limitations of single live performances (with the fluctuations of listeners' attention and fallible memory as corollaries) and of mediated excerpts on radio, short-playing sound recordings, or film. "The entire musical literature," Adorno writes, "could now become available in quite-authentic form to listeners desirous of auditioning and studying such works at a time convenient to them" ("Opera and the Long-Playing Record," 283). He refers to his own essay on questions of museums and musealization in the writings of Paul Valéry and Marcel Proust, in which he compares Valéry's view that art is reified and neutralized as soon as its living context is relinquished to that of Proust, for whom everything begins with "the afterlife of the work of art," allowing him, as Adorno writes, "to perceive history as landscape."[17] Adorno's metaphor of "hibernation" clearly aligns him with Proust—and implicitly too with Benjamin's affirmation of

collection and the reconstellation of historical materials—in perceiving museal recontextualization as a potentially positive process:

> Nor need they fear that the recorded works will be neutralized in the process, as they are in opera houses. Similar to the fate that Proust ascribed to paintings in museums, these recordings awaken to a second life in the wondrous dialogue with the lonely and perceptive listeners, hibernating for purposes unknown. ("Opera and the Long-Playing Record," 285)

Already in 1963, in fact, in his essay "On the Musical Use of the Radio," Adorno had suggested that radio broadcasts of music might be the occasion for constituting such recording archives, and he specifically refers to their impact on interpretation, because of the registration of multiple versions of a piece. "Boulez," he notes, "for a recording of *Wozzeck* to replace that of Mitropulos, which should never have been released, required seventy rehearsals. Such a practice . . . finally allowed the fundamental ill of the contemporary field of conducting to be eliminated, the fiction that through mere gesture, rhythmic technique, and skillful giving of cues, the work as conceived by the conductor can be translated to the orchestra and into sensuous phenomena."[18]

Besides this impact on interpretation by conductors and musicians, Adorno also foresees a reflexive impact of the long-duration recording back onto the forms of opera as created by composers and, through the mediation of appropriate reproduction, also then as experienced by well-prepared listeners. He argues that the long-playing recording is approaching the condition of a "compositional form" that will make clear the polarization of musical art into avant-garde and kitsch, a split obscured by the official forms of opera performance culture:

> The gramophone record becomes a form the moment it unintentionally approaches the requisite state of a compositional form. Looking back, it now seems as if the short-playing records of yesteryear . . . unconsciously also corresponded to their epoch: the desire for highbrow diversion, the salon pieces, favorite arias, and the Neapolitan semihits. . . . This sphere of music is finished: there is now only music of the highest standards and obvious kitsch, with nothing in between. The LP expresses this historical change rather precisely. ("Opera and the Long-Playing Record," 285)

His implication is that long-playing recordings hold out hope for the gradual constitution of a historically informed and aesthetically demanding listening public for opera (and for music more generally). In turn, rather than compromising out of professional necessity with the conservative tastes of the public, the composer will be challenged by listeners to explore new artistic materials and techniques.

Opera Mediation through Film and Television

While Adorno's comments on opera's relation to film are more limited than his radio-related writings, the topic recurs in several of his musicological writings, organized around a few key critical motifs. In the background of Adorno thinking about opera and film was a broader cultural discourse developing in the first few decades of the twentieth century that considered the two media as secret sharers, twins that possessed a common or parallel fate. As Lydia Goehr has pointed out, some participants in the debates about opera and film saw film as relieving opera from the drive towards technical integration and innovation—from the Wagnerian ambition to create a musical-dramatic *Gesamtkunstwerk*—thus allowing opera composers more modest, more bearable technical demands. Others, Schoenberg among them, saw film as forcing opera to abandon realism and find new dramatic means, since many of the old features of opera had been thoroughly outdone by film.[19] Adorno himself tended to see the relationship between opera and film as *prefigurative*: opera, as it developed during the nineteenth century, was the anticipation of features that would only be fully realized later in film. Most famously, he underscored Wagner's phantasmagoric anticipation of cinema, the "birth of film out of the spirit of music."[20] He quotes Houston Stewart Chamberlain's letter to Cosima Wagner in 1890, in which Chamberlain suggests playing Liszt's *Dante* symphony in a darkened room with moving pictures in the background. Adorno comments: "Few documents could demonstrate more tellingly how inaccurate it is to assert that mass culture was imposed on art from outside. The truth is, it was thanks to its own emancipation that art was transformed into its opposite" (107–8). Andreas Huyssen argues that not only did Adorno read Wagner through the Culture Industry concept he articulated in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, but also that the Culture Industry analysis is already rooted in Adorno's first version of his Wagner book in the 1930s, despite its post-*Dialectic of Enlightenment* publication in the early 1950s. Huyssen writes that "the framework for his theory of the culture industry was already in place *before* his encounter with American mass culture in the United States. In the Wagner book the pivotal categories of fetishism and reification, ego-weakness, regression, and myth are already fully developed, waiting, as it were, to be articulated in terms of the American culture industry."[21]

Rather than a radical break between the two forms, in Adorno's view, there was a migration and metamorphosis of the opera-going public into a film-viewing public, while opera itself increasingly adapted to the

expectations of cinema's entertainment- and attraction-hungry public. In "Bourgeois Opera," Adorno writes:

> Opera shares with film not just the suddenness of its invention but also many of its functions, among them the presentation to the masses of the body of inherited common knowledge, as well as the massiveness of the means, employed teleologically in the material of opera as in film, which lent opera . . . a similarity to the modern Culture Industry. . . . It is . . . astounding how early some of the worst abominations of today's Culture Industry announced themselves in opera, at the precise point where the naive person, in looking to the past, expects to find something like the pure autonomy of the genre. . . . [O]pera as a consumer product is entangled in calculations regarding the public—in this sense, too, it is related to film. ("Bourgeois Opera," 20)

In his *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, he further suggests that key features of opera which once secured its public have been taken up latterly and amplified by film:

> It was . . . not just the evolution of music which so far outran the operatic stage and its audience with any contact. . . . The social conditions, and thus the style and content, of traditional opera were so far removed from the theatergoers' consciousness that there is every reason to doubt the continued existence of any such thing as an operatic experience. The aesthetic conventions it rests upon, perhaps even the measure of sublimation it presupposes, can hardly be expected of broad listening strata. But the charms which opera had for the masses in the nineteenth century and earlier, in the Venetian, Neapolitan, and Hamburg performances of the seventeenth—the decorous pomp, the imposing spectacle, the intoxicating color and sensuous allure—all this had long since wandered off to motion pictures. The film has materially outbid the opera, while intellectually underbidding it so far that nothing from its fund could keep it competitive. (80)

In their jointly authored study of film music, *Composing for the Films*, Adorno and Eisler likewise suggest that the emergence of cinema and the culmination of a long-developing crisis of opera coincided in the first decade of the twentieth century. Film, in their view, affects not only the external conditions of opera's reception but also those of its composition, for example, in works by audience-conscious composers such as Richard Strauss:

> [A]t the time when motion-picture music was in its rudimentary stage, the breach between the middle-class audiences and the really serious music which expressed the situation of the middle classes became unbridgeable. This breach can be traced as far as *Tristan*, a work that has probably never been understood and liked as much as *Aida*, *Carmen*, or even the *Meistersinger*. The operatic theatre became finally estranged from its audience between 1900 and 1910, with the production of *Salome* and *Electra*, the two advanced operas of Richard Strauss. The fact that after 1910, with the *Rosenkavalier*—it is no

> accident that this opera has been made into a moving picture—he turned to a retrospective stylized way of writing reflects his awareness of that breach.[22]

Adorno and Eisler refer glancingly here to the silent film version of *Der Rosenkavalier* by director Robert Wiene—better known for his expressionist masterpiece *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*—from 1926. Either might have seen it at its original release.[23] Rather than Strauss, however, who was somewhat cool about the project, the filming of *Rosenkavalier* was, in fact, more the initiative of its librettist Hugo von Hofmannstahl, who sought to ease his financial straits through a lucrative film version. Although initially enthusiastic, Hofmannstahl himself quickly soured on Wiene, who he complained had made the dullest and crassest of films from his plot, and eventually it was withdrawn from circulation so that Hofmannstahl could pursue another, sound film version in Hollywood with United Artists, which never came to fruition. The highly cultivated, sensitive Austrian playwright, Adorno would have found apt, viewed the low cultural niveau of the American public as precisely the promising reason why a Hollywood *Rosenkavalier* sound film might prove a success in the American market. "The magnitude of the opportunities lies particularly with the North American business," wrote Hofmannstahl. "One can hardly imagine the possibilities for circulation in this monstrously large, completely theatreless and theatre-hungry Land."[24]

In his 1963 essay "On the Musical Use of the Radio," Adorno took a more positive stance towards the reproductive possibilities of film, comparing film favorably to the radio as a medium for the dissemination of music, at least when used intelligently and creatively. He saw film as the technically more progressive medium, insofar as production and reproduction come together before the spectator on the screen, unlike the static and distanced situation of the radio listener. The changing position of the camera, close-ups, and other techniques allow for a mobility in the situation of listening that can help overcome the distance from the listener and lead to a more appropriate reception of the work ("Über die musikalische Verwendung des Radios," 396). He notes with approval that Alban Berg had considered a film of *Wozzeck*, remarking that Berg "thought especially of the very polyphonic and complex street scene in the second action," and comments: "one could with a sound film recording through respective microphones select the thematic voices for dramaturgical impact" (397). He notes Berg's incorporation of film projection in the interlude in *Lulu*'s second act and ventures that Lulu's many-layered character would benefit from a similar microphonic technique as he had suggested in connection with *Wozzeck*.

In conclusion, it is notable that Adorno did not extend his more positive assessment of film's mediation of opera in his latter years to the medium of television. For the most part, he is quite dismissive. In his essay on opera and long-playing recording, for instance, in contrast to his optimistic view of the opera record album's potentials, he devotes a damning two sentences to televised opera even in comparison to the deeply compromised situation of live opera: "Television broadcasts of gala opera evenings do not make things any better. A million praline boxes are actually worse than one single one that still retains something of the childlike joy of blissful moments" ("Opera and the Long-Playing Record," 284). His judgment of televised music generally was communicated by a pointed quote from an interview with *Der Spiegel* in February 1968: "Musik im Fernsehen ist Brimborium" (Music on Television is Mumbo-Jumbo).

In this interview, Adorno first raises a (somewhat hackneyed) phenomenological point about the sensorial essences of television as an optical medium and music as an acoustic art form:

> Television, as an optical medium, stands in a somewhat foreign relation to music, which is essentially acoustic. In advance, there follows from televisual technology a certain displacement of attention, which is not favorable to music. In general, music is there for hearing and not seeing.[25]

Yet even if Adorno's point is granted concerning instrumental music, it is not clear how compelling it is in connection with opera, which, along with its musical basis, also has essential dramatic features that an "optical medium" might support even better than live performance. Adorno and the *Spiegel* interviewer, however, go on to discuss at length how current television broadcasts of operas are also riddled with Culture Industry traits and gross flaws of interpretation and performance. Among the objections Adorno raises to televised music broadcasts include: their emphasis on unessential aspects of the music to the detriment of attention to essential features of the composition; their tendency to overstress so-called main voices or melodies, tearing them "out of any relation to the music weave" ("Musik im Fernsehen," 561); their employment of kitsch settings and imagery to accompany the chestnuts of the "classical" repertory; and the "star" presentation of "telegenic" conductors like Herbert von Karajan as genius-magicians who gesturally conjure up music through the orchestra, thus becoming, as Adorno says, a TV "actor of their own artistic accomplishment" (566). Adorno argues that any possible positive use of television for musical or operatic purposes would require posing the question of a medium-specific music and musical procedure, if such false and inadequate phenomena are to be

avoided. He acknowledges the nascent efforts of new-music composers such as Karlheinz Stockhausen, Mauricio Kagel, and György Ligeti to approach television seriously as a technical medium for musical production and reproduction.

In the end, however, he also concedes that in the face of the "dominant productions of the culture industry, this is like a drop on a hot stone" (563). Artistically advanced new-music operas thus offer only the faintest glimmer of light for a path forward in the televisual medium. With regard to the historical legacy of opera, the mass dissemination of "classic" operas through television offers only false hope for a way out of the genre's crisis, since it only deepens the loss of operatic works' ability to occasion authentic experience in its public. "The televised *Figaro* is no longer *Figaro*" (569), Adorno laments. Concert broadcasts and opera for television, he concludes, remain for the present nothing more than "a piece of empty culture business" (569).

Alexander Kluge: Operatic (Re-)Mediations

The writer, filmmaker, television director, and critical theorist Alexander Kluge began his direct engagement with the Frankfurt School as a student and subsequently as a lawyer for the Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt. The legal profession, however, as Kluge has noted, "really bored me," and he considered both writing and film as ways to "escape jurisprudence."[26] Though Adorno in fact sought to discourage Kluge from pursuing either artistic career, he did eventually write to Fritz Lang to ask if he might take Kluge on as an assistant. As Kluge drily observed, Lang "did no such thing, but he did let me watch as an intern" on the set of the 1959 film *The Tiger of Eschnapur* (Kluge, *Difference and Orientation*, 151), which spurred Kluge's interest in film. Notably, a Lang-like figure and a production situation like that which plagued the filming of *The Tiger of Eschnapur* would later become the subject of Kluge's 1985 film *The Blind Director* (*Der Angriff der Gegenwart auf die übrige Zeit*). But Kluge notes that Adorno did not even esteem Lang's film work highly and largely avoided viewing films altogether; he mentions that Adorno probably saw only two of Kluge's own films and did not really care for them (Kluge, *Difference and Orientation*, 361). Kluge considered this failure to engage more deeply with cinema a missed opportunity that weakened Adorno's Culture Industry analysis:

> Had he not been so set against Hollywood, he could have developed an image theory based on the commodity fetish, i.e. the images and the exchangeability rooted in every commodity, as well as an exact method. This could have been

> a consciousness industry chapter. Instead, he simply criticized Hollywood's distribution system as a propaganda machine that developed through advertising. (361)

As to film music, in reference to Adorno's coauthored book *Composing for the Films*, Kluge bluntly states that without Eisler, "He was dead" (362).

In his work reflecting on and interrogating opera, however, Kluge signals a profound indebtedness to Adorno, even as his multifaceted, experimental practice of remediating opera plots, descriptions of performances, performance spaces, and anecdotes also exceeds Adorno's critical exploration of opera mediations such as radio, recording, film, and television. In his film and accompanying books *Die Macht der Gefühle* (The Power of Feelings, 1983), in his montages of television programs such as *Das Kraftwerk der Gefühle* (The Powerplant of Feelings, 1998–2007) and *Finsterlinge Singen Bass* (The Sinister Ones Sing Bass, 1998–2007), as well as in his illustrated montage-book *Herzblut trifft Kunstblut: Erster Imaginärer Opernführer* (Heart's Blood Meets Fake Blood, 2001), Kluge analytically breaks down and reassembles opera culture to reveal its experiential contents—mummified, like the entombed lovers in Verdi's *Aida*, an opera Kluge returns to again and again, in increasingly obsolescent artistic forms.[27] Kluge's approach is motivated by a Benjamin-inspired archeological approach to opera and its media, which he allegorizes in his mini-narrative "An Archeologist of Opera," with a focal character who flies between his archeological work in Syria and various European opera performances. The archeologist notes:

> As for what is happening on the stage, I am interested in the details. It is not the *plot* revealing the signs that refer to the goings-on in the opera I would like to know about. The story is only the mask for it. The secret lies in the minor points of the action, in tiny fragments. When we excavate, we also rarely find the entire object from antiquity—just splinters and remnants that we fit together.[28]

His micrological, analytic orientation to the opera, giving preference to the detail and fragment over the whole, is wedded by Kluge to a second guiding idea, also indebted to Adorno: an unearthing of underlying abstract *formulae* of operatic narrative, related to concrete experiential needs, which motivated Adorno to suggest writing "imaginary guides to the opera," a suggestion that Kluge would literally take up.

The genre of the opera guide, Kluge notes, "harbors a literary form that has so far been insufficiently utilized. Nobody would confuse the text of the opera with the guide itself. The opera guide thus permits

a perspectival foreshortening which—if one were to group diverse operas, as it were, in a long shot—could elucidate affinities among opera motifs."[29] Kluge also explored the possibilities of translating this foreshortening into film in short films such as *5 Stunden Parsifal* (1998), a condensation of the whole of Wagner's *Parsifal* into a single minute, and his forty-seven-minute television montage *Soprano gegen Bass* (1997–2006), which draws examples from *Nabucco*, *I Due Foscari*, *Macbeth*, *Luisa Miller*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, *Les Vépres Siciliennes*, *La Forza Della Destino*, and *Don Carlos*, to analyze the operatic embodiment of seven narrative functions: "1. Women who fight for their men; 2. Destiny rages; 3. Fathers against their sons; 4: The sopranos; 5. Killed by the bass; 6. Murder night in Palermo; 7. Grand finales." Kluge comments: "What patron attending an opera notices immediately that the music of the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlos* is the same as the music of the assassin in *Rigoletto*? Does one realize (if one only attends one opera on one particular evening) how related and yet how extremely different the finales of Verdi's operas are? Thus 12 x Verdi in context. A special contribution to Xaver Holzmann's Imaginary Opera Guide."[30] So too in his televised interviews with the renowned German opera director and administrator August Everding, published in book form as *Der Mann der 1,000 Opern* (The Man of 1,000 Operas, 1998), Kluge emphasizes the experiential condensation that opera direction entails (mirrored also in his own remediation of Everding's work in print and on screen): "Naturally, August Everding has not directed 1,000 operas. But one cannot stage a single opera well if one does not know 1,000 operas. Operas are related to one another. They create an *opera world*."[31] Kluge likewise sees such an accumulation and condensation of experience paradigmatically in the figure of Elina Makropulos in Leoš Janáček's 1926 opera *The Makropulos Affair*: both the daughter of a Prague alchemist who gives her a formula for immortality and her contemporary reincarnation as the opera diva Emilia Marty three hundred years later. Thus, in a scene in the film *Die Macht der Gefühle*, Kluge notes of Elina/Emilia, "All her feelings are 300 years old. She has, so to speak, an overview of 28 wars."[32]

Whether mediated textually, as in the *First Imaginary Opera Guide*, or through the technical means of film and television, Kluge's analytic decomposition and montage of opera narrative aims at developing new, alternative versions of plots, remediations especially of the tragic fate to which operas typically bind their heroes, often thus affirming in an emotionally compelling register the ideological and social constraints of their time. As Kluge's avatar "Xaver Holzmann" states in a (fictitious) interview about his project for an imaginary opera guide:

> —We know what an opera guide is, but what do you mean by "imaginary"?—I'm asking: What are the operas that don't exist? The twentieth century offers us operatic themes, just as every other century provides material worthy of serious treatment, i.e. an opera, a "work," but operas exist for certain themes and not for other ones. That was what interested me. On that basis I'm developing a proposition or an algorithm. If opera history contains around eighty thousand operas, why shouldn't we have the chance to create about seven hundred missing operas that would be needed to convey the substance of our contemporary experience? (Kluge, *Temples of the Scapegoat*, 57)

Kluge holds the view that the experiential contents of operas are entombed in an outmoded, reified artistic form, addressed, as Adorno diagnosed, to a disintegrated or even no-longer-existent listening public. Yet at the same time, analytic remediation of opera motifs and elements can address gaps in our ability to give expression to and work through contemporary experience, while the emotional charge of operatic materials breathes new life into textual, dramatic, and cinematic art forms.

In 1970, the East German playwright Heiner Müller—one of Kluge's favorite interview conversation partners—published a short text, "Six Points about Opera," which followed his composition of the libretto for Paul Dessau's *Lanzelot*, which was first performed in 1969.[33] Müller expressed the view that the opera opened a wider field for "the increasing aestheticization of praxis, the *Aufhebung* of the contradiction of work and play, daily life and history, private existence and society in the unity of socialism and scientific-technological revolution," because it is "better equipped to present 'non-antagonistic contradictions' than the drama."[34] Echoing Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* with an artistic twist, he argued that opera extended the operative means of theatre in adding music and voice to gesture and language. Opera allowed a kind of communication with a not yet realized future, as Bloch had envisioned in *Spirit of Utopia* in 1918. As Müller writes, "What one cannot yet say, one can perhaps sing"; and, identifying opera and utopia explicitly, he concludes: "Every song contains a utopian moment, anticipating a better world" (161).

In "Anti-Oper," a videotaped and televised conversation with Kluge almost twenty-five years later, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Müller looks back on his utopian hopes for the opera and revises his evaluation:

> *Müller*: Today I would be more skeptical. Today I would say that when everything has been said, the voices become sweet, and then comes the opera . . .
> *Kluge*: And that's a kind of fraudulent undertaking?
> *Müller*: Yes.[35]

Kluge follows up by remarking that in the nineteenth century, the great period of the construction of opera houses, these were corollary expressions of national pride to displays of military power such as fleets or parades of cavalry soldiers. But, he suggests, the times are dire for the opera:

> If now the operas must leave the opera houses and become partisans, just as soldiers must become partisans—if that is the case, there would be an anti-opera, a counter-movement. (394)

Kluge closes with an allusion to Adorno's well-known metaphor, in *Minima Moralia*, of "leaving behind messages in bottles on the flood of barbarism bursting on Europe," used originally in connection with Nietzsche.[36] Thinking of the opera version of Müller's *Die Hamletmaschine* by Wolfgang Rihm (1987), who also makes an appearance in this TV segment, perhaps as well of other post-Brechtian, politically radical new-music operas such as Luigi Nono's *Al Gran Sole Carico d'Amore* (To the Great Sun Burdened with Love, 1975) and Helmut Lachenmann's *Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern* (The Little Match-Girl, 1997),[37] Kluge asks the playwright: "Could there be opera in the form of a message in a bottle?" (394). We should note, however, that Kluge's "partisan" metaphor suggests the *detournement* of Adorno's bottled message into something more targeted and explosive in its relation to the future: a musical and dramatic Molotov cocktail tossed out into the streets, rather than a lonely last missive cast upon uncertain waters.

I will conclude by referring to just two additional short texts by Kluge—among the many hundreds I might choose from—that illustrate his awareness and interest in the complex interactions of opera and film, which date back to the early period of film history, when paradoxically operas offered ready material for adaptation to the silent film (see also my discussion of the *Rosenkavalier* film) and film projection was seen as an innovative means of refreshing the contemporary opera by composers such as Křenek (*Jonny spielt auf*, 1927), Darius Milhaud (*Christophe Columb*, 1930), and George Antheil (*Transatlantic*, 1930). The first of these Kluge texts is entitled "Why Cinema Was Unable, Due to Its Conditions of Production, to Become the OPERA OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY." The title refers to an idea of Adorno's concerning the connection of opera and film, and Adorno figures directly in the text as well:

> Theodor W. Adorno once had occasion to call Fritz Lang—not without a certain affection in his tone—his "kitsch brother." The epithet was not meant disparagingly, Adorno responded when I asked him about it. Otherwise, he

> added, he wouldn't have used the word *brother*. With this remark, he was referring to a certain audacity, brutality, or insouciance with which Fritz Lang—it was simply part of the film business—pruned material and opera-ready plots for use by the public and his direction. Lang had been applying this methodology—especially to films, which he considered by-products—since his early period. (*Temple of the Scapegoat*, 164)

Kluge goes on to explain that Adorno had referred specifically to Lang's 1919 film *Harakiri*, which stole its plot from Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, while modifying it sufficiently to avoid having to pay copyright for its use. Kluge notes that Lang's changes "sacrificed much of the sense and many of the emotionally comprehensible situations," focusing instead on parallel montages of the plot's different elements, underscored for the viewer by dramatic tinting (Kluge, *Temple of the Scapegoat*, 164). He ends on an open-ended question, supposedly posed by Adorno (though, in fact, the whole story has the scent of a fictitious invention of Kluge, who is deeply immersed in cinema history, while Adorno was not): "Adorno asked: could music have saved Fritz Lang's 1919 film?" The irony in Adorno-Kluge's question lies in the tension between Lang's analytic approach to the Puccini opera as a source of materials to appropriate and deploy through montage versus Adorno's putative view that the formal logic of music might have lent Lang's film the articulation and integrity it lacked as film. We might even see here Kluge restaging the arguments about montage and technical reproducibility that Adorno carried out with Benjamin, with Kluge as the next-generation heir of both sides of the argument in new contexts and disposing over new technical means.

My final example derives from Kluge's imaginary opera guide, in a passage on the Marx Brothers and opera. If in his 1932 essay on the Marx Brothers (based on his viewing of *Animal Crackers* and *Monkey Business*), Antonin Artaud had been able to see in their films "a hymn to anarchy and total rebellion,"[38] Kluge takes up *A Night at the Opera* (1935) with a different political valence:

> It's a matter of a Verdi opera in the Marx Brothers' film. The arrogant singer-stars of the first rank dominate the stage. There are however two alternate singers, in love with one another, whose way to the ramp is blocked by the stars. Here the Marx Brothers know how to help out. They disrupt the opera's business and push the stars out of the way. The backup singers take their places.
>
> The Marx Brothers are innovative in the opera. To channel the little couple towards success, they create chaos. It is not very cruelly presented, but it signifies: the extermination of the old is allowed. If the process that was followed by the Marx Brothers were translated into the Russia of 1936, then the political stars there, the comrades of Lenin, would be transferred to the gulag

> or shot. In this way the young reach the top spots. Happiness derives from cruelty, or it doesn't even become funny.[39]

In the unlikely affinities of the Marx Brothers with the Moscow trials (discussed at greater length in Chapter 10), Kluge unearths the communicating vessels connecting seemingly autonomous opera and film culture to the traumas of the historical moment in which they emerged. Indeed, at the beginning of the show trials, as Katerina Clark has pointed out, a new campaign was also launched against formalism in the arts, with theatre, opera, and dance in the crosshairs. The first salvo against the "leftist" aesthetic deviationists was, in fact, launched against an opera: Dmitri Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, which a January 1936 article in *Pravda* characterized as petty-bourgeois, formalist, vulgar, and neurotic.[40] It is only in retrospect, Kluge implies in his story, in the hidden traces preserved in the artifacts disinterred through his media-archeologist's labor, that the catastrophic events of the 1930s can at last be given expression and worked through for contemporary experience.

Notes

1. On the formation of European musical publics in the nineteenth century, see William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class: The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris, and Vienna between 1830 and 1848* (London and New York: Routledge, 1975, 2004); Antje Pieper, *Music and the Making of Middle-Class Culture: A Comparative History of Nineteenth-Century Leipzig and Birmingham* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
2. See also Thomas Y. Levin, "For the Record: Adorno on Music in the Age of Its Technical Reproducibility," *October* 55 (1990): 23–47.
3. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), 55.
4. Theodor W. Adorno, "Neue Oper und Publikum," in Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften* 19, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984), 476.
5. Theodor W. Adorno, "Bourgeois Opera," in Adorno, *Sound Figures*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 15.
6. Theodor W. Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, trans. E.B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1976), 81.
7. Richard Leppert, "Adorno and Opera," in *A Companion to Adorno*, eds. Peter E. Gordon, Espen Hammer, and Max Pensky (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2020), 445.
8. These reviews can be found in the lengthy selection of Frankfurt Opera and Concert reviews, spanning from 1922 to 1934, in Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften* 19, 9–255.
9. Theodor W. Adorno, "Berliner Opernmemorial," in *Gesammelte Schriften* 19, 267–75.

10. Theodor W. Adorno, "On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression in Listening," in *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. J.M. Bernstein (London: Routledge, 1991), 32.
11. Theodor W. Adorno, *Current of Music: Elements of a Radio Theory*, ed. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Cambridge: Polity, 2009), 184.
12. Adorno notes that the NBC's *Music Appreciation Hour* offered the full second act of Verdi's *Aida* in one of its programs, "certainly a good selection for presentation." (*Current of Music*, 190).
13. For historical information about the Met's opera broadcasts, see Paul Jackson, *Saturday Afternoons at the Old Met: The Metropolitan Opera Broadcasts, 1931–1950* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1992).
14. Theodor W. Adorno, "The Radio Symphony," in *Essays on Music*, ed. Richard Leppert, trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 262.
15. Theodor W. Adorno, *Alban Berg: Master of the Smallest Link*, trans. Juliane Brand and Christopher Haley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 85.
16. Theodor W. Adorno, "'Die Oper überwintert auf der Langspielplatte," *Der Spiegel* 23/13 (March 23, 1969), https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/die-oper-ueberwintert-auf-der-langspielplatte-a-7a5d1cef-0002-0001-0000-000045702462 (accessed December 31, 2021). English translation as "Opera and the Long-Playing Record," trans. Thomas Y. Levin, in Adorno, *Essays on Music*, 283–87. For a very early consideration of the gramophone record, published in *Der Anbruch* in 1928, see Adorno, "Nagelkurven," in *Gesammelte Schriften* 19, 525–29, and his 1934 essay, "Die Form der Schallplatte," in ibid., 530–34.
17. Theodor W. Adorno, "Valéry Proust Museum," in Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1981), 180–81.
18. Theodor W. Adorno, "Über die musikalische Verwendung des Radios," in Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften* 15, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1976), 391.
19. Lydia Goehr, "Film as Visual Music," in Goehr, *Elective Affinities: Musical Essays on the History of Aesthetic Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 222–23.
20. Theodor W. Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1981), 107.
21. Andreas Huyssen, "Adorno in Reverse: From Hollywood to Richard Wagner," in *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 42. Cf. Karin Bauer, who argues that Adorno connects Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* to the technological conquest of the aesthetic and a foreshadowing of the productions of the culture industry. See Bauer, "Adorno's Wagner: History and the Potential of the Artwork," *Cultural Critique* 60 (2005): 78.
22. Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler, *Composing for the Films* (London: Continuum, 1994), 38. Adorno elaborated his view of Strauss in his tartly critical early essay on the composer, "Richard Strauss: Zum 60. Geburtstage: 11 June 1924," in *Gesammelte Schriften* 18, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984), 254–62; English translation: "Richard

Strauss. Born June 11, 1864," Pt. 1, trans. Samuel Weber and Shierry Weber, *Perspectives of New Music* 4/1 (1965): 14–32 and Pt. 2, trans. Weber and Weber, *Perspectives of New Music* 4/2 (1966): 113–29.

23. This can now be seen in a restored 2007 DVD version from Das Filmarchiv Austria: *Der Rosenkavalier* (1925, dir. Robert Wiene), accompanied by a book of documents and essays: "*Ein sonderbarer Ding*"*: Essays und Materialien zum Stummfilm DER ROSENKAVALIER*, ed. Günter Krenn (Vienna: Verlag Filmarchiv Austria, 2007).
24. Hugo von Hofmannstahl to Johannes Oertel, June 20, 1929, in "*Ein sonderbarer Ding*," 209.
25. Adorno, "'Musik im Fernsehen ist Brimborium'," in *Gesammelte Schriften* 19, 559.
26. Alexander Kluge, *Difference and Orientation: An Alexander Kluge Reader*, ed. Richard Langston (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 151.
27. For critical discussion of Adorno's and Kluge's views of *Aida*, see Lydia Goehr, "*Aida* and the Empire of Emotions (Theodor W. Adorno, Edward Said, and Alexander Kluge)," *Current Musicology* 87 (2009): 133–59.
28. Alexander Kluge, *Temple of the Scapegoat: Opera Stories*, trans. Isabel Fargo Cole, Donna Stonecipher et al. (New York: New Directions, 2018), 167.
29. Alexander Kluge, "On Opera, Film, and Feelings," *New German Critique* 49 (1990): 137.
30. Alexander Kluge, Supplementary text to *Finsterlinge singen Bass*, DVD (Munich: Edition Filmmuseum, 2008), n.p.
31. Alexander Kluge and August Everding, *Der Mann der 1000 Opern: Gespräche und Bilder* (Hamburg: Rotbuch Verlag, 1998), 9–10.
32. Alexander Kluge, *Die Macht der Gefühle* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1984), 138.
33. Müller's libretto is published as "Drachenoper" in Müller, *Werke* 3, ed. Frank Hörnigk (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2000), 411–47.
34. Heiner Müller, "Sechs Punkte zur Oper," in Müller, *Werke* 8, ed. Frank Hörnigk (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2005), 161.
35. Heiner Müller, with Alexander Kluge, "Anti-Oper, Materialschlachten von 1914, Flug über Siberien," in Müller, *Werke* 12 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2008), 393.
36. Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 1974), 209.
37. These operas, along with Wolfgang Rihm's *Die Eroberung von Mexico* (The Conquest of Mexico, 1992) feature prominently in Kluge's epic-montage compilation films such as *Nachrichten aus der ideologischen Antike: Marx/Eisenstein/Das Kapital* (2008), *Früchte des Vertrauens* (2009), and *Wer sich traut, reißt die Kälte vom Pferde* (2010).
38. Antonin Artaud, "The Marx Brothers," in Artaud, *Selected Writings*, ed. Susan Sontag, trans. Helen Weaver (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 241.
39. Alexander Kluge, "Die Marx Brothers in der Oper," *Herzblut trifft Kunstblut*, 20. Kluge also notes the use of the Marx Brothers iconography by the student movement, animated by an analogous spirit of generational revolt taking on political dimensions.

40. Katerina Clark, *Moscow, the Fourth Rome: Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of Soviet Culture, 1931–1941* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 211. For the attack on *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* see: "Sumbor vmestro muzyki," *Pravda* (January 28, 1936), 3; English translation online at https://web.archive.org/web/20110127123117/http://www.arnoldschalks.nl/tlte1sub1.html (accessed December 31, 2021).