

In loving memory of my grandparents, Tante Vilma, Tante Lies, Oom Theo and *ons meter*.

**Ziemlich lebhaft**

Un - an - ge - klopft ein Herr tritt A - bends bei mir ein: Ich ha - be die  
(*diskret mauschelnd*)

Ehr; Ihr Re - censent zu sein! **schnell**

- Hugo Wolf, *Abschied* (Mörike-Lieder, Nr. 53)

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***'Das Zeitalter der unnützen Complimente geht  
nach und nach zu Grabe':  
Robert Schumann and Richard Wagner  
as Musikkritiker***

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# Acknowledgements

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Legend has it that Mozart wrote the overture to *Don Giovanni* the night before it premiered. Writing these acknowledgements hours before handing in my dissertation, I surely feel sympathetic to his plight. Of course, any comparison to the master immediately ends there. Still, I can only be experiencing the same feeling of excitement as I am extending these words of thanks to the people who have supported me throughout this dissertation, and well before that time. For it is thanks to them that these past four years turned out quite differently than things did for the protagonist of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Of one thing I am certain, indeed: this dissertation will not come back to haunt me.

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## List of Figures

Figure 1	The architectural metaphor makes way for a horizontal rendition of the musical progression.....	186
Figure 2	Text and footnote, references and musical examples vie with each other.....	187
Figure 3	Idem .....	188
Figure 4	Text and musical notation are semiotically on a par in Florestan's examples of humour in music.....	218



# Table of Contents

Préambule .....	1
<b>Part I: Writing ‘Musikkritik’ .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Chapter 1 ‘Musikkritik’ in the Public Sphere .....</b>	<b>35</b>
1.1 The notion of ‘Kritik’ .....	36
1.2 ‘Musikkritik’ as Institution of the Public Sphere .....	41
1.2.1 Habermas & Koselleck: Forays into the Public Sphere .....	42
1.2.2 The Function of ‘Kritik’ .....	52
1.2.3 ‘Musikkritik’ as Discourse .....	59
1.3 Schumann and Wagner Enter the Scene .....	67
1.3.1 Schumann .....	67
1.3.2 Wagner .....	76
1.4 Conclusion .....	84
<b>Chapter 2 Shaping the ‘Musikkritiker’ .....</b>	<b>87</b>
2.1 The ‘Musikkritiker’: Discourses of Identity .....	89
2.1.1 The Identity of the ‘Musikkritiker’ .....	90
2.1.2 The ‘Kritiker’ as Discursive Agent .....	101
2.2 Schumann: Pseudonyms and Self-Competition .....	120
2.2.1 What Schumann? .....	121
2.2.2 Self-competition .....	126
2.2.3 Conclusion .....	134
2.3 Wagner: From Correspondent to Visionary .....	137
2.3.1 Wagner as Correspondent in Paris .....	137
2.3.2 A Visionary in Retrospect: <i>Oper und Drama</i> .....	152
2.3.3 Conclusion .....	170
2.4 Conclusion .....	173

*Intermezzo: The Unsayable rendered sayable: ‘Musikkritik’ as the Debunking of Romantic*

<i>Musical Aesthetics</i> .....	175
The Romantic ‘Unsaybarkeitstopos’ .....	175
‘Musikkritik’ between Aesthetics and Pragmatics .....	178
Sublimating the Amorphous: Music as Form and Structure .....	183
The Score as Text .....	189
Conclusion .....	191
<i>Part II: Fashioning the Reader</i> .....	193
<b>Chapter 3</b> <b>Forcing the Reader to side with the ‘Musikkritiker’</b> .....	<b>205</b>
3.1    Schumann contra the Masses .....	206
3.1.1    ‘Virtuosenkritik’ .....	207
3.1.2    ‘Philisterrhetorik’ .....	211
3.1.3    The Reader as crypto-‘Kritiker’ .....	219
3.2    Wagner: Adapting to the Reader Audience .....	220
3.2.1    The Beethoven novellas .....	225
3.2.2    Two ‘Freischütz’-articles .....	231
3.2.3    ‘Musikkritik’ tailored to the Reader’s Sensibility .....	242
3.3    Conclusion .....	243
<b>Chapter 4</b> <b>Activating the Reader’s Judgement</b> .....	<b>247</b>
4.1    The ‘Davidsbund’: Narrative Gaps .....	247
4.1.1    The ‘Schwärmbriefe’: outlines of a critical project .....	249
4.1.2    The ‘Davidsbund’s Eristic Template .....	254
4.1.3    Narrative Gaps .....	258
4.1.4    The ‘Davidsbündler’ as Conductors of Opinion .....	265
4.2    The Poetics of Emphasis: Wagner, Emotions and the Polemical Register .....	266
4.2.1    The Polemical Register .....	270
4.2.2    The ‘Pariser Berichte’ .....	284
4.2.3    the ‘Zürcher Kunstschriften’ .....	288
4.3    Conclusion .....	304
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>307</b>
<b>Works Cited</b> .....	<b>317</b>
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>337</b>
<b>Samenvatting</b> .....	<b>341</b>

# Préambule

“Wollte man die nicht chronologisch, sondern der Qualität nach neue Produktion in ihrem ganzen Umfang, mit Einschluß aller Übergänge und Kompromisse durchmustern, man stieße unausweichlich doch wieder auf jene Extreme, sofern man sich nicht mit Beschreibung oder fachmännischer Beurteilung begnüge”.<sup>1</sup> With these lines, Theodor Adorno justifies why he constructs *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (1949) around the central opposition between Strawinsky and Schönberg. Adorno claims to draw inspiration for this guiding principle from Walter Benjamin. Little did he realise, perhaps, that his approach actually perpetuates an antipodal template of musical historiography which roots in that very 19<sup>th</sup>-century ‘fachmännischer Beurteilung’: *Musikkritik*.<sup>2</sup> The prevalent narrative in music history indeed depicts 19<sup>th</sup>-century musical culture as a rivalry between musical giants: the masculine Ludwig von Beethoven versus the female Franz Schubert, the ‘formstrenger’ Johannes Brahms contra the iconoclast Richard Wagner, and so on. The historical accuracy of these examples is to be taken *cum grano salis*, of course. What makes them more remarkable, however, is that each one of them originates from imagological machinations by *Musikkritiker*. In his review of

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<sup>1</sup> Theodor W. Adorno: *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (= Gesammelte Schriften 12). Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag 1975, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> There is no proper equivalent for the word ‘Kritik’ in English. ‘Kritik’ signifies both ‘criticism’ and ‘critique’. The word borders on the practical and the abstract, the subjective and objective, “Verfahren und Dingen” (Martin Gierl: ‘Kanon und Kritik. Aufklärung und die Vertextung des Sozialen’. In: *Kultur der Kommunikation. Die europäische Gelehrtenrepublik im Zeitalter von Leibniz und Lessing*, ed. by Ulrich Schneider. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz 2005, p. 101). Jochen Bär situates the difference between German and English word fields in the equivocal translation of ‘Kritik’: “[...] dort, wo man im Deutschen das Substantiv *Kritik* erwartet, [muss man] im Englischen nach zwei verschiedenen Wörtern Ausschau halten [...]: *critique* und *criticism*”. (Jochen Bär: ‘Der romantische Kritik-Begriff aus linguistischer Sicht’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, ed. by Ulrich Breuer and Anastanca Tabarasi-Hoffmann (= Schlegel-Studien 8). Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh 2015, p. 112). ‘Kritik’ conveys such a particular meaning in German that I will keep to the original, lexical form of term and its derivatives (e.g. ‘Musikkritik’, ‘(Musik)kritiker’, etc.) throughout this dissertation. For stylistic reasons, I will make one exception: I will write ‘critical’ where ‘kritisch’ is to be expected.

Schubert's 'Grand Duo' (D. 812), Schumann inaugurates an influential trope that genders the contrast between the sturdy Beethoven and the melancholic Schubert.<sup>3</sup> Eduard Hanslick likewise played off Brahms against Wagner as a response to the prolific forays Wagner, Liszt and other New-German compatriots had made into the (read: his) domain of musical aesthetics.<sup>4</sup> Adorno's *Philosophie der neuen Musik* can be seen as a late exponent of such antipodal models in *Musikkritik*. If anything, the work attests to the profound impact of 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Musikkritik* on musical, aesthetic and philosophical discourse.

This dissertation is devoted to two pivotal *Musikkritiker* of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century: Robert Schumann (1810-1856) and Richard Wagner (1813-1883). Most music aficionados are familiar with Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. Some of them can instantly quote Schumann's tip of the hat to Chopin or point out the presence of prominent 'Davidsbündler' in musical pieces like *Carnaval* (Op. 9). Others, for their part, have even been so audacious as to take Wagner's *Oper und Drama* to hand and discover the composer's ground-breaking aesthetic ideas first-hand – a life-altering experience, in any event. Scholars, as well, have so far engaged Schumann's and Wagner's critical writings out of interest for the lives or the aesthetic convictions of the composers. In that manner, the peculiarity of their *Musikkritik* itself has consistently been overlooked. Indeed, in this dissertation I shall mine the myriad of writing styles Schumann and Wagner use and examine the discursive techniques they employ to enhance their reputation as *Musikkritiker*. For the first time, their writings will be studied for what they principally are: *Musikkritik*.

What, then, does it mean to read Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* as *Musikkritik*? Above all, it implies that I approach the writings as texts that convey an opinion. Schumann and Wagner, I shall demonstrate, fall back on discursive strategies and

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<sup>3</sup> cf. "**Schubert ist ein Mädchencharakter an Jenen (Beethoven) gehalten**, bei weitem geschwätziger, weicher und breiter; [...] So verhalten sich auch diese Symphonieensätze zu denen Beethoven's und können in ihrer Innigkeit gar nicht anders, als von Schubert gedacht werden. Zwar bringt auch er seine Kraftstellen, bietet auch er massen auf; **doch verhält es sich immer wie Weib zum Mann**, der befiehlt, wo jenes bittet und überredet". (Robert Schumann (R.S.): 'Aus Franz Schubert's Nachlaß.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 1, Nr. 45, pp. 177-179; bold emphasis mine). See also Christopher H. Gibbs: "'Poor Schubert': images and legends of the composer". In: *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs. Cambridge: University Press 1997, pp.36-55 and Frederick H. Martens: 'Schubert and the Eternal Feminine'. In: *The Musical Quarterly* 14/4 (1928), pp. 539-552.

<sup>4</sup> Hanslick's opposition to the 'New German'-aesthetics was later (and especially in the 1960s) nicknamed the 'Hanslick-Komplex'. With the term, post-war musicologists described Hanslick's *Musikkritik* as reactionary, to wit anti-modern for the sake of being anti-modern (as opposed to pro-conservative). The 'Hanslick-Komplex' should be understood in its historic context: Hanslick was seen as a precursor of Nazi aesthetics, which, too, eschewed modern, at that time dodecaphonic music. cf. Carl Dahlhaus: 'Vom Elend der Musikkritik'. In: *Melos* 24 (1957), pp. 132-136; Hans Weigel: 'Eduard Hanslick. Eine Ehrenrettung'. In: *Neues Forum* 13 (1966), pp. 413-418; Alexander Wilfing: 'Richard Wagner in Eduard Hanslicks Schriften: Wagnerismus und Wagnerkultur'. In: *Musicologica Austriaca* 32 (2014), p. 156-158.

conventions that the institution of *Kritik* installs to negotiate personal judgement with the public sphere. From this point of view, Schumann and Wagner are first and foremost *Musikkritiker* and not composers: I will make the content of their reviews and essays second to the manner in which they convey that content, just as I will examine how they bring their personal biographies into play as a validation for their *Musikkritik* (e.g. the musical expertise that the office of composer entails). In contrast to the elitist, Romantic *Kritiker* most scholars have made them out to be, I ultimately argue that Schumann and Wagner actively fostered the reader's judgement. As *Kritiker*, Schumann and Wagner are more indebted to the critical poetics of the 18<sup>th</sup> century than to a Schlegelian, sympoetic notion of *Kritik*. My approach to the *Musikkritiken* as texts rethinks fixed commonplaces in current research. My analyses contradict the image we hold of Wagner as the uncompromised reformer who wishes to realise his aesthetic convictions at all costs. Instead, I shall point out that Wagner sets out to make his views more acceptable by trimming his opinions to the reader audience he is writing for. Likewise, I abandon the prevalent interpretation of the 'Davidsbund' as a tribute to literary role models, such as E.T.A. Hoffmann or Jean Paul. I claim, instead, that the epic, narrative structures in the texts aim to involve the reader in the process of critical reflection.

It stands to reason that this approach can apply to any other *Musikkritiker*. Among their peers, however, Schumann and Wagner undeniably made the most lasting contribution to the emancipation of *Musikkritik* as a critical genre *per se*. Schumann and Wagner lifted the institution to new standards: they consolidated *Musikkritik* as a proper institution of the public sphere and conceived new forms of medial and discursive organisation on the way.<sup>5</sup> Both authors embarked on *Musikkritik* as a lifetime project. In more than half of their

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<sup>5</sup> Later generations promptly acknowledged the lasting contribution Schumann and Wagner – for better or for worse – made to the development of 19th-century *Musikkritik*. They regarded the authors as key representatives of the institution and counted them among, if not above other prolific *Musikkritiker*, such as E.T.A. Hoffmann or Eduard Hanslick. The *Literaturpapst* Alfred Kerr proclaimed the 'Davidsbündler' as the patron saints of *Das neue Drama* (1908), his first anthology of theatre reviews: "Mein Buch will den Schutzherrn dieses Davidsbundes zum Schutzherrn der Kritik machen. [...] ich fordere vom wahren Kritiker: 'Er gebe die Kritik des Hasses und der Liebe, temperiert durch historische Gerechtigkeit. Davidsbündlerkritik, die gleich dem biblischen König zwei Werkzeuge liebt: die Schleuder und die Harfe'. Für den Kritiker sind, wie ich glaube, diese zwei Werkzeuge symbolisch: die Schleuder und die Harfe" (Alfred Kerr: *Das neue Drama*. Berlin: S. Fischer 1905, p. VII). Sixteen years earlier, by contrast, Max Nordau had diagnosed Wagner's 'graphomania' as a symptomatic neurosis of Romantic mysticism par excellence. In *Entartung* (1892), a disillusioned account of fin de siècle art and culture, Nordau makes the following assessment of Wagner's prose style: "Der eine Richard Wagner ist allein mit einer größern Menge Degeneration vollgeladen als alle anderen Entarteten zusammengenommen, die wir bisher kennen gelernt haben. Die Stigmata dieses Krankheitszustandes finden sich bei ihm mit unheimlicher Vollständigkeit und in üppigster Entfaltung vereinigt. Er zeigt in seiner allgemeinen Geistesverfassung Verfolgungswahnsinn, Größenwahn und Mysticismus, in seinen Trieben verschwommene Menschenliebe, Anarchismus, Auflehnungs- und Widerspruchssucht, in seinen Schriften alle Merkmale der Graphomanie,

letters to each other, they debate and reflect on their activities as *Musikkritiker*.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, they both left behind anthologies of their collected writings. Schumann's and Wagner's critical prose mark a pivotal discontinuity in *Musikkritik* that would radically alter the identity of the institution in the decades and centuries to come. The texts border on the friction between a poetical and an analytic practice, and they meticulously document how the academic *Musikkritiker* gradually supersedes the once ubiquitous composer-*Kritiker*. Their work reflects how *Musikkritik* gradually becomes an instrument of partisan rivalry. By the same token, we discern the seeds of musicology in their astute analytic observations, whereas their search for more accessible ways of talking about music at the same time anticipates the popularising music guides that emerge at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. Seen from that perspective, this dissertation represents a more extended exploration of music-critical discourse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century than I ever anticipated.



Schumann and Wagner had quite dissimilar careers as *Musikkritiker*. All in all, the former had a much more steadfast run in *Musikkritik* than the latter. Schumann wrote virtually all of his *Musikkritik* for the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (NZfM). He had (co-)founded the periodical in 1834. The NZfM guaranteed him consistent, reliable access to the public sphere. In addition, it assured him of a privileged familiarity with his readership. Schumann very much employed that familiarity to his own benefit, for instance to canonise his legacy as *Musikkritiker* (cf. 2.2). Wagner, on the other hand, was more

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nämlich Zusammenhanglosigkeit, Gedankenflucht und Neigung zu blödsinnigen Kalauern, und als Grundlage seines Wesens die kennzeichnende Emotivität von gleichzeitig erotomanischer und glaubenschwärmerischer Färbung" (Max Nordau: *Entartung*. Vol. 1. Berlin: Carl Duncker 1896, p. 370).

<sup>6</sup> We know little about the terms that Schumann and Wagner were on. It is generally accepted that they were not particularly ecstatic about each other. Though perhaps somewhat wary, Schumann acknowledged the innovative force of Wagner's music brought, but was less enthusiastic about his (public) person. Wagner – as is characteristic for him – only approached Schumann when he needed his support or help. Wagner began a smear campaign against Schumann after the latter had died, however. For reasons unknown, he attacked Schumann in the reprint of *Das Judenthum in der Musik* (1869). Wagner suggested that Schumann's alleged lack of creativity in the second half of his life was due to his close contact with Jews (most notably Mendelssohn), rather than that it was the result of his mental illnesses. See also Julius Kapp: 'Richard Wagner und Robert Schumann'. In: *Die Musik* 11/4 (1912), pp. 42-49 & 100-108; Sandra Sichler: 'Robert Schumann'. In: *Das Wagner-Lexikon*, ed. by Daniel Brandenburg and Rainer Franke. Laaber: Laaber 2012, pp. 663-664.



capricious in his choice of media outlets. His reviews and essays were published in a plethora of different newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets and treatises. Wagner regularly redesigned his ethos as *Musikkritiker*. After tentative beginnings in the 1830s, he reinvents himself for a first time around 1840. While in Paris, he worked as a correspondent for German periodicals and wrote articles for French newspapers, allegedly to make ends meet. I will claim in 2.3, however, that Wagner in reality used the institution of *Musikkritik* to eliminate his competitors and get his career as composer off the ground. Back in Germany, where he was appointed as *Kapellmeister* in Dresden, Wagner's critical output diminished for a while. His texts of that time mainly concern the organisation of the theatre.<sup>7</sup> A second group forestalls the imminent revolution of 1848, in which he actively took part.<sup>8</sup> Wagner literally fought on the barricades in Dresden (together with Mikhail Bakunin, for instance). His participation in the revolution eventually forced him to flee to Zürich; he would remain in exile for the ten following years. During his exile, Wagner once more took the opportunity to recreate himself as *Musikkritiker*. His *Musikkritik* strikes an increasingly theoretical-aesthetic tone and switches from newspapers and periodicals to pamphlets, printed at independent publishing houses.

Still, we must not ignore the similarities between Schumann's and Wagner's music-critical careers. First of all, both authors started writing *Musikkritik* fairly early in their lives, at the age of 21. In 1831, Schumann wrote his first – and most famous – critique, the review of Chopin's *Là ci darem la mano*-variations, published in Gottfried Wilhelm Finck's *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*.<sup>9</sup> The text introduces faces of 'Davidsbündler' that readers would later encounter on a more regular basis. Two years later, Schumann authored the two-part belletrist essay 'Die Davidsbündler' (1833) for the magazine *Der Komet* of Karl Herloßsohn. On top of that, he was a sporadic contributor to newspapers (e.g. the *Allgemeine Zeitung* in Leipzig) and he provided entries for the musical topics in the first two volumes of Herloßsohn's *Damen Conversations Lexikon*.<sup>10</sup> Three years Schumann's minor, Wagner wrote his first music-critical essay in 1834 for the *Zeitung für die elegante*

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<sup>7</sup> e.g. Richard Wagner: 'Entwurf zur Organisation eines National-Theaters für das Königreich Sachsen (1849)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, ed. by Richard Sternfeld and Hans von Wolzogen. Volksausgabe. Vol. 2. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1916, pp. 233-273; Richard Wagner: 'Theaterreform (1849)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 233-236; Richard Wagner: 'Nochmals Theaterreform (1849)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 237-239.

<sup>8</sup> e.g. Richard Wagner: 'Der Mensch und die bestehende Gesellschaft (1849)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 240-245; Richard Wagner: 'Die Revolution (1849)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 245-251; Richard Wagner: 'Die Kunst und die Revolution (1849)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 3, pp. 8-41.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Schumann (K. Schumann): 'Ein Opus II'. In: *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 1831, Nr. 49, pp. 806-808.

<sup>10</sup> *Damen Conversations Lexikon*, ed. by Carl Herloßsohn, 10 volumes. Leipzig: Volckmar 1834-1838. The lexicon has been digitalised by DirectMedia Publishing in 2005 as volume 118 of the *Digitale Bibliothek*.

*Welt*, edited by Heinrich Laube. Wagner's first articles predominantly lament the absence of a true German opera.<sup>11</sup> Thematically, the texts do not differ much from each other. In those early years already, we recognise a trend that characterises Wagner's career as *Musikkritiker*. In contrast to Schumann, Wagner writes for a range of different press organs: the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* is one of them, but other examples include the newspapers *Der Zuschauer*, *Dresdener Abendzeitung*<sup>12</sup> or the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*.

A second similarity is the periodical project both Schumann and Wagner venture on. Schumann's greatest critical legacy is undoubtedly the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. In 1834, a band of four musicians, Julius Knorr, Friedrich Wieck, Ludwig Schunke and Robert Schumann established the *Neue Leipziger Zeitschrift für Musik*.<sup>13</sup> The first issue appeared on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1834 and opened with a long statement about the goals and ambitions of the periodical. If Schumann had previously only written *Musikkritik*, he now added editorial duties to his daily routine. The project was a relative success,<sup>14</sup> although it faced severe hardships throughout its first year. By the end of 1834, the future of the NZfM already hung in the balance. Schunke – one of Schumann's best friends – had died in December and the lingering animosity between the remaining editors surfaced in all severity. After due judicial disputes,<sup>15</sup> Schumann eventually assumed sole control of the journal. He

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<sup>11</sup> e.g. Richard Wagner: 'Die deutsche Oper (1834)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 1-4; Richard Wagner (Ng.): 'Pasticcio von Canto Spianato'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 63 (pp. 250-252) & 64 (pp. 255-256); Richard Wagner: 'Der Dramatische Gesang (1837)'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 15-18.

<sup>12</sup> The spelling of the name 'Dresdener Abenzeitung' is very inconsistent. One just as well encounters 'Dresdner Abend-Zeitung' or 'Dresdner Abendzeitung'. For practical reasons, I will follow Wagner's spelling, which is 'Dresdener Abendzeitung'. Wagner published many correspondences from Paris for the newspaper (cf. 2.3.1 & 4.2.2). The *Abendzeitung* was founded in 1805 by Johann Christoph Arnold. Lacking success, the paper had a very short run of about a year. Arnold made a new attempt in 1817 together with Karl Gottfried Theodor Winkler and Friedrich Kind. Winkler bought the newspaper from his partners in 1835. During that period, Wagner wrote essays for the *Abendzeitung*. The *Abendzeitung* was eventually permanently discontinued in 1857.

<sup>13</sup> There was a realistic market for musical journalism in Leipzig. Together with Hamburg, the city had since long been the epicentre of the publishing industry, cf. Ernst Fischer/Wilhelm Haefs/ York-Gothart Mix: 'Einleitung: Aufklärung, Öffentlichkeit und Medienkultur in Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert'. In: *Almanach bis Zeitung: ein Handbuch der Medien in Deutschland 1700-1800*, ed. by Ernst Fischer and Wilhelm Haefs. München: Beck 1999, p. 16. For convenience's sake, I also refer to the *Neue Leipziger Zeitschrift für Musik* with the abbreviation 'NZfM'.

<sup>14</sup> In a letter of 2 July 1834, Schumann mentions to his mother that the NZfM already signed 300 subscribers (cf. Robert Schumann: 'An seine Mutter [2. Juli 1834]'. In: *Schumanns Briefe*, ed. by Karl Storck. Stuttgart: Greiner und Pfeiffer 1905, p. 72).

<sup>15</sup> Siegfried Kross gives a transparent account of the legal difficulties that faced Schumann as he tried to take over the NZfM in 'Aus der Frühgeschichte von Robert Schumanns Neuer Zeitschrift für Musik'. In: *Die Musikforschung* 34/4 (1981), pp. 423-445. See also Eric Frederick Jensen: *Schumann*. Oxford: University Press 2001, p. 111-112 and John Daverio: *Robert Schumann. Herald of a 'New Poetic Age'*. New York/Oxford: University Press 1997, p. 117.

changed the name to 'Neue Zeitschrift für Musik' (chiefly for legal reasons)<sup>16</sup> – a title the journal still bears to this day. During the following ten years, Schumann combined the pen of the *Musikkritiker* with the office of editor. In 1845, Franz Brendel took over the NZfM. Schumann made one last appearance in 1853 with the article 'Neue Bahnen', in which he praised Brahms as the 'next big thing' in German music. The story of Wagner's periodical project is rather short in comparison to Schumann's. For over forty years, Wagner contributed articles, essays and pamphlets to various newspaper and journals. In 1878 (five years prior to his death), however, he founded the *Bayreuther Blätter*. Wagner relegated the daily affairs of the periodical to Hans von Wolzogen (the uncredited inventor of the term 'Leitmotiv'), but was always near enough to ensure that it stayed true to its principle aim: to promulgate Wagnerian aesthetic and political ideology.

A third element that Schumann and Wagner have in common, is that they both anthologised their *Musikkritiken* at the end of their lives. In 1852, Schumann started compiling his critical writings, an idea that had been brewing since 1837.<sup>17</sup> The result was the four-volume *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (1854), the crowning achievement of a lifetime dedicated to the emancipation of German *Musikkritik*. Wagner, too, collected his *Musikkritiken*. They appeared as part of his *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen* (1871-1883). After his death, loyal Wagnerians duly expanded the original ten volumes with texts that the maestro, for reasons unknown, did not include (cf. *infra*). To this day, the *Sämtliche Schriften* remain the most complete collection of Wagner's prose oeuvre.

My dissertation, finally, takes its cue from a fourth similarity between Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritiken*, to wit the stylistic flexibility that characterises their writings. Musical and literary academia have so far abated the importance of Schumann's and Wagner's critical style, reducing the writings to the narrative 'Davidsbund'-environment or to polemical treatises about musical aesthetics, respectively (cf. *infra*). That the texts boast many intermediary forms and modes of passing on *Kritik* has – conveniently, perhaps – been ignored. Exactly this stylistic fluidity, however, warrants a more attentive, literary study of the *Musikkritiken*. Schumann, for instance, uses the 'Davidsbund' only for a small fraction of his reviews and, even then, predominantly in the earlier years of his tenure as *Musikkritiker*. By the same token, Wagner intersperses his polemical discourse with numerous narrative stagings, autofictions and pseudonyms.

The rich tapestry of critical styles we encounter in Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* attests to more than just the variation in the writings themselves. Measured

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<sup>16</sup> cf. Kross: *Aus der Frühgeschichte von Robert Schumanns Neuer Zeitschrift für Musik*, p. 441.

<sup>17</sup> cf. Martin Kreisig: 'Vorbericht des Herausgebers'. In: Robert Schumann: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, ed. by Martin Kreisig. 2 Volumes. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1914, p. XVIII-XX; Hans-Peter Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns: Versuch eines literaturwissenschaftlichen Zugangs*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1983, p. 21.

against each other, the bodies of texts emanate two disparate concepts of *Musikkritik*. Schumann practices a work-oriented, evaluative *Musikkritik*. He duly experiments with the stylistic form of the review. Wagner, on the other hand, sees *Musikkritik* more as a lever for cultural and social critique. From early belletrist correspondences to later theoretical pamphlets, Wagner steeps his writings in an historicising discourse that prophesies a grand musical and German future.

The fact that Schumann and Wagner label their writings exactly as ‘*Musikkritik*’, renders this disparity all the more remarkable. Schumann and Wagner ally themselves with an institution that they both, at the same instance, interpret in radically opposite ways. The moot identity of *Musikkritik* cues the overarching research question of this dissertation: how does the discursive organisation of *Musikkritik* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century allow Schumann and Wagner to lay claim to the same institution, while both authors render *Kritik* in such a stylistically divergent and flexible way? My study starts from a central concern for the critical style of Schumann and Wagner and investigates how their *Musikkritik* functions as critical discourse. I will concentrate on three sub-questions in particular: What understanding of *Musikkritik* informs Schumann’s and Wagner’s writings and in what manner do they mark out that understanding against other journals and other *Musikkritiker*? How do Schumann and Wagner assert their authority as *Musikkritiker*? What position do they adopt vis-à-vis the reader and what position do they allow the reader to assume in the *Musikkritiken*?

A first hypothesis I wish to pursue relates the undefined identity of *Musikkritik* to an intrinsic openness to other discourses. By 1834, when Schumann and Wagner became professionally involved as *Musikkritiker*, *Kritik* had long since carved out its place in the public sphere. True to its emancipatory ideals, the Enlightenment had catapulted *Kritik* to a central mode of communication and rational thinking. Standing on the threshold of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, moreover, *Kritik* reigned supreme as the main conductor of aesthetic philosophy. *Musikkritik* itself, by contrast, was a relatively new addition to the public sphere. As late as 1722, Johann Mattheson launched the first musical periodical, *Critica Musica*. For a long time, *Musikkritik* predominantly offered a forum of scientific, theoretical debate to scholars. Only towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, did correspondences and reports of concerts become established genres. In their wake, a true periodical enterprise took off. As an evaluative practice, *Musikkritik* long clung to other critical institutions. *Moralische Wochenschriften* or other journals with more generalist artistic or literary ambitions were the first to feature reviews of concrete musical pieces

and performances. From early on, as a result, *Musikkritik* developed an intrinsic openness to other discourses, not in the least *Literaturkritik*.<sup>18</sup>

Given its relatively late occurrence in the public sphere, *Musikkritik* still had to make a name for itself in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It needed to convince readers, audiences, composers and the music industry alike of its added value. As I will demonstrate, the indeterminate status of *Musikkritik* in the public sphere was of great advantage to Schumann and Wagner. Faced with a readership of which the makeup was as diversified and dynamic as the identity of *Musikkritik* itself, Schumann and Wagner developed a wide range of discursive strategies aimed at (pre)figuring the profile of their readership. In that sense, Schumann and Wagner skilfully carry on discursive traditions that *Kritik* had since long developed to organise itself, legitimise its activities and make itself acceptable to the reader. Are we to understand, in other words, how Schumann and Wagner take the readership along in their opinions, or – a purpose that we surely must not discount – how they employ *Musikkritik* to their own personal gain (e.g. to promote their own works), we must regard their *Musikkritiken* as discursive practices: Schumann and Wagner adhere to or exactly reject prevalent medial and genre conventions in order to authorise their actions as *Kritiker* and position themselves in that capacity vis-à-vis the reader.

On that account, my second hypothesis suggests that Schumann and Wagner ultimately do appeal to an analogous notion of *Musikkritik* in that they display a similar disposition to reach out to the reader. Schumann and Wagner aim to activate the reader's own sense of opinion and judgement. This hypothesis challenges the work of past scholarship, which generally tends to affirm the position of Schumann and Wagner within a Romantic literary or aesthetic context (cf. *infra*). The standard way of thinking about Schumann and Wagner has it that their *Musikkritik* is elitist: As *Kritiker*, they impose their verdict on a marginalised reader audience by means of depreciative or polemical language use. Despite their often elitist and aggressive rhetoric, however, I will maintain that Schumann and Wagner very much attempt to engage the reader in their *Kritik*. The rhetorical and narrative strategies in their texts encourage the reader to become involved in the process of critical reflection. Rather than barring the reader's judgement, Schumann and Wagner foster it and make their own *Musikkritik* contingent to it.

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<sup>18</sup> It is no coincidence that E.T.A. Hoffmann (a writer trained in that other evaluative practice from which *Kritik* borrows much of its terminology, *law*; cf. Thomas Anz: 'Theorien und Analysen zur Literaturkritik und zur Wertung'. In: *Literaturkritik. Geschichte, Theorie, Praxis*, ed. by Thomas Anz and Rainer Baasner. München: Beck 2004, p. 196) is an eminent exponent of the music-critical review which begins to emancipate itself in the first decades of the 19th century.

## Status Quaestionis

In existing literature on Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*, the writings serve mainly as sideshows to more topical biographic and aesthetic debates. Studies tend to home in on isolated characteristics of the *Musikkritiken* and reduce the texts exclusively to these stylistic traits. Thus, Schumann's remarkable use of a narrative 'Davidsbund'-model is generally pitted against Wagner's biting polemics. This paradigm comes along with a standard narrative that casts Schumann and Wagner as pretentious, Romantic composers who despise their (reader) audience. In 2011, still, Dana Gooley posed Schumann and Wagner as counter-models to Hanslick's neo-Enlightened form of *Musikkritik*.<sup>19</sup> In Gooley's eyes, Schumann counts as an archetypical representative of an elitist *Kritik*,<sup>20</sup> while Wagner's "self-aggrandizing, exalted writings"<sup>21</sup> form the backbone of a critical school of "Wagnerian polemicists"<sup>22</sup> whose authority Hanslick attempts to curb. Seen from that perspective, Schumann and Wagner emerge as central exponents of a Romantic, reader-silencing *Kritik*.<sup>23</sup>

Most scholars, to be sure, mainly draw implicit comparisons between Schumann and Wagner. The only study that brackets Schumann and Wagner together is Berenike Schröder's *Monumentale Erinnerung, ästhetische Erneuerung* (2014).<sup>24</sup> Schröder analyses the Beethoven-motif in the writings of, among others, Schumann and Wagner, whom she

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<sup>19</sup> Dana Gooley: 'Hanslick and the Institution of Criticism'. In: *The Journal of Musicology* 28/3 (2011), pp. 289-324.

<sup>20</sup> cf. "Robert Schumann founded the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1834 with the intention of altering the institution of music criticism dramatically, and in doing so he was willing to sacrifice key components of the Enlightenment legacy. [...] The *Neue Zeitschrift* severed all ties to the music publishing business. Its critics formed a self-styled 'League of David,' an elite of poetically gifted, artistically insightful writers who would lead the 'Philistines,' the general public, out of their vapid, sensuous indulgence in music. Free of amateurism and independent of the market, the new journal was meant to foster a 'higher' criticism concerned purely with the revelation of music's ideal essence. Schumann's own work for the journal reflects the influence of 'reflective' criticism, a product of early Romanticism. [...] Reflective criticism [...] sets aside entirely the worldly social struggle implicit in the Enlightenment institution of criticism. **With its frank elitism and its embrace of the irrational, it rejects the coordination of criticism with the aims of the rationally constituted bourgeois public sphere.**" (Gooley: *Hanslick and the Institution of Criticism*, p. 300-301; bold emphasis mine)

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, p. 291.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, p. 323.

<sup>23</sup> In the *Oxford History of Western Music*, Richard Taruskin essentially delivers the same narrative, e.g. "Schumann's journal was intended at the outset as a direct challenge or alternative to the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, which had grown conservative and 'philistine,' and hostile to the elite faction Schumann wished to champion". (Richard Taruskin: 'Chapter 6: Critics'. In: *Music in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, retrieved 26 July 2016 from <http://www.oxfordwesternmusic.com/view/Volume3/actrade-9780195384833-chapter-006.xml>).

<sup>24</sup> Berenike Schröder: *Monumentale Erinnerung, ästhetische Erneuerung: Beethovenrezeption und die Ästhetik der Intermedialität in den Schriften der Neudeutschen Schule*. Göttingen: V&R Unipres 2012.

both - not unproblematically – subsumes under the ‘Neudeutsche Schule’.<sup>25</sup> She claims that the composers’ views on music shapes the way they intermedially translate Beethoven’s music into words. The metaphors Wagner and Schumann use, project the ‘newness’ of their musical poetics onto the critical discourse. The intermedial strategies Wagner employs, for instance, primarily seek to validate the need for his aesthetic reforms. Schumann’s varied stylistic palette, conversely, mirrors his demand for a new poetical age. Schröder convincingly demonstrates that *Musikkritik* grew into significant mouthpiece of the public sphere by mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Virtually all major players in then musical life solicited the institution to leave their mark on society. In the end, however, Schröder does not move beyond prevalent axioms in research. For one, she, too, concludes that Wagner and certainly Schumann epitomise an exclusive, elitist *Musikkritik*.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, she predominantly uses the *Musikkritiken* to investigate the aesthetic thought of Schumann, Wagner and others.<sup>27</sup> While Schröder concludes that ‘Neudeutsche’ composers harbour a “Skepsis gegenüber der Gattung Musikkritik”<sup>28</sup>, at no occasion does she contemplate why those composers *did* use *Musikkritik*, what characterises their writings and how that *Musikkritik* compares to that of other ‘users’ of the institution.

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<sup>25</sup> It is rather unconventional, to put it mildly, to induct Schumann into the ranks of the ‘Neudeutsche Schule’, if only for the simple reason that Schumann had already died before the name came in vogue. ‘Neudeutsche Schule’ was originally a term that Franz Brendel introduced in 1859 to relieve the polemically charged notion of ‘Zukunftsmusik’ (cf. also 2.3.2). It mainly refers to the axis Wagner-Liszt, and to a lesser extent Berlioz (cf. GWi: ‘Neudeutsche Schule’. In: *Österreichisches Musiklexikon*, ed. by Rudolf Flotzinger. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 2002-2006, retrieved 28 July 2016 from [http://www.musiklexikon.ac.at/ml/musik\\_N/Neudeutsche-Schule.xml](http://www.musiklexikon.ac.at/ml/musik_N/Neudeutsche-Schule.xml)). In its public opposition to the more ‘formtreue’ aesthetics of composers like Brahms or *Kritiker* such as Hanslick, a significant characteristic of the ‘Neudeutsche Schule’ is the consistent resort to *Musikkritik* to promote its musical ideology. The upcoming volume *Die Neudeutsche Schule: Dokumente zum musikalischen Parteienstreit im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Detlef Altenburg, Daniel Ortuno-Stühling, Ulrike Roesler, Ruth Seehaber, Katharina Steinbeck. Wien/Köln: Böhlau (expected December 2016) will likely document that given to a fuller extent.

<sup>26</sup> cf. “Sowohl Schumann als auch Wagner sehen die enge Verflechtung von Wort und Ton, Dichtung und Musik bei Beethoven, und begreifen dies als Kennzeichen einer neuen Epoche, als eine Musikästhetik des freien subjektiven Ausdrucks und somit des Umbruchs. **Diese Ästhetik wird von Schumann eindeutig als progressiver Elitendiskurs gekennzeichnet und richtet sich gegen die breite (bourgeoise) Masse der Kunstrezipienten.** Die Bewahrung von Beethovens kulturellem Erbe und seine Monumentalisierung zielen auf die Durchsetzung einer als ideal begriffenen, ‘poetischen’ Musik in der Zukunft. Kunstreligiöse Aspekte charakterisieren hierbei Wagners und Schumanns Diskurse” (Schröder: *Monumentale Erinnerung*, p. 257; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>27</sup> cf. “Wie in ihren Schriften über Beethoven stellen die Neudeutschen auch im Schreiben übereinander die genannten Mittel und die Suggestivität des Literarisch-Rhetorischen in den Dienst ihrer reformerischen ästhetischen Bestrebungen” (ibid., p. 260).

<sup>28</sup> ibid., p. 261.

In a similar vein, studies that target Schumann and Wagner individually also look for the composers' musical poetics in the *Musikkritiken*. The first survey of Schumann's *Musikkritik* dates back to 1883.<sup>29</sup> In *Die Davidsbündler*,<sup>30</sup> Friedrich Gustav Jansen establishes the main topoi that circulate to this day: Schumann as a "tiefpoetische[r]"<sup>31</sup> composer who shakes up the stuffy *Musikkritik* of his time and who uses the 'Davidsbund' as a literary expression of his schizophrenic nature.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, most studies curtail Schumann's writings to the 'Davidsbund'-essays (all in all, but a small fraction of Schumann's output). In addition, they consistently depict Schumann as an exponent of Romantic musical aesthetics<sup>33</sup> or an epigone of E.T.A. Hoffmann's and Jean Paul's epic prose (cf. *infra*). The

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<sup>29</sup> Aigi Heero has in recent years made the texts Schumann wrote as a youth (long a neglected corpus) accessible, e.g. Aigi Heero: *Robert Schumanns Jugendlyrik. Kritische Edition und Kommentar* (= Schumann-Studien 3). Sinzig: Studio 2003 or Aigi Heero: 'Poesie der Musik. Zur Intermedialität in Schumanns frühen Schriften'. In: *Trames* 11 (2007), pp. 15-35. The literary projects that Schumann ventured on later in his life have equally been examined in greater detail of late, in particular the exceptional anthology of writers and poets that he called *Dichtergarten für Musik* (cf. Robert Schumann: *Dichtergarten für Musik. Eine Anthologie für Freunde der Literatur und Musik*, ed. by Gerd Nauhaus und Ingrid Bosch. StadtMuseum Bonn & Frankfurt am Main/Basel: Stroemfeld 2007). For more on Schumann's late literary projects, see also Gerd Nauhaus: 'Rückkehr zum Wort. Schumanns späte literarische Arbeiten'. In: *Musik-Konzepte. Sonderband: Der späte Schumann*, ed. by Ulrich Tadday. München: edition text + kritik 2006, pp. 201-212.

<sup>30</sup> F. Gustav Jansen: *Die Davidsbündler. Aus Robert Schumann's Sturm- und Drangperiode*. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1883.

<sup>31</sup> Jansen: *Die Davidsbündler*, p. 6.

<sup>32</sup> e.g. "Die phantastische idee war eine Widerspiegelung von Schumann's eigenartigem Wesen, das selbst aus mancherlei scheinbaren Widersprüchen zusammengesetzt war." (*ibid.*, p. 19). Schumann's mental illness and his early death, still shrouded in mystery, have aroused the interest of many researchers over time. See, among others, P. J. Möbius: *Ueber Robert Schumanns Krankheit*. Halle an der Saale: Carl Marhold 1906; Gerhard Granzow: 'Florestan und Eusebius. Zur Psychologie Robert Schumanns'. In: *Die Musik* 20/2 (1928), pp. 660-663; Dieter Schnebel: 'Rückungen - Ver-rückungen. Psychoanalytische Betrachtungen zu Schumanns Leben und Werk'. In: *Musik-Konzepte. Sonderband: Robert Schumann I*, ed. by Heinz-Klaus Metzger and Rainer Riehn. München: edition text + kritik 1981, pp. 4-89; Udo Rauchfleisch: *Robert Schumann: eine psychoanalytische Annäherung*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004; Dagmar Hoffmann-Axthelm: *Robert Schumann. Eine musikalisch-psychologische Studie*. Stuttgart: Reclam 2010. Bernhard R. Appel chronicles Schumann's stay in the psychiatric hospital of Eendenich in detail in (ed.): *Robert Schumann in Eendenich (1854-1856). Krankenakten, Briefzeugnisse und zeitgenössische Berichte*. Mainz: Edition Schott 2006. That last station of Schumann's life, I might add, constitutes one of two main narrative threads in Peter Härtling's novel *Schumanns Schatten* (1996).

<sup>33</sup> e.g. Christina E. Brantner: *Robert Schumann und das Tonkünstler-Bild der Romantiker*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1991. I am especially reminded here of the work of Ulrich Tadday. Tadday mines Schumann's *Musikkritik* as if it were one prolonged aesthetic manifesto. He sees the critical writings as the product of a general, reflexive process: the Romantic component of music is not only its semantic autonomy, to wit its 'Unsagbarkeit' (as Dahlhaus would have it; cf. *Intermezzo*); music also requires a concrete and, if possible, poetically inspired performance. *Musikkritik* epitomises this mediation between composition and interpretation, theory and practice. cf. Ulrich Tadday: *Das schöne Unendliche. Ästhetik, Kritik, Geschichte der romantischen Musikanschauung*. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1999. An abridged version of Tadday's main arguments can be



work of John Daverio,<sup>34</sup> Uwe Schweikert,<sup>35</sup> Monika Schmitz-Emans<sup>36</sup> and Christoph Bartscherer<sup>37</sup>, among others,<sup>38</sup> illustrates the persistency of this narrative.

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found in Ulrich Tadday: ‚Zwischen Empfindung und Reflexion. Zur romantischen Musikästhetik‘. In: *Musikästhetik*, ed. by Helga de la Motte-Haber. Laaber: Laaber 2004, pp. 201-219.

<sup>34</sup> John Daverio can be credited for his comprehensive work on the axial dialogue of music and literature in Schumann’s life and work. An early essay convincingly maps the literary influences (especially those of Jean Paul) on the *Davidsbündlertänze*, op. 6 (cf. John Daverio: ‘Reading Schumann by Way of Jean Paul and His Contemporaries’. In: *College Music Symposium* 30/2 (1990), pp. 28-45). Daverio essentially deepened his findings in the impressive biography *Robert Schumann. Herald of a ‘New Poetic Age*. New York/Oxford: University Press 1997. In the book, he further explores the impact literature had on Schumann’s musical aesthetics. Daverio’s main interest lies in aligning Schumann’s music with the 19th-century ‘Zeitgeist’. That ambition also speaks from his first book *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer 1993), a rather conjectural attempt to test central concepts of Schlegelian literary theory against the works of Schumann, Weber, Brahms, Wagner and Richard Strauss in order to determine the Romantic character of 19th-century music.

<sup>35</sup> cf. Uwe Schweikert: ‘Das literarische Werk – Lektüre, Poesie, Kritik und poetische Musik’. In: *Schumann Handbuch*, ed. by Ulrich Tadday. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 2006, pp. 107-126.

<sup>36</sup> In a number of essays, Monika Schmitz-Emans has recently taken to Schumann’s *Musikkritik*. Her literary analyses remain well within the established paradigm that reads Schumann as an epigone of leading Romantic authors (cf. Monika Schmitz-Emans: ‘Jean Paul – Schumann – Heine: Überlegungen zu einer poetisch-musikalischen Konstellation’. In: *Jahrbuch der Jean-Paul-Gesellschaft* 42 (2007), pp. 85-104), although she engages the topic from various angles (for instance Gothic fiction in Monika Schmitz-Emans: ‘The Spirit World of Art and Robert Schumann’s Gothic Novel Project: The Impact of Gothic Literature on Schumann’s Writing’. In: *Popular Revenants. The German Gothic and Its International Reception, 1800-2000*, ed. by Andrew Cusack and Barry Murnane. Rochester/New York: Camden House 2012, pp. 144-160). Particularly engaging are Schmitz-Emans’ observations on Schumann’s medial poetics. She shows how the form of the ‘Davidsbund’ changes as Schumann transposes them to different media over time, from his diaries and a novel project, to the NZfM and the *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (cf. Monika Schmitz-Emans: ‘Der Davidsbund als literarische Fiktion’. In: *„Eine neue poetische Zeit“. 175 Jahre Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, ed. by Michael Beiche and Armin Koch (= Schumann Forschungen 14). Mainz: Schott 2013, pp. 308-330; Monika Schmitz-Emans: ‘Musikkritik und literarische Schreibwerkstatt bei Robert Schumann’. In: *Zwischen Gattungsdisziplin und Gesamtkunstwerk: literarische Intermedialität 1815-1848*, ed. by Stefan Keppler-Tasaki and Wolf Gerhard Schmidt. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2015, pp. 239-261).

<sup>37</sup> Christoph Bartscherer: ‘Kongenialität als Kompositionsprinzip. Robert Schumann auf den Spuren E.T.A. Hoffmanns und Jean Pauls’. In: *E.T.A. Hoffmann-Jahrbuch* 14 (2006), pp. 88-106; Christoph Bartscherer: ‘Musik als Sprache des Unsagbaren. Robert Schumann und die literarische Romantik’. In: *Schreiben und Lesen. Wilhelm-Hausenstein-Symposion 2008*, ed. by Dieter Jakob. München: iudicum 2009, pp. 43-56.

<sup>38</sup> See also, for instance, Judith Chernaik: ‘Schumann’s Doppelgänger: Florestan and Eusebius revisited’. In: *The Musical Times* 152/1917 (2011), pp. 45-55; Constantin Floros: ‘Schumanns musikalische Poetik’. In: *Musik-Konzepte. Sonderband: Robert Schumann I*, pp. 105-115; Sonja Klimek: ‘»Betragt euch schön romantisch!« – Autorschaft als Rollenspiel in Robert Schumanns musikjournalistischem Werk’. In: *Medien der Autorschaft: Formen literarischer (Selbst-)Inszenierung von Brief und Tagebuch bis Fotografie und Interview*, ed. by Lucas Marco Gisi, Urs Meyer and Reto Sorg. München: Wilhelm Fink 2013, pp. 29-36.

Schumann's *Musikkritik* has been the subject of two monographs so far. In *Schumann as Critic* (1967),<sup>39</sup> the musicologist Leon Plantinga comprehensively outlines the general state of *Musikkritik* in Schumann's time. The study extensively scrutinises the position of the NZfM in relation to other journals and successfully dissociates Schumann's specific duties as editor and writer from his musical activities. Still, Plantinga remains rather vague when it comes to Schumann's style of writing itself. An enthused Schumann-adept, he eagerly lauds Schumann for his professionalism and objectivity.<sup>40</sup> Other than that, however, he does not deviate far from leading epithets in research. The study reiterates the central argument of epigonism and traces how Schumann's assessments of past and present composers conform to his musical aesthetics. The only literary monograph on Schumann's *Musikkritik* to date comes from Hans-Peter Fricker.<sup>41</sup> The study carries the promising title *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns. Versuch eines literaturwissenschaftlichen Zugangs*; unfortunately, Fricker does not come further than an attempt, indeed. Crucial, methodological objections pervade the work. For one, Fricker does not base his study on the original contributions in the NZfM, but rather on the *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (1854). It is all the more striking, too, that of the more than 250 texts Schumann published in the NZfM, Fricker discusses only fourteen. Furthermore, he generally restricts his analyses to paraphrases combined with a psychologising interpretation of Schumann's 'true' intentions.<sup>42</sup> Fricker does not interpret the *Musikkritik* as texts, let alone as *Kritik*. He primarily seeks to determine the

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<sup>39</sup> Leon B. Plantinga: *Schumann as Critic*. New York: da Capo 1976.

<sup>40</sup> Plantinga's final assessment of Schumann's *Musikkritik* exemplarily concludes: "In the portrait of German musical culture in the 1830s and 1840s Schumann draws for us, only one figure of real importance is missing: Schumann himself. In reading his criticism one tends to forget that the writer was a composer too. [...] Schumann's writings on music have a quality Kant (and many other) have said is essential for making any aesthetic judgement: disinterest. What he said about people like Mendelssohn, [...] who seemed to eclipse him so thoroughly, bore not tinge of jealousy; and his generosity toward aspiring musicians – his own competitors – was always spontaneous and sincere. (Plantinga: *Schumann as Critic*, p. 270). While I can't speak to Schumann's character, I will contradict the objectivity Plantinga so admires Schumann for in 1.3.1.

<sup>41</sup> Hans-Peter Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns: Versuch eines literaturwissenschaftlichen Zugangs*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1983.

<sup>42</sup> Paradigmatic is the following remark on Schumann's 'musical letters': "Schumann schreibt seine Kritiken nicht aus irgendetwelchen Zufalls- oder Gewohnheitsgründen – weil er einmal damit angefangen hat, weil er einem Arbeitgeber verpflichtet ist oder weil er seine Zeit irgendwie ausfüllen muss. Er schreibt allein um der Sache willen: der Ziele wegen, die er verfolgt, und der Werke wegen, die ihm zur Begutachtung vorliegen. Für das, wofür er schreibt, und für das, worüber er schreibt verpflichtet er sich. Er ist äusserlich und innerlich, intellektuell und emotionell daran beteiligt. Er steht nicht nur mit seinem beruflich-äusserlichen oder einem zeitlich beschränkten nebenamtlichen Ich, sondern mit seiner ganzen Person dahinter. [...] Schumann ist engagiert. Die Distanz zu dem, was er schreibt, ist nicht grösser als die Feder, mit der er es zu Papier bringt" (Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns*, p. 112).

“Literalität der Musikschriften”.<sup>43</sup> That much speaks from the closing ‘Exkurs’ as well, which investigates the literary quality of Schumann’s compositions.<sup>44</sup>

The current state of research on Wagner’s *Musikkritik* paints a similar picture.<sup>45</sup> As the adage goes, the body of literature about Wagner pales only against the innumerable studies on Jesus Christ and Napoleon.<sup>46</sup> Even if that scenario were a reality, remarkably little has been written about Wagner’s *Musikkritik* itself.<sup>47</sup> The isolated studies that do address his critical writings generally do so with the intention of fathoming the depths of the man and his work. Alternatively, they investigate what has been said *about* Wagner.<sup>48</sup> A significant contribution to the field, in that respect, is the fourth of six instalments of Helmut Kirchmeyer’s ambitious *Situationsgeschichte der Musikkritik und des musikalischen Pressewesens in Deutschland*, titled ‘Das zeitgenössische Wagner-Bild’.<sup>49</sup> Kirchmeyer meticulously chronicles contemporary debates about the persona and the work of Wagner: which *Kritiker* said what, in what periodical and to what effect. In two separate volumes, moreover, Kirchmeyer records all statements ever made – or that is his ambition, at least – about Wagner in journalistic media. *Per se*, nevertheless, Wagner’s *Musikkritik* has yet to be the subject of academic inquiry. True to the spirit of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, his critical oeuvre is read as a permeable conflux between life and art, the extension piece of an aesthetic philosophy that guides us through the music dramas. Klaus Kropfinger’s *Wagner und Beethoven* (1975) assesses the influence Beethoven had on

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<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, p. 248-293.

<sup>45</sup> Already in 1911, Thomas Mann voices his amazement at the disregard for Wagner’s *Musikkritik*: “Woher eigentlich dieser Mangel an Interesse für den Schriftsteller Wagner? Daher, daß seine Schriften Parteischriften und nicht Bekenntnisse sind? Daß sie sein Werk, worin er wahrhaftig in seiner leidenden Größe lebt, sehr mangelhaft, sehr mißverständlich kommentieren? [...] Es ist wahr, man kann aus Wagners Schriften nicht viel über Wagner lernen” (Thomas Mann: ‘Über die Kunst Richard Wagners (1911)’. In: *Essays. Band 3: Schriften über Musik und Philosophie*, ed. by Hermann Kurzke. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 1978, p. 60). An extensive analysis of the language Wagner uses in his music dramas can be found in Victor Henle: *Richard Wagners Wörter*. Berlin/München: Keyser 2011, p. 152-199. Josef Lehmkuhl offers animated paraphrases of a handful of Wagner’s texts in *Der Kunst-Messias. Richard Wagners Vermächtnis in seinen Schriften*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2009.

<sup>46</sup> In 1882, Nikolaus Oesterlein records no less than 1448 mentions of Wagner in books, articles, poems, periodicals, reviews etc. (cf. Nikolaus Oesterlein: *Katalog einer Richard-Wagner-Bibliothek*. Leipzig: Senf 1882).

<sup>47</sup> The most recent ‘Wagner Handbuch’ symptomatically features a six-page long entry on Wagner as *Kritiker*, which in reality mostly quotes long passages from Wagner’s writings, cf. Ulrich Tadday: ‘Wagner als Kritiker’. In: *Wagner Handbuch*, ed. by Laurenz Lütteken. Kassel: Bärenreiter 2012, pp. 148-153.

<sup>48</sup> An early example, though more comical in spirit, is Wilhelm Tappert: *Richard Wagner im Spiegel der Kritik: Wörterbuch der Unhöflichkeit*. Leipzig: Siegel 1903. Amusing, as well, is Ernst Kreowski/Eduard Fuchs: *Richard Wagner in der Karikatur*. Berlin: Behr 1907.

<sup>49</sup> Helmut Kirchmeyer: *Situationsgeschichte der Musikkritik und des musikalischen Pressewesens in Deutschland. Teil IV: Das Zeitgenössische Wagner-Bild*. Regensburg: Bosse 1972.

Wagner's life and music from the *Musikkritiken*.<sup>50</sup> In *Wagner's Musical Prose* (1995), Thomas Grey is more geared towards the texts themselves.<sup>51</sup> He postulates important methodological premises for any textual take on Wagner's writings (e.g. Wagner's tendency of self-fashioning)<sup>52</sup> and offers engaging analyses, for instance of the gender metaphors in *Oper und Drama*. Nonetheless, Grey reads the texts more as cultural-aesthetic than as critical discourses; his decision to label them as 'musical prose' rather than 'music criticism' is indicative of that choice. The study essentially examines to what extent Wagner's rhetoric and semantics conform to his views on music and how they resurface in his compositions. Against that background, Nicholas Vazsonyi offers a welcome new take on Wagner's *Musikkritik*. While not exclusively geared to the critical writings, his research<sup>53</sup> illustrates that the writings play a crucial part in Wagner's efforts to control the narrative over his public persona and in his attempts to turn that persona into a lucrative enterprise. For the first time, the *Musikkritiken* are not considered mere vehicles of aesthetic ideology. Instead, Vazsonyi frames them within a broader negotiation of the artist with the public sphere.

Existing scholarship, to summarise, precludes the sheer variety of critical styles and modes that prompts my study of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. This disregard for the full stylistic scope of their writings is hardly surprising. Above all, it exposes the limitations of main axioms in current research. In the end, the primary concern for musical aesthetics exhibited in such studies, requires a homogenous concept of music-critical style that matches the opposite poetic views Schumann and Wagner hold as composers. Whereas Schumann's dialogical style reflects the intention to strike a complacent alliance between set traditions (Bach, Schubert etc.) and new methods (Mendelssohn, Chopin, ...) <sup>54</sup>, Wagner is more revolutionary in his ideas and consequently

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<sup>50</sup> Klaus Kropfing: *Wagner and Beethoven. Richard Wagner's reception of Beethoven*. Transl. by Peter Palmer. Cambridge: University Press 1991.

<sup>51</sup> Thomas Grey: *Wagner's musical prose. Texts and contexts*. Cambridge: University Press 1995.

<sup>52</sup> cf. Grey: *Wagner's musical prose*, p. xvi.

<sup>53</sup> Nicholas Vazsonyi's most extensive study of Wagner is undoubtedly *Richard Wagner: Self-Promotion and the Making of a Brand*. Cambridge: University Press 2010. I would also like to draw attention to the insightful essays he authored in preparation of the book, e.g. Nicholas Vazsonyi: 'Marketing German Identity: Richard Wagner's "Enterprise"'. In: *German Studies Review* 28/2 (2005), pp. 327-346; Nicholas Vazsonyi: 'Beethoven Instrumentalized: Richard Wagner's Self-Marketing and Media Image'. In: *Music & Letters* 89/2 (May 2008), pp. 195-211.

<sup>54</sup> John Daverio, for instance, persists in equating stylistic dialectics with aesthetic dialectics. He describes Schumann as a critic who constantly tries to negotiate between analysis and interpretation, music and literature, or past, present and future (see, for example, Daverio: *Robert Schumann*, p.124-125). cf. also Edward A. Lippman: 'Theory and Practice in Schumann's Aesthetics'. In: *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 17/3 (1964), pp. 310-345.

has to rely on a more explicit, yes even violent rhetoric.<sup>55</sup> Such a poetic-aesthetic reading of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* draws attention to the pragmatic nature of the critical writings - and justly so. Still, it fails to take into account the particularity of *Musikkritik*. *Musikkritik* is not simply a vessel of poetic or even ideological propaganda; it also operates within the margins of its own certain conventions of stylistic and medial organisation. Reducing Schumann's and Wagner's writings to auxiliary instruments of wider-ranging music-aesthetical debates, discounts the discursive singularity of the *Musikkritiken*.

Studies that stand out for a more textual take, on the other hand, owe the stylistic fluidity in Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* to a different rhetorical approach. Following that same rationale, Schumann and Wagner simply use a different style to persuade their readers. While I certainly support this point of view, I do feel that it lingers too exclusively on the rhetorical properties of the critical writings. Scholars tend to ignore crucial discursive and medial qualities of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. Take the most often heard argument that scholars bring against Schumann, namely that the 'Davidsbund' siphons prevalent epic modes (most notably E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Serapionsbrüder*) into *Kritik*.<sup>56</sup> Such allegations of epigonism imply that the use of narrative frames stems from Schumann's passion for literature and in particular from his love of Jean Paul's prose. The eagerness to discover analogies between literary and music-critical discourse tends to obscure the differences that exist between them. Apropos the use of a narrative frame, the claim of Schumann copying Hoffmann is certainly legitimate.<sup>57</sup> Then again, Schumann's texts can be said to duplicate the grain of narrative prose on the basis of this sole criterion. What's more, the fact that Hoffmann only added the narrative frame to his *Serapionsbrüder* in retrospect (that is, when he compiled earlier reviews and other critical texts into one volume), mitigates Schumann's level of stylistic mimicry. On their original appearance in newspapers, in fact, Hoffmann's separate instalments exhibited but minimal, and certainly no narrative Serapion-coherence.<sup>58</sup> The narrative

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<sup>55</sup> Works that examine Wagner's political commitment especially champion this interpretation, e.g. James Garratt: *Music, Culture and Social Reform in the Age of Wagner*. Cambridge: University Press, 2010; Rüdiger Jacobs: *Revolutionsidee und Staatskritik in Richard Wagners Schriften: Perspektiven metapolitischen Denkens*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2010.

<sup>56</sup> e.g. Bartscherer: *Kongenialität als Kompositionsprinzip*, pp. 105-16; Chernaik: *Schumann's Doppelgänger*, pp. 46-47. I must add here that Anne Katrin Kaiser claims that Hoffmann also influenced Wagner, but more with regard to the latter's aesthetic thinking or the story world of his music dramas, cf. Anne Katrin Kaiser: *Die Kunstästhetik Richard Wagners in der Tradition E.T.A. Hoffmanns*. Freiburg/Berlin u.a.: Rombach 2009.

<sup>57</sup> The narrative frame of the *Serapionsbrüder* is extensively analyzed in Andreas Beck: *Geselliges Erzählen in Rahmenzyklen: Goethe, Tieck, E.T.A. Hoffmann*. Heidelberg: Winter 2008, p. 391-536.

<sup>58</sup> For more on the *Serapionsbrüder* and the genesis of the four-volume work, see Lothar Pikulik: *E.T.A. Hoffmann als Erzähler. Ein Kommentar zu den 'Serapions-Brüdern'*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1987; Hilda Meldrum

‘Davidsbund’-frame, on the contrary, is already embedded from the initial publication in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* on. The ‘Davidsbund’-Serapionsbrüder-case thus reminds us of the fact that Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik* should first and foremost be read within the context of *Kritik*. As an institution, *Musikkritik* belongs to the public sphere and builds on discursive traditions that other critical or evaluative institutions established. My methodology takes its cue from that premise.

## Methodology

*Musikkritik* is classically one of those ill-definable concepts. *Grove Music Online* distinguishes between a narrow and a broad definition. In the first sense, ‘music criticism’ is “a genre of professional writing, typically created for prompt publication, evaluating aspects of music and musical life”.<sup>59</sup> Seen in a more general light, *Musikkritik* denotes a mode of reflection on the aesthetics and history of music. Other definitions subscribe to a practical understanding of *Musikkritik*. According to Hermann Springer, the periodical press is indispensable to *Musikkritik*. He describes the term as “die mehr oder minder regelmäßig für die Öffentlichkeit verantwortlich gegebene Urteilsäußerung über musikalische Werke und Leistungen”.<sup>60</sup> The main task of *Musikkritik*, in that respect, is “das Ganze der musikalischen Erscheinungen einführend und wertend in ein Bild zu fassen”.<sup>61</sup> Judgements about the conditions and institutions of musical life, on the other hand, categorically count as ‘Musikpolitik’.<sup>62</sup> The *Österreichisches Musiklexikon* (OEM), finally, subscribes to a practical notion of *Musikkritik* as well. At the same time, it also signals the relativity of such definitions. Rather than assuming a general, diachronically valid definition, *Musikkritik* only signifies something “in Relation zu bestimmten Absichten”<sup>63</sup> that vary between different periods in time. In my opinion, this relativity renders a definition of *Musikkritik* if not impossible, then at least unnecessarily complicated and surely impractical.

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Brown: *E.T.A. Hoffmann and the Serapiontic principle: critique and creativity*. Rochester: Camden House 2006; Uwe Japp: ‘Das literarische Werk – Die Serapionsbrüder (1819/1821)’. In: *E.T.A. Hoffmann: Leben - Werk - Wirkung*, ed. by Detlef Kremer. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2009, pp. 257-267.

<sup>59</sup> Fred Everett Maus: ‘Criticism’. In: *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, ed. by Deane Root et al. Oxford: University Press, retrieved 27 July 2016 from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40589>.

<sup>60</sup> Hermann Springer: ‘Musikkritik’. In: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, ed. by Guido Adler. Tutzing: Hans Schneider 1961, p. 1241.

<sup>61</sup> Springer: *Musikkritik*, p. 1242.

<sup>62</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 1241.

<sup>63</sup> MWa: ‘Musikkritik’. In: *Österreichisches Musiklexikon*, retrieved 28 July 2016 from [http://www.musiklexikon.ac.at/ml/musik\\_M/Musikkritik.xml](http://www.musiklexikon.ac.at/ml/musik_M/Musikkritik.xml).

If we accept that the meaning of *Musikkritik* is changeable and contingent on the way others conceive it, I suggest to look at the functions of *Musikkritik*. Seen from that perspective, *Musikkritik* is defined according to its purpose to others. I wish to emphasise this point: *Musikkritik* has long since substantiated ulterior academic motives (cf. infra), but we must not ignore that (aesthetic) *Kritik*, qua institution, must meet a chief dialogic expectation: to pass on information, e.g. in the form of appraisals or judgements.<sup>64</sup> *Musikkritik*, in that respect, is never an isolated entity - it does not simply mean, but always means something to someone. In research on *Literaturkritik*, we find numerous examples of such a functional approach to *Kritik*.<sup>65</sup> According to Thomas Anz, *Literaturkritik* has six main functions: 1. information & orientation, 2. selection, 3. didactic mediation (i.e. pass on knowledge to readers), 4. didactic sanctioning (i.e. evaluation), 5. stimulating reflection & communication and, finally, 6. entertainment.<sup>66</sup> Steffen Neuhaus proposes a similar functional typology. Although he only distinguishes four main functions, his model essentially runs parallel to Anz' division. Neuhaus discerns orientation (Anz: 1 & 2), information (Anz: 3), – not unsurprisingly – 'Kritik' (Anz: 4 & 5) and entertainment (Anz: 6).<sup>67</sup> The analysis of *Musikkritik* gains much from this functional understanding of *Kritik*. As such, I submit the following five functions of *Musikkritik*: 1. orientation, 2. selection, 3. reporting & evaluation (both didactic and axiological) and 4. entertainment. The fifth function I distinguish does not appear in the typologies of Anz and Neuhaus, but is proper to *Musikkritik* itself: 5. translation. In comparison to *Literaturkritik*, the subject and medium of *Musikkritik* (music and written language, respectively) rely on different semiotic systems. In order to make music 'kritikfähig', *Musikkritik* first of all needs to translate music into a linguistically intelligible format. While every form of *Kritik* is essentially hermeneutic (especially in a persuasive sense, namely that the reader needs to grasp of the author's opinion), linguistically 'making sense' of the musical material is the main duty of the translative function in *Musikkritik*. I will point out that this function is also of crucial pragmatic importance in the communication with the reader (cf. Part 2). *Musikkritik* does not passively accept the functions others bestow on it, however. It can conversely appeal to certain functions in order to justify its presence. *Musikkritik* carves out an identity for itself which it enforces discursively: the textual organisation reflects on the role it seeks to play in the public

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<sup>64</sup> cf. Monika Neukirchen: 'Die Geburt der Kritik aus dem Geiste des Gesprächs'. In: *Hat Literatur die Kritik nötig? Antwort auf die Preisfrage der Deutschen Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung vom Jahr 1987*. Frankfurt am Main: Luchterhand 1989, pp. 115-160.

<sup>65</sup> cf. also 1.2.2.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas Anz: 'Theorien und Analysen zur Literaturkritik und zur Wertung'. In: *Literaturkritik. Geschichte, Theorie, Praxis*, ed. by Thomas Anz and Rainer Baasner. München: Beck 2004, p. 195-196.

<sup>67</sup> Steffen Neuhaus: *Literaturkritik. Eine Einführung*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004, p. 167-171.

sphere. Anz observes a similar congruity between function and discourse in *Literaturkritik*.<sup>68</sup> My dissertation will take up these self-reflexive elements and employ them to assess the discursive self-fashioning of the *Musikkritiker* (cf. 2.1).

A literary analysis of *Musikkritik* requires a fundamental openness to different disciplines and methodologies. All in all, comprehensive studies on the topic still lack. The *status quaestionis* is predominantly made up of isolated case studies. Main research incentives come from musicology and mainly home in on the history of *Musikkritik*. Paradoxically enough, an exhaustive historiographic survey of the field remains a key desideratum. In the lemma on 'periodicals',<sup>69</sup> *Grove Music Online* compiles a detailed list of music journals and newspapers worldwide. Compared to that, its entry on music criticism is rather short.<sup>70</sup> To this day, the most exhaustive, historical account of *Musikkritik* in the German-speaking territory is Max Graf's *Composer and Critic* (1947).<sup>71</sup> Graf was a pupil of Eduard Hanslick and Guido Adler.<sup>72</sup> He had been a *Musikkritiker* himself before he fled from Vienna<sup>73</sup> to New York in 1938. In an engaging, though sometimes somewhat dramatic

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<sup>68</sup> "Literarische Kommunikation hatte schon vor der Entstehung der modernen Literaturkritik selbstreflexive Elemente in dem Sinn, daß sie von öffentlicher Kommunikation über Literatur begleitet wurde. Im 18. Jahrhundert entwickelt sich die Kommunikation über Literatur zu einem relativ eigenständigen System mit spezialisierten Institutionen, Funktionen und Handlungsrollen" (Anz: *Theorien und Analysen zur Literaturkritik*, p. 197).

<sup>69</sup> cf. Imogen Fellinger et al.: 'Periodicals'. In: *Grove Music Online*., retrieved July 28 2016, from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/21338>.

<sup>70</sup> Maus: *Criticism*, retrieved July 28 2016 from <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40589>.

<sup>71</sup> Max Graf: *Composer and Critic. Two hundred years of musical criticism*. London: Chapman and Hall 1947.

<sup>72</sup> Graf himself introduces Hanslick and Adler as his patrons of nobility. Legitimising his work before the reader audience, he titles the first chapter of *Composer and Critic* 'The Authors presents his Credentials' and devotes it to the story of his training as well as his practical experience and expertise as *Kritiker* (cf. Graf: *Composer and Critic*, p. 15-29). In reality, Graf was not necessarily an adept of Hanslick's. Helmut Fiechtner mentions that Graf started his career as *Musikkritiker* with several biting polemics against Hanslick (cf. Helmut A. Fiechtner: 'Österreich'. In: *Symposion für Musikkritik*, ed. by Harald Kaufmann. Graz: Institut für Wertungsforschung 1968, p. 85) – an oedipal patricide, if ever there were one.

<sup>73</sup> In Vienna, Graf was part of Freud's *Psychologische Mittwoch-Gesellschaft*. His son, the stage director Herbert Graf, was 'Der kleine Hans', the subject of Freud's pioneering essay on child sexuality (cf Sigmund Freud: 'Analyse der Phobie eines fünfjährigen Knaben. (Der kleine Hans)'. In: *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschung* 1/1 (1909), pp. 1-109). For more on the relation between Graf and Freud see Julie Nagel: *Melodies of the Mind: Connections Between Psychoanalysis and Music*. London/New York: Routledge 2013, p. 15-17 and Laurence A. Rickels: *The Devil's Notebooks*. Minneapolis: University Press 2008, p. 112-130.



style,<sup>74</sup> Graf offers a concise history of German *Musikkritik*.<sup>75</sup> He pays particular attention to its institutional organisation, e.g. to the appearance of the first musical magazines or the public competition and tension between composers and critics (hence the title of the study). The lack of comprehensive, historical overviews is partially amended by the great number of studies that home in on practices of *Musikkritik* at a distinct moments in time.<sup>76</sup> Notable examples are Ian Bent's highly acclaimed volumes on musical analysis and Sanna Pederson's dissertation about music criticism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>77</sup> Other popular topics

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<sup>74</sup> Graf introduces the conflict between Bach and J. A. Scheibe as follows, for instance: "Now the stage is set for the conflict between Bach and Scheibe. The bell rings and the curtain rises, with the audience hissing, in accordance with the naïve theater usage, when the villain appears on the scene: the villain here, it goes without saying, is the music critic" (Graf: *Composer and Critic*, p. 79).

<sup>75</sup> Graf includes brief introductions to contemporary *Musikkritik* in other countries in a separate chapter (cf. *ibid.*, p. 264-321).

<sup>76</sup> Pre-war dissertations commonly explored the origins of *Musikkritik* (e.g. Ferdinand Krome: *Die Anfänge des musikalischen Journalismus in Deutschland*. Leipzig: Pöschel & Trepte 1897; Helmut Andres: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Musikkritik*. Dissertation. Heidelberg 1938). That interest has not dwindled since, cf. Dagmar Schenk-Güllich: *Anfänge der Musikkritik in frühen Periodika: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach den formalen und inhaltlichen Kriterien von Musikkritiken der Tages- und Fachpresse im Zeitraum von 1700 bis 1770*. Dissertation. Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg 1972; Hans-Günter Ottenberg (ed.): *Der kritische Musicus an der Spree: Berliner Musikschritftum von 1748 - 1799*. Leipzig: Reclam 1984; Holger Böning: *Der Musiker und Komponist. Johann Mattheson als Hamburger Publizist: Studie zu den Anfängen der Moralischen Wochenschriften und der deutschen Musikpublizistik*. Bremen: Lumière 2014.

<sup>77</sup> cf. Ian Bent (ed.): *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century*. 2 Volumes. Cambridge: University Press 1994; Sanna Pederson: *Enlightened and Romantic Music Criticism, 1800-1850*. Dissertation. University of Pennsylvania 1995.

include the phenomenology of the institution,<sup>78</sup> musical aesthetics<sup>79</sup> and reception studies.<sup>80</sup>

Compared to other forms of *Kritik*, such as *Literaturkritik* or *Kunstkritik*, *Musikkritik* has received little attention in literary studies itself. Literary scholars mostly single out cross-sections of *Musikkritik* and subsequently examine distinct motifs and tropes. A favoured period, in particular, is the transition from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Corina Caduff

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<sup>78</sup> The phenomenological category, as I call it, probes the role of *Musikkritik* in the present: what is it capable of, what are its duties and how far does its scope reach? A first trend champions a **systematic take on *Musikkritik***. Such studies draw up a typology that casts *Musikkritik* as an interaction between abstract, invariable roles and instances, e.g. Werner Braun: *Musikkritik: Versuch einer historisch-kritischen Standortbestimmung*. Köln: Gerig 1972; Lutz Lesle: *Der Musikkritiker - Gutachter oder Animateur? Aspekte einer publikumpädagogischen Handlungstheorie der Musikpublizistik*. Hamburg: Verlag der Musikalienhandlung Wagner 1984; Robert D. Schick: *Classical music criticism: with a chapter on reviewing ethnic music*. New York: Garland 1996; Michael Custodis: *Musik im Prisma der Gesellschaft: Wertungen in literarischen und ästhetischen Texten*. Münster/New York/München et al.: Waxmann Verlag 2009; Daniel Krause: *Marginalien zur Musikkritik: ein Bericht mit Ergänzungen*. München: AVM 2012. Often, such phenomenological studies, moreover, are written renditions of **symposia** that discuss the *Musikkritik* of a certain nation (e.g. Germany, USA) and engage the topic with the necessary **philosophical reflection**, cf. Richard Frederic French: *Music and criticism: a symposium*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press 1948; Theodor W. Adorno et al.: *Symposion für Musikkritik*. Graz: Akademie für Musik und Darstellende Kunst 1968; Kingsley Price: *On criticizing music: five philosophical perspectives*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1981. A third research tradition in this category, finally, homes in on the **linguistic properties of *Musikkritik***, cf. Gabriele Böheim: *Zur Sprache der Musikkritiken. Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten der Bewertung und/oder Beschreibung*. Innsbruck: Institut für Germanistik, Universität Innsbruck 1987; Christiane Thim-Mabrey: *Grenzen der Sprache - Möglichkeiten der Sprache : Untersuchungen zur Textsorte Musikkritik*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 2002; Susan Holtfreter: *Die Musikkritik im Wandel: eine soziologisch-textlinguistische Untersuchung*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang Edition 2013; Inesa Šeškauskienė, Totilė Levandauskaitė: 'Conceptualising Music: Metaphors of Classical Music Reviews'. In: *Studies About Languages* 23 (2013), pp. 78-88.

<sup>79</sup> Examining more than 1300 reviews, Mary Sue Morrow meticulously investigates the aesthetics of instrumental music in the *Musikkritik* of the late 18th century. She argues that an anti-mimetic discourse takes hold in the various texts. This discourse anticipates the aesthetics of absolute music that would dominate 19th-century musical thinking (cf. Mary Sue Morrow: *German music criticism in the late eighteenth century. Aesthetic issues in instrumental music*. Cambridge: University Press 1997). Other examples of studies that employ *Musikkritik* to determine the musical aesthetics of a given period in time include Werner Abegg: *Musikästhetik und Musikkritik bei Eduard Hanslick*. Regensburg: Bosse 1974; Robin Wallace: *Beethoven's Critics: Aesthetic Dilemmas and Resolutions During the Composer's Lifetime*. Cambridge: University Press 1986; Abigail Chantler: *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Aesthetics*. Burlington: Ashgate 2006; Mihaela Irina: *19th-century Music Criticism and Aesthetics: Mutual Influences*. Master Thesis. McMaster University 2006.

<sup>80</sup> On a similar note, researchers draw on *Musikkritik* to examine the contemporary reception of composers or social groups, cf. Angelika Varga-Behrer: *"Hut ab, ihr Herren, ein Genie": Studien zur Chopin-Rezeption in der zeitgenössischen Musikpresse Deutschlands und Frankreichs*. Mainz/London/Berlin et al.: Schott 2010; Samuel Weibel: *Die deutschen Musikfeste des 19. Jahrhunderts im Spiegel der zeitgenössischen musikalischen Fachpresse*. Berlin/Kassel: Merseburger 2006; Jürgen Rehm: *Zur Musikrezeption im vormärzlichen Berlin: die Präsentation bürgerlichen Selbstverständnisses und biedermeierlicher Kunstanschauung in den Musikkritiken Ludwig Rellstabs*. Hildesheim: Olms 1983.

argues that the increase in *Musikkritiken* and music-critical periodicals at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is in part due to the thorough reflection on the textualisation of visual arts and music (e.g. A.W. Schlegel, Karl Philipp Moritz) in aesthetic philosophy.<sup>81</sup> Nicolas Gess, for her part, traces the topos of ‘harmful music’ in literature and *Musikkritik*.<sup>82</sup> Although a musicologist, Holly Watkins explores how the metaphor of ‘depth’ strings together the axiological and analytical rhetoric of *Musikkritik* with other (e.g. nationalist) discourses.<sup>83</sup> A second line of literary research examines writers that also happened to write *Musikkritik*, most commonly E.T.A. Hoffmann (who was a writer, composer and *Musikkritiker* alike)<sup>84</sup> and Heinrich Heine (who did not have an outspoken musical talent, but as a true factotum did try his hand at a number of *Musikkritiken* and feuilletons).<sup>85</sup> This dissertation, too, mounts a synchronic comparison of Schumann and Wagner. To that aim, however, I will also go on research results in more chartered academic territories, such as *Literaturkritik*. In that regard, my methodology premises a comprehensive take on the discursive organisation of *Musikkritik* as a whole.

First of all, I will read Schumann’s and Wagner’s writings as *Musikkritik*. On first sight, this statement does not herald a bold undertaking. As we have seen, however, existing scholarship on Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik* has yet to assess how *Musikkritik* acts as a textual instance in its own right. So far, the institutional organisation of *Musikkritik* is a blank spot in secondary literature.<sup>86</sup> In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, budding research on *Musikkritik* keenly compiled lists of all the musical periodicals since the

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<sup>81</sup> Corina Caduff: *Die Literarisierung von Musik und bildender Kunst um 1800*. München: Wilhelm Fink 2003.

<sup>82</sup> Nicola Gess: *Gewalt der Musik: Literatur und Musikkritik um 1800*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach 2011.

<sup>83</sup> Holly Watkins: *Metaphors of depth in German musical thought: from E. T. A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg*. Cambridge: University Press 2011.

<sup>84</sup> A collection of Hoffmann’s writings on music is published as E.T.A. Hoffmann: *Schriften zur Musik. Aufsätze und Rezensionen*, ed. by Friedrich Schnapp. München: Winkler 1977. Central studies in secondary literature include Peter Schnaus: *E. T. A. Hoffmann als Beethoven-Rezensent der Allgemeinen musikalischen Zeitung*. Wilhelmshagen/Salzburg: Musikverlag Katzbichler 1977; Michael Walter: ‘Musikkritik und Kanonisierung: Über Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmanns Rezension der Fünften Symphonie Beethovens’. In: *Musiktheorie* 12/3 (1997), pp. 255-265.

<sup>85</sup> cf. Michael Mann: *Heinrich Heines Musikkritiken*. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe 1971; Momath Thiam: *Heinrich Heines Malerei-, Literatur- und Musikkritiken: die Verbindung von Kunstreflexion und politischer Reflexion*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1988; Rainer Kleinertz: ‘Heines Musikberichte im Kontext der zeitgenössischen französischen und deutschen Musikkritik’. In: *Übergänge zwischen Künsten und Kulturen. Internationaler Kongress zum 150. Todesjahr von Heinrich Heine und Robert Schumann*, ed. by Henriette Herwig. Stuttgart et al.: Metzler 2007, pp. 609-617; Peter Uwe Hohendahl: ‘Über Musik sprechen: Heine als Musikkritiker’. In: *Harry ... Heinrich ... Henri ... Heine. Deutscher, Jude, Europäer*, ed. by Dietmar Goltschnigg. Berlin: Erich Schmidt 2008, pp. 209-219.

<sup>86</sup> We have such studies at our disposal for modern music journalism, but not for earlier *Musikkritik*; cf., for example, André Doehring: *Musikkommunikatoren: Berufsrollen, Organisationsstrukturen und Handlungsspielräume im Popmusikjournalismus*. Bielefeld: transcript 2011.

institution's inception.<sup>87</sup> This medial interest has remained topical throughout. In *Composer and Critic* (1947), Max Graf argues that the publishing expertise in Hamburg facilitated the publication of the first musical periodical ever, *Critica Musica*.<sup>88</sup> Gudula Schütz shows that the increase in independent, non-academic musical journals for the first time enabled *Musikkritik* to carve out a recognizable, institutional identity for itself.<sup>89</sup> Ulrich Tadday confirms this popularising trend and demonstrates that musical feuilletons in generalist, unspecialised newspapers were able to reach a greater layman audience.<sup>90</sup> Mediality will remain a significant institutional parameter in my analysis of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. Nevertheless, I will take the medial question along in a broader socio-historic investigation of music-critical discourse. The work of Habermas and Koselleck, in particular, will spur on a discursive take on the dialogue Schumann and Wagner conduct with the public sphere through *Musikkritik*. On the same note, I approach Schumann and Wagner as authors of *Musikkritik*, and not as composers who simply emulate literary models. Ultimately, the synchronic comparison of Schumann and Wagner brings together both authors in a broader exploration of the medial and textual organisation in the *Musikkritik* of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*Musikkritik* grants Schumann and Wagner the institutional legitimacy their judgements require. This assumption cues my discursive approach to their writings. In coining the critical process as a power play of 'savoir' et 'pouvoir', Michel Foucault famously conceives of *Kritik* as a discursive process of knowledge transfer. He alerts us to the control the *Kritiker* has over that knowledge.<sup>91</sup> Seen from that perspective, not only what Schumann and Wagner say in their *Musikkritiken* contentwise is of importance, but also how they speak about *Kritik* itself. Like any form of *Kritik*, *Musikkritik* is first and foremost a textual discourse that engages in a constant process of persuasion and self-legitimation. The paradigmatic interest in issues of aesthetic and biographic purport has crowded out the question how Schumann and Wagner justify the need for their *Musikkritik*, how they cast themselves in the authoritative role of *Musikkritiker* and, finally, how they interact with the reader. Literary studies has long since embraced the socio-discursive paradigm.<sup>92</sup> By the same token, recent research on *Literaturkritik* leads the way

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<sup>87</sup> cf. supra, footnote 76.

<sup>88</sup> Max Graf: *Composer and critic*, p. 42-56.

<sup>89</sup> cf. Gudula Schütz: *Vor dem Richterstuhl der Kritik: Die Musik in Friedrich Nicolais »Allgemeiner Deutscher Bibliothek«*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007, p. 77-96.

<sup>90</sup> cf. Ulrich Tadday: *Die Anfänge des Musikfeuilletons. Der kommunikative gebrauchswert musikalischer Bildung in Deutschland um 1800*. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1993.

<sup>91</sup> Michel Foucault: 'Que'est-ce-que la critique? [Critique et Aufklärung]'. In: *Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie* 84/2 (1990), p. 47-49.

<sup>92</sup> cf. Simone Winko: 'Diskursanalyse, Diskursgeschichte'. In: *Grundzüge der Literaturwissenschaft*, ed. by Heinz Ludwig Arnold, Heinrich Detering. München: dtv 1999, pp. 463-478; Hannelore Bublitz: *Das Wuchern der Diskurse:*

on how to read *Kritik* as a Bourdieusian field in which competitors vie to convey information and to bring their opinions into prominence.<sup>93</sup> Against that background, my dissertation assesses how Schumann and Wagner position themselves in the critical field and fashion their appearance in the text. To that aim, Chapter 2 outlines a methodology that casts the different textual participants as abstract, discursive agents. The rhetorical concept of ethos and Wayne Booth's work on textual identity, in particular, will enable us to examine the role authors and readers (are allowed to) play in the *Musikkritiken*.

Ultimately, I will analyse the discursive organisation of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* on the basis of the style in the texts. Style is here conceived as a denominator for a rhetorical and narratological analysis which will allow for a systematic account of the textual operations within the *Musikkritiken*. This combined approach ties in with recent methodological developments within stylistics, which aim to discuss the rhetorical concept of ethos as a type of self-imaging that involves narrative dynamics.<sup>94</sup> Thus, style obtains an intentional quality in my analysis in that it is always part of a discourse: authors use it as a way of talking about something, i.e. in support of a certain aim. To put it differently, I will take the individual texts as a point of departure. From there on, I will investigate how stylistic features shape Schumann's and Wagner's persona as *Musikkritiker* as well as the identity of the reader. (Auto)biographical documents, such as letters and diaries, will underpin conclusions I draw from the stylistic analysis of the *Musikkritik* itself. This text-immanent approach adheres to my discursive reading of the *Musikkritiken*: the role of the author in a private environment is a different one from the persona he stages in the public sphere (a disparity that Kant already touched upon in 1784). We shall see, for instance, that Wagner adapts his judgements and rhetoric to the different reader audiences he addresses. Rather than targeting a biographical study, I concentrate on how authors position themselves and their *Musikkritik* in the public sphere. In that context, too, I regard the reader as a discursive role, and not as a historic

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*Perspektiven der Diskursanalyse Foucaults*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus 1999. A more recent survey of socio-discursive theory in literary studies can be found in Markus Joch/Norbert Christian Wold: 'Feldtheorie als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft'. In: *Text und Feld. Bourdieu in der literaturwissenschaftlichen Praxis*, ed. by Markus Joch and Norbert Christian Wolf. Tübingen: Niemeyer 2005. For the self-fashioning of the author in this methodological context, see Carolin John-Wenndorf: *Der öffentliche Autor. Über die Selbstinszenierung von Schriftstellern*. Bielefeld: transcript 2014.

<sup>93</sup> cf. Dominic Berleemann: *Wertvolle Werke. Reputation im Literatursystem*. Bielefeld: transcript 2011. Exemplary case studies are e.g. Heribert Tommek: 'Trennung der Räume und Kompetenzen. Der Glaube an die Gelehrtenrepublik: Klopstock, Goethe, Lenz (1774-1776)'. In: *Text und Feld*, pp. 89-108 or Markus Joch: 'Ein unmöglicher Habitus. Heines erstes Pariser Jahrzehnt'. In: *ibid.*, pp. 137-158.

<sup>94</sup> e.g. Liesbeth Korthals Altes: *Ethos and narrative interpretation: the negotiation of values in fiction*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 2014; Marina Lambrou/Peter Stockwell: *Contemporary Stylistics*. London: Continuum 2010.

individual. Truth is, we know very little about the reader of *Musikkritik* in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. Recent studies have investigated the make-up of concert or opera audiences in the 19<sup>th</sup> century;<sup>95</sup> their reading habits, however, remain underreported. Ulrich Tadday has examined the readership of musical feuilletons (cf. supra). He provides no such data about *Musikkritik* itself, however. Because the profile of the historic reader of *Musikkritik* is largely undocumented and given that I focus on *Musikkritik* as an instance of persuasion and pragmatics, I happen upon the reader of *Musikkritik* as a discursively prefigured agent.

## Objectives

The central aim of this dissertation is to mount a literary analysis of the *Musikkritik* that Robert Schumann and Richard Wagner wrote. In this respect, I pursue three, interrelated objectives.

My primary objective is to examine the texts for what they first and foremost are: *Musikkritik*. I will read the texts as a journalistic environment in and through which authors convey an opinion to peers in the public sphere. I shall specifically examine how Schumann and Wagner fashion a discursive identity as *Musikkritiker* and how they employ that persona as an argumentative instrument to persuade the reader.

Second of all, I intend to assess how *Musikkritik* operates as a text. I will examine the style of *Musikkritik*, how that style relates to other critical institutions and to what extent it affiliates to other critical discourses. This objective enables us to chart the stylistic features of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* within a general inquiry into the organisation of *Musikkritik* around mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, a chapter that has thus far remained underexposed.

In that regard, finally, I understand this study as a prolegomenon to a literary analysis of *Kritik*, in general. *Kritik* is an evaluative practice that comes in many forms (e.g. pamphlets, treatises, letters) and genres (e.g. review, editorial, feuilleton). My methodology reconciles the reporting function of *Kritik* with the (self-)representation of authors. In that respect, I will highlight the performative dimensions of *Kritik*: authors or readers are discursive agents that (self-)legitimise their roles in the critical process.



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<sup>95</sup> cf. Hans Erich Bödeker/Patrice Veit/Michael Werner (ed.): *Le concert et son public: mutations de la vie musicale en Europe de 1780 à 1914 (France, Allemagne, Angleterre)*. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme 2002; Sven Oliver Müller: *Das Publikum macht die Musik. Musikleben in Berlin, London und Wien im 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2014.

This dissertation consists of two parts that each highlight different discursive functions of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. The first part addresses the relation between *Musikkritik* and *Musikkritiker*. In the first chapter, I investigate how Schumann and Wagner justify the presence of their *Musikkritik*. A survey of socio-historic approaches to *Kritik* and recent studies about the function of *Kritik* prefaces a general discussion on *Musikkritik* as an institution of the public sphere. In that context, I particularly explore how *Musikkritik* relates to *Literatur-* and *Kunstkritik* in terms of discursive organisation. Concrete analyses consequently examine how Schumann and Wagner position their critical writings 'in the field'. Both authors promote their *Musikkritik* as new and revolutionary in order to legitimise its necessity. The medial parameter, however, emerges as a central fault line, I argue. Schumann employs the full institutional weight of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* to eliminate competitors, whereas Wagner advances a more pragmatic understanding of *Musikkritik* that adapts itself easily to any given medium.

Chapter 2 subsequently turns to the persona of the *Musikkritiker*. Drawing on concepts of textual authorship in rhetoric and narrative studies, I propose that Schumann and Wagner, as authors, project an image of themselves into the text. This image materialises as a discursive persona that we generally label as 'the *Musikkritiker*'. The abstract mediation of identity should be seen as a general discursive trait of *Kritik*. As I will show by means of concrete case studies, the *Kritiker* is above all a role that the author plays and through which he validates his suitability as *Kritiker* and asserts his authority. Thereupon, the second chapter analyses the appearance of Schumann and Wagner as *Musikkritiker*. On the one hand, we will focus on the reviews that Schumann signs with his own name. Schumann asserts his own consistency by entering into a retrospective competition with his former critical self. As such, he hermeneutises his own judgements and canonises the reputation of the NZfM at the same time. On the other hand, we will trace the different identities Wagner assumes between 1840 and 1850. In that decade, his persona in the public sphere goes through significant changes. While in Paris (1839-1842), he assumes an ethos of outsider which he enforces through the journalistic persona of the correspondent. By the end of the decade, by contrast, Wagner fashions himself as a ruminating theoretician. However, I will draw attention to a persistent discursive undercurrent that Wagner uses to vindicate his already available compositions in the context of the visionary, aesthetic reforms he proposes.

In what I call the Intermezzo of this dissertation, I investigate the 'Unsagbarkeitstopos' in Romanticism from the vantage point of *Musikkritik*. Around 1800, philosophers and writers criticised the inadequacy of verbal expression. In its place, they conceived music as the paragon of the absolute and the infinite, a source of pure emotion. This assumption gave rise to the infamous 'Unsagbarkeitstopos', the belief that music could not be captured through day-to-day verbal expression, but only by a language that is poeticised in fiction. *Musikkritik* could never rise up to those aesthetic demands, however. Given its inherent referentiality (in that it is always geared towards real, concrete objects), I will

argue, *Musikkritik* undermines the main premises of Romantic musical aesthetics and voids the essence of the Romantical itself - it categorically needs to render music sayable. The Intermezzo starts from the case study of E.T.A. Hoffmann's and Robert Schumann's *Musikkritik* in order to examine how the aesthetic demand for non-discursivity yields to a pragmatic need for discursivity. Hoffmann and Schumann fervently search for new ways of mediation of music through language, I will show. They experiment with the combination of different semiotic systems (e.g. the inclusion of score excerpts and musical notation) and eventually metaphorise music into a text itself. In verbalising music-critical discourse, Hoffmann and Schumann develop a precise and highly analytic, rhetorical apparatus that prepares late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, proto-musicological models of Heinrich Schenker, for example. The position of the Intermezzo between Part I and II of this dissertation was not chosen randomly: it illustrates that *Musikkritiker* do not solely set out to dogmatically impart their own understanding of the musical material; in the first place, they ensure that their opinions are intelligible to the reader.

The second part of this dissertation concentrates on the interaction between the *Musikkritiker* and the reader in greater detail. To that aim, I address the specific profile of the reader in *Musikkritik*, to wit that of second-hand listener. Chapter three examines how Schumann and Wagner increase the argumentativity of their *Musikkritik* by prefiguring the profile of their readers. They rely on a radically opposed outreach to the reader. Schumann preselects his reader audience by combining an anti-masses rhetoric with a technical discourse. An anti-amateur, 'Philister'-rhetoric provides a negative model of identification for the reader while musical examples and a technical rhetoric reinforce that effect by speaking to a technically well-versed readership. Wagner, for his part, strikes an appeasing attitude towards his readers. Writing for both German and French periodicals, he carefully tailors his arguments and his appearance as *Musikkritiker* to the respective reader audience.

The fourth chapter, finally, assesses to what extent Schumann and Wagner allow readers to become involved in the *Musikkritiken*. Academic consensus has it that Schumann and Wagner are elitist *Kritiker* who impose their views on the reader. I will argue, however, that their *Musikkritiken* host various strategies to foster the reader's judgement. The narrative scenography of the 'Davidsbund' features different characters who contradict each other. As there is no voice that brings the conflicting views together, however, Schumann creates a narrative gap that the reader is invited to fill with their own judgement. The say of the reader is less outspoken in Wagner's *Musikkritik*. Within a theoretical, historicising discourse, he involves the reader through a constant reactivation of the affective compass in the polemical register.



## Corpus

Apart from several exceptions, the texts I analyse in this dissertation stem from the period between 1830 and 1850. There are two major reasons why I focus on this particular time frame. First of all, Schumann resigns as editor of the NZfM in 1844. Discounting the article 'Neue Bahnen' of 1853, he quits as *Musikkritiker* from that moment on, as well. Wagner, for his part, clung to his pen until the bitter end, dying in 1883 as he was working on the essay 'Über das Weibliche im Menschlichen'. This study explores the discursive organisation of *Musikkritik* based on the comparative analysis between the authors' *Musikkritik*. In order to maintain this comparative perspective, Schumann's termination of all critical activities in the 1840s marks a logical end point. Secondly, *Musikkritik* undergoes a significant transformation in the 1850s. Once a predominantly evaluative practice, the institution more and more accommodated the proto- (and often pseudo-) scientific discussion of music that begins to crystallise around mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Whereas the composer-*Kritiker* was previously the profile of numerous authors (like Carl Maria von Weber or E.T.A. Hoffmann), scholars, such as Eduard Hanslick or Franz Brendel, now begin to take over the scene. Wagner's adjustment to this evolution is well documented in his *Musikkritik*, as I shall point out. A comprehensive comparison of *Musikkritik* as an evaluative and scientific discourse, respectively, however, would go beyond the scope of this dissertation.

I base my analyses as much as possible on the original versions of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. This, in itself, constitutes a break with previous research practices, which generally start from the anthologies Schumann and Wagner compiled later in their lives. Letters, diaries and other sources, such as entries in encyclopaedias, constitute a secondary corpus of texts in this study. It stands to reason that these documents, too, have a critical potential. One is perhaps even more inclined to candidly voice one's opinion in a letter or a diary than in public. The 'Ehetagebücher' of Robert and Clara Schumann, for instance, are certainly not devoid of poetic aspirations.<sup>96</sup> The spouses left messages and poems for each other, or privately debated issues of interpretation. But that is exactly why I elect to confine my study of *Musikkritik* to texts that appear in public (journalistic) genres, such as newspapers, periodicals or pamphlets. *Musikkritik* generates other discursive expectations than letters or diaries do. As I have indicated, *Musikkritik* is a discursive framework that legitimises personal judgement in the public sphere. Opinions are not categorically veritable in *Musikkritik*. I will show how authors attune their arguments to the presence of peers in the public sphere.

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<sup>96</sup> cf. Robert Schumann/Clara Schumann: *Ehetagebücher 1840-1844*, ed. by Gerd Nauhaus and Ingrid Bosch. StadtMuseum Bonn & Frankfurt am Main/Basel: Stroemfeld 2013.

I was able to retrieve most of the original prints of Schumann's *Musikkritik*. All volumes of the NZfM that Schumann edited and published in, are freely available online. In 1854, Schumann brought together his writings in the four-volume *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*.<sup>97</sup> The anthology constitutes a comprehensive collection of articles that Schumann licensed himself; in 1891, Gustav Jansen and in 1914, Martin Kreisig added new(ly discovered) texts.<sup>98</sup> In the process of including articles into the anthology, Schumann often made changes. For example, he added a narrative frame where previously there was none.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, he leaves out articles or suppresses contributions he had written as editor. As such, the original texts in the NZfM provide us with most authentic version of Schumann's *Musikkritik*. In addition, the *Retrospective Index to Music Periodicals* (RIMP) granted me access to articles Schumann wrote for other newspapers or periodicals. As the sole exception, the original copy of the text 'Die Davidsbündler' seems to be lost. The text is mostly quoted from the fragmentary reprint in Jansen's *Die Davidsbündler* (1883; cf. supra). Nevertheless, I have encountered a presumably full reprint in Alfred Schumann's (no connection) *Der junge Schumann. Dichtungen und Briefe* (1917).<sup>100</sup> The greatest hurdle in bringing Schumann's texts together has been his fondness for pseudonyms and narrative stagings. To deal with this issue, I matched the texts Schumann included in the *Gesammelte Schriften* (and thus identifies as his own) to their original versions in the NZfM. I thereupon drafted a list of pseudonyms and compared those to all the articles in the NZfM between 1834 and 1844. When quoting a text of Schumann, I will indicate the pseudonym(s) he used in parentheses. Thus, I obtained a list of 277 texts that, in all likelihood, are written by Schumann. Although I doubt that this list is exhaustive, it does represent the most comprehensive one to date.

Wagner wrote for a plethora of journals and periodicals, and moreover published texts at independent houses. This makes his critical oeuvre a somewhat more complicated philological labyrinth than Schumann's. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, Barry Millington and Jürgen Kühnel provide useful (in Kühnel's case, even annotated) overviews of all the texts

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<sup>97</sup> cf. Robert Schumann: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*. 4 Volumes. Reprint of the Leipzig-edition of 1854. Afterword by Gerd Nauhaus, register by Ingeborg Singer. Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel 1985.

<sup>98</sup> cf. Robert Schumann: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*. 2 Volumes, ed. by Gustav Jansen. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1891; Robert Schumann: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*. 2 Volumes, ed. by Martin Kreisig. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1914.

<sup>99</sup> In the *Gesammelte Schriften*, the text 'Das Komische in der Musik', for instance, suddenly introduces the character Eusebius, where this was not the case in the NZfM, cf. Robert Schumann (Fn.): 'Ueber den Aufsatz: Das Komische in der Musik von C. Stein im 60. Hft. Der Cäcilia.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 3, pp. 10-11 vs. Robert Schumann (Florestan): 'Das Komische in der Musik'. In: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, Vol. 1. Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel 1985, pp. 184-186.

<sup>100</sup> Alfred Schumann: *Der junge Schumann. Dichtungen und Briefe*. Leipzig: Insel 1917.

Wagner wrote.<sup>101</sup> For some publications, like those in the NZfM or the *Gazette et Revue Musicale de Paris*, I was able to consult online open access digitalisations. Other texts have been more difficult, or even impossible, to track down. As such, I was obligated to rely on their retrospective renditions in *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, still the most comprehensive collection of his prose. In the centennial year of Wagner's death, Dieter Borchmeyer edited a 10-volume jubilee edition of Wagner's writings.<sup>102</sup> Borchmeyer essentially offers a cross-section of the *Musikkritiken*: he selects a number of writings and conversely leaves others, like *Das Judenthum in der Musik* (1850/1869)<sup>103</sup>, out. For a dissertation that benefits from the broadest possible selections of texts, the Borchmeyer-edition is thus no option. The *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen* themselves exist in six editions.<sup>104</sup> Between 1871 and 1883, Wagner published a first anthology titled *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen*, comprising ten volumes (reprinted in four editions between 1871 and 1907). Between 1911 and 1916, Richard Sternfeld and Hans von Wolzogen added six volumes with libretti, sketches, miscellaneous articles and autobiographical texts (e.g. *Mein Leben*) that Wagner himself had omitted. I draw on the latter, sixteen-volume edition of Wagner's prose writings, the so-called *Volksausgabe*.

It must be noted, to conclude, that a historic-critical edition of both Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* remains a key desideratum. Klaus Kropfinger already published a critical edition of *Oper und Drama*.<sup>105</sup> At the University of Würzburg such a project now seems underway for all of Wagner's writings; a concrete date of publication has yet to be announced.

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<sup>101</sup> Nattiez' 'Catalog of Wagner's Writings' in Jean-Jacques Nattiez: *Wagner Androgyne*. Translated by Stewart Spencer. Princeton: University Press 1993, pp. 303-322. See also Barry Millington: 'A list of Wagner's writings, speeches, open letters and reviews'. In: *The Wagner Compendium*, ed. by Barry Millington. London: Thames & Hudson 1992, pp. 326-332. While Nattiez and Millington organise their text chronologically, Jürgen Kühnel divides the works per genre in different time frames, cf. Jürgen Kühnel: 'Wagners Schriften'. In: *Richard-Wagner-Handbuch*, ed. by Ulrich Müller and Peter Wapnewski. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner 1986, pp. 471-588.

<sup>102</sup> Richard Wagner: *Dichtungen und Schriften*, ed. by Dieter Borchmeyer. 10 Volumes. Frankfurt am Main: Insel 1983.

<sup>103</sup> *Das Judenthum in der Musik* was published two times with a gap of almost 20 years. The text originally appeared in the NZfM (then already edited by Franz Brendel); Wagner used the pseudonym 'K. Freigedank', cf. Richard Wagner (K. Freigedank): 'Das Judenthum in der Musik'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1850, Vol. 2., Nr. 19 (pp. 101-107) & Nr. 20, pp. 109-112. He reissued the text in 1869, this time under his own name, and added a lengthy epilogue, in which he describes the animosity against his person, for instance in the by Jews dominated German press, cf. Richard Wagner: *Das Judenthum in der Musik*. Leipzig: J. J. Weber 1869.

<sup>104</sup> Peter Jost: 'Die Editionen der Schriften Richard Wagners'. In: *Musikeditionen im Wandel der Geschichte*, ed. by Reinmar Emans and Ulrich Krämer. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2015, pp. 515-535 provides a more extensive overview of the different editions of the *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*.

<sup>105</sup> cf. Richard Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, ed. and comm. by Klaus Kropfinger. Stuttgart: Reclam 2000, p. 450.



## Part I: Writing ‘Musikkritik’

The first part of this dissertation focusses on the textual instances that initiate critical communication: *Musikkritik* (qua institution) and the *Musikkritiker*. I will specifically raise the question how Schumann and Wagner present their *Musikkritik* to the public sphere and how they introduce themselves as *Musikkritiker*. To that aim, each chapter addresses key methodological issues that any textual analysis of (*Musik*)*kritik* is exposed to. In the first chapter, I will propose to read *Musikkritik* as a discourse. Schumann and Wagner work within the margins of a public institution that regulates how authors validate their personal opinions as *Kritik*. On the one hand, I will examine how *Musikkritik* organises itself discursively, on the other hand, I will highlight the particular discursive strategies Schumann and Wagner use to oppose their *Kritiken* to those of their competitors. Chapter 2 subsequently homes in on the *Musikkritiker* himself. I shall approach the *Musikkritiker* as a discursive agent, i.e. a textual persona that authors use to broadcast the values and norms by which they judge. The case study of Schumann and Wagner additionally shows that the persona of the *Musikkritiker* also improves the standing of the author in the public sphere. Wagner, in particular, uses the instance to make room for his musical ambitions and to advertise his compositions.



## Chapter 1 ‘Musikkritik’ in the Public Sphere

This chapter explores the interaction between *Musikkritik* – as text – and the public sphere. The notion of *Kritik* in literary studies commonly centres on the institution of *Literaturkritik*: it examines the individuals that appraise literary works and the genres or media they employ to do so. The interest in *Musikkritik*, by contrast, has been less outspoken. This should not be a barrier to the goals of this chapter, however. Numerous studies on *Literaturkritik* have at the same time shed light on fundamental, textual properties of *Kritik*. Their observations will start off my inquiry into the critical component of *Musikkritik*. It stands to reason that we cannot straight out extrapolate the notion of *Kritik* as it is found in *Literaturkritik* to *Musikkritik*. Doing so would oversimplify the historical complexity of the matter. Still, there are deep-running analogies between both institutions that we must not overlook. *Musikkritik* for a long time capitalised on the successes of *Literaturkritik* and to a great extent recruited its readership from the same social ranks. Indeed, *Musikkritik* only fully emerged as an independent critical practice by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. 1.2.3). As a result, *Literaturkritik* left a notable discursive and medial mark on the textual organisation of *Musikkritik*. Research on *Literaturkritik* thus provides valuable insights that will help answer crucial questions I raise about Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik*: What notions of *Kritik* circulate in the public sphere in Schumann’s and Wagner’s time? How does *Kritik* operate and organise itself discursively at that time? To what extent can *Musikkritik* be placed in that tradition?

The textual understanding of *Kritik* that prompts my study will specifically focus on *Kritik* as a discourse, i.e. as a text that authors use to defend positions in the public sphere. That discursive foundation, I suggest, drastically affects the argumentative structure of the text. To make that case, this chapter first scrutinises the term ‘*Kritik*’ itself. Instead of one comprehensive definition, I shall approach the concept on the basis of its institutional, discursive and medial dimensions (1.1). Building on that premise, I home in on the relation between *Kritik* and the public sphere. The seminal works that Habermas and Koselleck wrote about the rise of *Kritik* in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (1.2.1) will preface a survey of recent studies on the discursive organisation of *Literatur* and – to a lesser extent – *Kunstkritik* (1.2.2). Thereupon, I apply those findings to the discursive identity of

*Musikkritik* itself (1.2.3). In the last two sections, finally, I will analyse how Schumann and Wagner introduce their *Musikkritik* to the public sphere and how they use their writings to carve out a position for themselves.

## 1.1 The notion of ‘Kritik’

What does ‘Kritik’ mean? There is no straightforward answer. Jochen Bär regards ‘Kritik’ as a semantical field, a ‘Wortfeld’. One ought not necessarily use the word itself, he argues, to indicate or describe the practice it stands for.<sup>1</sup> In fact, he discerns nine general meanings:

1. ‘kritische Betrachtung, Beurteilung eines Gegenstandes’ [...] speziell die philosophische Reflexion über Beschaffenheit und Grenzen der menschlichen Erkenntnisvermögen. Auch ‚Gesamtheit aller beurteilenden Beschäftigung mit einem Gegenstandsbereich‘, die dann tendenziell als Institution verstanden werden kann.
2. ‘wertende Betrachtung eines Kunstwerks [...]’
3. ‘Prüfung der Echtheit eines Kunstgegenstandes, vor allem eines literarischen Textes [...]’
4. ‘philosophische Abhandlung, Studie [...]’
5. ‘sprachliche Äußerung, in der die Beurteilung eines Kunstwerks oder mehrerer Kunstwerke vorgetragen wird’, insbesondere in schriftlicher Form und als spezifische Textsorte: >Rezension<.
6. ‘philologische Studie [...]’
7. ‘Etwas beurteilende (in der Regel: etwas tadelnde) Person, als einzelne oder auch als Typus [...]’
8. ‘Kritiker, Kunstrichter’ als Einzelner oder auch als Typus [...]
9. ‘Philologe; Historiker’ als Einzelner oder auch als Typus [...]<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> cf. “Warum es wichtig ist, nicht nur Einzelwörter wie *Kritik*, sondern Wortfelder zu untersuchen, liegt auf der Hand: Es kann je beispielsweise um Kritik gehen, ohne dass das Lexem *Kritik* Verwendung findet, beispielsweise, wenn von *Kunstrichtern*, *Kunsturteilen* oder überhaupt *Beurteilung* die Rede ist” (Jochen Bär: ‘Der romantische Kritik-Begriff aus linguistischer Sicht’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, ed. by Ulrich Breuer and Anastanca Tabarasi-Hoffmann (= Schlegel-Studien 8). Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh 2015, p. 94).

<sup>2</sup> Bär: *Der romantische Kritik-Begriff*, p. 97-98.



In contrast to these semantic definitions, Kurt Röttgers rather reluctantly<sup>3</sup> proposes a functional interpretation of *Kritik*: “Wollte man in Zusammenschau der Historie von Kant bis Marx eine Beschreibung des Begriffsfeldes versuchen, so würde man sagen müssen, daß Kritik in dieser Zeit zu tun hat mit Fragen der Logik, Ästhetik, Metaphysik, Grundlegung der Philosophie, poetischer Produktion und ästhetischer Beurteilung, Fragen der Philologie und der Sprachbedingtheit des Denkens, der Politik, Ideologie, kurzum mit allem, was wichtig ist”.<sup>4</sup> Here, the attempt to define *Kritik* already shifts from a semantic understanding of the concept to an interpretation of its purpose and usefulness.<sup>5</sup>

Maybe a historical approach, then, could shed a more light on the meaning of *Kritik*? Hardly. For, although there is little history to go on, the term acquired a plethora of meanings in the short time frame it entered the German language. The German word ‘Kritik’ occurs as late as 1718, when Gottfried Stolle first introduced the term in a philological sense.<sup>6</sup> Before that time, authors used Latin or French equivalents.<sup>7</sup> By 1830, the decade that Schumann and Wagner started writing *Musikkritik*, the word ‘Kritik’ had already experienced a series of considerable semantic changes. ‘Kritik’ derives from the Greek κρίνειν (*krínein*) and hails from a judicial context (‘to distinguish’, ‘to decide’, ‘to pass judgement’). The word retained that connotation throughout Antiquity and the Middle Ages.<sup>8</sup> Over time, however, its meaning expanded. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, ‘Kritik’ encompassed three general definitions.<sup>9</sup> First of all (and in the way Stolle uses it) as a

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<sup>3</sup> cf. “Insofern konnte auch nicht eine Wesendefinition von Kritik vorausgeschickt werden oder gar eine Beschreibung des Begriffsfeldes, in dem Kritik auftaucht. Eine Definition, die allen hier nachgezeichneten Begriffskonstellationen gerecht würde, wäre zwangsläufig so leer, daß sie unbrauchbar wäre, und eine präskriptive Definition ist für die Zwecke der Begriffsgeschichte natürlich von vornherein zu vermeiden” (Kurt Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis: zur Geschichte des Kritikbegriffs von Kant bis Marx*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1975, p. 15-16).

<sup>4</sup> Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Mark-Georg Dehrmann, for that matter, makes such a distinction on practical grounds. He distinguishes between ‘Literaturkritik’ (the institution of public, textual debate and discussion) and ‘Textkritik’ (philology). (cf. Mark-Georg Dehrmann: ‘Was ist Kritik? Zum Zusammenhang von ästhetisch-literarischer und philologischer Kritik in der Aufklärung und bei Friedrich Schlegel’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 73).

<sup>6</sup> cf. Gottfried Stolle: *Kurtze Anleitung Zur Historie der Gelahrtheit, denen zum besten so den Fryen Fürsten und der Philosophie obliegen*. Halle a. d. Saale, 1718. For a history of ‘Kritik’ in the German territory until the 18th century see Herbert Jaumann: *Critica. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Literaturkritik zwischen Quintilian und Thomasius*. Leiden, New York e.a.: Brill 1995; Giorgio Tonelli: ‘Critique’ and Related Terms Prior to Kant: A Historical Survey’. In: *Kant-Studien* 69 (1978), pp. 119-148.

<sup>7</sup> cf. Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 21.

<sup>8</sup> cf. Ulrich Breuer, Ana-Stanca Tabarasi-Hoffmann: ‘Einleitung’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> This survey predominantly paraphrases Kurt Röttger’s etymological overview of ‘Kritik’ in *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 19-23 and the entry by Helmut Holzhey on ‘Kritik’ in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. by Joachim Ritter and Karlfried Gründer. Volume 4. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1976, pp. 1250-1282. See also

philological method. Renaissance humanists developed a practice of ‘Textkritik’ (ars critica) that enabled them to reconstruct editions of the valuable manuscripts they rediscovered all over Europe. From this philological framework sprung a second, more aesthetic form of *Kritik*. Scholars like the Italian J.C. Scaliger strayed from the exclusively material approach to texts. Instead, they appraised the quality of writing of classical authors. Philological and aesthetic *Kritiker* step by step asserted their independence from the clerical authorities and proclaimed the free, ideologically unsullied use of ratio (e.g. Pierre Bayle’s *République des Letters*). Eventually, that rational understanding sparked a third, general understanding of *Kritik*, namely that of a logical, scientific process.

By the time Kant fell on the concept of ‘Kritik’ in his critiques, as a result, the word had already acquired a broad span of meanings during the sixty years that it took hold in German. Kant brought together all three connotations<sup>10</sup> in a philosophical oeuvre that not only probes the way we acquire knowledge, but that also questions the very legitimacy of thinking and judging itself. In that manner, Kant always thinks along the conditions for *Kritik* in a meta-*Kritik*. He set a lasting standard for the generations to come. Friedrich Schlegel and his circle, for that matter, revert to the practical, philological-aesthetic roots of *Kritik*.<sup>11</sup> They produce the master polemicist Lessing<sup>12</sup> against Kant and his abstract - ‘radikal’, as Röttgers calls it<sup>13</sup> - understanding of *Kritik*. For Schlegel, *Kritik* is

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Werner Schneiders: ‘Kritik’. In: *Lexikon der Aufklärung. Deutschland und Europa*, ed. by Werner Schneiders. München: C. H. Beck 1995, pp. 224-225.

<sup>10</sup> cf. “Die eigenartige Geschichte des Kritikbegriffs bei Kant, die von einer Analogie von ästhetischer und logischer bzw. metaphysischer Kritik ausgeht, in der ‘Kritik der reinen Vernunft’ zu einer autonomen Wissenschaft wird und so die ästhetische Kritik, die ja nur Kunst ist, hinter sich läßt, gerät in der ‘Kritik der Urteilskraft’ in eine Kollision der beiden Kritikbegriffe, wobei Kant es hier nur mit der transzendentalen Kritik zu tun haben will. *Kritik wird immer mehr zur ausschließlichen Darstellung der Quelle*. Das rückt Kants späten Kritikbegriff formal in die Nähe des philologischen Kritikbegriffs, ohne daß dieses allerdings von Kant selbst bemerkt und reflektiert würde.” (Röttgers, *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 48).

<sup>11</sup> Mark-Georg Dehrmann argues that Romantic *Kritik* added a philological dimension to work-centred critical practices like *Literaturkritik*. The philological component acts as a normative framework and assesses the historical individuality of individual works of art (cf. Mark-Georg Dehrmann: ‘Was ist Kritik? Zum Zusammenhang von ästhetisch-literarischer und philologischer Kritik in der Aufklärung und bei Friedrich Schlegel’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 71-89.). cf also Manuel Bauer: *Schlegel und Schleiermacher. Frühromantische Kunstkritik und Hermeneutik*. Paderborn: Schöningh 2011; Jure Zovko: ‘Zur Aktualität von Friedrich Schlegels Kritikkonzeption für die Geisteswissenschaften’. In: *Europäische Romantik. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven der Forschung*, ed. by Helmut Hühn and Joachim Schiederemair. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2015, pp. 185-198.

<sup>12</sup> cf. Antonie Magen: ‘Praktische Kritik und ihre theoretische Begründung aus dem Geist der Aufklärung. Zum Begriff der Kritik bei Friedrich Schlegel’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 55-63; Röttgers, *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 127. Especially informative is the chapter on ‘Die neue Rolle der Kritik’ in Lothar Pikulik: *Frühromantik. Epoche - Werke - Wirkung*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. München: Beck 1992, pp. 146-156.

<sup>13</sup> cf. Röttgers, *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 25-62.

a project that demands active contribution. It conflates art and life, poetry and society. Schlegel had no small expectations for *Kritik*: he believed that it could revolutionise the very notion of knowledge through its historicising and normative framework. At the same time, we notice that early 19<sup>th</sup>-century philosophers narrow *Kritik* down to its aesthetic dimensions. On the one hand, *Kritik*, needed to become a work of art in and of itself. On the other hand, they marked out *Kritik* as a practical evaluation of art, as August Wilhelm Schlegel emphasises in his *Vorlesungen über schöne Literatur und Kunst*: “Ganz einfach erklärt ist Kritik die Fertigkeit, Werke der schönen Kunst zu beurtheilen”.<sup>14</sup>

Still, 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Kritiker* tended to lose the absolute confidence in the transformative potential of *Kritik* that Kantian and Schlegelian thinking still have in common. When Schumann and Wagner turn to *Musikkritik* in the 1830s, *Kritik* occupies a more prominent role in the public sphere than ever before. The exponential rise in the number of journals undoubtedly contributed to its increasing popularity.<sup>15</sup> However, thinking about the function of *Kritik* itself becomes more decentralised and less regimented:<sup>16</sup> the notion of *Kritik* speaks from scattered practices<sup>17</sup> and no longer exists as the grand philosophical project that Enlightenment and (early) Romantic thinkers once proclaimed. Authors such as Karl Gutzkow, Heinrich Heine or Friedrich Engels primarily relied on *Kritik* to advocate social revolution. Nonetheless, the age of *Kritik* as an all-encompassing philosophical programme is over. *Kritik* becomes a lever for social reform, a weapon – as Marx put it –<sup>18</sup> of political opposition; it no longer constitutes an end in and of itself, however.

In Schumann’s and Wagner’s days, in other words, *Kritik* materialises in the act of passing judgement itself. Accordingly, a definition of the term varies from one author to another. Schumann continues a tradition of aesthetic *Kritik* and mainly writes reviews or belletrist essays. Wagner, on the other hand, in due time blends such reviews with

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<sup>14</sup> August Wilhelm Schlegel: *Vorlesungen über schöne Litteratur und Kunst. Erster Teil: Die Kunstlehre*. (= Deutsche Literaturdenkmale des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts 17). Heilbronn: Henninger 1884, p. 23.

<sup>15</sup> cf. René Wellek: *Geschichte der Literaturkritik 1750-1950*. Vol. 2: Zeitalter des Übergangs. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1977, p. XIII-XIV; Peter Uwe Hohendahl: ‘Literaturkritik in der Epoche des Liberalismus’. In: *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik (1730-1980)*, ed. by Peter Uwe Hohendahl. Stuttgart: Carl Ernst Poeschel 1985, p. 131-139.

<sup>16</sup> cf. “Das Junge Deutschland bildete, wie neuerdings mit Recht unterstrichen worden ist, keine Schule, es wurde eher durch die gemeinsamen Feinde zu einer identischen Position gebracht. So sind auch die literaturkritischen Arbeiten nicht aufeinander abgestimmt, es überwiegt eher gegenseitige Kritik.” (Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik in der Epoche des Liberalismus*, p. 144).

<sup>17</sup> Hohendahl, for instance, writes that *Kritik* becomes more and more entrenched in literature, turning both into a more unified form of critical expression: “Mit Recht ist drauf hingewiesen worden, daß die jungdeutschen Schriftsteller Literatur und Kritik enger verbinden, wobei die Kritik nicht so sehr poetisiert – wie dies in der romantischen Theorie der Fall war – als vielmehr die Literatur mit Elementen der Kritik durchdrungen werden soll” (Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik in der Epoche des Liberalismus*, p. 140).

<sup>18</sup> cf. Karl Marx: ‘Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung’. In: *Karl Marx- Friedrich Engels Werke. Band 1 (1842-1844)*, ed. by Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der SED. Berlin: Dietz 1981, p. 385.

political critique, philosophical musings and aesthetic theory. *Kritik* attains a flexible and transient quality. Indeed, in his only text on the poetics of *Musikkritik* (cf. infra 1.3.2.), Wagner labels *Kritik* as a necessary, but intermediate step in a broader aesthetic evolution: “Ehe es [das Kunstwerk der Zukunft] selbst aber noch nicht in das volle Leben getreten ist, haben wir Alle unser Ziel auch noch nicht erreicht: ist dieß jedoch im wirklichen Kunstwerke erreicht, steht das von uns Gewollte unfehlbar unser Gefühl bestimmend vor uns da, dann ist auch unsere Kritik zu Ende; [...] sie stirbt, weil das Kunstwerk lebt! –“.<sup>19</sup>

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to summarise, the concept of ‘*Kritik*’ rested more and more on the input of individual authors. Defining the term from a synchronic, let alone diachronic perspective thus becomes a challenging task. It would certainly take more than one dissertation to make true on that attempt. For that reason, I will propose three aspects of *Kritik* that I will specifically pay attention to when analysing Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik*.

In its most general sense, first of all, *Kritik* qualifies as an institution of the public sphere (cf. 1.2.). *Kritik* exerted a growing pressure on society from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. As it left its academic environment, it emerged as a new estate - to paraphrase Burke<sup>20</sup> - that defied the existing rule of the state and the church. *Kritik* developed distinct structures of representation in the public sphere, such as proper media outlets, editorial organisation and interaction with the reader. *Kritik* is not exclusively an evaluative practice; first and foremost, it constitutes a form of communication in and with the public sphere. With its emancipation into an institution of the public sphere came a set of expectations and responsibilities, which I categorised as five functions in the introduction.<sup>21</sup>

Secondly, and following on that institutional understanding, I will read *Kritik* as a specific discourse in the public sphere. In 1.2., I will claim that the language of *Kritik* on the one hand conveys opinions or judgements; on the other hand, it legitimises the very act of *Kritik* itself. Furthermore, I understand *Kritik* as a genre-wide discursive mode: it cannot be pinned down to one certain practice or text type. Rather, *Kritik* shows up in disciplines as diverse as philosophy, science or aesthetics. To support that argument, I will employ key concepts that Discourse Analysis, and more specifically Dominique Maingueneau has recently advanced (cf. 1.2.3.).

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Über musikalische Kritik. Brief an den Herausgeber der neuen Zeitschrift für Musik’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, ed. by Richard Sternfeld and Hans von Wolzogen. Volksausgabe. Vol. 5. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1916, p. 64.

<sup>20</sup> cf. Julianne Schultz: *Reviving the Fourth Estate. Democracy, accountability and the media*. Cambridge: University Press 1998, p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> I distinguished 1. orientation, 2. selection, 3. reporting & evaluation (both didactic and axiological), 4. entertainment, 5. translation.

My interpretation of *Kritik* as a genre-wide discourse, finally, will draw particular attention to the medial environment of critical texts. *Kritik* enters the public sphere in many different guises: in journals or books, as essays or full-fledged treatises. Wagner's critical oeuvre poignantly illustrates this medially transposable character. Wagner first wrote standard journalistic articles but gradually switched to pamphlets and essays. Moreover, authors often combine the discursive strategies through which they shape themselves as *Kritiker* with a broader, medial programme.<sup>22</sup> Schumann, for instance, was both the sole editor of and a prolific contributor to the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* and could attune both offices to each other. The task of this study, in that respect, is to determine how Schumann and Wagner engage with the medium of their *Musikkritik*: what discursive strategies stay consistent as the medial environment of *Kritik* changes and how does the medium conversely affect critical discourse?

## 1.2 'Musikkritik' as Institution of the Public Sphere

This section considers the role *Musikkritik* plays in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century society. I will first of all characterise *Kritik* as an institution of the public sphere. To that aim, the seminal, socio-historic works of Jürgen Habermas and Reinhart Koselleck lay the foundation for a discursive understanding of *Kritik*. Subsequently, I will survey how literary studies employ that socio-historic framework to analyse the function of *Kritik* in the public sphere. On the one hand, we will see, *Kritik* puts 18<sup>th</sup>-century philosophical premises about communication and interaction into practice. On the other hand, *Kritik* institutionalises its textual organisation and puts proper discursive traditions and medial formats in place. Based on this survey, we will concentrate on the discursive identity of *Musikkritik*. *Musikkritik* was a relatively new element of the public sphere. As an institution, it previously found its way to the public sphere through other critical channels and only gained footing by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As such, *Musikkritik* from early on developed an intrinsic openness to other discourses. Drawing on key concepts of

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<sup>22</sup> cf. "Einem gattungsübergreifend literarisierten Bewusstsein, das literaturexterne Gesichtspunkte und Vorgaben aus Rhetorik, Moral, Theologie und Nützlichkeitsforderungen aller Art nicht mehr zwingend als verbindliche Voraussetzung und Ziel der Gestaltung ansieht, entspricht einerseits ein Gefühl der totalen Verfügbarkeit literarischer Verfahren, andererseits aber auch der Eindruck einer Unverfügbarkeit der Sprache, der bis zur Sprachskepsis gehen kann. Beides ließe sich als Effekt der intellektuellen Entdeckung und freien Handhabung der Werkmedien Buch und Zeitschrift verstehen." (Breuer, Tabarasi-Hoffmann: *Einleitung*, p. 13); see also Magen: *Praktische Kritik*, p. 69.

Discourse Analysis, I will therefore outline a method that allows me to heed the discursive flexibility of *Musikkritik*.

### 1.2.1 Habermas & Koselleck: Forays into the Public Sphere

Jürgen Habermas' *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (1962) is a benchmark study of historical sociology. Habermas explores the rise and subsequent decline of bourgeois society in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century in Western Europe. He attempts to explain how modern democracies developed structures that enabled their citizens to interact with each other (between the lines, however, he just as well searches for an answer to the traumatic failure of democracy in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century). Just like Max Weber and his teachers at the Frankfurt School, but in contrast to Niklas Luhmann's more empiric 'Systemtheorie',<sup>23</sup> Habermas develops an ideal type of society. He takes examples from England, France and, of course, Germany, though not with the interest of writing the social history of each individual nation. He rather intends to uncover general processes of democratisation. *Kritik*, and literature in general, are one of the most pivotal achievements of the burgeoning 'Öffentlichkeit' since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. The latter facilitates the former, and the former fosters the circulation of the latter. *Kritik* is essentially the product of a shift in political power: the heart of governments moved from representative authority to public rule. In the Middle Ages, European governments ruled along the premise of representation: one central power (often symbolised and mediated by personal attributes, e.g. the monarch or the church)<sup>24</sup> exercised authority over its territory. The public sphere, then, comprised those areas in which these powers were (metaphorically) present: "Solange der Fürst und seine Landstände das Land 'sind', statt es bloß zu vertreten, können sie in einem spezifischen Sinne repräsentieren; sie repräsentieren ihre Herrschaft, statt für das Volk, 'vor' dem Volk"<sup>25</sup>. The representative public sphere – quite at odds with our conception of 'public' nowadays – initially left little room for privacy. Habermas does concede that representation "ist immer noch auf eine Umgebung angewiesen, vor der sie sich entfaltet".<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, it seems that in those early days of the Middle Ages, the idea of privacy was legally ill-conceived, partially due to economic

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<sup>23</sup> cf. Jürgen Gerhards: 'Öffentlichkeit'. In: *Politische Kommunikation in der demokratischen Gesellschaft: ein Handbuch mit Lexikonteil*, ed. by Otfried Jarren, Ulrich Sarcinelli and Ulrich Saxer. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1998, p. 269.

<sup>24</sup> Jürgen Habermas: *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft. Mit einem Vorwort zur Neuauflage 1990*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1990, p. 61.

<sup>25</sup> Habermas: *Strukturwandel*, p. 61.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, p. 65.

structures, such as serfdom. Western societies underwent decisive changes around the 15th century, however. The interest of Humanism in the very essence of reality counted as an early symptom of a gradual 'Strukturwandel'. The representative sphere retreated within the walls of the absolutist court, thus creating room for the formation of a private sphere *extra muros*. Religion became a question of private choice in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and heralded a first token of autonomy for the private citizen.

Habermas strongly ties in the emancipation of the public sphere with interaction and communicativity. "Öffentlichkeit konstituiert sich im Gespräch",<sup>27</sup> he observes. Moreover, the emancipation of the public sphere in modern times coincides with the rise of mercantilism and of the journalistic media that develop in its wake. The ever expanding structures of commerce heighten the need for "Dauerkontakte und Dauerkommunikation".<sup>28</sup> This continuous stream of information consolidates as 'Nachrichtenverkehr'. From that moment on, publicity is inextricably bound up with the public sphere:

Der neue Kommunikationsbereich fügt sich, mit seinen Institutionen des Nachrichtenverkehrs, den bestehenden Formen der Kommunikation ohne weiteres ein, solange das entscheidende Moment, Publizität, fehlt. Wie [...] von 'Post' erst die Rede sein kann, wenn die regelmäßige Gelegenheit zum Brieftransport dem Publikum allgemein zugänglich wird, so gibt es eine Presse im strengen Sinne erst, seitdem die regelmäßige Berichterstattung öffentlich, wiederum: dem Publikum allgemein zugänglich wird.<sup>29</sup>

The advent of the printing press stimulates a faster and wider proliferation of information and guarantees that the public can access that information. On the one hand, the publicity of the state goes through a "Mediatisierung der ständischen Öffentlichkeit."<sup>30</sup> The "Sphäre der öffentlichen Gewalt"<sup>31</sup> replaces the metaphorical, representative presence of authority. Of more decisive importance, however, is the coinciding expansion of the modern press industry, which turns information into a commodity.<sup>32</sup> State newspapers are established to counter and take control of the unregulated flow of information. Whether inadvertently or not, however, the authorities kindled a new understanding of 'Öffentlichkeit' in that manner: "Die Obrigkeit adressiert ihre Bekanntmachungen an 'das' Publikum, im Prinzip also an alle Untertanen; aber für gewöhnlich erreicht sie auf diesem

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>32</sup> cf. "Der Nachrichtenverkehr entwickelt sich ja nicht nur im Zusammenhang mit Bedürfnissen des Warenverkehrs, die Nachrichten selber werden zu Waren" (*ibid.*, p. 78).

Wege nicht den 'gemeinen Mann', sondern allenfalls die 'gebildeten Stände'. Zusammen mit dem Apparat des modernen Staates ist eine neue Schicht der 'Bürgerlichen' entstanden, die eine zentrale Stellung im 'Publikum' einnehmen".<sup>33</sup>

Habermas defines this new class as "von Anbeginn ein Leseublikum".<sup>34</sup> Their socially intermediary position gradually creates tensions between bourgeois city and the absolutist court. In the end, the bourgeois classes estrange themselves more and more from the official government and develop a political self-awareness:

Die Obrigkeit löst in dieser, von der merkantilistischen Politik in erster Linie betroffenen und beanspruchten Schicht eine Resonanz aus, die das Publicum, das abstrakte Gegenüber der öffentlichen Gewalt, sich als eines Gegenspielers, als des Publikums der nun entstehenden bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit bewußt werden läßt. Eine solche entwickelt sich nämlich in dem Maße, in dem das öffentliche Interesse an der privaten Sphäre der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft nicht mehr nur von der Obrigkeit wahrgenommen, sondern von den Untertanen als ihr eigenes in Betracht gezogen wird.<sup>35</sup>

The mouthpieces through which the bourgeois class expresses itself, define and dominate the self-awareness of its members. In *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, Habermas therefore argues that the modern public sphere was only ever 'public' as long as private citizens understood themselves as such: "Bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit läßt sich vorerst als die Sphäre der zum Publikum versammelten Privatleute begreifen".<sup>36</sup> The public sphere thus organises itself around a central dialogic premise of interaction. The notion of the 'Öffentlichkeit' as a "permanente Diskussion unter Privatleuten"<sup>37</sup> permeates Habermas' discussion of 18<sup>th</sup>-century bourgeois society. The reclusive courtly life and the subsequent decline of representativeness paved the way for new meetingplaces outside of absolutist walls. Private citizens gathered in coffee houses or salons, and cultivated their political awareness as they discussed a diverse range of topics.<sup>38</sup> In Germany, where the public severed its ties to the political regime less decisively, Habermas observes a tenacious tendency of resorting to a culture of secrecy. This "Arkanpraxis der Aufklärung"<sup>39</sup> is a strategy of self-preservation: the act of concealment guards the culture of rationality against state control. Habermas sees *Kritik* as a cornerstone of the public sphere's dedication to conversation and dialogue. *Kritik*, as a matter of fact, generates political

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<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, p. 81-82.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>38</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*, p. 96.



consciousness: “Diese [die bürgerlichen Schichten] bilden das Publikum, das aus jenen frühen Institutionen der Kaffeehäuser, der Salons, der Tischgesellschaften längst herausgewachsen ist und nun durch die Vermittlungsinstanz der Presse und deren professionelle Kritik zusammengehalten wird. Sie bilden die Öffentlichkeit eines literarischen Rasonnements, in dem sich die Subjektivität kleinfamilial-intimer Herkunft mit sich über sich selbst verständigt”.<sup>40</sup>

As art detaches itself from courtly influence, it gains a liberal, mercantile quality. Likewise, aesthetic *Kritik* acts as a space of negotiation: authors seek to win the graces of the layman and promote discussion to a central instrument of communication: “[D]ie Diskussion wird zum Medium ihrer [der Kunst] Aneignung. Die zahllosen Pamphlete, die Kritik und Apologie der herrschenden Kunsttheorie zum Gegenstand haben, knüpfen an die Salongespräche an und werden ihrerseits von diesen aufgenommen – Kunstkritik als Konversation”.<sup>41</sup> As with many other institutions of the public sphere, Habermas demonstrates how *Kritik* organises itself both professionally (e.g. with the emergence of the ‘Kunstrichter’, who is mouthpiece and teacher of the public in one, cf. 2.1.2.1) and medially, in periodicals.<sup>42</sup> Journals, of course, do not exclusively focus on artistic topics, but they also discuss themes of more general interest (current affairs, morals, ...). Dialogue, however, remains at the heart of them and sustains a cyclic pattern of debate: “Auch die Dialogform, die manche der Artikel beibehalten, bezeugt die Nähe zum gesprochenen Wort. Dieselbe Diskussion wird, in ein anderes Medium übertragen, fortgesetzt, um über die Lektüre wieder ins ursprüngliche Medium der Konversation einzugehen”.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p. 103-107.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, p. 106. In his later work, Habermas deepens his fundamentally dialogic understanding of communication. The idea that communication, and the way in which it organises itself, shapes and determines the public sphere – either in its past or present form – resurfaces in his theory of universal pragmatics. “Universalpragmatik”, Habermas says, “hat die Aufgabe, universale Bedingungen möglicher Verständigung zu identifizieren und nachzukonstruieren” (Jürgen Habermas: ‘Was heißt Universalpragmatik? (1976)’. In: *Vorstudien und Ergänzungen zur Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1984, p. 353). Habermas ties in his theory of ‘Universalpragmatik’ with the speech act theory of Austin and Searle. He determines the universal conditions that are required to reach an understanding between different interlocutors: “Die Universalpragmatik stellt mithin den Anspruch, die Fähigkeit erwachsener Sprecher zu rekonstruieren, Sätze derart in Realitätsbezüge einzubetten, daß sie die allgemeinen pragmatischen Funktionen der Darstellung, der Selbstdarstellung und der Herstellung interpersonaler Beziehungen übernehmen können. Diese kommunikative Kompetenz drückt sich u.a. in jenen Leistungen aus, die die Hermeneutik zu einer Kunstlehre stilisiert: nämlich darin, Äußerungen durch kontextgleiche Äußerungen derselben Sprache zu paraphrasieren oder in fremdsprachliche Äußerungen eines vergleichbaren Kontexts zu übersetzen” (Habermas: *Was heißt Universalpragmatik?*, p. 394-395). In the end, however, Habermas strays from Austin’s and Searle’s concept of illocution, to wit the notion that we do things in saying something (cf. J. L. Austin: *How to do Things with Words*. Oxford: Clarendon 1962). Habermas rejects their

In contrast to Habermas' all in all rather optimistic assessment of critical communication since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there are less positive views on the subject as well. In *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1947), Horkheimer and Adorno famously argue that the fatal fallacy of the Enlightenment lies in its instrumental, rational reasoning. Above all, the 18<sup>th</sup> century facilitated the creation of a super-individual, homogenous mass culture. Thus, it provided the ideal breeding ground for fascist regimes.<sup>44</sup> For Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik* is the dark horse of the rationality culture in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In *Kritik und Krise* (1959), he tries to come to grips with the modern crises of two World Wars, of fascism and – most importantly – of the Cold War: “Die gegenwärtige Weltkrise, bestimmt durch die polare Spannung der Weltmächte Amerika und Rußland, ist – historisch gesehen – Ergebnis der europäischen Geschichte”.<sup>45</sup> According to Koselleck, the crises of modernity date back to the Enlightenment, which propagated a utopian marriage of politics and *Kritik*, of rationality and morality. In doing so, the 18<sup>th</sup> century traded in self-reflexivity for hypocrisy. The French Revolution was the first crisis to spark off many more to come. From that moment on, the state hangs up a fictive image of unity, while, in fact, the system of opposition and partisanship spreads “Angst und [...] Terro[r]”.<sup>46</sup> *Kritik und Krise* opens with an idealised account<sup>47</sup> of the structure of society in absolutism. After the religious and civil wars of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, Koselleck claims, law and morality divided society. Whereas the absolutist government shouldered the former, the latter was handed over to the private citizen, who could now freely determine his religion and

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insistence on performance and does not agree that the success of an utterance is only achieved when the hearer complies with the intention of the speaker. Instead, he eliminates the performative aspect from the equation and argues that the success of interpersonal interaction relies on “sprachlich explizit[es] verständigungsorientiert[es] Handeln[n]” (ibid., p. 398), i.e. “kommunikatives Handeln” (Habermas: *Was heißt Universalpragmatik?*, p. 356). The objective of universal pragmatics is to establish the universal conditions under which ‘Verständigung’ leads to ‘Einverständnis’. In other words, Habermas does not reckon with the possibility that achieving this ‘Einverständnis’ might fail. On the contrary, the failure of ‘Einverständnis’ only allows strategic, pragmatic measures to intervene in the communicative process, e.g. a halt of communication or back-and-forth argumentation (cf. ibid., p. 356). Habermas alternatively focusses on the provisions for consensus: “Ich werde im folgenden den Diskurs ebenso wie das strategische Handeln vernachlässigen und nur konsensuelle Sprechhandlungen in Betracht ziehen” (ibid., p. 356).

<sup>44</sup> cf. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W Adorno: *Dialektik der Aufklärung: philosophische Fragmente*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag 1978.

<sup>45</sup> Reinhart Koselleck: *Kritik und Krise. Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1973, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Koselleck: *Kritik und Krise*, p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> A summary of the main lines of criticism on Koselleck can be found in Michael Schwartz: ‘Leviathan Oder Lucifer: Reinhart Kosellecks 'Kritik Und Krise' Revisited.’ In: *Zeitschrift Für Religions- Und Geistesgeschichte* 45/1 (1993), p. 37-40 and Sisko Haikala: ‘Criticism in the Enlightenment. Perspectives on Koselleck’s Kritik’. In: *Redescriptions. Yearbook of Political Thought and Conceptual History* 1 (1997), p. 76-84. For a reevaluation of Koselleck’s claims on the relation between Absolutism and Enlightenment see Haikala, p. 77-78, in particular.

contemplate about it. For Koselleck, the central architect of this separation is Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes ruptures “Gewissen” from “Politik”.<sup>48</sup> An act of grave consequences, for every subject irreparably gets split up into two identities, each one with its own domain of accountability: one time as a citizen, who obeys the law of the land, one time as an individual, who has free reign over his own attitudes and basic beliefs. Koselleck owes the crisis of modernity to the division between citizen and individual. The Enlightenment abused the moral freedom subjects received; it shrouded its ever excessive claim to political power in a veil of secrecy and mystery.<sup>49</sup>

Koselleck is much more wary of the dialogic emancipation of the public sphere than Habermas is. To him, the instrumentalisation of the arcane relies on structures of organised sociability. The private citizen reflects on religion and other moral issues together with peers. Within the confines that the absolutist state set, the public sphere turns into a sheltered platform for interaction and discussion:

Der Aufbruch der bürgerlichen Intelligenz erfolgt aus dem privaten Innenraum, auf den der Staat seine Untertanen beschränkt hatte. Jeder Schritt nach außen ist ein Schritt ans Licht, ein Akt der Aufklärung. Die Aufklärung nimmt ihren Siegeszug im gleichen Maße als sie den privaten Innenraum zur Öffentlichkeit ausweitet. Ohne sich ihres privaten Charakters zu begeben, wird die Öffentlichkeit zum Forum der Gesellschaft, die den gesamten Staat durchsetzt. Schließlich wird die Gesellschaft anpochen an die Türen der politischen Machthaber, um auch hier Öffentlichkeit zu fordern und Einlaß zu erheischen.<sup>50</sup>

It is quite a bleak view that Koselleck sketches in these lines. Indeed, he blames the Enlightenment for appropriating a political force and a political responsibility that it was not designed for, nor fit to cope with (as the course of history would demonstrate). Koselleck encounters the first encouragement of political subversion in John Locke’s theories on the position of the subject in the state. Locke introduces a moral law: next to the statutes of scripture and the rules that the government imposes on its subjects, he upgrades the will of the public sphere to law. According to Koselleck, Locke’s moral law constitutes an act of pure defiance. The public sphere as “dritte Gewalt”<sup>51</sup> undermines the institution of religion and the *raison d’état*. It forms a restless faction looming *intra muros*: “Die Bürger ordnen sich nicht mehr nu der Staatsgewalt unter, sondern sie bilden zusammen eine society, die ihre eigenen moralischen Gesetze entwickelt, die neben die

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<sup>48</sup> Koselleck: *Kritik und Krise*, p. 28.

<sup>49</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p. 47.

Gesetze des Staates treten".<sup>52</sup> The aura of secrecy that the Enlightenment cultivates and that Habermas views as a stylistic strategy of self-preservation,<sup>53</sup> is a central element of subversion in Koselleck's eyes: "Aufklärung und Geheimnis treten von Anbeginn auf als ein geschichtliches Zwilingspaar".<sup>54</sup> Civil disobedience crystallises in two exemplary societies: the Freemasons and the 'Gelehrtenrepublik'. The former, together with the Illuminati, mainly represent a physical power which works against the state from within. The Freemasons convene in a society that has its own rules and regulations and indirectly oppose the powers that be. The secrecy that shrouds them in mystery, makes them "de facto Gegner des absolutistischen Staates".<sup>55</sup>

In a much less tangible, yet in the long run more destructive way, the 'Gelehrtenrepublik', too, aspires to political influence. The main instrument of the 'Gelehrtenrepublik', says Koselleck, is *Kritik*. *Kritik* is an elusive mechanism that denounces the state under the guise of neutrality. It pretends to distance itself from politics<sup>56</sup> but in truth falls back on the prerogative of moral autonomy to undermine the state: "[D]ie Kritik [spart sich] zunächst aus dem Staate aus, um dann gerade auf Grund dieser Aussparung sich scheinbar neutral auf den Staat auszuweiten und ihn ihrem Richterspruch zu unterwerfen. Die Kritik [...] erliegt dem Schein ihrer Neutralität; sie wird zur Hypokrisie".<sup>57</sup>

For Koselleck, it is very clear: the inherent deception of *Kritik* is the mother of all modern crises. The hypocrisy of *Kritik* in the 18<sup>th</sup> century marks the end of a process that started near the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century with Richard Simon. Simon breaks with the religious philology of the Humanists. He regards truth as the result of ratio, not the privilege of scripture, and sees *Kritik* as a means to achieving that truth. Pierre Bayle

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<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>53</sup> Rather than undermining the polity, as Koselleck argues, Habermas contends that the secret societies of the Enlightenment protect its members from political repercussions: "Nicht sowohl die politische Gleichheit der Mitglieder als vielmehr ihre Exklusivität gegenüber dem politischen Bereich des Absolutismus überhaupt ist das Entscheidende: die soziale Gleichheit war zunächst nur als eine Gleichheit außerhalb des Staates möglich. Der Zusammenschluß der Privatleute zum Publikum wird deshalb im geheimen, Öffentlichkeit noch weitgehend unter Ausschluß der Öffentlichkeit antizipiert. Die für die Logen typische, aber auch bei anderen Bünden und Tischgesellschaften verbreitete Arkanpraxis der Aufklärung ist dialektischen Charakters. Die Vernunft, die sich in der rationalen Kommunikation eines Publikums gebildeter Menschen im öffentlichen Gebrauch des Verstandes verwirklichen soll, bedarf, weil sie jedes Herrschaftsverhältnis bedroht, selber des Schutzes vor einer Veröffentlichung. Solange die Publizität ihren Sitz in der fürstlichen Geheimkanzlei hat, kann sich Vernunft nicht unvermittelt offenbaren. Ihre Öffentlichkeit ist noch auf Geheimhaltung angewiesen, ihr Publikum bleibt, selbst als Publikum, intern" (Habermas: *Strukturwandel*, p. 95-96).

<sup>54</sup> Koselleck: *Kritik und Krise*, p. 49.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>56</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, p. 82

underlines the rational legitimacy of *Kritik* even more forcefully. He conceives of *Kritik* as the ultimate agency of reason and upgrades it to a potentially direct adversary of the rational state.<sup>58</sup> ‘Potentially’, for Bayle still draws a strict line between *Kritik* and politics. *Kritik* is concerned with “der unpolitische Kampf um die Wahrheit”;<sup>59</sup> it is an autonomous, yet virtual power, as epitomised by the metaphor of the ‘Gelehrtenrepublik’. Bayle views *Kritik* as a productive method that stimulates all intellectual progress. Koselleck, however, exposes the moral dark side of the progress that *Kritik* advocates: “Die erst morgen zu findende Wahrheit enthebt den Kritiker heute jeglicher Schuld”.<sup>60</sup> Bayle, in Kosellecks eyes, sows the seeds of the excesses of reason and rationality that would come to determine modernity. As a matter of fact, Voltaire and his contemporaries soon abuse *Kritik* as a veil behind which *Kritiker* can unload their political responsibility or hide their true intentions. Voltaire writes *Kritik* under the guise of *Kunstkritik*. He seemingly steers away from political issues, but in reality makes use of the indirectness of *Kritik* to criticise church and state.<sup>61</sup> Diderot intensifies the rapprochement between *Kritik* and the public sphere. He brings about its complete “Wendung nach außen”.<sup>62</sup> He overturns the distinction between individual and citizen, one of the existential pillars in the absolutist state. Instead, he proclaims a new, critical public sphere that revolves around the distinction between individual and author. *Kritik* is thus elevated to a goal in and of itself and poses a fundamental threat to Enlightenment society. The public sphere drags down everything in its unifying wake: “Die Schriften verbergen nicht nur des Autors wahre Gedanken, weil die staatliche Zensur sie dazu zwingt, sondern die Schriften entfremden den Menschen, der sich in ihnen nicht mehr wiederfindet”.<sup>63</sup> *Kritik* stages an apophatic play of identity, in which the search for truth warrants a loss of subjectivity. The Enlightenment exteriorises this polarity and invokes a “epochalen Zwang zu dualistischer Aufspaltung”.<sup>64</sup>

To Koselleck, the institution of *Kritik* is nothing more than hypocrisy, the extension piece of an age in which political responsibility is always covered up by the hypocritical varnish of non-political interests. This illusion would be maintained until the French Revolution. Koselleck remarks a gradual usurpation of political involvement and the abolition of absolutism in the Enlightenment. In Germany, the Illuminati subscribe to a teleological rationale that broadcasts the elimination of absolutist reign as a political fact and an unalienable right.

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<sup>58</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>61</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 94.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, p. 98.



Quite understandably, neither Habermas nor Koselleck mention *Musikkritik*.<sup>65</sup> Their study looks at *Kritik* as an institution of society and as a mode of thinking, not at its different manifestations. They focus, in other terms, on the presence of *Kritik* in the public sphere. What, then, do we take from Habermas and Koselleck? I wish to highlight two main issues that lay the groundwork for a discursive approach to *Kritik*.

Although both in a different way and with different emphases, Habermas and Koselleck show that *Kritik* is a formative part of the public sphere. Habermas affirms the position that 18<sup>th</sup>-century critical poetics assigned to *Kritik*. He counts it among the “Institutionen der Öffentlichkeit”<sup>66</sup> that embody the pedagogic goals of the Enlightenment. *Kritik* negotiates between the domestically or groupwise fostered judgement of the individual on the one hand, and public opinion on the other hand.<sup>67</sup> Koselleck, for his part, emphasises that Enlightenment *Kritik* first and foremost indulges in acts of political subversion. In that regard, *Kritik* is not the logical outcome of Enlightenment philosophy, as Habermas would have it; it rather pursues a proper hidden agenda and attempts to undermine the very society that allows and enables it. *Kritik*, it can thus be expected, relies on a fundamental self-assertion and self-reflexivity. The transference from personal into public opinion and the public warrant that *Kritik* requires to do so, leaves traces in the discourse. These traces expose how *Kritik* legitimises its presence and relevance apropos its peers in the public sphere. I will examine them in 2.1.2 by means of emblematic discursive agents of *Kritik*.

The fact that *Kritik* interacts with the public sphere points to its fundamental intersubjectivity, a second prominent feature that Habermas, in particular, stresses. Popular venues of rendezvous, the salons in France, the coffee houses in England and the Tischgesellschaften in Germany spring from the same philosophy, to wit to realise “eine [...] permanente Diskussion unter Privatleuten”.<sup>68</sup> *Kunstkritik* subsequently adopts such physical forms of interaction. The prevailing mode of *Kritik* is therefore the dialogic mode,

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<sup>65</sup> Habermas does briefly sketch how music emancipated itself from courtly life in the 18th century and subsequently managed to increase its appeal to a wider audience (cf. Habermas: *Strukturwandel*, p. 101-102).

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*, p. 61-63.

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*, p. 97.

Habermas argues: “Die Museen institutionalisieren, wie Konzert und Theater, das Laienurteil über Kunst: die Diskussion wird zum Medium ihrer Aneignung. Die zahllosen Pamphlete, die Kritik und Apologie der herrschenden Kunsttheorie zum Gegenstand haben, knüpfen an die Salongespräche an und werden ihrerseits von diesen aufgenommen – Kunstkritik als Konversation”.<sup>69</sup> Production and discussion become so closely intertwined, Habermas remarks, that by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, they both mutually depend on each other: “Auf der einen Seite ist Philosophie nur mehr als eine kritische, sind Literatur und Kunst bloß noch im Zusammenhang mit Literatur- und Kunstkritik möglich”.<sup>70</sup>

The intrinsic dialogicity of *Kritik* signals the increased - and often commercially motivated - pragmatic function of *Kritik* at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The shift from an oral to a written intersubjectivity implies a fundamental indirectness; the opportunity to respond directly to or engage with the opinion of a *Kritiker*, lacks. More than ever, the conversation that *Kritik* stimulates, becomes a medially staged event. Editors manipulate the course of the discussion by opposing *Antikritik* to *Kritik* (cf. infra). Furthermore, the discursive techniques with which *Kritik* affirms its presence in the public sphere, include several basic strategies to address the reader. The multiple *Herausgeberfiktionen*<sup>71</sup> likewise stage a *Leserfiktion*, in which editors address the reader, but always on their terms and with their own interests in mind. *Kritiker*, moreover, employ narrative suspense in their texts to capture the attention and curiosity of the audience. Portending the success of the feuilleton in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Enlightenment journals took advantage of their periodical appearance to maximise the continuity of their sales. Articles of any genre and about any topic were published in serial forms, i.e. as instalments. Stock phrases, such as ‘Fortsetzung folgt’ or ‘Beschluß folgt’, filled the pages of periodicals and established a narrative cohesion that lifted the text over the borders of one, proper issue.<sup>72</sup> The following sections will, therefore, investigate the position(ing) of *Kritik* in the public sphere in the context of this institutionalised dialogism.

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<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*, p. 102-103.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>71</sup> cf. Till Dembeck: *Texte rahmen: Grenzregionen literarischer Werke im 18. Jahrhundert* (Gottsched, Wieland, Moritz, Jean Paul). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007; Uwe Wirth: *Die Geburt des Autors aus dem Geist der Herausgeberfiktion: editoriale Rahmung im Roman um 1800: Wieland, Goethe, Brentano, Jean Paul und E. T. A. Hoffmann*. München: Fink 2008.

<sup>72</sup> see, for instance, Nicola Kaminski, Nora Ramtke, Carsten Zelle (ed.): *Zeitschriftenliteratur/Fortsetzungsliteratur*. Hannover: Wehrhann 2014, dedicated to the narrative suspense in 18th- and 19th century periodicals. Manuel Bauer sees analogies between such narrative formulas and the Romantic poetics of the fragment, cf. Manuel Bauer: ‘Hermeneutische ‘Teufeleyn’? Schleiermacher und die frühromantische Kritik’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 187.

## 1.2.2 The Function of ‘Kritik’

Habermas’ *Strukturwandel* and to a lesser extent Koselleck’s *Kritik und Krise* influenced a range of studies that investigate the function of *Kritik* and the way it performs that function in society. Habermas, in particular, inspired new ways of interpreting the historical and sociological dimensions of *Kritik*. Previously, studies tended to read *Kritik* with the aim of extracting information about its object (what works are featured in critical texts, against what standards are they measured, what groups read them, ...). Recently, however, researchers have come upon the self-reflexive instances of *Kritik*: What function does *Kritik* intend for itself in the public sphere? How does *Kritik* spread knowledge? What does the argumentative structure teach us about *Kritik*’s self-awareness? And how do the poetical and the textual level correlate?

Functional inquiries into *Kritik* (in most cases *Literaturkritik*) either make explicit reference to Habermas’ research or prove to be indirectly influenced by his basic tenet, to wit that intersubjective communication defines the public sphere. By the same token, they cast *Kritik* in the role of an institution of the public sphere: a public power that relies on proper structures of textual organisation, discursive traditions and media channels. We can subsume this ‘Habermasian’ approach to the function of *Kritik* in the public sphere under two general trends: on the one hand, those studies that approach *Kritik* as an act of communication and interaction, and on the other hand, those that analyse *Kritik* as a textual system and discursive network. In this section, I will survey both directions in greater detail. Section 1.2.3. will subsequently measure these observations against the case study of *Musikkritik* and will examine how *Musikkritik* functions as a discourse in the public sphere.

### Communication & Interaction

The most prominent study of *Kritik* to make use of socio-historical theory are the impressive number of essays and books that Peter Uwe Hohendahl has authored or edited about *Literaturkritik*. The early essay *Literaturkritik und Öffentlichkeit* (1974) opens with a for the time striking observation about the exchange between society and culture: “Die sozialen Grundlagen einer kulturellen Institution bleiben vielfach verdeckt, solange diese unbezweifelt funktioniert”.<sup>73</sup> Hohendahl observes a crisis in the *Literaturkritik* of his time. The *Kritiker* of his day believed all too strongly in the autonomy and the independence of *Literaturkritik*. Hohendahl counters the self-reliance and self-confidence of his colleagues. Hohendahl explores the function of *Kritik* with the aim of assessing its social relevance as

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<sup>73</sup> Peter Uwe Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik und Öffentlichkeit*. München: Piper 1974, p. 7.



a cultural institution. He thus dismisses the claim to objectivity, which supporters of an autonomous *Literaturkritik* made, as fictional. In a Koselleckian vocabulary, Hohendahl instead draws attention to the social function of *Literaturkritik*<sup>74</sup> and proposes to focus on “den historisch-gesellschaftlichen Prozeß”.<sup>75</sup>

In his elaborate follow-up anthology *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik (1730-1980)* Hohendahl relates his functional understanding of *Literaturkritik*<sup>76</sup> more explicitly to Habermas’ thinking. He again uses the term ‘functionality’ to distinguish himself from other contemporary approaches to Kritik.<sup>77</sup> His anthology studies the “Entstehung und Veränderung einer literarischen Institution”<sup>78</sup> and takes its cue from Habermas’ “sozialgeschichtlich fundierte Modell der Öffentlichkeit”.<sup>79</sup> Hohendahl does hold several reservations vis-à-vis the theory. For one, he nuances the idea that the public sphere is merely a sounding board of the reigning political order. Similar to Koselleck’s criticism on the hypocrisy of the *Öffentlichkeit*’s hidden political aspirations, Hohendahl reminds us that the public sphere articulated its critique on rationalist, political policies in a broad range of media, among which literature and *Kritik*. For that reason, the volume rightfully distinguishes between “dem Modell der Öffentlichkeit und der Struktur des öffentlichen Bereiches, in dem die literaturkritische Kommunikation sich abspielt”.<sup>80</sup> Hohendahl makes a plea for a context-aware analysis when examining the function of (*Literatur*)kritik in society.

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<sup>74</sup> “Erstens wird die Fiktion der Autonomie mißbraucht, um dem Kritiker eine angemessene Machtstellung zu sichern. Er usurpiert gegenüber Autor und Publikum das Amt des Gesetzgebers und Richters zugleich. Die Ideologie der Autonomie hat – möglicherweise unbeabsichtigt – zur autoritären Kritik geführt. [...] Die Kritik erstarrt zur dogmatischen Meinung, die dem Publikum die Chance des eigenen, abweichenden Urteils nicht mehr zugesteht. Der individuelle Geschmack des Kritikers wird als solcher nicht kenntlich gemacht, sondern als objektiv ausgegeben.” (Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 8-9).

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10; The case study of the transition from 17th to 18th century *Literaturkritik* exemplifies his ‘historisch-gesellschaftliche’ approach. On a content-related level, no clear line can be drawn between both periods. However, precisely in “[d]er funktionalen Betrachtung [...] stellt sich der Unterschied dar” (*ibid.*, p. 11), Hohendahl argues. The Enlightenment concept of *Kritik* differs from former models because of its pragmatic ambivalence between authority and rationality, theory and praxis, and not so much on grounds of its poetics.

<sup>76</sup> In the introduction, for instance, Hohendahl disavows prevalent interpretations of *Literaturkritik* as a genre. *Literaturkritik* is first and foremost an institution, he remarks instead, that comprises a too heterogeneous collective of literary forms and text types to become the object of ‘Gattungsgeschichte’. Therefore the “formale Bestimmung” remains “unbefriedigend, weil sie über das Medium und die Funktion der Kommunikation nichts aussagt.” (Peter Uwe Hohendahl: ‘Einleitung’. In: *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik*, p. 2).

<sup>77</sup> In the introduction, Hohendahl refers to “die Krise der Literaturkritik” between 1967 and 1976 (cf. Hohendahl: *Einleitung*, p. 2).

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*, p. 6.

Second of all, Hohendahl's *Geschichte der Literaturkritik* highlights the discursive organisation of *Kritik*. The study maintains that any inquiry into *Kritik* can only be successful when it is read in its social and historical context. It asserts that "die literaturkritische Kommunikation selbst [...] das Gesellschaftliche [ist]".<sup>81</sup> In that respect, he views *Kritik* as more than just an instrument of appraisal; it also acts as a medium of communication. *Kritik* conveys the values with which a society looks at others and itself. It leads:

zur Unterscheidung des literaturkritischen Diskurses, d.h. der Argumentationsstrategien und der rhetorischen Mittel, mit denen die Bewertung und Einordnung von literarischen Werken und Autoren plausibel gemacht wird. Die Diskursanalyse erlaubt die Einsicht in den Zusammenhang von sprachlicher Mitteilung und gesellschaftlicher Funktion. Die Vorliebe für bestimmte Formen der Kritik, zum Beispiel das Autorenportrait oder die Polemik, das Vorherrschen einer bestimmten Argumentationsstruktur [...] sind im Hinblick auf ihre kommunikative Funktion sozialgeschichtlich zu entschlüsseln.<sup>82</sup>

Hans Erich Bödeker deepens that understanding of communication as a bridge between *Kritik* and the public sphere. In *Aufklärung als Kommunikationsprozeß*, he argues that communication was hard-wired in the DNA of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Kant's early advocacy of freedom of speech and opinion, the concept of intersubjective exchange, the Enlightenment's pedagogic mission: all these examples attest to "das Bedürfnis nach breiter Kommunikation".<sup>83</sup> "Die Kultur der Aufklärung", Bödeker says, "[...] läßt sich als Ergebnis einer Intensivierung von Kommunikation begreifen, die ihrerseits durch die soziale Mobilisierung von Teilen der Bevölkerung verstärkt wurde".<sup>84</sup> The Enlightenment envisioned a modern society, a design that was not just conveyed, but exactly facilitated by communicativity. Bödeker supports his claims with diverse examples. On the one hand, he concentrates on the role of communication in the thinking of specific authors. Christan Thomasius, the editor of *Monats-Gespräche* (one of the first newspapers in Germany), for example, counts as a key promoter of communication because he introduced a dialogic style in his journalistic writings. Lessing thereupon extended that dialogic impulse. To Lessing, conversation and communication were essential features of any textual identity.<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, Bödeker investigates how the poetics of

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<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>83</sup> Hans Erich Bödeker: 'Aufklärung als Kommunikationsprozeß'. In: *Aufklärung als Prozeß*, ed. by Rudolf Vierhaus. Hamburg: Felix Meiner 1988, p. 91.

<sup>84</sup> Bödeker: *Aufklärung als Kommunikationsprozeß*, p. 91.

<sup>85</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 92-98.

communication was functionalised and put into practice. To that aim, he singles out specific media and institutions (such as letters, newspaper and ‘Societäten’).<sup>86</sup>

While Hohendahl and Bödeker explicitly embrace Habermas’s thinking, the *Handbuch der Medien* (1999) relinquishes the socio-historical model of communication. In regarding *Publizität* – not entirely an unimportant aspect of Habermas’ *Strukturwandel*<sup>87</sup>– as “entscheidende Voraussetzung für die Begründung einer öffentlichen Moral und damit als Angelpunkt gesellschaftlicher Reform”<sup>88</sup>, the volume renders a broad view of written media in the 17<sup>th</sup>- and the 18<sup>th</sup>-century. The handbook regards the public sphere as a “von Medien gestiftet[e] Öffentlichkeit”.<sup>89</sup> It subsequently focusses on the impulses print media itself gives to communication, rather than the dialogic interaction between individuals: “Vielmehr ist gerade charakteristisch für die neue Form von Medienkommunikation die Transformierung privater Kommunikationsräume zu öffentlichen oder doch zumindest teil-öffentlichen und, daraus folgend, deren gegenseitige Durchdringung”.<sup>90</sup> One would almost expect that the authors followed Koselleck in rejecting intersubjectivity as the motor of a harmonious intersubjectivity. Yet, the *Handbuch der Medien* also rebuffs this negative take on 18<sup>th</sup> century press media. The editors rather mark out to the positive role that newspapers and journals had to play. They direct their attention to “die grundsätzliche Vergesellschaftungsfunktion der Medien”.<sup>91</sup> In the first place, the volume chooses to investigate the pedagogic and formative function of written media, as Enlightenment philosophers envisaged it from the start. Second of all, it aims to uncover the self-reflexive discourse of 18<sup>th</sup>-century media and the extent to which they enter into a “Gespräch über Zeitungen und Zeitschriften”.<sup>92</sup>

### ‘Kritik’ as textual system

A second, more recent direction in academic literature on (*Literatur*)*Kritik* examines the institution as a distinct textual system in the public sphere. In contrast to the perspective of interaction and communication that Hohendahl and Bödeker take from Habermas (and to a lesser extent Koselleck), these studies turn to the critical genres, the organisation of periodicals as well as the medial and stylistic aspects of *Kritik*. Stefan Matuschek studies

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<sup>86</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 98-110.

<sup>87</sup> cf. §13 in Habermas: *Strukturwandel*, p. 178-194.

<sup>88</sup> Ernst Fischer/Wilhelm Haefs/ York-Gothart Mix: ‘Einleitung: Aufklärung, Öffentlichkeit und Medienkultur in Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert’. In: *Almanach bis Zeitung: ein Handbuch der Medien in Deutschland 1700-1800*, ed. by Ernst Fischer and Wilhelm Haefs. München: Beck 1999, p. 10.

<sup>89</sup> Fischer/Haefs/Mix: *Aufklärung, Öffentlichkeit und Medienkultur*, p. 10.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10-11.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*, p. 15.

the *Organisation der Kritik* (2004) in one of the most influential and prolific journals of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* of Friedrich Justin Bertuch, Christian Gottfried Schütz and Martin Wieland. Matuschek wants to uncover “die Strukturen und die Programmatik dieses Rezensionsjournals”<sup>93</sup> in order to gain insight into the meta-discourse of *Kritik*.<sup>94</sup> *Kritik* is not a mere connecting piece between the individual and the public sphere, as Habermas proposes, but rather constitutes a self-regulatory system of interaction between different, template agents. The volume specifically shows that the ALZ’s attitude towards the *Öffentlichkeit* is one of abstraction. Participants on different sides of the communicative spectrum tend to be conceived as virtual correspondents.<sup>95</sup> Matuschek furthermore examines how the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* puts philosophical concepts of *Kritik* into practice.<sup>96</sup> Another exponent of the systematic take on *Kritik* is Astrid Urban’s *Kunst der Kritik* (2004). Urban traces the organisation of one specific genre, namely the review, in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. She distances herself from former takes on the review which use the genre to study the reception of certain authors and their works or to write the history of *Literaturkritik* itself.<sup>97</sup> From Urban’s point of view, reviews are a “Primärgattung”<sup>98</sup> with proper medial and text-structural parameters. She

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<sup>93</sup> Stefan Matuschek: ‘Epochenschwelle und prozessuale Verknüpfung. Zur Position der Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung zwischen Aufklärung und Frühromantik’. In: *Organisation der Kritik. Die Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung in Jena 1785-1803*, ed. by Stefan Matuschek. Heidelberg: Winter 2004, p. 19.

<sup>94</sup> cf. “Durch seine zahlreichen Antikritiken sowie die darauf folgenden Er widerungen der Rezensenten und durch die Kommentare und Stellungnahmen der Redaction führt es [...] einen fortlaufenden Dialog über das Alltagsgeschäft der Kritik. Rezensions- und Intelligenzblatt bilden einen Verbund von Aktion, Reaktion und Reflexion, bilden damit eine (zeitgenössisch vielbeachtete) Bühne, auf der und an der sich das Problembewusstsein von Kritik artikuliert und fortbildet.” (Matuschek: *Epochenschwelle und prozessuale Verknüpfung*, p. 19).

<sup>95</sup> Different contributors to volume subscribe to this thesis as well, e.g. Stephan Pabst: ‘Der anonyme Rezensent und das hypothetische Publikum. Zum Öffentlichkeitsverständnis der Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung’, p. 23-54 or Irina Denissenko: ‘Die inszenierte Öffentlichkeit des Streites. Die Gattung Antikritik und das kritische Profil der Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung’, p. 113-142. For a more profound discussion of the relation between *Kritiker* and audience see 2.1 and the introduction to Part II.

<sup>96</sup> Exemplary for this approach, is his interpretation of Lessing’s ‘Tonleiter’: Matuschek reads Lessing’s call for stylistic individuality as a crucial step in the development of *Kritik* and not as a tool of persuasion or a vindication of polemical rhetoric (cf. in that regard Klaus Berghahn’s more ‘wirkungsästhetische’ interpretation of Lessing in ‘Von der klassizistischen zur klassischen Literaturkritik’. In: *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik*, p. 38-47). Instead, Lessing’s insistence on an individual style, according to Matuschek, consolidates the relationship between public and *Kritiker* as a more individualised one: “Neben das Ideal kollektiver Sachlichkeit rückt ein stilistisches Kritik-Verständnis, das sich gegenläufig an individuellem schriftstellerischem Vermögen orientiert” (Matuschek: *Epochenschwelle und prozessuale Verknüpfung*, p. 12).

<sup>97</sup> cf. Astrid Urban: *Kunst der Kritik: die Gattungsgeschichte der Rezension von der Spätaufklärung bis zur Romantik*. Heidelberg: Winter 2004, p. 7-9.

<sup>98</sup> Urban: *Kunst der Kritik*, p. 10.

regards them as ‘Gesprächskontexte’: reviews always enter into a dialogue with the reviewed work, the journal itself or with other reviews.

Steffen Martus negotiates between the communicative take, on the one hand, and the text-systematic approach to *Kritik*, on the other hand. His monograph on critical communication in (early) modern times<sup>99</sup> recognises communication as a central element of *Kritik*, but hesitates to further label that trait as a defining characteristic. Rather, the institutional structures that surround communication, prompt his discursive analysis. *Kritik*, for one, always involves a discourse of commerce and promotion. Martus observes that researchers such as Bödeker have put up a far too naïve image of 18<sup>th</sup>-century ‘peacefulness’. In reality, a discourse of negativity and violence fairly early takes root in *Kritik*. With the loss of the representational organisation of society,<sup>100</sup> writers and *Kritiker* needed to develop a form of visibility of their own: “Das Bild einer auf Harmonie und Verständigung zielenden Öffentlichkeit auf der Vorderseite der aufklärerischen Medaille wird auf diese Weise durch das rückseitige Bild einer von Zerstreung und eskalierender Meinungsdivergenz geprägten Kommunikation ergänzt”.<sup>101</sup> *Kritik* does not bank on the utopian realisation of social interaction *an sich*, but actually rakes up the notion of communication to accommodate the fervent tussle of opinions.

Furthermore, *Kritik* organises itself as a self-reflexive discourse, both elements constituting an indivisible analytic unit:

Entscheidend ist jedoch der Ort von Kritik in den Diskursen, entscheidend sind die Grenzen, die Ein- und Ausschlüsse, die ihren Geltungsbereich, ihre Form und ihre Zirkulationsmöglichkeiten bestimmen, entscheidend ist, mit welchen Nachbardiskursen sich der kritische Diskurs verzahnen und dadurch gegebenenfalls an Dynamik gewinnen kann. Kritik hat es gegeben, seit Sprache Ablehnung formulierbar gemacht hat. Ihre Funktion und ihr Stellenwert aber sind jeweils historisch zu bestimmen.<sup>102</sup>

A first symptom of negativity that Martus recognises in critical discourse is the more marked position of the *Kritiker* himself. Until the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, *Kritik* was attributed normative and regulatory duties. In every act of *Kritik*, *Kritiker* needed to demonstrate, first of all, that they were aware of the models informing aesthetic judgement and, secondly, that they were able to put those rules into practice more aptly than the writers they criticised. Lessing’s *Der Kritiker braucht nicht besser machen zu können, was er tadelt*

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<sup>99</sup> Steffen Martus: *Werkpolitik. Zur Literaturgeschichte kritischer Kommunikation vom 17. bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007.

<sup>100</sup> cf. supra Habermas; Martus: *Werkpolitik*, p. 57.

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>102</sup> *ibid.*, p. 79.

(1768) constitutes a turning point in that narrative.<sup>103</sup> Lessing upgrades the *Kritiker* to an autonomous agent. Critical rhetoric changes accordingly: as the *Kritiker* breaks the causal chain of production and reception, he needs to make his mark all the more distinctly.

The second aspect of negativity in *Kritik* is the widespread use of dialogic scenographies (cf. *infra*). Martus singles out the court case, the courtly life or war scenes,<sup>104</sup> but acknowledges that dialogism is symptomatic for the 18<sup>th</sup>-century culture of negativity. The use of a dialogic setting - especially then, when the author is understood more and more as a virtual proxy of the subject -<sup>105</sup> “läßt sich [...] als Teil eines interaktionistischen Poesieverständnisses lesen und als nach außen projizierte, personalisierte Form der Virtualität von Kritik”.<sup>106</sup> The Enlightenment, in particular, remodels the sharp and socially uncontrolled ‘Fernkommunikation’ of the ‘Gelehrtenrepublik’ (which actually is a form of interactive, though monologic *Kritik*). They replace it with a ‘geselliges’ (cf. 2.1.2.3) conversation-model which founds on the same code of conduct for oral communication. Regulating dialogism mitigates instances of negative *Kritik* and diminishes the tolerance for negativity in one fell swoop: “In einer auf Fernkommunikation umgestellten Semantik liegt die Akzeptanz von kritischer Negativität näher, wohingegen die Chancen für eine positive Bewertung des Tadels unter der Leitperspektive von Interaktion nur gering sind”.<sup>107</sup>

Dialogic orality is nevertheless but a simulated setting. It remains fixed to the written object which, in its definiteness, is an easy target for counter-*Kritik*. The text itself, Martus argues, already catalyses the acceptance of multiple opinions and acts as a seed-bed of negative discourse: “Der Verlust an ‘Ontizität’ und damit die Möglichkeit, schriftlich Gedanken zu entwickeln, die man mündlich zurückhalten würde und deren Verteidigung man in direktem Austausch kaum durchhalten könnte, führt zu Unsicherheit und Meinungskampf”.<sup>108</sup> Over time, *Kritiker* discovered the performative dimension of critical discourse and took a self-reflexive stance on *Kritik*: *Kritik* becomes a productive system that detaches itself more and more from any notion of rigid autonomy. It embraces a dialectic organisation, for instance when *Antikritik* posits itself against *Kritik*, periodicals engage in a ‘dialogue des journaux’. Negativity no longer constitutes a discursive side-effect - it comes to embody the very essence of *Kritik* as a system and institution.

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<sup>103</sup> *ibid.*, p. 67-69.

<sup>104</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 84-101.

<sup>105</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 63-64.

<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>107</sup> *ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>108</sup> *ibid.* p. 102.



*Kritik*, to summarise, operates under a central discursive premise. Communication is as much a (philosophical) source of legitimation for the institution (Hohendahl, Bödecker) as it is boosted by *Kritik* itself (*Handbuch der Medien*). Likewise, the organisation of *Kritik* as a textual system draws on the very structures it developed to reach out to the public sphere (e.g. the dialectic exchange *Kritik-Antikritik*). In that regard, *Kritik* is intrinsically self-reflexive: authors must carve out their position ‘in the field’ and defend it against their peers and – more importantly – colleagues. In the next section, I will examine that discursive understanding of *Kritik* for the specific case of *Musikkritik*. I shall first of all outline general traits of *Musikkritik* as a discourse and claim that it possess an intrinsic openness to other (critical) discourses. Afterwards, I will outline a methodological framework based on recent work in Discourse Analysis.

### 1.2.3 ‘Musikkritik’ as Discourse

The previous section mainly quoted studies that explore how *Literaturkritik*, in particular, capitalises on theories of communication or how it enlists specific textual formats to position itself as an institution in (and of) the public sphere. Literary research into the role of *Kritik* in society has indeed predominantly been done in the area of *Literaturkritik*. Nonetheless, the lead-off from *Literaturkritik* is also of particular relevance to a discursive analysis of *Musikkritik*. Margrit Vogt has already shown that *Literaturkritik* acted as a crucial forerunner of German *Kunstkritik*.<sup>109</sup> Such discursive parallels also apply to

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<sup>109</sup> Margrit Vogt has shown that *Kunstkritik* in Germany takes its cue from similar, but earlier developments in England and, especially, neighbouring France. Vogt confirms the dialogic mode as the prevalent mode since 18th-century *Kritik* (cf. 1.2.2). Already in the early 18th-century, *Literaturkritik* embraced “eine Streitkultur der Negativität” (Margrit Vogt: *Von Kunstworten und -werten: Die Entstehung der deutschen Kunstkritik in Periodika der Aufklärung*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2010, p. 27). A German culture of *Kritik* truly takes its start when writers such as Gellert and Lessing reject that aesthetic production is a prerequisite for critical judgement (cf. Vogt: *Von Kunstworten und -werten*, p. 30-34; cf. also supra Lessings *Der Kritiker braucht nicht besser machen zu können, was er tadelt*). The tolerant environment of scientific exchange from which *Kritik* grew, soon turned into a contest between conflicting opinions. In this competitive setting, *Kritik* developed a meta-reflexive discourse: “Die verbreitete Ablehnung deines Metiers stellt den Kritiker ab der Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts vor die Schwierigkeit, seine Werturteile legitimieren zu müssen, um Anspruch auf Gesellschaftliche Akzeptanz seines kritischen Urteils erheben zu können” (ibid., p. 29). *Kunstkritik*, as a critical *Streitkultur*, would eventually institutionalise those dialogic premises. First of all, the style of reviews changed. Early forms of *Kunstkritik* merely described

*Musikkritik* and *Literaturkritik*. The first musical periodicals were essentially academic journals that addressed questions of theoretical and aesthetic purport. They did not discuss specific compositions or performances.<sup>110</sup> However, *Musikkritik* did gain access to layman audiences through generalist magazines that informed about literature and many different forms of art.<sup>111</sup> *Musikkritik* emancipated itself from that context by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, it continued to build on the discursive traditions of the journalistic media that once sheltered it, so to speak. An important factor was also the fact that the musical enterprise long relied on the logistic organisation of the literature

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works of art (*Kunstbesprechung*). They made way for more pathos-laden accounts, based on the way the *Kritiker* experienced a certain work (*Wirkungsästhetik*; cf. *ibid.*, p. 112-121). Secondly, in contrast to France and England, Germany had no outspoken (cultural) capital, nor did it have national academies that prescribed aesthetic rules. Similarly, art debates did not unfold in therefore predetermined locales, such as the salons or coffee houses. Instead, periodicals assumed that function and bridged the wide distance between art lovers all over the German-speaking territory (cf. *ibid.*, p. 173-183). Journals, as consolidators of the burgeoning critical self-awareness of the broader masses, grew into *the* central forum of discussion. The prospering ‘Kunstmarkt’ and the increasing number of public exhibitions indeed kindled or sharpened aesthetic sensibilities (cf. *ibid.*, p. 158-173), but periodicals maximised that effect and formed a meeting-ground for various individual opinions. The booming periodical enterprise instigated a remarkable “Kritik der Kritik” (*ibid.*, p. 189), Vogt argues. As *Zeitschriften*, *Zeitungen* and other journals increasingly competed with each other, a “Verweissystem zwischen den Periodika” (*ibid.*, p. 189) emerged, which gave rise to further reflection about the nature of critical discourse: “Neben der inhaltlichen und epistemischen Positionsverschärfung der Kritik der Kritik bekommen kritische Debatten im Verweissystem periodischer Kunstberichterstattung eine normative Dimension. Zusehens häufen sich metareflexive Überlegungen, die das Dilemma thematisieren, dass eine Kritik, die vor keiner Autorität halt macht, für die flüssige kunstkritische Kommunikation nötig sei, allzu harsche Kritik jedoch den Diskurs ins Stocken bringt, weswegen häufig ihre Disziplinierung eingefordert wird (*ibid.*, p. 208).” In the long run, Vogt demonstrates, critical discourse embraced a fundamental, communicative responsibility (cf. 209). *Kunstkritik* opened itself to a broader forum of participants (*Kritiker*, artists, readers, etc.). It put out measures to curb and regulate critical discourse (e.g. through labels as ‘Höflichkeit’ and ‘Freimütigkeit’). On the other hand, editors sought boosted the communicativity of *Kritik* by exploiting its negativity, for example in the genre of *Antikritik*.

<sup>110</sup> Concert reviews only appeared in in the first decades of the 19th century. Before that, journals mainly featured short announcements or brief reports of musical performances. cf. Axel Beer: ‘Musikzeitschriften’. In: *Handbuch der Medien*, p. 244-245.

<sup>111</sup> cf. Gudula Schütz has exemplarily documented the connection between *Musikkritik* and literary periodicals in her study *Vor dem Richterstuhl der Kritik: Die Musik in Friedrich Nicolais »Allgemeiner Deutscher Bibliothek«*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007. In 1788, the first journal ever identifying as a musical periodical in its title appeared, the *Musikalische Realzeitung* of H.P. Boßler (cf. Beer: *Musikzeitschriften*, p. 242-243). The *Realzeitung* only lasted for two years (cf. Wilhelm Freystätter: *Die musikalischen Zeitschriften seit ihrer Entstehung bis zur Gegenwart. Chronologisches Verzeichniss der periodischen Schriften über Musik*. München: Theodor Riedel 1884, p.28). However, during the 1790s, independent musical periodicals would be more succesful and would run for longer stretches of time. cf. Beer: *Musikzeitschriften*, p. 243-244). See also Ulrich Tadday: *Die Anfänge des Musikfeuilletons. Der kommunikative gebrauchswert musikalischer Bildung in Deutschland um 1800*. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1993, p. 63-65; Laurenz Lütteken/Gudula Schütz: *Die Musik in den Zeitschriften des 18. Jahrhunderts: eine Bibliographie; mit Datenbank auf CD-ROM*. Kassel: Bärenreiter 2004.



market. Until around 1820, for instance, most music publications were still sold in book shops.<sup>112</sup>

*Musikkritik*, in other words, started out as a critical institution in the margins of the public sphere. As such, an openness to other discourses from early on inheres in the institution. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century still, the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ essentially required that music be channelled through other forms of expression (cf. Intermezzo). Gundula Schütz, moreover, explains that music-critical discourse until late in the 18<sup>th</sup>-century clung to the academic standards that scholars installed. In its most extreme form, *Musikkritiker* translated music into a mathematical discourse that ‘calculated’ the affects it elicited in the reader.<sup>113</sup> Eventually, the discourse of ‘Geschmack’ superseded that paradigm, enabling *Musikkritik* to assert itself as a proper institution:

In der Tat ist Geschmackskritik immer zunächst eine Selbstvergewisserung des eigenen künstlerischen Standorts und sodann der Versuch, über diesen in der größtmöglichen Öffentlichkeit einen ästhetischen Konsens zu erzielen. [...] Um diese Faszination weiterzugeben, bot sich die Zeitschrift als geeignetes Medium an, da sie für jene bei Marcus Herz thematisierte Verbindung von Geselligkeit und Geschmack eine gleichsam überpersönliche Ebene herstellen konnte. [...] In diesem Augenblick ist Musikkritik institutionalisiert, und erst jetzt löst das Geschmacksurteil seinen Anspruch auf überindividuelle Gültigkeit ein.<sup>114</sup>

The open attitude of *Musikkritik* to other discourses informs my literary analysis of Schumann’s and Wagner’s critical writings. I will specifically go on recent developments in Discourse Analysis (DA). In short, DA takes the context of utterances in consideration. It argues that social and cultural discourse conventions shape our acts of writing and speaking. The project of DA has been present in the Humanities since the 1970s. In linguistics, DA draws attention to functional structures in language that go beyond the lexical or sentence level. A second, broader interpretation of DA takes its cue from sociological thinking on the relation between individuals, identity and society. The work of Foucault and Bourdieu fostered the idea that discourse not only mirrors, but also produces the power relationships that govern daily life. DA, then, explores the social conditions that authorise texts, conversations and any other form of communicative engagement. Thus, it “stresses that truth is relative to what is articulated in discourse, while highlighting the social and institutional conditions that enable its expression”.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> cf. Schütz: *Vor dem Richterstuhl der Kritik*, p. 79.

<sup>113</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*, p. 92-93.

<sup>115</sup> Stef Slembrouck: ‘Discourse Analysis’. In: *The Routledge Linguistics Encyclopedia*, ed. by Kirsten Malmkjaer. 3rd edition. London: Routledge 2010, p. 134.

Discourse Analysis in literary studies falls into the second, more sociological category. DA's particular concern for the discursive shape (and shaping) of identity has prompted a fruitful exploration who the speakers in texts and oral utterances are, what their relation to the reader is, and how social conventions affect their textual identity. Seen from that perspective, the main rationale of DA chimes in with key theories of postmodern and post-structuralist literary criticism.<sup>116</sup> One of the principal protagonists of DA in literary studies is Dominique Maingueneau. Maingueneau manifestly defines literary DA as a full-fledged theory that "aims to reconsider the reciprocal envelopment of text and context, which implies shifting the core the analysis: from the creator and his or her work to the conditions that make literary discourse possible".<sup>117</sup> In that regard, literary DA first of all provides us with new perspectives on text and context. The rigid focus of structuralism on the text de facto implied the presence of the extra-textual, to wit the context, but it also separated literary studies from neighbouring human sciences, such as sociology or psychology. According to Maingueneau, DA puts a model of social convention in the place of the common distinction between text and context. Literary DA therefore examines 'genres' as "communication frames [and] sets of norms associated with a certain category of speech situations"<sup>118</sup> rather than as literary compositions with a shared set of characteristics. Genres in DA cannot be pinned down to one mode of

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<sup>116</sup> cf. Linda Hutcheon: *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*. New York/London: Routledge 1988, p. 185; Robert de Beaugrande associates the rise of DA in literary criticism with a paradigm shift. Consistent with the turn of linguistics to "types of text and conditions of text production and reception" (Robert De Beaugrande: 'Discourse Analysis and Literary Theory: Closing the Gap.' *Journal of Advanced Composition* 13/2 (1993), p. 429), he observes that literary scholars were equally interested in the context and situation of literary production. As they started to reconsider the rather impassive role that literary criticism originally reserved for readers, this revaluation set in motion a change of perspective which aims to scrutinise all objects and participants involved in the process of writing, including the role of the author. "[M]odels of the author which any real author would fit only approximately" (De Beaugrande: *Discourse Analysis and Literary Theory*, p. 435) soon superseded monolithic views on textual production. They attested to the growing belief that "authorship is more a performance and a goal than a state or attribute of a person" (ibid., p. 435). Beaugrande interprets these developments in light of a general methodological evolution from 'literary studies' to 'literary theory'. The context-inclusive scope that DA champions, affirms the general sentiment that prospered in literary criticism around 1970: "[U]ncertainty, ambiguity, figurality, and the like were no longer obstacles for the scholar to resolve, but essential factors to be enacted or even celebrated" (ibid., p. 436). In a somewhat contrived scheme, Beaugrande pits rigid conceptions of literary works as historical objects and as products of generic conventions, (which he subsumes under 'literary studies', and more particularly Formalism and New Criticism) against literary theory, which broadens its generic scope to 'popular' and 'trivial' texts and explores for the first time the ideological undercurrents in literature. Literary theory thus seeks to redefine the object of its study by committing itself to the social values that literature communicates and negotiates. DA indeed reiterates a lot of these ideas and notions. Be that as it may, Beaugrande does not further digress about the theory's specific merit to, let alone use in literary criticism; he limits his argument to the methodological environment in which DA thrived.

<sup>117</sup> Dominique Maingueneau: 'Literature and discourse analysis'. In: *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* 42/1 (2010), p. 147.

<sup>118</sup> Maingueneau: *Literature and discourse analysis*, p. 150.

stylistic expression. They combine many registers (e.g. polemic, irony, criticism) at the same time. In addition, genres transcend the boundaries of mediality. Literature, for instance, can not be reduced to a collection of literary works. It is much more a discourse in which many different genres converge: practices as diverse as a conversation about, academic writing on or reviewing of literary works all make up the face of literature.

Maingueneau expands the definition of literature to the social frameworks that engage with it. He does away with the boundaries that previously delineated literary forms, types and genres and opens literature to other modes of discourse. Maingueneau specifically rejects the distinction between literary and non-literary texts because it perpetuates a false notion of uniqueness that is prevalent since Romantic literary theory. Consequently, one risks of imbuing authors with a similar air of singularity. This idea, indeed, contradicts DA's main view that the social environment radically shapes literature (and its participants). Texts rely on social entities to authorise and activate particular discursive operations. The search for distinct literary qualities, moreover, proves inadequate when trying to account for the genre-wide use of literary discourse. Writers like Rousseau or Descartes authored texts in a wide range of – traditional – genres, for example.

Maingueneau cancels out the common distinction between literary and non-literary texts. He proposes that discourses are fundamentally permeable and illustrates this idea via “discours constituants”.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, Maingueneau claims that the individual participants conform to a socio-discursive hierarchy. Within a discourse, for instance, different ‘positions’ (*positionnements*; e.g. opinions, theories, parties) can clash. These positions are structured in ‘discursive fields’, i.e. “le système de relations qui permet à

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<sup>119</sup> The concept of self-constitutive discourses refers to “ces discours qui se donnent comme discours d’Origine, validés par une scène d’énonciation qui s’autorise d’elle-même” (47). Maingueneau counts literature, religion, science, philosophy and myth among these self-constitutive discourses. ‘Discours constituants’ constantly maintain a meta-status: “La prétention attachée au statut de discours constituant, c’est de fonder et n’être pas fondé” (Dominique Maingueneau/Frédéric Cossutta: ‘L’analyse des discours constituants’. In: *Langages* 29 (1995), p. 112). Therefore, they are self-legitimising (they take recourse to a notion of absoluteness that at the same time authorises their existence) as well as self-regulative (in both a legal and structural sense; see also Maingueneau’s notion of ‘inscription’ in Dominique Maingueneau: *Le discours littéraire. Paratopie et scène d’énonciation*. Paris: Armand Colin 2004). As illustrations of the general interchangeability of discourses (be they self-constitutive or not), ‘discours constituants’ are moreover not isolated sources of enunciation. On the contrary, they are “à la fois auto- et hétéroconstituants, ces deux faces se supposant réciproquement: seul un discours qui se constitue en thématissant sa propre constitution peut jouer un rôle constituant à l’égard d’autres discours” (Maingueneau/Cossutta: *L’analyse des discours constituants*, 113). This discussion of ‘discours constituants’ only touches on main elements of the theory. For a more detailed account, see Dominique Maingueneau: ‘Analysing self-constituting discourses’. In: *Discourse Studies* 1/2 (1999), pp. 175-199, Maingueneau: *Literature and discourse analysis*, pp. 147-158.

chacun de s'instaurer et de se maintenir".<sup>120</sup> Most importantly, the practices and norms of the separate positions and discursive fields come together in "communautés discursives".<sup>121</sup> Such discursive communities regulate as well as authenticate the social position of institutions or individuals that produce texts. As Maingueneau illustrates with reference to self-constitutive discourses: "Un discours constituant, en effet, ne mobilise pas que des auteurs, mais un variété de rôles sociodiscursifs chargés de gérer les énoncés: par exemple pour la littérature les critiques littéraires des journeaux, les enseignants, les libraires, les bibliothécaires, etc".<sup>122</sup> Discursive communities, in short, are the social system in which texts are integrated.

A second, central notion is the 'scénographie'. The suffix '-graphie' imparts a connotation of inscription that does not refer to the written character of discourses, but rather shows how scenographies prescribe discursive practices.<sup>123</sup> The concept of 'scénographie' captures the intrinsic mise-en-scène of texts.<sup>124</sup> It projects texts as the product of a speaker's pragmatic aims rather than as autonomous bodies of enunciation. Discourse, accordingly, mirrors these pragmatic aims. Maingueneau associates each discourse with a 'scène d'énonciation'. He distinguishes three complementary scenic types, each of them with their proper conventions and expectations. First of all, the 'scène englobante', a general template that determines the type of discourse readers encounter (e.g. formal elements like titles and other paratexts).<sup>125</sup> Secondly, the 'scène générique', which regulates how the different participants involved in the discourse can interact with each other;<sup>126</sup> it "attributes parts to actors, prescribes the place and the moment, the medium, textual macrostructures – all conditions necessary to felicity (Austin) of a given macrospeech act".<sup>127</sup> The third scene of the 'scène d'énonciation' is the scenography. In contrast to the 'scène englobante' and 'scène générique', the scenography does not determine the text's discourse but, conversely, is *produced* by the text.<sup>128</sup> It comprises the text's narrative environment,<sup>129</sup> e.g. via the use of letters, the staging of a dialogue

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<sup>120</sup> Maingueneau, *Le discours littéraire*, p. 53.

<sup>121</sup> *ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>122</sup> *ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>123</sup> "Cette -graphie ne renvoie pas à une opposition empirique entre support oral et support graphique, mais à un processus fondateur, à l'inscription légitimante d'un texte, dans le double rapport à la mémoire d'une énonciation qui se place dans la filiation d'autres et qui prétend à un certain type de réemploi" (*ibid.*, p. 192).

<sup>124</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>125</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>126</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>127</sup> Maingueneau: *Analysing self-constituting discourses*, p. 191.

<sup>128</sup> Maingueneau, *Le discours littéraire*, p. 191.

<sup>129</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 191.

between two people, a prophetic scenography<sup>130</sup> etc. Scenographies are not necessarily present in every text. Nonetheless, Maingueneau stresses their importance for the interaction with the reader. Indeed, the 'scénographie' is the first scene readers encounter. For a large part, it determines their position vis-à-vis the text:

Le lecteur se trouve ainsi pris dans une sorte de piège, puisqu'il reçoit le texte d'abord à travers sa scénographie, non à travers sa scène englobante et sa scène générique, releguées au second plan mais qui constituent en fait le cadre de cette énonciation. C'est dans la scénographie, à la fois condition et produit de l'oeuvre, à la fois 'dans' l'oeuvre et ce qui la porte, que se valident les statuts d'énonciateur et de co-énonciateur, mais aussi l'espace (*topographie*) et le temps (*chronographie*) à partir desquels se développe l'énonciation.<sup>131</sup>

Maingueneau provides a stimulating alternative to author- or reader-based approaches in literary pragmatics.<sup>132</sup> Concepts like the discursive community and 'scénographie' allow us to interpret the individual creations, aims and goals of authors on a more abstract plane. It casts authorship as a particular function in a network of interrelated, social interactions. Likewise, texts, as the products of social practices, always exhibit traces of their (expected) reception by the reader. The fundamental interchangeability of discourses creates the possibility to continually stimulate and reactivate the presence of the reader<sup>133</sup> – an observation that will be of great value with regard to Wagner's *Musikkritik* (cf. 4.2). DA teaches us that any literary analysis must take into account that texts are essentially products of non-verbal processes: as a discourse, they are governed by practices and pragmatic considerations on which words do not have a hold.

While Maingueneau principally outlines his theories with literature in mind, his open views on texts and their discourses ascertains that his concepts are just as valid for a wide range of different text types, including *Musikkritik*. I will specifically investigate how the combined set of stylistic (to wit rhetorical and narrative), paratextual and medial parameters enable *Musikkritik* to interact with the public sphere. Focussing on the discursive organisation of Schumann's and Wagner's writings enables a new take on the *Kritiken* as a dialogue between authors, readers, society and other discourses. First of all, I will uncover the strategies of information transfer that drive the stylistic composition of *Kritik*. Secondly, a discursive take allows us to map the intricate relation between author, *Kritiker* and opinion in more detail. In that respect, finally, we can render a more

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<sup>130</sup> cf. Maingueneau: *Literature and discourse analysis*, p. 155.

<sup>131</sup> Maingueneau, *Le discours littéraire*, p. 192.

<sup>132</sup> e.g. the Speech Act theory of Austin and Searle (cf. supra, footnote 43), which focused exclusively on the author, or more reader-oriented models, such as reader-response-criticism (Norman Holland, Stanley Fish, Louise Rosenblatt) and *Rezeptionsästhetik* (Wolfgang Iser, Hans-Robert Jauss).

<sup>133</sup> cf. Dominique Maingueneau: *Pragmatique pour le discours littéraire*. Paris: Nathan 2001, p. 27-52.

engaged model of critical communication. Thus, I will draw attention to the pragmatic fabric of the *Musikkritiken*.

My discursive take on Schumann's and Wagner's critical writings takes its cue from three key concepts Maingueneau advances: the discursive community, the permeability of discourse and 'scénography'. Scholars have mainly read critical discourse as a historical interaction between *Kritik* and critical poetics. *Kritik* is not exclusively licensed by poetic rules and theories, however. Social standards norms, practices and institutions, too, regulate it. Maingueneau's notion of the discursive community enables a more flexible perspective on critical discourse and its participants. I thus read Schumann's and Wagner's writings as an interaction with the public sphere: as a way of positioning oneself in the field (cf. 1.3), of legitimising the identity as *Kritiker* (cf. Chapter 2) and as a form of persuasive interaction with the reader (cf. Part II). Furthermore, I shall take up Maingueneau's concept of the fundamental permeability between discourses to account for *Musikkritik*'s fundamental openness to other discourses. Together with journalism, debate, law or even science, we might well label *Kritik* as a 'discours évaluatif', for instance. Although a theoretical *Spielerei*, the idea that *Kritik* engages in an overarching dialogue with other evaluative discourses does account for the many different faces that critical discourse assumes throughout the 18th and 19th century. In the analyses, we will come across numerous discursive features that *Kritik* imports from other evaluative practices, e.g. legal metaphors (e.g. 'Kunstrichter', Kant's 'innerer Gerichtshof'), 18th-century debate societies (e.g. 'Gelehrtenrepublik', dialogues, fictional gatherings), the publishing enterprise (e.g. 'Herausgeberfiktion'). The concept of 'scenography', finally, permits us to interpret the stylistic variation in Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* within an encompassing discursive framework. The *Musikkritiken* that I examine span about 20 years. During those years, both authors heavily experimented with their way of passing judgement. Schumann, for example, gradually exchanges the narrative 'Davidsbund'-model from his earlier writings for the more forceful presence of a single *Kritiker*-persona (cf. 2.2). The same observation applies to Wagner, whose critical oeuvre switches from fictionalised accounts (e.g. novellas, concert reviews) to a polemical discourse that foregrounds his critical ego. I will read these stylistic changes as variations on default discursive situations. Much in line with the concept of scenography, Schumann's frequent use of letters, let alone of the 'Davidsbund', or Wagner's autofictions can no longer – or not exclusively – be read as epic modes (cf. Prémambule). Instead, they entail various modes of expression that each seek to realise the same pragmatic objective of interaction with the reader, e.g. informing, persuasion, etc. As such, I will assess to what extent these stylistic changes affect the pragmatic nature of the texts, that is to say: whether a change in the mode of expression correlates with a change in 'the message' of texts (cf. *infra*). For that reason, I will particularly examine how the discourse in their *Musikkritiken* affects the interaction between speaker and reader audience, as well as the

relation between the author's intention, on the one hand, and his textual identity, on the other.

## 1.3 Schumann and Wagner Enter the Scene

The following analyses examine how Schumann and Wagner enter the public sphere with their *Musikkritik*. On the one hand, I will explore their understanding of *Kritik*: What function do they see for *Musikkritik* in the public sphere? What do they want to achieve with their writings? And how do they translate those objectives into a critical practice? On the other hand, I will analyse how Schumann and Wagner position their *Musikkritik* 'in the field', i.e. how they justify writing *Musikkritik* and how they position their critical writings vis-à-vis those of their competitors. As I outlined in the previous section, I read *Musikkritik* as a discourse: in writing *Musikkritik*, Schumann and Wagner legitimise the very act of passing *Kritik* itself. Chapters 2, 3 & 4 examine what part authors (as *Kritiker*) and readers play in this discursive constellation. The analyses in this chapter, to that effect, specifically concentrates on *Musikkritik* as an institution in the public sphere.

### 1.3.1 Schumann

Schumann acted as (co-)editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* for eleven consecutive years, from 1834 to 1844. He remained on-site in Leipzig throughout that period, save for a brief stint in Vienna in 1838 (cf. 2.2) and for the second half of 1844, when he accompanied Clara on her tour in Russia. Oswald Lorenz replaced him as editor during that period. Upon his return, Schumann decided to move to Dresden and passed on the editorship to Franz Brendel, who gave the journal a new identity as the mouthpiece of 'Neudeutsche' musical aesthetics. Schumann made one last appearance in his NZfM. In 1853, ten years after handing over the baton to Brendel, he heaped praise on the young Johannes Brahms, whom he extolled as the prospective redeemer of German music. A few months later, Schumann would be committed to the sanatorium Endenich, near Bonn, after a failed suicide attempt. He spent his last years far away from the public sphere that his journal had so readily given him access to in the past.

Schumann seldom makes appearances as editor in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. The responsibilities involved with the job consumed much of his time, but in his writings, he mainly comes out as *Musikkritiker* (cf. 2.2). His interventions in the role of editor are limited: he uses the office to outline the profile of the journal, to position it within the broader field of music-critical periodicals and to put competitors out of the way. Founding

an own periodical is never an arbitrary act. As Mark Napierala remarks: “Die Gründung eines Journals kann nämlich ebenfalls darauf abzielen, die Kontrollfunktion der Kritik auch unter gewandelten Medienverhältnissen in eigener Regie zu verwalten und Grundlagendiskussionen dadurch wirksam zu unterbinden”.<sup>134</sup> As an editor, Schumann indeed first and foremost defines what the *Neue Zeitschrift* stands for, what its goals and ambitions are. Notable examples of this can be found in the volumes 1834 to 1837. Every first issue of those years opens with a statement of what the journal offers and what it aims at achieving. The prospects come in a quasi-fixed format and change little over time. Schumann condenses the content of the NZfM to a handful of categories: ‘Theoretische und historische Aufsätze’, ‘Belletristisches’, ‘Kritiken’, ‘Miscellen’, ‘Correspondenzartikel’ and ‘Chronik’; in 1835 he splits up ‘Miscellen’ into ‘Verschiedenes’ and ‘Kunstbemerkung’ and in 1837 he adds an eighth category titled ‘Neuerschienenenes’. In the maiden issue of the NZfM, Schumann and his fellow editors present the journal as a project for and by artists. They market it as a medium which grants artists (indirect) access to the public sphere:

Wer den Künstler erforschen will, besuche ihn in seiner Werkstatt. Es schien notwendig, auch ihm ein Organ zu verschaffen, das ihn anregte, außer durch seinen directen Einfluß, noch durch Wort und Schrift zu wirken, einen öffentlichen Ort, in dem er das Beste von dem, was er selbst gesehen im eigenen Auge, selbst erfahren im eigenen Geist, niederlegen, eben eine Zeitschrift, in der er sich gegen einseitige oder unwahre Kritik vertheidigen könne, so weit sich das mit Gerechtigkeit und Unparteilichkeit überhaupt verträgt”.<sup>135</sup>

The NZfM seeks to lift the apparent immunity of *Kritiker*: the critical project of the journals enables artists to finally turn the tables; it accommodates demands “die jetzt den Künstler an den Kritiker machen darf”.<sup>136</sup>

From 1835 onwards, this statement in favour of the artist makes room for a list of all contributors - apart from the correspondents<sup>137</sup> - to the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. The suspension of anonymity had been quite common since the Schlegel brothers’ *Athenaeum* (cf. 2.1.2). In two years’ time, the NZfM’s list would grow from 42 to 50 names, although we should take that increase with a pinch of salt. Schumann also includes the ‘Davidsbündler’ into the list of 1836 and 1837, for instance. In addition to their names,

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<sup>134</sup> Mark Napierala: ‘Unparteilichkeit und Polemik. Kritik am Rezensionswesen und die Ordnung der Gelehrtenrepublik’. In: *Organisation der Kritik*, p. 94.

<sup>135</sup> Die Herausgeber: ‚[Prospectus]‘. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 1, p. 1.

<sup>136</sup> Die Herausgeber: *Prospectus*, p. 2.

<sup>137</sup> The prospect of 1835 clearly states: “Die Namen unserer geehrten Correspondenten zu verschweigen zwingen uns Rücksichten, die der wohlwollende Leser als begründet voraussetzen möge” (Robert Schumann (Die Redaction): ‘Zur Eröffnung des Jahrganges 1835’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 1, Nr. 1, p. 2).



Schumann specifies the occupation of each and every contributor. He records himself as ‘Componist’, for example, and Wagner as ‘Musikdirektor’<sup>138</sup>. Judging by the list, more than half of the contributors are, to varying extents, actively involved with art. As such, Schumann emphasizes that not only theoreticians, but also a substantial contingent of artists (among which painters, composers, singers, organists, writers, etc.) participate in the journal. Schumann has complete control over the contents of the list, of course: he chooses what occupation he associates with each collaborator. He lists Ludwig Rellstab as ‘Schriftsteller’, for example. True enough, Rellstab’s lyrical output might have enjoyed some renown by proximity because Schubert set several of his poems to music.<sup>139</sup> By the mid-1830s, nonetheless, his professional activities almost exclusively centred on *Musikkritik*.<sup>140</sup> Rellstab was as an influential *Musikkritiker* and had launched his own journal *Iris im Gebiete der Tonkunst* in 1830. Schumann neither inducts Rellstab into his list of collaborators as an editor or as a *Musikkritiker*, however. His reasons for not doing so are unclear. He possibly wants to avoid the impression that competitors have any say in the journal. Alternatively, one could read it as a sneer at the lack of quality in Rellstab’s *Kritik*: Rellstab merely writes about music without grasping its deeper meaning. Schumann’s survey of *Iris* in the ‘Journalschau’ later that year does not endorse this interpretation, however (cf. *infra*).

A third characteristic of the different prospects is that they promote multiperspectivism as the journal’s central signpost. The NZfM presents itself as a collaboration between different individuals that gather around one and the same objective: “Künstler sind wir denn und Kunstfreunde, jüngere, wie ältere, die wir durch jahrelanges Beisammenleben mit einander vertraut und im Wesentlichen derselben Ansicht zugethan, und zur Herausgabe dieser Blätter verbunden”.<sup>141</sup> The *Neue Zeitschrift* asserts itself as a forum for dialogue, adopting a dialectic approach to *Kritik*. It announces to feature a “Zusammenstellung verschiedener Beurtheilungen über dieselbe Sache”, to provide a platform for “Antikritiken der Künstler selbst” and to examine compositions from different viewpoints.<sup>142</sup> The heading of the 1834 issues, in addition, hands over the editorship of the journal to a ‘Verein von Künstlern und Kunstfreunden’. Needless to say, this multiperspectivist philosophy also surfaces in the ‘Davidsbund’. As Schumann became the sole editor of the NZfM that caption was changed into ‘Im Vereine mit mehren

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<sup>138</sup> This title reflects reality, as Wagner was ‘Musikdirektor’ in Magdeburg at the time. In 1836, *Das Liebesverbot* would be the first opera of his that would be staged.

<sup>139</sup> for instance, in the posthumous song cycle *Schwanengesang* (D 957) the Lieder one to seven.

<sup>140</sup> cf. Jürgen Rehm: *Zur Musikrezeption im vormärzlichen Berlin: die Präsentation bürgerlichen Selbstverständnisses und biedermeierlicher Kunstanschauung in den Musikkritiken Ludwig Rellstabs*. Hildesheim: Olms 1983.

<sup>141</sup> Die Herausgeber: *Prospectus*, p. 2.

<sup>142</sup> *ibid.*, p. 2.

Künstlern und Kunstfreunden. Herausgegeben unter Verantwortlichkeit von R. Schumann'. Schumann ultimately relinquished the editorial 'Verein'-idea in 1840.

Apart from the prospects, Schumann also intervenes as editor in several editorials. The years 1835, 1839 and 1840<sup>143</sup> open with a statement that once more familiarises the reader with the goals and ambitions of the NZfM. The editorial to the year 1835 is the most elaborate. Having become the sole editor, Schumann had the unique opportunity to set forth his views in full and outline his objectives. He commences by looking back at the first volume of the NZfM and lists some of the most important articles that appeared during the first year. Afterwards, Schumann turns his gaze to "die Fortsetzung des kritischen Theils dieser Blätter".<sup>144</sup> Schumann is very combative when it comes to this point. He accuses his competitors of cowardice and shallowness: "Wer das Schlimme einer Sache sich nicht anzugreifen getraut, vertheidigt das Gute nur halb."<sup>145</sup> (cf. infra, 'Journalschau'). Moreover, he briefly steps outside of the 'Verein'-idea and addresses the 'Künstler' as an outsider party: "– Künstler, namentlich Ihr, Componisten, Ihr glaubt kaum, wie stolz und glücklich wir uns fühlten, wenn wir Euch recht ungemessen loben konnten. Wir kennen die Sprache wohl, mit der man über unsere heilige Kunst reden müßte – es ist die des Wohlwollens; aber beim besten Willen, Talente wie Nichttalente zu fördern oder zurückzuhalten, geht es kaum – wohlwollend".<sup>146</sup> Schumann subsequently justifies his use of strong rhetoric:

Aber wir sehen nicht, was wir vor anderen Künsten und Wissenschaften voraus haben sollen, wo sich die Parteien offen gegenüber stehen und befehlen, noch überhaupt wie es sich mit der Ehre der Kunst und der Wahrheit der Kritik vereinbaren ließ, den drei Erzfeinden unserer und aller Kunst, den Talentlosen, dann den Dutzendtalenten (wir finden kein Beßres Wort), endlich den Talentvollen Vielschreibern ruhig zuzusehen, gar gewähren zu lassen. [...] Die Masse steckt bis an den Kopf in den Noten, verwirrt sich, verwechselt; dem Verleger, Drucker, Stecher, Spieler, Zuhörer wird unnüß Zeit genommen.<sup>147</sup>

Schumann acknowledges that the NZfM lost track of its priorities by going after its three 'archenemies'. This crusade had an adverse effect on the critical ambitions of the journal: "Mancher Leser wird gesehen und geklagt haben, daß der Raum, den wir der *Kritik* anwiesen, in keinem Verhältniß zur Zahl der erscheinenden Werke stehe. Er war nicht in den Stand gesetzt, sich einen Ueberblick über alle Erscheinungen, gute wie schlechte, zu

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<sup>143</sup> The year 1842 also features an opening editorial, but from the hand of C. F. Beck, a former assistant editor.

<sup>144</sup> Schumann: *Zur Eröffnung des Jahrganges 1835*, p. 3.

<sup>145</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>146</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>147</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3.

verschaffen. Nun waren es die drei obengenannten Hauptfeinde, die jenen erschwerten”.<sup>148</sup> Schumann remains true to the concept of reviewing both good and bad works,<sup>149</sup> but he proposes a pragmatic solution, namely to write “einzelne Stereotyprecensionen”.<sup>150</sup> One ‘bad’ composition will be reviewed and he will simply add the names of other works that fit the bill. That plan did never fully materialise, however. The NZfM does feature what Schumann calls ‘En-Gros-Rezensionen’,<sup>151</sup> but never to the extent of the stereotype-model that he proposes. The editorials of 1839 and 1840 are less concerned with the critical poetics of the NZfM. They rather memorialise the course of the journal so far. The columns also come at another moment in time for the journal. By 1840, the NZfM had acquired a fixed position in the journalistic field and already lasted longer than many other periodicals had managed to exist. As we will see in 2.2, the growing success of the *Neue Zeitschrift* sincerely affected the way Schumann positioned himself as *Musikkritiker* in his writings.

Only on one occasion, Schumann breaks journalistic conventions, i.e. when he uses his authority as editor to write a (negative) review about Franz Lachner’s *Preissymphonie*. Lachner was the 1835 laureate of the composition prize awarded by the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* in Vienna. Any extreme sympathy or antipathy that Schumann could have harboured for or against Lachner is undocumented. Still, it is telling that Schumann uses the weight of the entire organ to give a judgement against the symphony. The review responds to an essay in the previous issue by the ‘Dorfküster’ Gottschalk Wedel, the pseudonym by which Zuccamaglio goes, a close friend of Schumann’s. Wedel has little to say about Lachner’s symphony itself, having not heard it.<sup>152</sup> He simply praises Lachner for the fact that the award went to a fellow German. The essay recounts a dream in which Berlioz – the epitome of the French music style, according to Wedel – won the competition. To Wedel’s great relief, however, it was all but phantasy. Schumann thereupon chastises the ‘Dorfküster’ for his provincial view on the subject. Lachner might be German, he says, but the symphony itself is utterly superficial. Already midway the review, ‘die Redaction’ reaches its destructive conclusion: “Gäbe es grobe Schnitzer, Formenschwächen, Extravaganzen, so ließe sich darüber sprechen, bessern, aufmuntern; hier aber kann man nichts sagen als etwa ‘es ist langweilig.’ oder ‘recht gut’ oder seufzen,

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<sup>148</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>149</sup> Interestingly enough, in Romantic critical poetics *Kritik* was only intended for good art, i.e. works worthy of *Kritik*. In an early stage, *Polemik* had already sifted out good from bad works. cf. Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 119; Dirk Rose: ‘Polemische Totalität’. *Philosophische und ästhetische Begründungen der Polemik bei Friedrich Schlegel*. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 133-142.

<sup>150</sup> Schumann: *Zur Eröffnung des Jahrganges 1835*, p. 4.

<sup>151</sup> Robert Schumann (Eusebius., Florestan): ‘Museum’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik 1837*, Vol. 2, Nr. 18, p. 69.

<sup>152</sup> cf. Gottschalk Wedel: ‘Die Preissymphonie’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik 1836*, Vol. 2, Nr. 38, p. 148.

oder an etwas Anderes denken".<sup>153</sup> The opinion of the editor – and thus of the NZfM as a whole – even reaches a seldom moment of concord with the general audience: "Die Empfänglichkeit des Publikums hatte aber bereits so sehr abgenommen, daß selbst die stärksten massen jeden Eindruck auf Ohr und Herz verleugneten. Und so klatschten Einige, was wohl auch der übrigens tadellosen Aufführung galt: bei weitem die Meisten aber waren der endlichen Erlösung froh".<sup>154</sup>

## The 'Journalschau'

From September until November 1834, five months into its first year, the NZfM published a 'Journalschau'.<sup>155</sup> The 'Journalschau' essentially comprises reviews of competing periodicals and is quite exceptional, for that matter. The survey is a resourceful attempt at positioning the *Neue Zeitschrift* in the music-critical field. It insists on a break with established practices, an identity that the NZfM asserted on many other fronts as well: the sense of renewal and innovation that the title imparts ('Neue'), the prospect committing to a new *Kritik* for and of artists, etc. Schumann had long since spoken out against the hopeless plight of German *Kunstkritik*. Already in 'Die Davidsbündler', one of his first critical texts published 1833 in *Der Komet*, he complains about the cowardly attitude of *Musikkritiker*:

Jener [Eusebius] sagte nämlich nach Lesung einer Irisnummer: Er [Ludwig Rellstab, cf. infra] macht's aber zu arg. — Wie? Was? Eusebius, fuhr hier Florestan auf, Rellstab machte es zu arg? Soll denn diese verdammte deutsche Höflichkeit Jahrhunderte fortdauern? Während die literarischen Parteien sich offen gegenüberstehen und befehden, herrscht in der Kunstkritik ein Achselzucken, ein Zurückhalten, das weder begriffen noch genug getadelt werden kann. [...] Hat nur einer angefangen einzuschlagen und zu decimiren, so seid ihr außer euch. Ist denn die Waffe, mit der jener Ehrenfeste angreift, der Spott, der nur verwundet, nicht tödtet, nicht noch gut genug für eine Klasse, die mit Stumpf und Stiel ausgerottet

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<sup>153</sup> Robert Schumann (Die Redaction): 'Die Preissymphonie'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 2, Nr. 38, p. 152.

<sup>154</sup> Schumann: *Die Preissymphonie*, p. 152. In 1839, Schumann would give a better appraisal of Lachner's *Preissymphonie* and claim that it was the deserved winner (cf. Robert Schumann: 'Neue Symphonieen für Orchester'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 2, Nr. 1, p. 1.

<sup>155</sup> Schumann wrote the following contributions: Robert Schumann (Die Redaction): 'Journalschau'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 46, pp. 182-183 [= *Journalschau* I]; Robert Schumann: 'Journalschau. (Fortsetzung)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 49, pp. 193-194 [= *Journalschau* II]; Robert Schumann: 'Journalschau. (Fortsetzung)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 50, pp. 198-199 [= *Journalschau* III]; Robert Schumann: 'Journalschau. (Fortsetzung)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 53, pp. 210-211 [= *Journalschau* IV]; Robert Schumann: 'Journalschau. (Fortsetzung)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 57, p. 226-227 [= *Journalschau* V].

werden muß? [...] Aber nun wird es einmal Zeit, aufzustehen gegen das Schutz- und Trutzbündniß, das die Gemeinheit mit dem Trotze geschlossen hat, ehe es über uns zusammenwächst und dem Jammer gar kein Ende abzusehen ist.<sup>156</sup>

A journal passing on a verdict on fellow journals, then, seems an appropriate way of breaking with established practices. The 'Journalschau' appeared in ten instalments and targeted seven competitors: five Germanophone (*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* – Gottfried Wilhelm Fink, *Cäcilie* – Gottfried Weber, *Iris* – Rellstab, and two different *Allgemeine musikalischer Anzeiger*, one in Frankfurt from J. F. Castelli and one in Vienna edited by A. Fischer) and two Francophone (the *Revue Musicale* from Fétis and *Gazette Musicale de Paris*, with the expat Moritz Schlesinger as editor; both would merge in 1835 into the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*). Each periodical was purportedly reviewed by a different contributor. We can gather that much from the various pseudonyms signing the different instalments as well as the short introduction to the series: "Schließlich bemerken wir, daß die verschiedenen Zeitschriften verschiedenen unserer Hauptmitarbeiter zum Auszug übergeben worden. Wenn dadurch eine Ungleichheit in der Darstellungsart entstand, so mag dagegen die Vielseitigkeit der Ansicht entschuldigen".<sup>157</sup> Nevertheless, a closer look at the pseudonyms teaches us that Schumann was responsible for the discussion of at least three periodicals: he reviewed *Iris* as 2. and both *Allgemeiner musikalischer Anzeiger* as 22.<sup>158</sup>

In terms of securing a place for the *Neue Zeitschrift* in the music-critical field, the 'Journalschau's most remarkable strategy is that it confronts its rivals with their own opinions. Each review to a large extent quotes articles from a particular periodical. And these quotes can be quite lengthy. The instalments concerning the *Revue Musicale* and the *Gazette Musicale*, for instance, mostly consist of translated excerpts rather than actual commentary. The quotation-technique constitutes a well-contemplated editorial decision: "Wir sind sämmtlich treuer, als die Beschreibungen von uns; nur selten haben wir uns daher eine Bemerkung erlaubt und vorgezogen, unsere geschätzten Mitschwestern mit ihren eigenen Worten sprechen zu lassen".<sup>159</sup> We must not be misled by the seemingly agreeable tone in this statement. The 'Journalschau' first and foremost pits competitors to each other and – most importantly – to the NZfM. The appraisals that

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<sup>156</sup> Alfred Schumann: *Der junge Schumann. Dichtungen und Briefe*. Leipzig: Insel 1917, p. 7-8.

<sup>157</sup> Schumann: *Journalschau* I, p. 182.

<sup>158</sup> Schumann himself lifts the veil of pseudonymity in a letter to Theodor Töpken: "Die 3 bin ich nicht, sondern Schunke – habe sonst aber vielen Antheil an seinen Aufsätzen, da er die Feder tausendmal schlechter führt, als seine Clavierhand. Mit Zahlen unterschreib ich mich selten; ist's aber, so sind die Zweien meine, also 2, 12, 22, 32 u.s.f." (Robert Schumann: 'An Theodor Töpken' [18.08.1834], quoted from Wilhelm Joseph von Wasielewski: *Robert Schumann - Eine Biographie*. Third edition. Bonn: Strauß 1880, p. 330.

<sup>159</sup> Schumann: *Journalschau* I, p. 182.

the series cites, for one, often involve works that the NZfM too has reviewed during its first five months. As such, the series on multiple occasions quotes essays on “Ueber das Komische in der Musik” by K. Stein<sup>160</sup> or Hummel’s Etudes<sup>161</sup> – two works that Schumann, incidentally, reviewed in the third and nineteenth issue of the NZfM, respectively. This overlap adds to the perception that the *Neue Zeitschrift*, despite it being a recent player, already manages to compete with the more established music periodicals that surround it. Furthermore, the ‘Journalschau’ plays those different periodicals against each other. Beneath the discussion of a particular piece, for instance, footnotes indicate on what pages or in what issues other journals like *Iris* or the AMZ, but also the NZfM itself have reviewed that same work. Again, the *Neue Zeitschrift* puts itself on a par with its rivals.

In addition, the quotation-strategy lampoons the rivalling Germanophone ‘Zeitschriften’. The alternation between quotes and commentary ridicules the competition and brings out the satire in the ‘Journalschau’. The review of the *Frankfurt Allgemeiner musikalischer Anzeiger*, for example, claims to capture the spirit of the periodical on the basis of one single quote: “Aus dem Angeführten kann man auf die Tonart schließen, in der das Ganze gehalten. Sie ist durchweg naiv, bescheiden, so nach Art der ‘Dorfzeitung’. Zu Zeiten guckt aber auch eine Faust heraus, der man es ansieht, daß sie derber anfassen könnte, wenn sie sonst wollte”.<sup>162</sup> Later in the review, Schumann makes fun of the clichéd banalities in the journal:

Die Kritik scheint im Durchschnitt in schätzbaren Händen zu sein, glauben wir auch nicht, das sich 1010 kritische Finger zusammengeschlossen haben zum Bund, wie die unterschriebenen Zahlen, die bis 101 reichen, vermuthen lassen können. So wäre es z. B. wunderbar, wenn die Trias 7. 12. 46. sich auf einmal In die oft vorkommende Redoblume

„dieses Stück möge Anwerth finden“

verliebt hätte. Doch sind das Kleinigkeiten, die allefalls die Aufmerksamkeit beweisen sollen, mit der man gelesen, durchgegangen. — Die Form der Darstellung bleibt sich immer gleich. Gemeinplätze, wie bei Gelegenheit der Hummel'schen Etüden

„von Hummel läßt sich nur Treffliches erwarten“ finden sich zu häufig vor.—

<sup>163</sup>

The *Anzeiger* from Vienna does not fare any better. Schumann is very vocal in his disdain for the recurrent platitudes in the journal:

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<sup>160</sup> cf. Robert Schumann: Journalschau. (Fortsetzung)!. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 47, p. 187; Robert Schumann: Journalschau. (Fortsetzung)!. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 48, p. 190.

<sup>161</sup> cf. Schumann: Journalschau IV, p. 211; Schumann: Journalschau V, p. 226.

<sup>162</sup> Schumann: Journalschau IV, p. 210.

<sup>163</sup> *ibid.*, p. 210-211.

Von Wahrheiten ziehen wir noch folgende aus:

„Eine Hauptregel in Sachen der Kunst ist ja diese, das Schöne nur in seiner Quelle aufzusuchen; möge jeder Freund der Kunst diese Regel beherzigen und verfolgen!"

Sodann:

„Nur die Vollendung darf das Ziel des ausübenden Künstlers sein, nicht die Gefallsucht im Gebiet der Fertigkeit."

Endlich:

„Möchte doch immer der Componist eines Werks bedenken, daß es sich um die große Aufgabe, der Kunst zu genügen, handelt, und jedes scheinbare Modegewand derselben vor dem Glanz eines ächten Kunstwerks verschwinden muß."

Wie lahm! — So geht's durch sammtliche 18 Nummern, die wir kennen.

Und somit empfehlen wir diesen Anzeiger keineswegs, der übrigens seit Monat Mai nichts mehr von sich hören läßt. Sollte er untergegangen sein, so weinet nicht um ihn, Grazien! denn es starb kein Adonis.<sup>164</sup>

A different case in point is the review of Rellstab's *Iris*. The motto that opens the respective issue quotes the *Komet*-article in which Florestan praises Rellstab as the standard-bearer of a new form of straightforward, undaunted *Musikkritik* (cf. supra). In the first part of the review, Schumann mocks the inconsistent quality of *Iris*. He extends the simile of the rainbow (of which *Iris* is the personification in Greek mythology). One time, gods "nicht allein welche von Fleisch und Gestalt, sondern auch von Geist und Gedanken"<sup>165</sup> find their way into the journal, another time "[rutschen] [a]ber auch Kobolde vom Bogen herunter und aufhuckende Graumännchen".<sup>166</sup> Subsequently, Schumann satirises the ambiguous face of *Iris*:

Man könnte die Regenbogenvergleiche noch weiter treiben, etwa entschuldigend: „hat doch der Astronom Frauenhofer in den reinen Irisfarben dunkelschwarze Streifen entdeckt, und Du wolltest zürnen, wenn einmal eine schöne Seele irrt," oder tadelnd: „diese Iris ist allerdings ein Regenbogen, der, wie der idealische Mensch, mit dem Fuß an der Erde haftet, während das Haupt die Wolken berührt, er ist aber einfarbig," oder auf die Zeit angewandt: „der unbewölkte Himmel malt keinen, wohl aber der dunkle — desto fester tritt er dann hervor." Und dergleichen ließe sich viel sagen, wäre man nicht vom Ernst einer Journalschau lebhaft durchdrungen.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Schumann: *Journalschau* V, p. 227.

<sup>165</sup> Schumann: *Journalschau* II, p. 193.

<sup>166</sup> *ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>167</sup> *ibid.*, p. 194.

The second part of the review expressly breaks the quotation-pattern that most of the 'Journalschau' had so far adhered to: "Es scheint uns aber hier der Ort, ob wohl dem Versprechen der Einleitungsworte der Journalschau entgegen, nach dem wir die einzelnen Organe durch sich selbst sprechen lassen wollten, unsere Meinung über diesen Gegenstand auszusprechen".<sup>168</sup> What follows, is a nuanced view on Rellstab and his attainments. Schumann reiterates his claims from 'Die Davidsbündler', namely that Rellstab was the first one to make "einen Angriff gegen die verkühlte, kritische Sprachweise, gegen den Geist der Unentschiedenheit, der sich den Schein von Unparteilichkeit gab, um seine Charakterlosigkeit zu verbergen".<sup>169</sup> Although he wonders about Rellstab's obstinate reluctance ("Starsinn")<sup>170</sup> to recognise the talent of Chopin, his final conclusion about *Iris* is very positive. It is the only journal to receive the NZfM's seal of approval.<sup>171</sup> Rellstab made a 'Kunstkampf' out of *Musikkritik*: "Der ältere Streiter hat uns jüngere Kunstkämpen unaufgefordert mit solcher Theilnahme der Welt als turnierfähige Jünglinge vorgestellt, daß wir die Schwerter um so schärfer schlifften, einzuhaue[n] in alles Kranke, Unkünstlerische und Haßliche".<sup>172</sup> A merit of which the 'Journalschau' in itself is perhaps the best proof.

### 1.3.2 Wagner

"Es ist eigentlich ein Jammer", Wagner complains in a letter to Schumann, "daß ein Componist sich gedrungen fühlt, auch zu schriftstellern, – bei uns Deutschen geht es aber nicht anders, wir sind sämmtlich auf das speculative Terrain hingewiesen; – unser Vortheil ist es aber gewiß nicht."<sup>173</sup> Wagner utters these existential musings in 1836, two years after he had first entered the scene as *Musikkritiker* with an article called 'Die Deutsche Oper' in the *Zeitung für die Allgemeine Welt* – quite a fitting debut for a composer and *Musikkritiker* who would devote the next 47 years of his life to promoting a new kind of musical drama. During those years, Wagner constantly reinvented himself as *Musikkritiker*. Wagner acutely sensed the changes in his lifetime, the reactions they called

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<sup>168</sup> Schumann: *Journalschau* III, p. 198.

<sup>169</sup> *ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>170</sup> *ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>171</sup> cf. "Wie dem auch sei, [...] so bleibt an sich die Gesinnung dieser Götterbotin eine edle, ihres Ursprungs würdige und wenn auch die Ehrfurcht vor zwei Künstlern, Bernhard Klein und Ludwig Berger, die Schuld tragen sollte, daß Rellstab die späteren Zeitgenossen zurückmessen wollte, so bleibt es immer anzuerkennen, daß diese Geister, die vielleicht sonst, wenn nicht untergegangen, doch übersehen worden wären, von ihm verherrlicht worden sind, wie sie es in solchem Maß verdienen". (*ibid.*, p. 199).

<sup>172</sup> *ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>173</sup> Richard Wagner: 'An Robert Schumann [28.05.1836]'. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, ed. by Gertrud Strobel and Werner Wolf. Vol. 1. Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik 1967<sup>3</sup>, p. 274-275.



for and how to adapt his *Musikkritik* to them. Until around 1849, he wrote for various periodicals, both German and French, in standard journalistic roles (e.g. the musician-contributor, the correspondent; cf. 2.3.1). After he participated in the revolution in Dresden in 1848, Wagner was forced to go into exile and eventually ended up in Zürich. The move apparently inspired him to subject his *Musikkritik* to similar changes. He started writing pamphlets and full-fledged aesthetic treatises. Not longer bound to the medial environment of the periodical, his essays were published under his own name by independent publishing houses. Only later in life, in 1878 to be precise, Wagner established the *Bayreuther Blätter*, the official mouthpiece of Wagnerian aesthetics and ideology. It was the crowning achievement of a lifetime Wagner spent searching for the right medium through which his *Musikkritik* could best further the circulation of his music and his ideas.

Nonetheless, Wagner over and over reiterates that he is reluctant to be a *Musikkritiker*. The claim that he writes against his own volition, sticks as a topos. Certainly in retrospective accounts, Wagner uses it as a pragmatic way of legitimising his writings. In the dedication of *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, for instance, he explains that he was resolved to only make his ideas and beliefs known “durch künstlerische Taten“; yet, eventually, he had to make the decision, „Schriftsteller zu werden, wozu einst mich schon einmal die äußere Lebensnot getrieben hatte“.<sup>174</sup> We hear the same sound of economic necessity in *Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde* (1851): „So verhaßt ist mir aber das schriftstellerische Wesen und die Not, die mich zum Schriftstellern gedrängt hat, daß ich mit dieser Mitteilung zum letzten Male als Litterat vor meinen Freunden erschienen sein möchte, [...]“.<sup>175</sup> The introduction to his *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, likewise, makes mention of his „Nötigung zu schriftstellerischen Arbeiten“.<sup>176</sup>

Despite his apparent reluctance to be a *Musikkritiker*, Wagner realised from the start that an artist had much to gain from *Kritik*. Exactly for that reason, it is hard to figure out how Wagner exactly conceives of *Musikkritik*, for the views that he expounds, are at the same time often designed to fit his own agenda. The only document in which Wagner comprehensively spells out his views on *Musikkritik* is the text ‘Über Musikalische Kritik. Brief an den Herausgeber der Neuen Zeitschrift für Musik’ (1852). Wagner claims to write the essay at the request of Franz Brendel, who had apparently<sup>177</sup> asked him to assess “welchen Anteil eine ‘Zeitschrift für Musik’ an dem Prozesse nehmen solle, den unsre

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<sup>174</sup> Richard Wagner: “Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft’ Ludwig Feuerbach in dankbarer Verehrung gewidmet’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 285.

<sup>175</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 4, p. 330.

<sup>176</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Einleitung’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 1, p. 1.

<sup>177</sup> I express myself with caution because Wagner often cites an external cause as a discursive strategy to vindicate his writings, cf. 2.3.1 & 4.2.3.

heutige Musik notwendig zu bestehen hat [...]”.<sup>178</sup> In reality, the text thus already starts from a particular form of *Musikkritik*, namely *Musikkritik* that appears in a periodical (more specifically the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* that Brendel had inherited from Schumann in 1844). Interestingly enough, moreover, he embarks on the topic from the perspective of the artist, and not that of the *Musikritiker* or the reader. Wagner opens his essay by describing the Elysium in which he found himself as *Kapellmeister in Dresden*. During that period, Wagner says, he hardly looked at periodicals; his only concern was the “unmittelbare Darstellung” and the “praktische Verwirklichung meiner künstlerischen Absichten”.<sup>179</sup> Still, “die gänzliche Geschmacksverwirrung des Publikums, und die Kopf-

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<sup>178</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Über Musikalische Kritik. Brief an den Herausgeber der Neuen Zeitschrift für Musik’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 5, p. 53.

<sup>179</sup> Wagner: *Über Musikalische Kritik*, p. 54. This is a fabricated argument. Wagner’s time in Dresden was hardly the Golden Age he made it out to be. On the contrary, the state of the *Musikkritik* in Dresden very much bothered him. In a letter to Karl Gaillard, he complains about the ‘Neid’ with which journalists oppose his compositions (cf. Richard Wagner: ‘An Karl Gaillard [05.06.1845]’. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 2, p. 431). In the essay *Künstler und Kritiker* (1846), two years after he had been appointed as ‘Kapellmeister’, Wagner defends his conducting performance of *Le Nozze di Figaro* against a bad review Carl Blanck had given the production. Wagner fiercely asserts the position of the ‘Künstler’ as one of aesthetic autonomy. Discursively, Wagner installs himself in the position of ‘Künstler’ by occasional references to his appointment as Kapellmeister, e.g. “Endlich macht es meinem Dafürhalten nach gerade jene – seien wir ehrlich! – sehr beneidete ehrenvolle Stellung zu einem so hochachtungswürdigen Institute, wie der königl. Kapelle, mir zur Pflicht, Beschuldigungen, wie sie Herr C.B. mir zufügt, nicht unerwidert zu lassen [...]” (Richard Wagner: ‘Künstler und Kritiker, mit Bezug auf einen besonderen Fall’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 209-210), “[...] die mir, dem vor noch nicht lange gänzlich Ungenannten, verliehene ehrenvolle Anstellung [...]” (Wagner: *Künstler und Kritiker*, p. 209), “[N]iemand, ganz gewiß aber auch Herr C.B. selbst nicht, [ist] daran Ärgerniß zu nehmen berechtigt [...], da er vor allen Dingen, wenn er eben gerecht und unparteiisch sein wollte, zugestehen müßte, daß jene Leistungen der königl. Kapelle von ihr selbst noch nicht übertroffen worden sind” (ibid., p. 214). Carl Blanck, by contrast, belongs to the category of laymen *Kritiker* whose unsubstantiated opinions are regrettably given a forum. Wagner reverts to an 18th-century understanding of ‘Kritikertum’ to defend himself against Blanck, one that sees the *Kritiker* as a learned and objective ‘Kunstrichter’, knowledgeable from experience (cf. 2.1.2.1). Although this understanding soon crumbled under the weight of the Enlightenment (cf. supra Lessing’s *Der Kritiker braucht nicht besser machen zu können, was er tadelt* (1768)), Wagner reiterates its main premises: “Niemand verarge es einem Beteiligten aber, wenn er erklärt und (wie ich hiermit es zu tun mich gedrunge gefühlt habe) öffentlich ausspricht, wie widerlich und peinigend er [...] von öffentlich zu Markt getragener Vielwisserei und Besserkennerei berührt wird, zumal wenn dem Ausspruche bestimmte, **nur in dem Berufe selbst zu erlangende Sachkenntnis** und endlich gar noch die nötige Unbefangenheit abgeht, ohne welche auch das gescheuteste und einsichtsvollst Gesagte wirkungslos bleiben muß und sich selbst den Anstrich der Sophisterei zuzieht. [...] Herr C.B. hat bei der Aufführung der Übelstände [...] die schädliche Einwirkung ungenügend und einseitig gehandhabter Kritik gänzlich übersehen. **Ein Kritiker könnte vor allen Dingen, zumal sobald er sich (wie dies fast ausschließlich der Fall ist) durch praktische Erfahrung nicht die nötige vollständige Sachkenntnis verschafft hat, um die Leitung eines Kunstinstitutes [...] sich gänzlich unbekümmert lassen**, weil er durch sein mehr oder weniger unberufenes Hineinreden in Dinge, [...] Leuten, die es besser verstehen müssen, als er, nur lästig fallen, nach dieser Seite hin gewiß aber nie etwas fördern können wird. Wollte er eine sehr wichtige Aufgabe erfüllen, so wendete er sich zu dem Publikum hin, um zwischen ihm und der Kunsterscheinung den

und Ehrlosigkeit der Kritik”<sup>180</sup> disrupts the ideal mindset of an artist, i.e. “mit dem Kunstwerke selbst sich an das unbefangene Gefühl wenden zu wollen”.<sup>181</sup> For that reason,

sieht er [der wirkliche Künstler] sich notgedrungen nach Hilfe von seiten des gebildeten Kunstverständes, nach Vermittlung durch die Kritik um. Der bald gewonnene Ekel vor dem Publikum trieb auch mich endlich unwiderstehlich in diese bedürfnisvolle Stellung zur Kritik, und hier, wo ich sie selbst suchte, und somit nicht mehr absichtlich sie von mir weisen konnte, war es, wo ich das Wesen unserer modernen Kritik ganz erkennen und gegen sie zunächst fast einzig nun zu Felde ziehen mußte.<sup>182</sup>

Wagner advertises his recent *Kunstschriften* as examples of a new *Musikkritik* that turns away from the contemporary audiences and against „die kritiklose, schlechte Kritik, die Kritik, die weder vom Gefühle noch auch vom wahren Verstande geleitet wird, und die ihr Fortbestehen einzig auf die Verwahrlosung der Masse gründet, von dieser Verwahrlosung lebt, und um ihres Lebens willen sie selbst fördert“.<sup>183</sup> That new *Musikkritik* is a „Kritik der gesunden Vernunft, nämlich des Verstandes, der mit Bewußtsein keinen Augenblick als seinen fortgesetzten Ernährer das gesunde Gefühl aufgibt” rather than “die kritische Routine der alten, vom Gefühle losgeschraubten Methode, der Methode, die höchstens aus derselben Gefühlsverwirrung und

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läuternden und fördernden Vermittler abzugeben; und, so wieder rückwirkend auf die produzierenden Kräfte, dürfte er das höhere Verständniß des Publikums repräsentiren und seine Ausstellungen und Wünsche von diesem Standpunkte aus klar und deutlich motivirt, vor allem aber stets mit schrankenlosester Unparteilichkeit nicht als Einzelner, sondern als geläuterter Ausspruch der Gesammtheit zu erkennen geben.” (ibid., p. 217-218; bold emphasis mine). To add injury to the insult, Wagner passes off Blanck as a ‘Rezensent’, a derogatory term that has the discursive function of eroding the authority of a *Kritiker* (cf. 2.1.2.2): “Das hieraus entstehende Durcheinanderreden und Hineinpredigen auf den Darsteller nämlich muß der Dirigent oder Regisseur mit Recht endlich nur noch lästiger und verwirrender zu machen befürchten, wenn auch er [...] seine oft von der Ansicht des Kritikers abweichende Meinung noch zur Geltung bringen soll; **kommt nun noch die fast gar nicht ausbleibende Persönlichkeit des Rezensenten hinzu, die hier in Gunst, dort in Ungunst sich äußert, so gerät das Übel endlich auf einen Grad, der nothwendig von der äußersten Verderblichkeit sein muß** [...]. Daher schreibt sich dann endlich der allerdinge zu betrauernde Übelstand, daß der wohlthätige und anständige Einfluß, den Dirigent oder Regisseur auf den Geist und das Wesen einzelner Leistungen der Darsteller haben könnte und sollte, gänzlich verloren gehen muß, dagegen jene rohere und willkürlichere Einwirkung des gewöhnlichen, mehr oder weniger bestechlichen [...] Rezensentenwesens sich immer breiter zwischen die künstlerisch und amtlich sich Nächststehenden drängt, [...] **Was unter diesen unausbleiblichen, überall und stets wiederholten Umständen die Kritik [...] genutzt hat, besteht lediglich in Null**; was sie geschadet hat, liegt bei dieser Darstellung, in der noch große und garstig entstellende Flecken, aus Furcht, in das Persönliche zu geraten, unberührt geblieben sind, ziemlich klar am Tage.” (ibid., p. 218; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>180</sup> Wagner: *Über Musikalische Kritik*, p. 54.

<sup>181</sup> ibid., p. 55.

<sup>182</sup> ibid., p. 54.

<sup>183</sup> ibid., p. 54-55.

Stumpfsinnigkeit sich erhält, die wir am Publikum wahrnehmen [...]”.<sup>184</sup> That is the closest Wagner ever comes to a definition of *Musikkritik*: a public practice that combines rationality and feeling, as in a feeling for what lives in society and the ‘Volk’.

Wagner subsequently discusses what kind of periodicals are best suited to convey that kind of *Kritik*. He makes a point similar to Schumann’s and argues that most periodicals are only interested in literature<sup>185</sup> – literature as a genre (novels, poetry, ...), but also in the broader sense of the word, as a quarrelsome, critical process of writing and overwriting: “Unsere ästhetischen Zeitschriften sind nicht künstlerischen, sondern litterarischen Interessen gewidmet [...] Sie kommen nie mit der wirklichen Kunst in Berührung, sondern immer nur wieder mit der Kritik, sie leben einzig von der erdenklichsten Möglichkeit der Kritik, [...] indem sie Kritik auf Kritik über einander speichern [...]”.<sup>186</sup> Such periodicals offer *Kritik* for the sake of *Kritik*; they talk only *about* music, and not *of* music. A second concern Wagner raises, is the semiotic gap between language and music. Wagner recognises the intermedial predicament *Musikkritik* finds itself in, namely that music “der literarisch-zeitschriftlichen Vermittlung zu ihrem Verständnisse nötig [hat]”.<sup>187</sup> But a successful ‘Zeitschrift für Musik’ precisely reckons with that ‘weak side’, as Wagner calls it,<sup>188</sup> and overcomes that drawback.<sup>189</sup>

How exactly can a periodical get the semiotic shortcomings of music out of the way, however? It all depends on what we understand by ‘music’, Wagner argues. Here, we begin to walk the fine line between theoretical reflection and poetic doctrine. Gradually, the essay develops into an outright promotion of Wagner’s aesthetic beliefs. In a nutshell:

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<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>185</sup> cf. “Wie sollten die Herausgeber die Vorzüge der bestehenden höchst achtbaren Organe, die sich ausschließlich mit musikalischer Literature beschäftigen, nicht anerkennen wollen.” (Die Herausgeber: *Prospectus*, p. 2).

<sup>186</sup> Wagner: *Über Musikalische Kritik*, p. 58.

<sup>187</sup> *ibid.*, p. 58; cf. also the consequences for the position of the reader in *Musikkritik* because of the semiotic gap between music and language in the introduction to Part II.

<sup>188</sup> “Daß allerdings die Musik einer Literatur bedurft hat, die sich mit ihr befasse und ihr Verständnis vermittele, daß es somit ‘Zeitschriften für Musik’ geben konnte, dies hat uns eben die schwache Seite auch dieser Kunst aufdecken müssen” (*ibid.*, p. 58).

<sup>189</sup> “Es kommt nun aber nur darauf an, in der literarisch vermittelnden Bemühung für die Musik so weit zu gelangen, daß diese schwache Seite vollkommen aufgedeckt, die Beschaffenheit unserer Musik, eben aus dem Grunde, daß sie der literarischen Vermittlung bedurfte, als eine fehlerhafte erkannt, der Charakter und die Ursache dieser Fehlerhaftigkeit genau erörtert, und somit der redliche Wille an den Tag gelegt werde, die Musik aus ihrer unrichtigen Stellung zu befreien, und dagegen sie in die einzig richtige zu bringen, in welcher sie dereinst der literarischen Vermittlung zu ihrem Verständnisse eben nicht mehr bedürfen soll: so ist auch fortan der Tätigkeit einer Zeitschrift ‘für Musik’ ein Charakter gewonnen, der sie, unmittelbar auf das Leben der Kunst gerichtet, als eine erfreulichste und unter den heutigen Umständen nützlichste im wahrsten Interesse der Kunst erscheinen läßt.” (*ibid.*, p.58-59).

music, Wagner says, is the “Vereinigung der Dichtkunst und Tonkunst”.<sup>190</sup> Only a journal that embraces this understanding of music, can provide productive, relevant *Musikkritik* – can be, in other words, a *Zeitschrift für Musik* (Wagner does omit *how* exactly such a periodical can discuss this encompassing notion of music). In the end, however, it becomes clear that Wagner resigns himself to an outspoken instrumental concept of *Musikkritik* (cf. *infra*). The ultimate goal, above all, is the dissolution of *Kritik*. When the aesthetic revolution he has initiated, succeeds and the sympoetic music drama has been realised, audiences will no longer be in need of *Musikkritik*: “Ehe es [das Kunstwerk der Zukunft] selbst aber noch nicht in das volle Leben getreten ist, haben wir Alle unser Ziel auch noch nicht erreicht: ist dies jedoch im wirklichen Kunstwerke erreicht, steht das von uns Gewollte unfehlbar unser Gefühl bestimmend vor uns da, dann ist auch unsere Kritik zu Ende; dann sind wir aus Kritikern erlöst zu Künstlern und kunstgenießenden Menschen, und dann, verehrter Freund, schließen Sie die Zeitschrift für Musik: sie stirbt, weil das Kunstwerk lebt! –“.<sup>191</sup>

For the most comprehensive text that Wagner has written on the nature of *Musikkritik*, we still remain in the dark about his thoughts on the matter. The chief conclusion, perhaps, is that Wagner, above all, regards *Kritik* as an instrument, a means to an end. First of all, he acknowledges *Kritik* as an entity in its own right: it interacts with people, influences their opinions, it is a force that artists reckon with, etc. Wagner early on casts *Musikkritik* in that autonomous role, for example when he writes in *Pasticcio von Canto Spianato* (1834 - ‘Canto spianato’ being the pseudonym he uses): “Eine grundfalsche Forderung macht die Kritik an die Kunst, wenn sie verlangt, daß die Kunst des Schönen immer nur idealisiren solle”.<sup>192</sup> To be more precise, Wagner acknowledges *Kritik* as an institution of the public sphere. ‘Über Musikalische Kritik’ explicitly depicts *Musikkritik* as a text genre that appears in periodicals and articles, such as *Künstler und Kritiker* (cf. *supra*, footnote 182) harp upon the responsibilities that *Kritik* has as a mediary between artist and audience. Similarly, Wagner regularly observes that *Kritiker* are to blame for the incompetence of the audiences; they want to please their readers, not educate them.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> *ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>191</sup> *ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>192</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Pasticcio von Canto Spianato’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 11.

<sup>193</sup> e.g. „Ein von der Kritik unbeirrtes Gefallen des größeren Publikums war leicht verständlich, wenn einst die Kritiker, wie es in Deutschland geschah, ihm zuriefen: ‘Wendet euch ab von den verführerischen Sirenenklängen Rossini's, verschließt euer Ohr seinem leichten Melodiengetändel’ und das Publikum dennoch mit Vergnügen diese Melodien hörte. Hier aber trat der Fall ein, wo die Kritiker unablässig das Publikum warnten, sein Geld nicht für Dinge auszugeben, die ihm unmöglich Vergnügen machen könnten; denn was es einzig in der Oper suche, Melodien, Melodien – die seien in meinen Opern ganz und gar nicht vorhanden, sondern Nichts wie die langweiligsten Rezitative und der unverständlichste musikalische Gallimathias; kurz – ‘Zukunftsmusik!’” (Richard Wagner: “Zukunftsmusik”. An einen Französischen Freund (Fr. Villot) als Vorwort

Second of all, the instrumental function of *Musikkritik* brings with it that it can now act as an ally, then as an adversary to the artist. In letters and essays, Wagner frequently complains that *Kritiker* misrepresent his ideas or outright sabotage his ambitions. He engages in an ever continuing conflict with them.<sup>194</sup> More importantly, however, Wagner also realises that *Kritik* can work in his favour. *Musikkritik* is the partisan *par excellence*. The most straightforward example comes early in Wagner's career. On May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1836, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* published Wagner's essay *Aus Magdeburg* (1836). Wagner had sent the text a few weeks earlier to Schumann, explaining the contents as follows:

Ich konnte es mit dem besten Willen nicht umgehen, einiges über meine eigene Person zu sprechen, – einmal muß ich in einem Musikbericht über MAGDEBURG als hiesiger Musikdirektor mit erwähnt werden; zweitens wäre es albern, mich selbst, ohne es verdient zu haben, herunter zu reißen, u. daß ich drittens über meine Oper schreibe, hat besonders den Grund, weil sonst Niemand Anderes darüber schreibt, u. ich doch gern will, daß ein Wort darüber gesprochen werde.<sup>195</sup>

Wagner indeed talks about himself. And not in a shy way: he reviews his own opera *Das Liebesverbot*. In the essay, Wagner complains about the amateurish music periodicals in Magdeburg and about the “Indifferentismus”<sup>196</sup> of the audiences. Wagner takes matters into his own hands: he simply sings the praises of his own work in order to anticipate – so we might read between the lines – the bad press the first of performance of *Das Liebesverbot* might receive:

Den Schluß machte eine neue Oper von R. Wagner ‘Das Liebesverbot oder die Novize von Palermo’. – Das Malheur war schon eingetreten, die Oper in der Auflösung, und nur mit Qual und Noth konnte der Componist diese Oper noch in der größten Eile einstudiren. Die Aufführung war also übereilt und über's Knie gebrochen; aber auch

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zu einer Prosa-Übersetzung meiner Operndichtungen’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 7, p. 115-116); „Du hebst in Deinem briefe mit besonderem gewichte hervor, daß der feind, den wir zu bekämpfen hätten, nicht nur in den kehlen der Sängler stücke, sondern in der trägen philisterhaftigkeit unsres publikum's und der eselhaftigkeit unsrer Kritik. [...] Ich will nur verkehrte anforderungen nicht gelten lassen, die man an das publikum stellt; ich will nicht gelten lassen, daß man dem publikum seine kunstunverständigkeit vorwirft, und dagegen alles heil der kunst davon erwartet, daß man diesem publikum von oben herein kunstintelligenz einpropfe: seitdem es kunstkenner giebt, ist die kunst zum teufel gegangen.“ (Richard Wagner: ‘An Franz Liszt [02.10.1850]’. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 3, p. 431).

<sup>194</sup> e.g. “Kritiker von Fach haben mich stets heruntergerissen.“ (Wagner: ‘Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft’. *Ludwig Feuerbach in dankbarer Verehrung gewidmet*, p. 284), „was bis jetzt noch darüber geschrieben worden ist, rührte entweder von Leuten her, die mir übel gesinnt, oder von Freunden, die mir zu unbedingt wohl gesinnt waren, vor Allem aber von Leuten, die sich auf das Fach nicht verstanden, wie Braunthal u.s.w.“ (Richard Wagner: ‘An Peter Lyser’. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 2, p. 227).

<sup>195</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘An Robert Schumann [15.04.1836]’. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 2, p. 261.

<sup>196</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Aus Magdeburg’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 1, Nr. 36, p. 151.

wenn dies nicht der Fall gewesen wäre, kann ich demohngeachtet noch nicht begreifen, was den Komponisten bewegen konnte, ein Werk wie diese Oper zum ersten Male in Magdeburg aufzuführen. Es tut mir übrigens leid, mich über diese Oper noch nicht ganz aussprechen zu können; – was ist eine einzige Aufführung und diese nicht einmal klar und deutlich? [...] Es ist Viel darin, und was mir gefällt: es klingt Alles, es ist Musik und Melodie drin, was wir bei unsern deutschen Opern jetzt so ziemlich suchen müssen.<sup>197</sup>

The review indicates that Wagner from early on (it was the third article he ever wrote) sought to capitalise on those aspects of *Musikkritik* that could best further his goals and ambitions. In that respect, it was perhaps not a bad estimation that Schumann, who was in 1836 still very much committed to the idea of the ‘Davidsbund’ (cf. 4.1), would be most susceptible to Wagner’s own autofictions.

The *Bayreuther Blätter*, the last great music-critical venture Wagner undertook, likewise testify to his utilitarian views on *Musikkritik*. Wagner had contemplated the idea of editing his own periodical long before the *Bayreuther Blätter* (1878) were eventually founded. He struck up serious and less serious initiatives with, among others, Theodor Uhlig and Friedrich Nietzsche.<sup>198</sup> The *Blätter* are irrefutably intended as a party organ. Wagner’s opening words for the first issue signal that much: “Wiederholt bin ich vor meinen Freunden als Schriftsteller erschienen, noch nicht aber an der Spitze einer Zeitschrift. [...] durch seine Ausführung soll vorläufig die Verbindung, welche die Freunde meiner Kunst zum Zwecke der Förderung der praktischen Tendenzen derselben vereinigt in möglichst ersprießlicher Weise erhalten und sinnvoll befestigt werden.”<sup>199</sup> Although Wagner rejects the term ‘school’ for his Bayreuth clique,<sup>200</sup> he does regard the *Blätter* as the official flagship of his enterprise:

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<sup>197</sup> Wagner: *Aus Magdeburg*, p. 152.

<sup>198</sup> For the long genesis of the *Bayreuther Blätter* and the periodical projects Wagner had tried his hand at on earlier occasions, see Annette Hein: »Es ist viel >Hitler< in Wagner«. *Rassismus und antisemitische Deutschtumsideologie in den »Bayreuther Blättern« (1878-1938)*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 1996, p. 17-47.

<sup>199</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Bayreuther Blätter. Zur Einführung. (Bayreuther Blätter, Erstes Stück.)’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 10, p. 19.

<sup>200</sup> “Sollten nun diese Blätter ursprünglich dazu bestimmt sein, Mitteilungen aus der Schule an die außerhalb stehenden Vereinsmitglieder zu geben, so werden sie jetzt allerdings einem abstrakteren Zwecke dienen müssen. [...] Schon hatte ich mich wohl gehütet, den Gegenstand meines Entwurfes mit dem Namen einer Schule zu benennen, [...] Mir war es aufgegangen, daß, wer gegenwärtig in Deutschland von einer ‘Schule’ der dramatisch- musikalischen Kunst spricht, nicht weiß, was er sagt, wer aber gar eine solche gründet und einrichtet, sie dirigiert und zur Belehrung durch dieselbe auffordert, nicht weiß, was er tut. [...] Auch ich war hierfür in keiner Schule: nur habe ich mir eine negative Belehrung über den richtigen Vortrag unserer großen Musikwerke dadurch angeeignet, daß ich der tiefen Verletzung Rechnung trug, welche mein Gefühl mit zunehmender Stärke erlitt, wenn ich unsere große Musik, gleichviel ob in Hochschulkonzerten oder auf dem militärischen Paradeplatz, aufgeführt hörte.” (Richard Wagner: *Zur Einführung. (Bayreuther Blätter, Erstes Stück.)*,

Deshalb sollen diese 'Blätter' nur als Mitteilungen innerhalb des Vereines gelten. Die hierfür mit mir zunächst verbundenen Freunde werden sich nie an die außerhalb des Vereines stehenden Vertreter der öffentlichen Kunstmeinung wenden, oder auch nur den Anschein nehmen, als sprächen sie zu ihnen. Was jene vertreten, kennen wir: bedienen sie sich zu Zeiten eines wahren Wortes, so können wir sicher sein, daß es sich auf einen Irrtum gründet. Sollte hiervon etwas von uns beachtet werden, so wird dies nie geschehen, um Jene, sondern um uns zu belehren; in welchem Sinne sie uns wiederum oft recht ersprießlich werden dürften.<sup>201</sup>

Convinced as he was of the self-promotional power that *Musikkritik* had in the public sphere, finally, Wagner was self-aware about his impact as *Kritiker*. For example, he writes to Ernst Benedikt Kietz, about the 'revolution' he had started in *Kritik*<sup>202</sup> or instructs Franz Brendel to imitate his style.<sup>203</sup>

## 1.4 Conclusion

This first chapter has examined the interaction between *Musikkritik* and the public sphere. To that aim, I suggested a discursive and medial understanding of the concept 'Kritik'. I surveyed recent research in literary studies to characterise *Musikkritik* as an institution of the public sphere. Furthermore, I emphasised the discursive patterns that organise and legitimise *Musikkritik*'s critical activities. Subsequently, I applied these theoretical

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p. 20-21). Wagner had put forward the idea of a journal for a school on an earlier occasion as well. In the outlines for a school of music in Munich that Ludwig II had asked him to draw up, for example, Wagner stipulates the benefit that such a school can gain when it has a proper journal at its disposal. (cf. Richard Wagner: 'Bericht an Seine Majestät den König Ludwig II. von Bayern über eine in München zu errichtende deutsche Musikschule'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 8, p. 169-170).

<sup>201</sup> Richard Wagner: *Zur Einführung*. (*Bayreuther Blätter, Erstes Stück*.), p. 22.

<sup>202</sup> "Ich mache jetzt in der Kritik eine Revolution, und übersehen kann ich jetzt in Deutschland wenigstens nicht mehr werden. – Gegenwärtig vollende ich ein Buch: »Oper und Drama« das mindestens doppelt so stark als das 'Kunstwerk der Zukunft' ausfällt." (Richard Wagner: 'An Ernst Benedikt Kietz [13.12.1850]'. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 3, p. 481.

<sup>203</sup> "Liefere Sie hierzu eine genaue Kritik unsrer Lieder und Opernarien, lediglich mit Bezug auf das rein technische des 'Verses' und der ihr aufgefropften 'Melodie', und lassen Sie die Leute hierdurch zu dem Resultate kommen, welche bodenlose Willkür hier in der Technik herrsche [...] Im Anfange des 3ten Theiles von 'Oper und Drama' habe ich dieser Kritik deutlich die Wege gebahnt. An Ihrer Zeitschr. ist es nun, das dort allgemein genommene in die speciellsten Details zu verfolgen, und zwar eben durch Kritik – durch eine kühne, zersetzende, negative (d.h. die truggebilde verneinende) Sichtung es eindringlich, ersichtlich zu machen. Dazu Beispiele – immer Beispiele: vom größten beginnen, bis zum feinsten, und täuschendsten hinauf." (Richard Wagner: 'An Franz Brendel [02.02.1853]'. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. V, p. 174-175).



premises to Schumann's and Wagner's writings in order to assess how they used their *Musikkritik* as a dialogue with the public sphere.

Apart from earlier stints as *Musikkritiker* in different periodicals, Schumann publishes the majority of his critical writings in his own *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. The NZfM serves as a vehicle to proclaim a new kind of *Musikkritik*. Schumann rivals with his competitors 'in the field' on different levels. The prospects at the beginning of a new volume define the new music-critical project as a collaboration between different artists. Secondly, the editorials allow Schumann (who only appears in the capacity of the editor on those occasions) to evaluate that critical project and stress the consistency of the journal's ambitions. A third strategy for dealing with competitors, finally, is the 'Journalschau', which offers a review, not of compositions, but of other musical periodicals.

Wagner steers a different course. Whereas Schumann settles on the periodical as the preferred vehicle of his *Musikkritik*, Wagner writes texts for a wide range of media. He publishes *Musikkritik* in periodicals, as pamphlets or treatises and, by the end of his life, eventually establishes the *Bayreuther Blätter*, the flagship of his aesthetic and political ideology. The medially flexible attitude springs from a pragmatic view of *Musikkritik* that Wagner, more so than Schumann ever did, openly confesses to. Wagner enters the public sphere as a composer who is reluctant to write *Musikkritik*. In reality, however, he very well understands how to use the institution to further his own interests. His only poetic text on the subject reveals that he acknowledges the opportunities the institutional framework of *Musikkritik* provides for his self-promotion in the public sphere.

Schumann and Wagner introduce a self-conscious *Musikkritik* to the public sphere. Their writings validate *Musikkritik* as an institution in its own right and make substantial contributions to its development in that capacity. With the NZfM, Schumann subscribes to a critical medium that first enabled 18<sup>th</sup>-century *Musikkritik* to emancipate itself from its earlier alliance with other critical vehicles, most notably *Literaturkritik* and science. Wagner, by contrast, falls in less with such traditional journalistic formats. Going by his writings, indeed, his critical oeuvre gives a medially more dispersed impression. That fact is not to be owed to a lack of belief in the institutional abilities of *Musikkritik*, however. On the contrary: Wagner kept a solid finger on the pulse of *Musikkritik* and precisely sensed where it stood as an institution at any given moment in time. We will repeatedly observe that Wagner readily adapts his choice for a specific critical style or medium to changes *Musikkritik* undergoes in the public sphere.

Despite their medially different approach, it is safe to say that Schumann and Wagner both aim to realise a more concrete, individualised *Musikkritik*. They generally translate that ambition into a work-oriented critical practice. In 1834, a pivotal year in both authors' music-critical career, *Musikkritik* found itself caught between two discursive tracks. On the one hand, music still endured as the subject of academic discussion. If one looks at the articles in the 1834 volumes of journals like the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* (AMZ) or *Caecilia, eine Zeitschrift für die musikalische Welt*, for example, one immediately

detects the clear remnants of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century practice that centres on aesthetic debate and (reviews of) scientific treatises.<sup>204</sup> At the same time, practical appraisals began to prevail. Rellstab's *Iris* was a central exponent of that direction and found a welcome ally in Schumann's NZfM. Schumann explicitly turns his back on the academic discourse in *Musikkritik* by framing the NZfM as collaboration between artists. Wagner, in comparison, compromises more between the academic and the evaluative discursive track. Early appearances as a correspondent who reviews specific performances initially blend with, and on the long term get replaced by aesthetic treatises. And although those theoretical texts chime in the academic origins of music-critical writing, the pragmatic view on the function of *Musikkritik* that Wagner professes in his essays and letters, reveal a personalised, yes self-involved understanding of the institution.

As they introduce their *Musikkritik* to the public sphere, Schumann and Wagner tend to fall back on similar discursive strategies to boost the ethos of their *Musikkritik* and position it 'in the field'. Most notably, both authors assert the 'newness' of their writings: Schumann does so already in the title of his journal; Wagner, conversely, through his demand for a concerted revolution in *Musikkritik* and musical aesthetics. In that regard, Schumann's and Wagner's relation vis-à-vis the music-critical field differs. The 'Journalschau', for instance, works from within existing structures of the institution itself and aims to eliminate competitors in the critical sphere. Wagner, on the other hand, uses *Musikkritik* as a vehicle to push through his own musical agenda. Leaving their personal gain as composers aside, even, there is no denying the benefits Schumann and Wagner draw from a favourable positioning of their *Musikkritik* in the public sphere. As we shall see, the historicising tendencies in the editorials run parallel with a prominent discursive strategy that Schumann employs to canonise his own judgements as *Kritiker* (cf. 2.2). Likewise, Wagner's shift to theoretical pamphlets involves a new ethos as *Musikkritiker* that he finds on a more rational type of *Musikkritiker* that emerges around mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century (cf. 2.3). These analogies confirm my claim that *Musikkritik*, as an institution of the public sphere, is above all a discursive network: the medium, the ethos of the *Musikkritiker* and the communication with the reader are to be thought along with as well as measured against each other in order to fully comprehend how Schumann and Wagner launch their *Musikkritik* into the public sphere. The following chapters will build on that insight.

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<sup>204</sup> e.g. the following essays from the editor of the AMZ, Gottfried Wilhelm Fink 'Antwort auf die Abhandlung: „Ueber musikalische Begeisterung.“', columns 218-226, 'Wie sind alte Zeiten in der Gegenwart auch für die Tonkunst zu nutzen?', columns 656-659 or 'Nothwendige Beweise für die Sicherstellung der ersten deutschen Oper', columns 837-839. Similar examples of academically inspired articles are to be found in the 1834 volume of *Caecilia*, e.g. Gustav Nauenburg: 'Orthoepik - Ein Beitrag zur Gesanglehre', pp. 1-16, Gottfried Weber: 'Ueber compensirte Labialpfeifen', pp. 65-67 or Stephan Schütze: 'Ueber das Verhältnis der Komik zur Musik', pp. 197-205.

## Chapter 2 Shaping the ‘Musikkritiker’

This chapter examines how Schumann and Wagner shape their identity as *Musikkritiker*. I will claim that their critical feats entail acts of self-fashioning and that Schumann and Wagner project an image of themselves into the text. The *Musikkritiker* is a persona of the author, to wit a discursive role he plays to steer the critical communication. The *Musikkritiker* is a key factor in the process of informing and appraising. His appearance to the public sphere affects the success with which he reaches out to the reader. Furthermore, the legitimacy of *Kritik* for a great part hinges on the authority of the one exerting it. *Kritik* is essentially an act of persuasion and the *Kritiker* is its main mediator.

In what follows, I will therefore investigate how Schumann and Wagner mould their presence as *Musikkritiker* and how they gain credibility through it. In that regard, a recurrent theme in my analyses will be the relation between *Musikkritiker* and composer. Not, I might stress, with the purpose of determining to what extent the opinions of the *Musikkritiker* align with the views of the composer, but rather because Schumann and Wagner often allude to their experience as a composer to justify the claims they make and to emphasise their suitability as *Musikkritiker*. On top of that, Schumann’s and Wagner’s attempts of self-advertisement were very much part of the economic *Zeitgeist*. Since Kant postulated in *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790) that any sound aesthetic judgement ought to start from disinterest and should lack any personal involvement, self-interest had become taboo in matters of critical evaluation. As it happens, Kant’s third critique intersects with the formulation of early Romantic aesthetics which inveighed against trivial literature, the rise of the commercial book market and its advertising strategies.<sup>1</sup> From Herder over Schelling and Novalis to the Schlegel brothers – aesthetic philosophy

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Helmuth Kiesel/Paul Münch: *Gesellschaft und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert. Voraussetzungen und Entstehung des literarischen Markts in Deutschland*. München: Beck 1977; Christa Bürger: ‘Literarischer Markt und Öffentlichkeit am Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland’. In: *Aufklärung und literarische Öffentlichkeit*, ed. by Christa Bürger, Peter Bürger and Jochen Schulte-Sasse. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1980, pp. 162-212. Youn Sin Kim: *Als die Lumpen Flügel bekamen. Frühromantik im Zeitalter des Buchdrucks*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2004.

at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reacted to this commercialisation by emphasising individuality, originality and creativity as the cornerstones of true art.<sup>2</sup> They championed the literary work and its *Kritik* as unique creations - works that speak for themselves. Still, such philosophical reflection was incongruous with the ever-growing need of the public for news, information and – most acutely - sensation. Art discussion evolved into an entrepreneurial commodity in and of itself. The commercial market became saturated with journals and periodicals, anthologies, biographies of writers and musicians, etc.<sup>3</sup> The image of the artist had become central in the public sphere and it was crucial for artists to gain control over that very narrative.

Schumann and Wagner, too, first and foremost wrote for their contemporaries, and not for posterity. Both of them were zealous *Musikkritiker* and wanted to be taken seriously in that capacity. If any concern for the future speaks from their *Musikkritik*, indeed, it can be found, as we will see, in Schumann's perpetuating efforts to canonise the views and opinions he defended as *Kritiker* in retrospect. Moreover, I will not investigate what impact of Schumann's and Wagner's critical writings might have had on their musical career. I will primarily focus on the way they position and legitimise themselves discursively as *Musikkritiker* in their own *Musikkritik*.

To that effect, this chapter will first survey the discursive function of the *Kritiker* in *Kritik*. Ever since *Kritik* grew into the voice of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the persona of the *Kritiker* emerged as a prominent mouthpiece. The *Kritiker* was soon burdened with a central discursive responsibility: on the one hand, authors modelled Enlightenment beliefs about the transmission of information and knowledge onto the *Kritiker*; on the other hand, producers of art used the *Kritiker* to attack the commercial institution *Kritik* had grown into by the end of the century. As such, the *Kritiker* is a discursive agent who sets the boundaries and possibilities of *Kritik* and who justifies the very act of *Kritik* itself.

My analysis of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* homes in on that very function. I will examine Schumann's colourful use of pseudonyms and argue that the reviews he

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<sup>2</sup> cf. Jochen Schulte-Sasse: *Die Kritik an der Trivilliteratur seit der Aufklärung: Studien zur Geschichte des modernen Kitschbegriffs*. München: Fink 1971; Julia Genz: *Diskurse der Wertung: Banalität, Trivialität und Kitsch*. München: Fink 2011, p. 95-101.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Helmut Scheuer: *Biographie. Studien zur Funktion und zum Wandel einer literarischen Gattung vom 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*. Stuttgart: Metzler 1979; Olaf Hähner: *Historische Biographik. Die Entwicklung einer geschichtswissenschaftlichen Darstellungsform von der Antike bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1999; Michael Maurer: 'Zur Theorie der Biographie im 18. Jahrhundert'. In: *Biographie und Kunst als historiographisches Problem*, ed. by Joachim Kremer, Wolf Hohohm and Wolfgang Ruf. Hildesheim/New York/Zürich: Olms 2004, pp. 40-45. See also the articles '18. Jahrhundert' and '19. Jahrhundert' by Falko Schnicke in *Handbuch Biographie. Methoden, Traditionen, Theorien*, ed. by Christian Klein. Stuttgart: Metzler 2009, pp. 234-242 & pp. 243-250. The specific case study of the 'Musikerbiographie' is discussed in Annette Oppermann: *Musikalische Klassiker-Ausgaben des 19. Jahrhunderts: eine Studie zur deutschen Editions-geschichte am Beispiel von Bachs Wohltemperiertem Clavier und Beethovens Klaviersonaten*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2001, p. 140-142.

signs with his proper name, set out to canonise his opinions as *Musikkritiker*. Wagner, for his part, takes a different road. He stages a more explicit interplay between his roles as *Kritiker* and *Künstler* in his texts. The medial form of his *Musikkritik* additionally affects his appearance as *Musikkritiker*. Wagner's first ventures as *Musikkritiker* take their cue from his disastrous stay in Paris between 1839 and 1841. He features as a correspondent in the writings of that period. Wagner organises his *Musikkritik* around his familiarity with the readership, and works from within the reigning genre conventions in order to make room for himself among his musical competitors. By the end of the decade, however, Wagner's *Musikkritik* shifts from its focus on daily affairs to aesthetic treatises that offer a glimpse into the future of music. *Oper und Drama* is the ultimate culmination of this evolution. Although the discourse of progress prevails in *Oper und Drama*, I will show that there also is a second, underlying discursive mode that pitches the essay as a written rendition of discoveries Wagner had already made in earlier compositions. As such, Wagner adds an experiential dimension to *Oper und Drama*, one that challenges the theoretical, future-oriented rhetoric dominating the essay. Most importantly, however, the fact that Wagner alleges to write from concrete experience, vindicates not only the claims he makes throughout the pamphlet, but also adds to his credibility as *Musikkritiker*. In the end, I will show that the persona of the *Musikkritiker* has a decisive function, not only as a mouthpiece of opinions, but also in steering the reception of Schumann and Wagner (and their music) by their peers in the public sphere.

## 2.1 The 'Musikkritiker': Discourses of Identity

The *Musikkritiker* is the primary agent of *Musikkritik*, the central connecting piece between the institution and the public sphere. In the role of spokesperson, the *Musikkritiker* embodies the values of a text: he enacts the norms by which *Musikkritik* judges. The *Musikkritiker* thus has the outspoken discursive responsibility to not only state opinions or give appraisals, but also to account for the aim to or manner in which those opinions and appraisals are conveyed. In that regard, his presence in the text has an unequivocal ethical function. The act of passing *Kritik* involves the crucial responsibility to make *Kritik* acceptable in the eyes of the peers in public sphere, to wit the readers. This section will therefore address the discursive role of the *Musikkritiker* and specifically highlight the ethical manoeuvres that the author undertakes by means of that persona.

First of all, I will elaborate on the discursive relation between author and *Musikkritiker*. To that aim, I conjoin recent forays into the rhetorical concept of ethos with Wayne Booth's notion of the 'implied author': I will propose that authors fashion a discursive image of themselves – commonly referred to as the 'Kritiker' – that embodies and

propagates the values and norms of a given *Kritik* (2.1.1). Second of all, I will test my discursive take on the *Kritiker's* textual role against concrete identity templates that we, to varying degrees, also encounter in Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* (2.1.2). As such, I will show that authors employ the *Kritiker* as a discursive agent that regulates, legitimises or enfeebles the critical process.

### 2.1.1 The Identity of the 'Musikkritiker'

Although literary criticism has developed many models to broach the issue, the question of textual authorship remains contested.<sup>4</sup> Generally speaking, rhetorics hypostatise the author in stylistic patterns of persuasion. The verbal dimension of a text mirrors the intentions and ambitions of the speaker. Narratology, by contrast, bans the author from the text and puts a complex diegetic scaffolding in its place. Despite the plethora of views on the issue, most authorship-theories are based on established literary genres: novels, mostly, but also poetry, drama or digital forms of writings.<sup>5</sup> (*Musik*)*kritik* is certainly not part of this list. *Musikkritik* is a highly hybrid text type that does not fit the prevailing models. As a written composition, on the one hand, *Musikkritik* intersects with main issues literary analysis raises about the author: their methodologies allow us to cut through the many pseudonyms, autofiction and other forms of identity plays that Schumann and Wagner stage. At the same time, an extratextual hand perforce lurks behind the pages of *Musikkritik*. An author expresses opinions and judgements. As such, we must reckon with a textual entity that conveys those thoughts.

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<sup>4</sup> The author-concept has experienced a considerable reevaluation during the past decades. Updates of the notion can be found in Fotis Jannidis, Gerhard Lauer/Matías Martínez/Simone Winko (ed.): *Rückkehr des Autors. Zur Erneuerung eines umstrittenen Begriffs*. Tübingen: Niemeyer 1999; Carlos Spoerhase: *Autorschaft und Interpretation. Methodische Grundlagen einer philologischen Hermeneutik*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2012; Matthias Schaffrick, Marcus Willand (ed.): *Theorien und Praktiken der Autorschaft*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2014. For a cultural understanding of authorship, see the special issue of *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 60/1 (2012), and specifically the essay Ingo Berensmeyer/Gert Buelens/Marysa Demoor: 'Authorship as Cultural Performance: New Perspectives in Authorship Studies', pp. 5-29.

<sup>5</sup> Authorship in digital forms of writings is of particular interest to stylometry, one of the central branches of Digital Humanities. Stylometry identifies an author (or a group of authors) on the basis of a quantitative analysis of texts. cf. Walter Daelemans: "Explanation in Computational Stylometry". In: *Computational Linguistics and Intelligent Text Processing*. Vol. 1. Ed. by Alexander Gelbukh. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer 2013, pp. 451-462; Mike Kestemont: 'What can Stylometry learn from its Application to Middle Dutch Literature?'. In: *Journal of Dutch Literature* 2 (2/2012), pp. 46-65. For a historical survey of stylometry Peter Grzybek: 'The Emergence of Stylometry: Prolegomena to the History of the Term and Concept'. In: *Text within Text - Culture within Culture*. Ed. by Katalin Kroó & Peeter Torop. Budapest, Tartu: L'Harmattan, pp. 58-75.

Not that there have no attempts so far to broach the issue of authorship and textual identity in *Kritik*. Stephen Spector and Marion Guck, for instance, have made interesting, albeit methodologically inadequate proposals about the topic.<sup>6</sup> I shall address the authorship-question in *Musikkritik* by placing *Musikkritiker* within a discursive context. On the one hand, I will take into account that the opinions Schumann and Wagner relay in their *Musikkritik*, stem from individual appraisals of composers and their works of music. On the other hand, I will propose that the *Musikkritiker* is a discursive persona of the author in the text. In the act of writing *Musikkritik*, in other words, authors construct a textual identity. This identity is not exclusively shaped by textual indices or personal sentiments, but also the position the author (wishes to) assume in the public sphere. (cf. 2.1.2.) *Kritik*, as an institution of that public sphere, developed distinct discursive practices that enable the author to adopt those different identities. For example, *Kritiker* might prefer to appear as an outsider, to pose as ignorant or even to suppress their identity as *Kritiker*. In the following, I will underpin the discursive self-fashioning of Schumann and

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<sup>6</sup> Stephen Spector situates the origin of critical discourse “in a problem experienced by the critic as he reads, when a rift of self-consciousness is opened up by the incongruity of the language of the text and the language of the critic” (Stephen J. Spector: ‘The Dummy in Critical Discourse’. In: *boundary 2* 4/1 (1975), p. 144). This cognitive rupture between text and *Kritiker* influences more than just the linguistic dimensions of *Kritik*. Spector proposes that we should regard the *Kritiker* as the narrative cast of a hermeneutic process, as a ‘dummy’: “As the critic constructs a narrator who uncovers the text he creates a seer who covers his previous blind, naked consciousness.” (Spector: *The Dummy in Critical Discourse*, p. 144). The narrative instance who recounts his opinion to the reader thus objectifies the otherwise latent process of ‘making sense of something’. Spector, as a result, neutralises the *Kritiker* and his ambitions. The ‘dummy’ strips *Kritik* of the norms and values it projects. Spector fails to acknowledge *Kritik* as a particular discursive environment and reduces it to any other text type. Marion Guck, by contrast, suggests a re-assessment of the *Kritiker*’s subjectivity in *Musikkritik*. She claims that *Musikkritiker* simulate an air of objectivity in their texts. However, the vocabulary, rhetoric and syntax they employ, create analytical fictions which lay bare the review’s subjective foundations: “Music scholars have responded to the prestige that the sciences have achieved by trying to formalize and ‘objectify’ their ideas. [...] language conveying a personal involvement with musical works pervades, indeed shapes, even the most technically oriented musical prose.” (Marion A. Guck: ‘Analytical Fictions’. In: *Music Theory Spectrum* 16/2 (1994), p. 217–218). When Guck insists on the stimulation of ‘involvement’, it illustrates her instrumental understanding of *Musikkritik*. She emphasises that *Musikkritik* is an individual experience that, first and foremost, follows from an act of individual, musical reception: “[W]e create many kind of portrayals of involvement with musical works [...] it is clear that there is no one, right story. Different individuals engage pieces in different ways; they therefore find different language congenial to that engagement.” (Guck: *Analytical Fictions*, p. 228). The notion of ‘analytical fictions’ does not provide a straightforward set of tools that we can apply to *Musikkritik*. First of all, Guck equates the act of reviewing with the act of storytelling. Rather than examining the functional purpose of these narratives (why are narratives employed to deliver the essence of a musical work?), she questions the veracity of such fictions, however. Consequently, she turns the tried strategy of cognitive estrangement into an instance of cognitive deception. At the conclusion of her essay, Guck even expresses bleak premonitions about the insincerity of the critic and brings the dangers of manipulation to our attention: “It behooves us to be aware of what we ask others to accept. [...] Since stories of involvement are unavoidable, each of us needs to consider what story to tell” (ibid., p. 230).

Wagner as *Musikkritiker* by means of different authorsip-models developed in rhetorics, narrative studies and discourse analysis. Although these theories were primarily designed with literary genres in mind, and not for hybrid text types like *Musikkritik*, I strive to bring together those elements that allow us to highlight the discursive relation between author and *Musikkritiker*.

## Ethos

The complex question of speaker identity can be traced back to the early days of rhetorics. Next to logos and pathos, Aristotle identifies ethos as one of the main elements of proof. Arguments and emotions underpin and enforce the specific rationale that orators develop in their speech. The image of the self that orators fashion and impart to their audience is as important, however. Ethos remains a central concept in literary criticism. Recently, Jérôme Meizoz has fitted ethos within a broader theory about the ‘posture’ of authors in texts. As an exponent of the sociopoetic turn in French literary studies<sup>7</sup>, Meizoz borrows the notion of ‘posture’ from Alain Viala, who had tied in the concept (“[le] façon d’occuper une position”)<sup>8</sup> with the rhetorical category of ethos. In *Postures Littéraires. Mises en scène modernes de l’auteur* (2007), Meizoz turns the hierarchy between ethos and posture around. In an interesting case of Maingueneauian ‘scénographie’ in academic writing (cf. 1.2.3), he stages a conversation between ‘le chercheur’ and ‘le curieux’. ‘Le chercheur’ explains to ‘le curieux’ that posture constitutes “l’ ‘identité littéraire’ construite par l’auteur lui-même et souvent relayée par les médias qui la donnent à lire au public”.<sup>9</sup> The concept specifically describes those elements of performativity that relate to the act of writing and are “à la fois physique et verbale”.<sup>10</sup> The physical aspect of posture relates to the non-verbal elements of an author’s public staging: his appearance, behaviour, media-wide presence, and so on. The verbal elements of posture, on the other hand, involve the ‘ethos discursif’, i.e. the way authors use the discursive level of a text to talk about themselves and assume a position vis-à-vis others. The concept of ‘posture’ encompasses the autopoetic strategies that make up the continuum between the author as creator and the author as public figure. “[L]’interne textuel”, Meizoz claims, “[ne va] pas sans son pendant externe et vice-versa”.<sup>11</sup> Still, Meizoz understates the often artificial nature of ‘postures’. When he claims that pseudonyms are “un indicateur de posture”,<sup>12</sup> for

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<sup>7</sup> cf. Georges Molinié, Alain Viala: *Approches de la réception. Sémiostylistique et sociopoétique de Le Clézio*. Paris: PUF 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Alain Viala: ‘Éléments de sociopoétique’. In: *Approches de la réception*, p. 216.

<sup>9</sup> Jérôme Meizoz: *Postures littéraires: mises en scène modernes de l’auteur: essai*. Genève: Slatkine 2007, p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> Meizoz: *Postures littéraires*, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 18.



instance, he casually introduces an element of fictivity: “Au fond, le pseudonyme fait de l’ auteur un énonciateur fictif, un personnage à part entière”.<sup>13</sup> This element of fictivity has profound theoretical repercussions which Meizoz, nonetheless, fails to address. He assumes an explicit distinction between the ‘real’ and the ‘fictive’ author, a distinction which puts his insistence on a strong biographical connection between author and posture at risk.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Meizoz maintains throughout his study that the ‘posture’ is inextricably bound to the persona of the author. However, he does not clarify whom of both authors he is referring to, the real or the fictive one. Likewise, Meizoz does not indicate the reason for the split between the real and fictive ‘énonciateur”. One could presume pragmatic motives or narrative considerations, but as specific reasons lack, Meizoz’ theory of posture tends to offer a fragmentary model of discursive identity that strongly isolates the author from the communicative processes taking place in and around the text.

Maingueneau draws up a discursive identity of the author that resembles Meizoz’ theory of posture. In addition to the narratological distinction between the narrator and the real, biographical author, Maingueneau distinguishes a third instance: the ‘writer’. The ‘writer’ performs a very particular socio-discursive role in texts. Like Meizoz, Maingueneau regards him as “the instance who plays a role in the literary field. The writer determines certain options concerning his behaviour as a producer of works: he or she assumes a pen name or not, gives interviews or refuses to see journalists, publishes in certain genres and not in others, writes forewords, and so on”.<sup>15</sup> The discourse-analytic concept of the ‘writer’ bears out the status that literature wishes to occupy as an institution in society.<sup>16</sup> It shows that literature is inherently structured by techniques and processes that transcend the verbal and, for that matter, even material level of texts. Therefore, Maingueneau understands extra-textual actions of self-fashioning as crucial ingredients of literary meaning.

Maingueneau’s insistence on the social role of ethos is perhaps somewhat surprising. Sociologists like Foucault and Bourdieu exactly reject the notion that speakers can import a proper identity in texts. Instead, they believe that speakers gain the authority to persuade an audience from their position ‘in the field’, i.e. from the rituals in or institutions of society.<sup>17</sup> Seen from this perspective, writing a text is already a socially

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<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> cf. “Cela [Meizoz’ preference for autobiographical texts] permettait d’envisager l’énonciateur dans le texte (le ‘je’) et la personne biographique comme deux niveaux d’une même instance auctoriale” (*ibid.*, p. 28).

<sup>15</sup> Dominique Maingueneau: ‘Literature and discourse analysis’. In: *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* 42/1 (2010), p. 151.

<sup>16</sup> cf. Maingueneau: *Literature and discourse analysis*, p. 151.

<sup>17</sup> cf. Ruth Amossy: ‘Ethos at the Crossroads of Disciplines: Rhetoric, Pragmatics, Sociology’. In: *Poetics Today* 22/1 (2001), p. 3-4. In highlighting the utilitarian character of conversation, one could argue, speech act theory (yet

warranted privilege. Recently, however, scholars have turned to the discursive dimensions of ethos. Liesbeth Korthals Altes brings together sociopoetic perspectives on authorial ethos (like habitus and posture, e.g. Bourdieu, Viala, Meizoz; cf. supra), French Discourse Analysis (Maingueneau) and conflict analysis (Boltanski, Thevenot) in a theory that reconciles the notion of ethos with narratology. She suggests that the author makes use of pragmatic strategies to shape and influence the reader's interpretation of a literary text.<sup>18</sup> Ruth Amossy also searches for middle ground between rhetoric and sociological traditions (cf. supra).<sup>19</sup> She recognises that New Rhetoric<sup>20</sup> has familiarised us once again

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another model of authorship) has of course rewired our understanding of conversation: we do things with words. Nevertheless, theorists like Austin and Searle restrict their philosophical arguments to ideal conversation settings. They do not consider the contact, let alone the rapport between speaker and hearer.

<sup>18</sup> In *Ethos and Narrative Interpretation*, Korthals Altes claims that “discourse through its whole form is likely to be understood as expressing the enunciator's character; that the ethos an audience attributes to a speaker on the basis of his discourse is likely to determine deep down what message is conveyed, superseding actual semantic content; hence, that to strategically fashion one's discursive ethos is crucial” (Liesbeth Korthals Altes: *Ethos and narrative interpretation: the negotiation of values in fiction*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 2014, p. 4).<sup>18</sup> Korthals Altes correlates her approach with cognitive sciences and hermeneutics, and regards narratology as the middle-ground between both paradigms. She proposes that the act of reading does not only entail a semantic understanding of texts; it also takes place as a process of cognitive enrichment: “In this book I try to capture how interpreter's reading strategies and framing acts may affect the importance characters and their experientiality have for them” (ibid., p. 131).

<sup>19</sup> Amossy has addressed the topic of ethos on numerous occasions. In 1999, she edited the volume *Images de soi dans le discours. La construction de l'ethos*. Lausanne: Delachaux et Niestlé 1999. The volume gives a forum to scholars from various schools and different subjects of study. Amossy, for her part, finds herself ‘au carrefour des disciplines’ and argues that ethos fosters the interaction between different textual participants. (Ruth Amossy: ‘L'ethos au carrefour des disciplines: rhétorique, pragmatique, sociologie des champs’. In: *Images de soi*, p. 127-154; the essay does not differ much from the article in *Poetics Today* in 2001, cf. supra). Amossy's follow-up monograph *La présentation de soi. Ethos et identité verbale* (2010) elaborates on the crucial role of ethos in persuasion. In comparison to earlier work, *La Présentation de soi* is more speaker-oriented and – as the title already gives away – more language-driven. Amossy targets the verbal structures and strategies that shape the presentation of the self in discourse. As she explains, “[l]'essentiel sera ici de voir comment celui qui prend la parole ou la plume [...] effectue *ipso facto* une mise en scène de sa personne plus ou moins programmée, et comment il utilise les ressources du langage dans des objectifs communicationnels divers qui vont de la publicité électorale à la conversation courante et au récit littéraire” (Ruth Amossy: *La présentation de soi : ethos et identité verbale*. Paris: PUF 2010, p. 7).

<sup>20</sup> In *Traité de l'argumentation - la nouvelle rhétorique* (1958), Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca aim to restore the original persuasive and thus social function of Classical rhetoric. Central to New Rhetoric is the belief that argumentation is dialectic, as opposed to the analytic, deductive reasoning patterns of demonstration. Demonstration tests the validity of propositions by means of logical rules and conventions; its results are to be taken or left. Argumentation, on the contrary, is understood as a dialogue between orator and audience. The authors make it very clear that “c'est en fonction d'un auditoire que se développe toute argumentation” (Chaïm Perelman, Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca: *Traité de l'argumentation - la nouvelle rhétorique*. Brussels: Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles 2000, p. 7). They focus on methods of persuasion in texts, but always presume the presence of an ideal audience: “Ce que nous conservons de la rhétorique traditionnelle, c'est l'idée même

with the idea that speakers, above all, attempt to persuade their audience.<sup>21</sup> As such, orators always have an ideal audience in mind. Speakers construct an abstract image of their listeners, and design their arguments according to the reactions they expect from them. However, speakers are also the product of their social environment. Their discourse must accommodate the fact that the ideal audience, for its part, also holds ideal impressions of the speakers. “An orator”, Amossy says, “also has to choose a presentation of self as fulfilling the expectations of the audience”.<sup>22</sup> The reciprocity between (ideal) speaker and (ideal) audience produces an interesting play of pre-discursivity and discourse. Speakers need to anticipate the ideal image that listeners hold of them. It profoundly shapes the discourse of the self, though never surfaces on the level of discourse itself. Amossy refers to this anticipatory element as the ‘prior ethos’. The notion

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d’auditoire, qui est immédiatement évoquée, dès que l’on pense à un discours. Tout discours d’adresse à un auditoire et on oublie trop souvent qu’il en est de même de tout écrit. Tandis que le discours est conçu en fonction même de l’auditoire, l’absence matérielle des lecteurs peut faire croire à l’écrivain qu’il est seul au monde, bien qu’en fait son texte soit toujours conditionné, consciemment ou inconsciemment, par ceux auxquels il prétend s’adresser” (Perelman, Olbrechts-Tyteca: *Traité de l’argumentation*, p. 9; cf. also Richard Long: ‘The Role auf Audience in Chaïm Perelman’s New Rhetoric’. In: *Journal of Advanced Composition* 4 (1983), pp. 107-117). It must be noted that Anglo-Saxon academia experienced a similar revaluation of rhetoric. In *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950) the American scholar Kenneth Burke touches on the pragmatics of interaction between speakers and their audience. Burke uses the term ‘identification’ to describe the social force of rhetorical action. Persuasion, the basic ingredient of ‘old’ rhetoric, Burke argues, is but a subsidiary effect of the larger process of identification that goes on between two parties. Before we can persuade someone, two participants must identify with each other (cf. Kenneth Burke: *A Rhetoric of Motives*. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press 1969).

<sup>21</sup> Ruth Amossy’s *L’Argumentation dans le Discours*. Paris: Armand Colin 2012 actualises the main theses of the *Nouvelle Rhétorique* with other takes on the subject in pragma-dialectics (Frans van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst), language-centred argumentation theories (Jean-Claude Anscombe and Oswald Ducrot) and discourse analysis (cf. 1.2.3). In comparison to New Rhetoric, Amossy is more sensitive to the concrete, discursive operations in argumentation. Whereas Perelman mainly illustrate the application of New Rhetoric on the basis of judicial and ethical discourse, Amossy extends her notion of argumentation to a broader corpus “qui va de la conversation quotidienne au texte littéraire en passant par le discours politique, les médias et Internet” (Amossy: *L’argumentation dans le discours*, p. 41). On top of that, Amossy does away with the idea that argumentative discourse is necessarily generated by the friction between two or more antagonistic positions. In her opinion, argumentativity follows a Bakhtinian sense of dialogism: each utterance, no matter its modality, should be understood as part of a fundamental dialectics (cf. *ibid.*, p. 42-43). Hence, she proposes that we should take in to account “un continuum qui présente des modalités argumentatives” (*ibid.*, p. 43). Crucial, finally, is the central role of *pathos* in Amossy’s theory of argumentation. Amossy salvages *pathos* from Aristotle’s rhetoric. Perelman devoted strikingly little attention to role of emotions in argumentation. Amossy sees emotions as objects of the argument itself, however: not only do orators express *pathos* or do they aim to arouse feelings in their audience, as Aristotle proposes; they also have to legitimise the *use* of those emotions: “En effet, souvent un discours se propose de susciter une émotion en avançant explicitement les arguments qui justifient la réaction escomptée” (*ibid.*, p. 227). In this manner, *pathos* is no longer the sole effect of *logos*, but also subsidiary to *ethos* and the social contexts of argumentation.

<sup>22</sup> Amossy: *Ethos at the Crossroads of Disciplines*, p. 6.

of 'prior ethos' supports Amossy's general claim that ethos is not solely an element of argumentation. Indeed, her wide-ranging interest in ethea as discursive patterns, to wit stereotypes, shows that ethos has a greater control over the shape, structure and organisation of the discourse than we tend to assume.

My analysis of Schumann's and Wagner's textual identity subscribes to the basic understanding of ethos, namely that speakers want to persuade readers and that they tailor their textual appearance to that aim. I will specifically locate ethos in the rhetorical features of a text. As such, textual identity resides in the stylistic aspects of the *Musikkritiken*. For example, Wagner frequently switches addressees (often enforced through different apostrophes) and personal pronouns (e.g. the collective 'wir'; cf. 2.3.1 & 3.2). Congenial to the work of Amossy on the relation between personal pronouns and ethos (cf. Chapter 3, footnote 146), I will assess the prominence of Wagner in his writings from the deictic indicators he employs. While these strategies do not excel in originality and can be found in the work of numerous other authors, they do allow us to map the position Wagner assumes vis-à-vis the reader and to record how the textual manifestation of his ethos aligns with those results. Furthermore, the rhetorical foundation of ethos excludes a reliance on the narrative modalities of a text. When Schumann, for example, gives the floor to different 'Davidsbündler' at the same time, these characters do not represent separate ethea of the author, but rather variations on a basic ethos that Schumann constructs in the text.

Ultimately, I will always interpret the ethos of the author in *Kritik* against a broader discursive background. To that effect, authors do not only pass judgement or persuade. They also need to mark out their position in the field and legitimise the act of persuasion itself. In order to bring out those discursive features of the author's identity, I subscribe to Booth's basic distinction between author and implied author.

## The Implied Author

The notion of the 'implied author' is inextricably bound up with the work of Wayne Booth. Although other scholars have proposed similar authorship models,<sup>23</sup> Booth is the father of a concept that provokes debate to this day (cf. *infra*). As with any theorem, paradigm or school, the implied author – most elaborately discussed in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* – is best understood as a child of its age. The concept responds to the New Critics and their frantic search for the meaning of a text in linguistic structures, and linguistic structures alone. Every inkling of subjectivity, to put it bluntly, was to be barred from literary analysis. As an exponent of the Chicago School, a group of renegade scholars that advocated a more

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<sup>23</sup> e.g. Wolf Schmid's concept of the 'abstract author' in *Der Textaufbau in den Erzählungen Dostoevskijs*. Amsterdam: Grüner 1973.

literature-centred and inductive methodology,<sup>24</sup> Booth wanted to reintroduce identity and intention to the discussion. Indeed, the third chapter of *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, in which Booth disbars the idea that authors are or should be objective, contains the most comprehensive outline of the implied author.

Booth acknowledges a fundamental mediacy between authors and their texts. Authors are not directly present in the texts they write; consciously or unconsciously, they leave a print, an abstract of themselves behind. Nor do authors gratuitously write texts. On the contrary: they pursue specific objectives. At a time when narrative studies began to bud from the stem of structuralism, Booth, conversely, did not seek the mediated presence of the author in textual structures. Rather, he locates the implied author somewhere between the biographical author and the narrator.<sup>25</sup> Booth does not encounter the implied author in textual indices like style, tone or technique,<sup>26</sup> but in the moral message that a literary work conveys, the wordly (i.e. extrafictional) values it transmits.

Since Booth introduced the 'implied author', the concept has drawn extensive criticism and debate.<sup>27</sup> First of all, scholars argue that the ontology of the implied author remains ambivalent. Booth does not adequately specify whether the author intentionally installs a version of himself *in* the text or whether the reader reconstructs him *from* the text. Depending on the personal backgrounds, assumptions and feelings of the readers, each reader would, logically speaking, then infer a different implied author. A second point of criticism concerns the practicality of the concept. Booth, indeed, barely illustrates how the implied author can serve as the basis of literary analysis. In that regard, it is hard to understand the 'implied author' as a sound methodological model. Despite these objections, which I by all means share, the implied author is of distinct relevance to the discursive identity of the (*Musik*)kritiker. Two aspects, in particular, allow

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<sup>24</sup> cf. Tom Kindt, Hans Harald: *The Implied Author. Concept and Controversy*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, p. 18-42.

<sup>25</sup> cf. "It is a curious fact that we have no terms either for this created 'second self' or for our relationship with him. None of our terms for various aspects of the narrator is quite accurate. 'Persona,' 'mask,' and 'narrator' are sometimes used, but they more commonly refer to the speaker in the work who is after all only one of the elements created by the implied author and who may be separated from him by large ironies. 'Narrator' is usually taken to mean the 'I' of a work, but the 'I' is seldom if ever identical with the implied image of the artist." (Wayne C. Booth: *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Chicago: University Press 1983, p. 73).

<sup>26</sup> cf. Booth: *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, p. 74.

<sup>27</sup> Kindt, Harald: *The Implied Author*, p. 58-61. The *Living Handbook of Narratology* lists four major reservations, which can nonetheless be reduced to the two central points of criticism I summarise here (cf. Wolf Schmid: 'Implied Author'. In: *the living handbook of narratology*, ed. by Peter Hühn. Hamburg: Hamburg University, §3.2, retrieved 12 July 2016 from <http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/implied-author-revisedversion-uploaded-26-january-2013>). Daniel Shen, on the other hand, defends the concept against the many misinterpretations it has been exposed to and points out the consistency of Booth (cf. Daniel Shen: 'What is the Implied Author?'. In: *Style* 45/1 (2011), pp. 80-98).

us to better conceptualise the role the *Musikkritiker* plays in *Musikkritik*: the moral and the pragmatic dimension of the 'implied author', respectively.

After graduating, Booth travelled the US as a Mormon missionary. A religious man, indeed, his preoccupation with the values that novels project and the beliefs they transmit, does not come as a surprise. Booth claims that the author is neutral, objective nor impartial. "In practice", he writes, "no author ever manages to create a work which shows complete impartiality [...] Even among characters of equal moral, intellectual, or aesthetic worth, all authors inevitably take sides".<sup>28</sup> In reality, the term 'implied author' thus is somewhat misleading. In fact, it does not refer to a concrete person or author; more than anything, it denotes the author's personal involvement with the text:<sup>29</sup> "Our sense of the implied author includes not only the extractable meanings but also the moral and emotional content of each bit of action and suffering of all of the characters. It includes, in short, the intuitive apprehension of a completed artistic whole; the chief value to which this implied author is committed, regardless of what party his creator belongs to in real life, is that which is expressed by the total form".<sup>30</sup> In short, the implied author embodies, i.e. personifies the 'message'<sup>31</sup> of a text. As noted, Booth remains vague on how this 'message' materialises and whether the author or the reader is to be held accountable for it. It is safe to assume, however, that it does not necessarily need to be verbally fixed; it can just as well involve a set of values, beliefs and norms that we read between the lines.

The 'message' of a text, as a result, always operates within a wider, pragmatic context. Booth emphasises that the implied author acts as a mouthpiece through which authors thrust their views on the reader. Readers must of course be open to these messages. In the end, the success of implication lies in the eyes of the beholder: "[...] it is clear that the picture the reader gets of this presence is one of the author's most important effects. However impersonal he may try to be, his reader will inevitably construct a picture of the official scribe who writes in this manner—and of course that official scribe will never be neutral toward all values. Our reactions to his various commitments, secret or overt, will

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<sup>28</sup> Booth: *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, p. 78.

<sup>29</sup> Alternatives that Booth quotes from other scholars, express a similar personification: e.g. the 'official scribe' (Jessamyn) or 'a second self' (Tillotson) (ibid., p. 70). Synonyms that Booth himself uses, conversely convey a less personal connotation, e.g. "the author's individuality" or "an ideal, impersonal 'man in general' (ibid., p. 70).

<sup>30</sup> ibid., p. 73-74.

<sup>31</sup> In the sense of Searle: "[a]lmost any important work of fiction conveys a 'message' or 'messages' which are conveyed by the text but are not *in* the text" (cf. John Searle: 'The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse'. In: *New Literary History*, 6/2 (1975), p. 74).

help to determine our response to the work”.<sup>32</sup> Booth comments on the role of the reader in more detail in chapter five of *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. He argues that “[e]very literary work of any power [...] is in fact an elaborate system of controls over the reader's involvement and detachment along various lines of interest”.<sup>33</sup> Authors, manipulative as they are, try to capitalise on the interests<sup>34</sup> of the reader to make their work more alluring and engaging. But the reader is not entirely passive. Readers, Booth says, bring their own convictions and values with them into a text. As such, they are just as mediated, i.e. ‘implied’, as authors are:

But the implied author of each novel is someone with whose beliefs on all subjects I must largely agree if I am to enjoy his work. Of course, the same distinction must be made between myself as reader and the often very different self who goes about paying bills, repairing leaky faucets, and failing in generosity and wisdom. It is only as I read that I become the self whose beliefs must coincide with the author's. Regardless of my real beliefs and practices, I must subordinate my mind and heart to the book if I am to enjoy it to the full. The author creates, in short, an image of himself and another image of his reader; he makes his reader, as he makes his second self, and the most successful reading is one in which the created selves, author and reader, can find complete agreement.<sup>35</sup>

Booth's concept of the ‘implied author’ is of particular relevance to my analysis of *Musikkritik*. *Musikkritik* is a text type that institutionalises social norms and values: in order to be as successful, *Kritik* must convey a ‘message’ (e.g. opinions, criticism; cf. the function of reporting and evaluation I outlined in the introduction). Booth's theory, then, allows us to reconcile that requirement with the discursive appearance of the author as *Musikkritiker*. To that effect, I adhere to the basic distinction Booth introduces: *Kritik* transports a discursive abstract authors project of themselves into the text. We generally refer to this abstract as the ‘Kritiker’. The *Kritiker*, in other words, is the discursive entity that disseminates the views of the author in the text, a persona that readers can hold accountable.

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<sup>32</sup> Booth: *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, p. 73; see also on that same page: “the reader's need to know where, in the world of values, he stands—that is, to know where the author wants him to stand.”

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>34</sup> Booth distinguishes three categories: ‘intellectual or cognitive’, ‘qualitative’ and ‘practical’ (cf. *ibid.*, p. 125-133).

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, p. 137-138. Here, the normative properties of Booth's implied author come forward. Throughout his study, Booth understands in the implied author as an indicator of quality. “It is true that some great works seem to rise above differences of speculative system and to win readers of all camps. [...] Great art can bring men of different conviction together by translating, as it were, their different vocabularies into a tangible experience that incorporates what they mean” (*ibid.*, p. 141).

Booth argues that the rhetorical salience of meaning can only be advanced in relation to the mediated and linguistically elusive position of the implied author. It is remarkable that, yet to a certain extent understandable why Booth severs the ties between rhetoric and author in a study that exactly rehabilitates the status of rhetoric in narrative fiction. Working under a paradigm that had branded intentionality as a fallacy, the incorporeal implied author “made it possible for him [Booth] to pursue a programme of combined rhetorical and ethical literary analysis without having to bring the empirical author into play”.<sup>36</sup> This concern, however, does not apply to *Kritik*. As noted, *Kritik* is socially conditioned; readers expect it to ‘make sense’. The concept of ethos understands textual identity as a rhetorical product. Of course, opinions are subjective, and in their full range cannot always be arrested materially. Still, *Kritik* is exactly a social ritual of formalising opinion: it relies on a process of writing down (cf. *infra*). For that reason, I wish to propose that the ‘message’ of *Kritik* resides in both the text’s rhetorical and in its implied, i.e. discursive features.

*Kritiker*, to be sure, do not necessarily need to speak in an individual capacity. They rarely occur under that name in *Kritik*, indeed. Instead, *Kritiker* adapt their persona to the scenography (cf. 1.2.3) that authors choose for their *Kritik* (e.g. dialogues, letters, etc.). In contrast to Meizoz’ notion of ‘posture’, moreover, I do not presuppose a *de facto* biographical correlation between author and *Kritiker*. *Kritiker* do not have a fixed identity. Their default ‘transparency’ first and foremost allows us to model the frequent identity games in Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik* onto a textual instance of which the principal task is to transmit a ‘message’ to the reader.

The distinction between author (as writer of the text) and *Kritiker* (as speaker of the text), finally, also provides us with a discursive perspective on the interaction with the reader. Authors shape each specific text to their stylistic linking. They select the persona(e), scénographies and other stylistic elements that best suit the *Kritik* they want to convey to the reader. Readers, as a result, have an indirect, but crucial stake in the layout of *Kritik*. At the same time, the objective of persuasion that inheres in *Kritik* makes readers liable to pragmatic strategies. If authors adapt the make-up of their texts to the readership, they also need to form an idea of the reader’s reactions beforehand (cf. Amossy *supra*). My analysis of the discursive staging of the *Kritiker* therefore specifically focusses on the textual manoeuvres that aim to prefigure the readers’ judgement: I will, in other words, concentrate on the stylistic techniques that Schumann and Wagner employ to prefigure and manipulate the way readers *respond* to the critical writings. As such, I stand by a double understanding of style. On the one hand, style concerns the aesthetic design of a text, because it implies that verbal data is structured in a certain

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<sup>36</sup> Kindt, Harald: *The Implied Author*, p. 53.



way. On the other hand, style is a pragmatic instrument, because authors tailor style to the objectives they pursue.

The discursive take acknowledges that *Kritik* is fundamentally a process of *interaction*. I extend my analysis of persuasion techniques in the *Kritiken* beyond the relation between form and opinion. The *Musikkritiken* first and foremost show us how Schumann and Wagner select, structure and translate information into a critical discourse. In the following section, I will therefore illustrate how *Kritik* translates its inherent dialogism into a discourse that it can manage and coordinate. The German culture of *Kritik* inherently understands itself as an exchange between different participants (cf. 1.2.2 & the introduction to Part II). Yet, in order to enforce its own programme, critical discourse attempts to get a grip over its (geographically) disparate public by categorising the infinite numbers of participants into emblematic roles. In the following, I will exemplify these strategies of discursive generalisation by means of the *Kritiker*, who renders *Kritik*, yet through whom *Kritik*, conversely, constantly questions and realigns its own authority as well. The discursive role of the reader will be broached in Part 2.

### 2.1.2 The ‘Kritiker’ as Discursive Agent

A *Kritiker* is someone who passes *Kritik*. That is the most straightforward definition. Scholars have cited a host of reasons why *Kritiker* pass *Kritik*. Most commonly, they mention poetological motives. Historiographic anthologies, such as those of Jaumann, Wellek or Hohendahl,<sup>37</sup> trace the role of the *Kritiker* against the background of the changing critical poetics in time. The different accounts agree on a basic narrative: While the Enlightenment regards *Kritiker* as speakers of the public sphere who make use of their rational faculties to educate the masses, the ‘Genie’-ideal of *Sturm und Drang* devalues the usefulness and relevance of *Kritiker*. Art, it was argued, is not to be contained by a set of rules and conventions, nor is it to be judged by worldly individuals who expect professional and commercial benefit from prolonging aesthetic debate. *Sturm und Drang*, on the other hand, placed emphasis on creativity and originality. Thus, the supremacy of the individual superseded the age of the layman. Romantic critical poetics isolated *Kritiker* even more from their readership; they retreated into an ideal of aesthetic autonomy.<sup>38</sup> The *Kritiker*’s ‘Abhandenkommen’ was only temporary, however. Junges Deutschland

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<sup>37</sup> cf. Herbert Jaumann: *Critica. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Literaturkritik zwischen Quintilian und Thomasius*. Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill 1995; René Wellek: *Geschichte der Literaturkritik 1750-1950*. 5 Volumes. Berlin: De Gruyter 1978 – 1990; Peter Uwe Hohendahl (ed.): *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik (1730-1980)*. Stuttgart: Carl Ernst Poeschel 1985.

<sup>38</sup> cf. Ulrich Breuer, Ana-Stanca Tabarasi-Hoffmann: ‘Einleitung’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, ed. by Ulrich Breuer and Ana-Stanca Tabarasi-Hoffmann (= Schlegel-Studien 8). Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh 2015, p. 12-13.

revived the social responsibilities that *Kritiker* had in public debate and reinstated them as crucial mediators between art and the public sphere. Historiographic approaches, in short, tend to measure the function of the *Kritiker* in critical discourse in terms of the identity that critical poetics attributed to them.

A second way of assessing the motives of the *Kritiker* is the commercial perspective. Already in his *Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der hochdeutschen Mundart* (1774–1786), Adelung stresses that ‘Kunstrichter’ (cf. 2.1.2.1) sought to gain economic profit from their *Kritik*; the Kunstrichter is “eine Person, welche ein Geschäft daraus macht, die Producte der freyen oder schönen Künste [...] zu beurtheilen”.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, throughout history we find numerous case studies that document the commercial motives of *Kritiker*.<sup>40</sup> Hohendahl describes how the competition between *Kritiker* and publishers had grown into *the* driving force of *Kritik* by 1830.<sup>41</sup> Around 1800, journals had become a preferred medium of self-promotion. Men of letters, such as Schiller (who, Berghahn observes, “die Kritik skrupellos zu Reklamezwecken ein[setzt]”)<sup>42</sup> and Schlegel, founded their own journals and initiated a trend of journalistic contest that would become the economic norm one generation later.<sup>43</sup> *Kritik* increasingly depended on the medial institutions that facilitated it: “Die Bedeutung einer Besprechung richtet sich nach dem Organ, in dem sie erscheint, die Signifikanz eines Kritikers danach, welches publizistisches Instrument er kontrolliert”.<sup>44</sup> The rivalry between *Kritiker*, journals and publishers deeply affected critical discourse as well: “Angesichts eines literarischen Betriebs, in dem die Übersicht nicht mehr ohne weiteres möglich war, nimmt die literarische Kommunikation weitgehend die Form eines permanenten Kampfes an”.<sup>45</sup> The constant competition on the critical scene since 1830 leads to a revaluation of polemical discourse (cf. 4.2.1.2). The polemical register is no longer an aggressive form of passing *Kritik*; it also aims to

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<sup>39</sup> Johann Christoph Adelung: ‘Kunstrichter’. In: *Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der hochdeutschen Mundart, mit beständiger Vergleichung der übrigen Mundarten, besonders aber der Oberdeutschen*. Vol. 2. Leipzig: Breitkopf 1796, p. 1835.

<sup>40</sup> Lessing, for instance, wrote his *Briefe, antiquarischen Inhalts* because he experienced the success that Christian Adolph Klotz garnered with his popularising treatises about antiquity (a territory that Lessing had claimed for himself since his *Laokoon*-essay) as a threat to his livelihood as a writer and journalist. What’s more, Friedrich Nicolai was more than happy to strike a partnership with Lessing and publish the *Briefe*. Nicolai, for his part, wanted to break Klotz’ monopoly as a publisher of periodicals. (cf. Karol Sauerland: ‘Wann ist Kritik möglich? Ihre intellektuellen, formellen und sozialen Voraussetzungen, aufgezeigt anhand der Überlegungen von Lessing, Friedrich Schlegel und Schleiermacher’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 27-30).

<sup>41</sup> Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik in der Epoche des Liberalismus*, p. 129-131.

<sup>42</sup> Klaus Berghahn: ‘Von der klassizistischen zur klassischen Literaturkritik’. In: *Geschichte der Literaturkritik*, p. 70.

<sup>43</sup> cf. Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik in der Epoche des Liberalismus*, p. 131

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p. 132.

eliminate other rivals on the journalistic market.<sup>46</sup> Despite their ambition to emancipate the masses, exactly this reliance on economic interests distinguishes Junges Deutschland *Kritiker* from Enlightenment *Kritiker*, Hohendahl says: “Die von der Aufklärung unterstellte Konsensfähigkeit aller Leser ist im 19. Jahrhundert praktisch nicht zu erreichen, und zwar nicht so sehr aus psychologischen Gründen, sondern weil der Apparat das Verhalten der Kritiker in bestimmter Weise formt”.<sup>47</sup>

Thirdly, scholars have tested the appearance of *Kritiker* against the social or political climate of a certain period. A case in point is the frequent use of pseudonyms or even of an anonymous identity. On the one hand, pseudonyms can be understood as a way to emphasise the ‘Allgemeingültigkeit’ of opinions (cf. Kant). On the other hand, they could well be read in response to censorship. For example, Schiller explicitly founded *Die Horen* in reaction to the political turmoil at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In light of the turbulent aftermath of the French Revolution, *Die Horen* were designed as an a-political platform:

Zu einer Zeit, wo das nahe Geräusch des Kriegs das Vaterland ängstiget, wo der Kampf politischer Meinungen und Interessen diesen Krieg beinahe in jedem Zirkel erneuert und nur allzuoft Musen und Grazien daraus verscheucht, wo weder in den Gesprächen noch in den Schriften des Tages vor diesem allverfolgenden Dämon der Staatskritik Rettung ist, möchte es ebenso gewagt als verdienstlich sein, den so sehr zerstreuten Leser zu einer Unterhaltung von ganz entgegengesetzter Art einzuladen. In der Tat scheinen die Zeitumstände einer Schrift wenig Glück zu versprechen, die sich über das Lieblingsthema des Tages ein strenges Stillschweigen auferlegen [...].

Dies ist der Gesichtspunkt, aus welchem die Verfasser dieser Zeitschrift dieselbe betrachtet wissen möchten. [...] Mitten in diesem politischen Tumult soll sie für Musen und Charitinnen einen engen vertraulichen Zirkel schließen, aus welchem alles verbannt sein wird, was mit einem unreinen Parteigeist gestempelt ist.<sup>48</sup>

The poetical, commercial or political perspective take too little into account, however, how these incentives to write *Kritik* influence the discursive appearance of the *Kritiker*. In the following, I will therefore briefly explore how the pseudonymic practice in 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Kritik* (a discursive strategy that Schumann and Wagner, as we shall see, still heavily relied on) supported the overall fluid and relative the identity of the *Kritiker*.

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<sup>46</sup> cf. “Die Polemik ad hominem ist Teil einer Strategie, die den Gegner als Konkurrenten vom Markt verdrängen will.” (ibid., p. 134).

<sup>47</sup> ibid., p. 134

<sup>48</sup> Friedrich Schiller: ‘[Vorrede]’. In: *Die Horen. Eine Monatschrift 1795*, Vol. 1, Nr. 1, p. III-IV.

## Pseudonymity & Anonymity in Critical Discourse

The appeal of pseudonyms or anonymity to authors of *Kritik* should not come as a surprise. They facilitate the discursive staging that the author engages in. When authors forfeit a fixed name, they likewise lose a fixed identity to which readers can relate. Their identity as *Kritiker*, as a result, is entirely built up from the discourse itself. Felix Phillip Ingold explains that by using a pseudonym, “die Identität des Namensträgers ins Wanken gebracht [wird]”.<sup>49</sup> A proper name *tout court* is never fully one’s own. It always conveys a certain historical or etymological connotation that does not coincide with the character of the individual carrying that name.<sup>50</sup> From a more practical vantage point, on the other hand, is “der jeweils gegebene, übernommene, verwendete Name [...] wesentlich an der Identitätsbildung seines Trägers beteiligt”.<sup>51</sup> Thus, pseudonyms enable authors to tailor the meaning of the assumed name to a personal preference or a program. As Ingold notes, pen names have a camouflaging function: “[D]er selbstgewählte, allenfalls eigens erfundene Name eröffnet vielmehr die Möglichkeit, als jemand in Erscheinung zu treten der man *nicht* ist, als ein fiktiver *Anderer*, der die eigene Person verschattet und zugleich das Ichbewußtsein erweitert.”<sup>52</sup> In that regard, pseudonyms reflect the real identity of a writer to a much greater extent. They evoke a personality that the speaker has full control over - they are more of a proper name than the given name ever is:

Pseudonyme sind [...] viel eher als *Eigennamen* zu begreifen denn jene eigentlichen Namen, die sie zu ersetzen, zu verfremden oder auszublenden haben. Im Unterschied zum ursprünglichen Personennamen, der dem Träger *gegeben* beziehungsweise von ihm empfangen wird, geht das Pseudonym in der Regel auf einen souveränen Akt der Selbstbestimmung zurück - es wird von dem, der es zu tragen gedenkt, eigens *genommen*, es wird angenommen und soll einer vorgefaßten Werkidee, einem vorgefaßten Lebensplan zum Durchbruch verhelfen.<sup>53</sup>

Although Ingold claims that anonymity should not be equalled to pseudonymity, he does treat the phenomenon as a special kind of pseudonym. When writers suppress their identity, “[wird] die Pseudonymisierung selbst zum Gegenstand der Pseudonymbildung”. “[Das] Pseudonym”, he continues, “wird dann in Bezug auf den wirklichen Namen völlig

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<sup>49</sup> Felix Philipp Ingold: *Im Namen des Autors*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag 2004, p. 318.

<sup>50</sup> cf. Ingold: *Im Namen des Autors*, p. 307; Jean Paul Richter may well be the only documented case in history of a ‘Kunstrichter’ carrying a fitting name for his profession.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p. 316.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, p. 308

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p. 327-328.

undurchlässig und bedeutet nichts anderes mehr als das, was es ist und/oder wie es funktioniert”.<sup>54</sup>

Anonymity is a key chapter in the development of *Kritik*. It originated in the ‘gelehrte Zeitungen’ of the 1600s. In 18<sup>th</sup>-century, an unprecedented numbers of signed *Kritiken* anonymously. They did so for various reasons.<sup>55</sup> Censorship compelled authors to exert caution when taking the center stage with their opinions all too openly (cf. supra) or periodicals expected writers to publish anonymously.<sup>56</sup> Authors themselves, moreover, used anonymity to enhance the objective quality of their reviews, while others viewed the practice as an excellent instrument to put their own work in a more positive light (as Schiller famously did with his *Räuber*).<sup>57</sup> Astrid Urban shows that around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century, authors started to openly display their identity as *Kritiker*. Schiller unsettled the anonymity-system in *Die Horen*. As editor, he allowed the contributors to sign their articles without revealing their identity, but did include a list at the end of every year which revealed the author of each text.<sup>58</sup> As the brothers Schlegel founded *Athenaeum* and embarked on a project of post-Kantian *Kritik* of their own, furthermore, they restored individuality to the *Kritiker*.<sup>59</sup> *Kritiker* were no longer considered as the mouthpiece of the general public. Instead, they counted as the exponent of the aesthetic beliefs they themselves advocated. August Wilhelm Schlegel, finally, did away with the practice of anonymous reviewing in its entirety. His identity was at stake in a fierce quarrel with the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*. Schlegel had accused the editors of the ALZ of substantially lowering the standards of the journal as well as of pursuing improper “Rücksichten und

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, p. 324.

<sup>55</sup> For a more exhaustive list of motives for anonymity, see Stephan Pabst: ‘Anonymität und Autorschaft. Ein Problemaufriss’. In: *Anonymität und Autorschaft. Zur Literatur- und Rechtsgeschichte der Namenlosigkeit*, ed. by Stephan Pabst. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2011, p. 10-18.

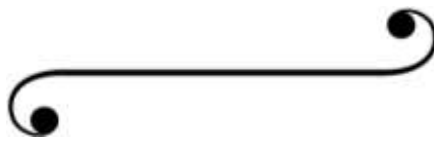
<sup>56</sup> As was the case with the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, cf. Stephan Pabst: ‘Der anonyme Rezensent und das hypothetische Publikum. Zum Öffentlichkeitsverständnis der Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung’. In: *Organisation der Kritik. Die Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung in Jena 1785-1803*, ed. by Stefan Matuschek. Heidelberg: Winter 2004, p. 25-30.

<sup>57</sup> cf. Christoph Jürgensen, Gerhard Kaiser: ‘Der Dichter als Kritiker und der Kritiker als Dichter: Schriftstellerische Inszenierungspraktiken um ‘1800’ und ‘1900’ am Beispiel von Friedrich Schiller und Alfred Kerr’. In: *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 86/1 (2012), p. 92-106.

<sup>58</sup> cf. “Auch soll jedem, der es verlangt, verstattet seyn, anonym zu bleiben, weil man bey Aufnahme der Beyträge nur auf den Gehalt und nicht auf den Stempel sehen wird. Aus diesem Grunde, und um die Freyheit der Critik zu befördern, wird man sich erlauben, von einer allgemeinen Gewohnheit abzugehen, und bey den einzelnen Aufsätzen die Nahmen ihrer Verfasser, bis zum Ablauf eines jeden Jahrgangs verschweigen, welches der Leser sich um so eher gefallen lassen kann, da ihn diese Anzeige schon im Ganzen mit denselben bekannt macht.” (Schiller: [Vorrede], p. IX).

<sup>59</sup> Astrid Urban: *Kunst der Kritik: die Gattungsgeschichte der Rezension von der Spätaufklärung bis zur Romantik*. Heidelberg: Winter 2004, p. 160.

Absichten".<sup>60</sup> The ALZ responded viciously: it threatened to print a list of all his reviews, so that the readers could decide for themselves whether there was any truth to Schlegel's allegations. Schlegel beat the ALZ to the punch, however, and published a list of all his reviews up to that point in *Athenaeum*. Anonymity, this small but telling case study shows, is not a fainthearted attempt at shirking off the responsibilities of one's opinion. On the contrary: Schlegel claimed the identity of the *Kritiker* as the prerogative of the author. As a powerful discursive instrument to both a journal and an author, Stephan Pabst shows, forsaking anonymity constitutes a central juncture between Enlightenment and Romantic *Kritik*.<sup>61</sup>



*Kritiker*, that much is clear by now, act as significant barometers of *Kritik*'s self-awareness. Debates about their precise function come at a time when the social position and the right of individuals to express opinion is high on the agenda. Kant, for instance, famously distinguished between a 'private' and 'public' use of reason. Ever more practical, Lessing advanced that the *Kritiker* neither belongs to any social class or rank, nor that he needs to be an artist himself.<sup>62</sup> *Kritiker* became central pivots of aesthetic philosophy, moreover. Whereas the Enlightenment found that the *Kritiker* had the responsibility to judge as to improve the 'guter Geschmack' of the general audience, Romantic philosophers saw a

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<sup>60</sup> August Wilhelm Schlegel: 'Abschied von der Allg. Lit. Zeitung'. In: *Intelligenzblatt der Allgem. Literatur-Zeitung* 1799, Nr. 145, p. 1179.

<sup>61</sup> cf. Pabst: *Der anonyme Rezensent und das hypothetische Publikum*, p. 50-51.

<sup>62</sup> cf. Mark-Georg Dehrmann remarks the following about the social emancipation of the *Kritiker* in the 18th century: "Kritik in diesem Sinne ist also eigentlich ein im besten Sinne traditionelles Thema der Aufklärungsforschung. Seit langem bekannt ist auch die in diesem Zusammenhang gehörende Entwicklung des Literaturkritikers als einer eigenen Rolle im literarischen System: Der Kritiker, der nicht selbst Dichter zu sein braucht und der die aktuelle Produktion prüfend und normativ urteilend begleitet – dieser Kritiker wurde gleichfalls als konstitutive Persönlichkeit des 18. Jahrhunderts erkannt und gedeutet. Entstanden im 17. Jahrhundert, beginnt diese Form der Kritik dann im 18. Jahrhundert ihre Erfolgsgeschichte. Literaturkritik, wie wir sie noch heute kennen, wird zum wichtigen Faktor im literarischen Feld des 18. Jahrhunderts. Mit ihr scheint sich die Rede über Literatur aus den Fängen der Gelehrten und Fachforscher zu befreien. Sie dürfen sich – so scheint es – ganz ihren pedantischen historischen Untersuchungen überlassen, während der Kritiker stattdessen einer literarischen Öffentlichkeit dient und, anders als der Philologe, am literarischen Leben teilnimmt." (Mark-Georg Dehrmann: 'Was ist Kritik? Zum Zusammenhang von ästhetisch-literarischer und philologischer Kritik in der Aufklärung und bei Friedrich Schlegel'. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 72).

hermeneutic duty for the *Kritiker*, for they believed that “a work of art is necessarily incomplete”.<sup>63</sup>

Whether *ex positivo* or *ex negativo*, *Kritiker* considerably influence the organisation of critical discourse. *Kritiker* are not only the discursive extension piece of opinions. Authors and periodicals cater their presence (or absence) to the mark they wish to make on the readers and, by extension, on the public sphere. Once beyond the paratextual environment (e.g. position of the text on the page, its title), *Kritiker* constitute the first point of contact between readers, authors and journals. It should therefore hardly come as a surprise that *Kritiker* come in so many forms and guises in 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>- century critical discourse. *Kritik* carefully cultivates and controls the identity of *Kritiker*, exactly because they have such an outspoken, crucial discursive function. The various identities of *Kritiker* in critical discourse relate to the historical situation *Kritik* found itself since the ‘Repräsentationskultur’ had been superseded.<sup>64</sup> *Kritik*, as an institution of the public sphere, had to conceive new forms of visibility. *Kritiker*, correspondingly, extricated themselves from their status as mere agents of evaluation. They became powerful interpreters of critical discourse. As such, the different personae that *Kritiker* appear as, serve as a means to regulate, legitimise or enfeeble the critical process, to propagate and epitomise poetical beliefs, as well as to claim or shirk responsibilities. Along with activating critical debate, *Kritiker* expose us to the pragmatic fabric of *Kritik*. They infer that broad range of roles to a large extent from the written nature of *Kritik*. “Die Erhöhung der Kritikmöglichkeit durch schriftliche Fixierung”, Steffen Martus remarks,

“[...] bedeutet zunächst eine quantitative, ab einem bestimmten Punkt jedoch auch eine qualitative Veränderung. Sobald Negationen und Positionen verschriftlicht und somit gesammelt und pränsert gehalten und nicht – wie in der mündlichen Rede – sogleich wieder vergessen [...] werden können, steigen die Vielfalt potentieller Betrachtungsvarianten und die Möglichkeiten zur Ablehnung. Schrift erzeugt eine Überschuß an Bedeutung, gleichsam eine Verhandlungsmasse von Meinungen, die Konflikte wahrscheinlich macht und daher auf eine entsprechende soziale Akzeptanz von Konflikten [...] ist.”<sup>65</sup>

The pragmatic interaction between reader and author precipitates in the intrinsically written *modus operandi* of *Kritik*. In critical discourse, one speaker or a group of speakers stands out. This enables readers to retrace the source of the opinions that are presented in *Kritik* and to hold that someone accountable for those opinions. The following sections

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<sup>63</sup> Kathleen M. Wheeler: ‘Introduction’. In: *German aesthetic and literary criticism: The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, ed. by Kathleen M. Wheeler. Cambridge: University Press 1984, p. 10.

<sup>64</sup> cf. Habermas, 1.2.1; Steffen Martus: *Werkpolitik. Zur Literaturgeschichte kritischer Kommunikation vom 17. bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007, p. 57.

<sup>65</sup> Martus: *Werkpolitik*, p. 102-103.

will exemplify the discursive roles *Kritik* delegates to the *Kritiker* by means of three specific manifestations: the ‘Kunstrichter’, the ‘Rezensent’ and models of collective identity. Next to poetic, medial and political considerations, I will specifically highlight how *Kritiker* are employed to organise critical discourse, that is to say: to occupy a position in the field, to legitimise opinions or, alternatively, disavow the outright necessity of *Kritik*. *Kritiker*, in other terms, expose the metareflexive dimensions of *Kritik* (cf. supra). Through the various stagings of the *Kritiker*, *Kritik* constantly questions and realigns its own authority.

### 2.1.2.1 The ‘Kritiker’ as ‘Kunstrichter’

‘Kunstrichter’ emerge as the need to regulate the practice of *Kritik* increased. The presence of *Kritik* in journals and newspapers grew exponentially during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The unregulated, widespread presence of personal opinion called for ways to secure one of the cornerstones of the Enlightenment project, to wit the formation of public opinion. The appearance of ‘Kunstrichter’ chimes in with measures of aesthetic regulation like ‘Regelpoetik’ or ‘guter Geschmack’. ‘Kunstrichter’ directly correlate with the self-legitimacy of *Kritik* as an Enlightenment institution and attest to its newfound self-awareness.<sup>66</sup> As such, they are made to mirror rationalist Enlightenment poetology. As the discursive embodiment of a new type of *Kritik*, they arbitrate over the quality, decency and suitability of art works (most commonly literature) on the basis of communal, aesthetic rules and principles: “Zwischen den K. [Kunstrichtern] bestehen keine Unterschiede im zentralen kritischen Prinzip, nämlich in der Forderung, daß ein Kunsturteil auf ein Normensystem gegründet sein müsse, dessen Aussagen selber begründet sind. Unterschiede gibt es in der Bestimmung der Normen [...]”.<sup>67</sup>

‘Kunstrichter’ not only vouch for a new type of *Kritik*, but also represent a new type of *Kritiker*. The rules that activate their judgement reflect the then emerging belief in the rational use of one’s faculties. The presence of these rules furthermore neutralises the potentially hostile environment that the contest between different opinions could turn

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<sup>66</sup> In his introduction to the second edition of *Versuch einer kritischen Dichtkunst* (1737), Johann Christoph Gottsched writes that ‘Kunstrichter’ represents of a philosophical *Kritik*, as opposed to the philologist *ars critica*: “Das Critisiren ist seit einigen Jahren schon gewöhnlicher in Deutschland geworden, als es vorhin gewesen: Und dadurch ist auch der wahre Begriff dieses Wortes schon bekannter geworden. Auch junge Leute wissens nunmehr schon, daß ein Criticus oder Kunstrichter nicht nur mit Worten, sondern auch mit Gedanken, nicht nur mit Sylben und Buchstaben, sondern auch mit den Regeln ganzer Künste und Kunstwerke zu thun hat.” (Johann Christoph Gottsched: *Versuch einer Critischen Dichtkunst für die Deutschen*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Leipzig: Breitkopf 1737, p. 7; for the transition from *ars critica* to a public type of *Kritik*, see Jaumann: *Critica*, 1995).

<sup>67</sup> Werner Strubbe: ‘Kunstrichter’. In: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. by Joachim Rittert and Karlfried Gründer. Volume 4. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1976, p. 1460.



*Kritik* into. In their capacity as arbitrators, ‘Kunstrichter’ can keep violent or polemical language use in check and can control any affective, subjective involvement. The *modus operandi* of ‘Kunstrichter’ is indeed more geared towards the unification than the confrontation of opinions. ‘Kunstrichter’ shift the focus of *Kritik* from specific art works to the underlying principles that enable these works. They defend, in other words, certain aesthetic principles that are universally valid (as Kant, too, would claim in *Kritik der Urteilkraft*). Not uncommonly, indeed, their tasks take shape in then emerging notions of national awareness. Especially in the work of Friedrich Justus Riedel, we encounter the idea that the ‘Kunstrichter’ needs to bring the norms shared by different communities together into a one, unified aesthetics of German art appreciation.<sup>68</sup>

In Enlightenment critical discourse, ‘Kunstrichter’ legitimise the evaluation criteria on the basis of which *Kritik* operates. ‘Kunstrichter’ judge the quality of specific works (along criteria that are already communal and universal) and justify their assessments to a public of peers.<sup>69</sup> They constitute, so to speak, a pre-hermeneutic station between public and artist. Furthermore, ‘Kunstrichter’ reveal the pragmatic sides of *Kritik*. In critical discourse, they make for a notable strategy of self-immunisation of the author. ‘Kunstrichter’ accomplish their duties as judges on the basis of norms and rules that are a priori and superindividual, and in that way, they give authors the opportunity to distance themselves at any given moment from the judgements they make. The ‘Kunstrichter’ forms an ideal opportunity for the *Kritiker* to unload the critical liability onto the social conventions that legitimise *Kritik* in the first place.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> cf. “Ablöschen wollen wir also die Tinctur, welche der Geschmack eines jeden durch den besondern NationalGeist [sic] erhält; un dann in ganz Deutschland herumwandern und die zerstreuten Glieder des Publicum aus allen Landen zusammensuchen./Vermutlich werden es die Kunstrichter seyn, von den berlinischen, hallischen und leipzigern an biß auf den jenaischen freyen Beurtheiler und den hamburgischen Nachrichten? [...] Nie können ihre Stimmen die Stimme des Publicum [sic] seyn, so lange sie mehr ihrem Eigensinne, als ihrer Empfindung folgen, so lange sie weniger die Dollmetscher [sic] einer freyen Nation, als die Herolde ihre eigene Verdienste sind. Die Urtheile der guten Kunstrichter, zuweilen selbst der elenden, treffen nicht selten mit den Urtheilen des Publicum [sic] zusammen [...]” (Friedrich Justus Riedel: *Ueber das Publicum. Briefe an einige Glieder desselben*. Jena: Christian Henrich Cuno 1768, p. 216-217).

<sup>69</sup> cf. also Habermas: *Strukturwandel*, p. 103-104.

<sup>70</sup> In the 56<sup>th</sup> installment of his *Briefe, antiquarischen Inhalts*, Lessing provides us with a formidable example of pragmatic (ab)use of the ‘Kunstrichter’. The *Briefe* polemicise against Christian Adolph Klotz, a prolific author on antiquity (cf. supra, footnote 40). In the 56th letter, Lessing chastises Klotz for signing reviews with his own name and using them for his own gain: “Die Nachsicht, die das Publicum hierin gegen einen ungenannten kritischen Schriftsteller hat, kann es gegen ihn [Klotz] nicht haben. Der ungenannte Kunstrichter will nichts als eine Stimme aus dem Publicum seyn, und so langer er ungenannt bleibt, läßt ihn das Publicum dafür gelten. Aber der Kunstrichter, der sich nennt, will nicht eine Stimme des Publicum seyn, sondern will das Publicum stimmen” (Gotthold Ephraim Lessing: *Briefe, antiquarischen Inhalts: zweyter Theil*. Berlin: Friedrich Nicolai 1769, p. 264). Lessing’s play on words make confirms the prevalent impression that ‘Kunstrichter’ were crucial mediators of critical opinion. As the Klotz-case shows, they also constitute discursive instances of self-

By the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ‘Kunstrichter’ would eventually efface from the critical scene. His downfall starts in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when less affirmative models of the *Kritiker* seep into critical discourse (cf. infra, 2.1.2.2.). The ‘Kunstrichter’, likewise, begins to serve as a negative template to the ‘Genie’ of *Sturm und Drang*. The rule-based, objective appraisals of ‘Kunstrichter’ are at odds with the budding *Wirkungsästhetik* that emphasised individuality and originality. The ‘Genie’, in short, does not model his art after general norms, but follows only his own rules and, in turn, delivers the examples on which other rules are based.<sup>71</sup> Romanticism would permanently do away with the ‘Kunstrichter’. Walter Benjamin points out that the demise of the ‘Kunstrichter’ eventually facilitated the birth of the ‘Kunstkritiker’.<sup>72</sup> On a different note, Andreas Stuhlmann points out that the ‘Kunstrichter’ is the discursive precursor of the moralistic, intellectual outsider, a persona that authors would hide behind for decades to come in order to weigh in on political debate.<sup>73</sup>

### 2.1.2.2 The ‘Kritiker’ as ‘Rezendent’

The ‘Rezendent’ is a second persona of the *Kritiker* in critical discourse. In contrast to the ‘Kunstrichter’, *Kritiker* seldom identify as ‘Rezendenten’ and they surely do not sign their writings with that name. On the contrary: especially the parties affected by *Kritik* (among which authors, poets, other *Kritiker*) use the persona of the ‘Rezendent’ to disparage and weaken the authority of *Kritik*. The ‘Rezendent’ is the discursive embodiment of anti-

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reflexivity on the relation between *Kritik* and society. For more on Lessing as Kunstrichter, see also Antonie Magen: ‘Praktische Kritik und ihre theoretische Begründung aus dem Geist der Aufklärung. Zum Begriff der Kritik bei Friedrich Schlegel’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 59-63. Magen refers to Lessing’s ‘Rezendentenfehde’ with Klotz, but fails to observe the pragmatic function of the ‘Kunstrichter’ in that context.

<sup>71</sup> cf. Strubbe: *Kunstrichter*, p. 1462-1463; Guido Naschert: ‘Kunstrichter’. In: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. by Gert Ueding. Volume 4. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 1998, p. 1534-1535.

<sup>72</sup> “Erst mit den Romantikern setzte sich der Ausdruck Kunstkritiker gegenüber dem älteren Kunstrichter endgültig durch. Man vermied die Vorstellung eines zu Gericht-Sitzens über Kunstwerke, eines an geschriebene oder ungeschriebene Gesetze fixierten Urteilspruches, man dachte dabei an Gottsched, wenn nicht etwa noch an Lessing und Winckelmann. Ebenso sehr aber fühlte man sich im Gegensatz zu den Theoremen des Sturms und Dranges. Diese führten zwar nicht durch zweiflerische Tendenzen, sondern durch schrankenlosen Glauben an das recht der Genialität, zur Aufhebung aller festen Grundsätze und Kriterien der Beurteilung.” (cf. Walter Benjamin: ‘Der Begriff der Kunstkritik in der deutschen Romantik’. In: *Gesammelte Schriften*. Volume 1/I, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1978, p. 52-53).

<sup>73</sup>cf. Andreas Stuhlmann: *Die Literatur - das sind wir und unsere Feinde: Literarische Polemik bei Heinrich Heine und Karl Kraus*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann 2010, p. 46-48; Ulrich Breuer and Ana-Stanca Tabarasi-Hoffmann, on their part claim that the figure of ‘the intellectual’ is the discursive antipode to Benjamin’s *Kunstkritiker*: “Vor allem die Figur des kongenialen ‘Kritikers’, die prominent in eine Geschichte des Intellektuellen gehört, löst allmählich den im 18. Jahrhundert sehr verbreiteten Begriff des ‘Kunstrichters’ ab” (Breuer, Tabarasi-Hoffmann: *Einleitung*, p. 13).

critical sentiments: the term is exclusively used pejoratively. Famous, in that regard, is Goethe's exhortation "Schlagt ihn tot, den Hund! Es ist ein Rezensent" (1774).<sup>74</sup> Sixty years later, Mörike would make true on these words; in the poem 'Abschied', he gives the 'Rezensent' a small nudge towards his final demise.<sup>75</sup> The 'Rezensent' is entirely the brainchild of 18<sup>th</sup>-century critical discourse.<sup>76</sup> The roots of the 'Kunstrichter' can be traced back to the judges of tragedies in Antiquity. The term often occurs as a synonym to the Latin *Criticus* and multiple dictionaries, moreover, record the use of the name. But 'Rezensenten' have no counterparts prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Instead, they find their origins in the changed conditions of the book market. Only by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, book publishers changed from written media to printed media. From that point onwards, the circulation of new novels, treatises, theories etc. reached such expansive and exponential proportions that the system called for an instance that could assess the quality of individual works and writers – enter the 'Rezensent'.<sup>77</sup>

Goethe's death sentence on the 'Rezensent' is characteristic of the verbal violence that *Kritiker* were increasingly exposed to since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Rainer Baasner explains that the emergence of the *Literaturkritiker* was, at first, very much welcomed. He sees two main reasons why "sich die öffentliche Anerkennung des Literaturkritikers zur Rezensentenschelte wandelt".<sup>78</sup> First of all, *Kritiker* were the neophytes of the public sphere and they could not be tied to a specific social class or rank.<sup>79</sup> Formerly, scholars or

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<sup>74</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: 'Rezensent'. In: *Sämtliche Gedichte*. Frankfurt am Main: Insel 2007, p 294.

<sup>75</sup> cf. Eduard Mörike: 'Abschied'. In: *Gedichte*. Stuttgart: Göschen 1873, pp. 427-428. Despite the sixty years that separate them, there striking similarities between the poems. In both poems, for instance, the 'Rezensent' enters the personal space of the author (epitomised by the setting of the house). Furthermore, the obtrusive visitor gives unsolicited criticism on the abilities or other personal qualities of the host (e.g. his outward appearance) and not his literary output. This constitutes an unsurprising indication of the fact that the authors took the *Kritik* on their work rather personally. As reaction to Goethe, Heinrich Leopold Wagner closed his poem 'Der Sudelkoch' (1775) with the verse 'Schmeißt ihn todt, den Hund! es ist ein Autor der nicht kritisiert will sein'.

<sup>76</sup> Antonie Magen points out that the 'Rezension' symbolizes the emancipation of *Kritik*: "Die Rezension wird ihm in diesem Zusammenhang zu einem Medium, mit dem Autoritäten überwunden werden können und in dem sich der Rezensent selbst als Autorität etablieren kann. Er ist autark und braucht keine Regeln mehr. Er wird selbst zur unbezweifelten Instanz" (Magen: *Praktische Kritik*, p. 61). It is, however, important to take into account the discursive ramifications of the term 'Rezension'. Magen draws attention to the importance of the 'Rezension' to Schlegel, but fails to observe that Schlegel exactly titles his reviews 'Kritiken', cf. *ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>77</sup> The gradual shift from 'Kunstrichter' to 'Rezensent' is well documented in the chapter 'Der Dichter als Kunstrichter. Zu Schillers Rezensionstrategie' of Helmut Koopmann: *Nachgefragt. Zur deutschen Literatur des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 2013, p. 47-66.

<sup>78</sup> Rainer Baasner: 'Das Bild des Rezensenten'. In: *Der Bildhunger der Literatur*, ed. by Dieter Heimböckel and Uwe Werlein. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2005, p. 70.

<sup>79</sup> cf. "Aufgeklärtes, vom theologischen und gelehrt-scholastischen Diskurs befreites Wissen und dessen praktische Anwendbarkeit wird um 1700 zu einer die ständisch-hierarchische Ordnung unterminierenden Macht, indem es zu einem neuen gesellschaftlichen Wert erhoben wird und zugleich um neue soziale Träger

novelists themselves acted as *Kritiker*. As *Kritik*, however, developed into an autonomous institution during the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, *Kritiker* likewise detached themselves from the erudite *res publica literaria* and claimed certain responsibilities for themselves.<sup>80</sup> *Kritiker*-hood had turned into a true profession. Baasner credits Lessing with promoting this sense of self-awareness; he regards Lessing “als Kritiker neuen Stils, indem er sich als Rezensent professionalisiert”.<sup>81</sup> A second crucial factor that contributed to the negative view on *Kritiker* is the fact that the literary system depended more and more on the practice of reviewing. In the 18<sup>th</sup>-century, the German territory was utterly decentralised. This hindered the swift circulation of new literary works. Journals and newspapers, however, profitted from this situation commercially. “Die Überwindung von Distanz, die Verbindung von Örtern”, Baasner argues, “gehört speziell im deutschen Kulturraum zu den Leistungsforderungen, die an den Beruf des Kritikers gestellt werden”.<sup>82</sup> The economic dependence of literature on the presence of a ‘Rezensent’ whom sciences nor art can control, kindles the scepticism that fuels the discourse about ‘Rezensent’. ‘Rezensieren’ (as the proper act of reviewing) has always been around. Over time, however, it came to epitomise the negative sentiments that artists, predominantly, harboured against the “Herrschaft der Kritik”.<sup>83</sup> *Kritik* clashes with an opposing discourse that disavows its attainments and that calls in question its expertise and relevance. Baasner demonstrates that the ‘Rezensent’ had grown into a media-wide topos by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In portraying the ‘Rezensent’ as an extravagant exponent of profit seeking journals, the topos questions the moral fibre of *Kritik* and exposing its dangers to the audience.

Later on, as well, ‘Rezensenten’ were not able to cast off the pejorative connotations that 18<sup>th</sup>-century critical discourse had introduced. Franz Heinmann explains that the ‘Rezensent’ was the “bête noire”<sup>84</sup> of Romanticism. Kerner, von Arnim and Uhland pilloried the excessive down-to-earthness of ‘Rezensenten’. Writers used them to validate the poetic sensibility of the Romantic artist. True to the Goethean tradition of violence reveries<sup>85</sup>, Tieck even proposes in *Phantasmus* (1812) to bake marzipan in the shape of ‘Rezensenten’ and cut them up in order to savour them “mit Wohlgefallen und Herzenswuth”.<sup>86</sup> The homicidal attempts of Romanticism to dispose of the ‘Rezensent’

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wirbt” (Emanuel Peter: *Geselligkeiten : Literatur, Gruppenbildung und kultureller Wandel im 18. Jahrhundert*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, p. 65)

<sup>80</sup> Baasner: *Das Bild des Rezensenten*, p. 70.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>84</sup> Franz Heinmann: *Justinus Kerner als Romantiker*. Tübingen: Laup 1908, p. 66.

<sup>85</sup> Andreas Stuhlmann speaks of ‘Folterphantasieen’ in polemical texts, cf. Stuhlmann: *Literarische Polemik*, p. 30.

<sup>86</sup> Ludwig Tieck: ‘Phantasmus. Erster Theil’. In: *Schriften*. Vol. 4. Berlin: Reimer 1828, p. 62.

nonetheless passed its peak. In lieu, ‘Rezensenten’ took centre stage in a discourse that vilified the rampancy of *Kritik* and opinions.<sup>87</sup> Hohendahl confirms that the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century did no longer regard ‘Rezensenten’ as relicts of overrationalist and overrationalised critical poetics. The discursive template of the ‘Rezensent’ rather stimulated poetological countermodels: “Das Rezensieren hatte einen schlechten Namen erhalten, daß diejenigen Schriftsteller, die sich als Kritiker profilieren wollten, sich von der Masse der Rezensenten durch die Formulierung eines neuen Programms (nicht selten in einem neuen Journal) abheben mußten”.<sup>88</sup>

### 2.1.2.3 The ‘Kritiker’ as Collective Identity

‘Kunstrichter’ and ‘Rezensenten’ touch on the discursive identity of the *Kritiker* as an individual. They mirror the activities of the *Kritiker* and set examples that are (not) worth following. Furthermore, they primarily act on the metadiscursive scene of *Kritik*: authors employ ‘Kunstrichter’ and ‘Rezensenten’ to talk *about Kritik* rather than being prominently present *in Kritik*. In that regard, they provide insight into the way the public sphere uses critical discourse as an instrument to regulate the institution of *Kritik* and keep it under control. In contrast to these individual and metadiscursive manifestations of the *Kritiker*-function, 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century critical discourse also profusely features collective identities. Such appearances of the *Kritiker* as a collectivity come in many forms. Some reflect the ‘machinery’ that motors *Kritik*, others explicitly take place as an interaction between multiple participants. The former variant comes most prominently to the fore in the shape of the many ‘Herausgeber’ and ‘Redakteure’ that flood the pages of periodicals in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the latter in the form of fictional societies, leagues and other gatherings of separate individuals.

#### ‘Herausgeberfiktion’

‘Herausgeber’ and ‘Redakteure’ find their way into critical discourse through the economic and logistic background of the journalistic enterprise to which *Kritik* belongs. They symbolise the autonomous status that *Kritik* claimed throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Karl Bücher describes how the appearance of editors in newspapers constitutes a crucial

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<sup>87</sup> Ludwig Börne, for instance, was very vocal in his aversion against ‘Rezensenten’: “Deutsche Rezensionen lassen sich in der Kürze mit nichts treffender vergleichen als mit dem Löschpapiere, auf dem sie gedruckt sind. Ach, man kennt ja dieses Löschpapier und das, was darauf steht! Es löscht den Durst nicht, es ist selbst durstig. Und doch rühmen sich die Deutschen, die besten Kritiker zu sein!” (Ludwig Börne: *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. by Inge and Peter Rippmann. Vol. 1. Dreieich: Joseph Melzer 1977, p. 623).

<sup>88</sup> Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik in der Epoche des Liberalismus*, p. 132.

step in the development of the modern press.<sup>89</sup> As early 1609, the first weekly periodicals in Germany appeared. Those early newspapers were driven by commercial interests. Periodical publishers, in fact, were in most cases also book printers, who sought to maximise their share on the market.<sup>90</sup> As publishers, however, were confronted with an increasing number of news sources, they had to proof their reliability. Thus, the publisher started to take on responsibilities as editor, who acted as an intermediary between “die Nachrichtensammlung und die Nachrichtenpublikation”.<sup>91</sup> The increased concern of the editor for the content did not place the commercial interests of the publisher on the second row, however. The selection of news was at all times tailored to specific groups of readers. After all, the commercial livelihood of newspapers was contingent on its appeal to the readership: “Der Verleger [wurde] in den Stand gesetzt [...], das Risiko seiner Unternehmung zum Teil auf eine Parteiorganisation, eine Interessentengruppe, eine Regierung abzuwälzen. Gefiel die Tendenz des Blattes den Lesern nicht, so hörten sie auf, es zu kaufen; ihr Bedürfnis blieb also doch in letzter Linie für den Inhalt der Zeitungen maßgebend”.<sup>92</sup> Habermas contradicts that interpretation. He says that ‘Gesinnung’ rather than ‘Geschäft’ drove periodicals until far into the 19th century.<sup>93</sup> In the ‘moralische Wochenschriften’ of the early 18th century, journalism was often a one (wo)man

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<sup>89</sup> Bücher explains that “die Organisation der Nachrichtenvermittlung zu jeder Zeit bedingt ist durch die gesamte Wirtschaftsweise” (Karl Bücher: ‘Die Anfänge des Zeitungswesens’. In: *Die Entstehung der Volkswirtschaft*. Vol. 1. Tübingen: Laupp 1917, p. 259). First steps towards our modern press system were made in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Avisenschreiber, individuals who collected news and other important or (spectacular) facts for specifically targeted groups in society (governments, companies, cities, etc.). By 1600 already, they organised themselves in professional correspondence bureaus in order to make a profit out of news gathering (cf. Bücher: *Die Anfänge des Zeitungswesens*, p. 242-248). While the Avisenschreiber – as their name gives away – still practiced written press, the printing press and, above all, the widened possible readership expedited the circulation as well as publication of news. Year chronicles were soon followed by biannual trading newspapers. These *Relationes semestrales* “schöpfen vorzugsweise aus den regelmäßigen Post- und Kaufmannszeitungen und bilden mehr als zwei Jahrhunderte hindurch einen der Hauptvertriebsartikel der Frankfurter und bald auch der Leipziger Frühjahrs- und Herbstmesse” (ibid., p. 253). The communication structures in early newspaper and periodicals are extensively elaborated on in the volume Volker Bauer/Holger Böning (ed.): *Die Entstehung des Zeitungswesens im 17. Jahrhundert. Ein neues Medium und seine Folgen für das Kommunikationssystem der Frühen Neuzeit*. Bremen: edition lumière 2011.

<sup>90</sup> “Am Anfang war der Herausgeber einer gedruckten periodisch erscheinenden Zeitung nichts anderes als der Verleger eines sonstigen Presserzeugnisses [...], der Verfielfältiger und Verkäufer eines literarischen Products, über dessen Inhalt er keine Gewalt übte. Der Zeitungsverleger (“Zeitungshändler”) brachte die Originari-Avisen der Post gedruckt auf den Markt, wie ein anderer Verleger ein Kräuterbuch oder dies Ausgabe eines alten Schriftstellers dem Publikum darbot” (ibid., p. 256).

<sup>91</sup> ibid., p. 257.

<sup>92</sup> ibid., p. 257.

<sup>93</sup> cf. Habermas: *Strukturwandel*, p. 277.

enterprise.<sup>94</sup> The editor was at the same time publisher, author and *Kritiker*. Gradually, editors concentrated more and more on the content of the periodical. They consequently relegated the financial side to the publishers, who only occupied themselves with the economic and logistical aspects of the particular periodical: “In der Phase, da sich die Öffentlichkeit als eine politisch fungierende durchsetzt, bewahren auch die verlegerisch konsolidierten Zeitungsunternehmen ihren Redaktionen jene Art Freiheit, die für die Kommunikation der Privatleute als Publikum im allgemeinen charakterisch war”.<sup>95</sup> Once the striving of the public sphere for political representation obtained a legal foundation, publishers began to see their periodicals as a lucrative enterprise rather than an ideological mouthpiece.

The prominence of ‘Herausgeber’ and ‘Redakteure’ in critical discourse mirrors the growing autonomy *Kritik* achieved in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. ‘Editors’ come from the very structures that sustain and facilitate *Kritik* itself: their significance in real life pertaining the content of journals mirrors their outspoken role as discursive agent of *Kritik*. ‘Herausgeber’ and ‘Redakteure’ are free from the regulations that the public sphere imposes on critical discourse. Instead, they can control and manipulate critical discourse, e.g. by intervening in texts or even by selecting what gets printed. ‘Herausgeber’ and ‘Redakteure’ venture outside of established journalistic forms and genres. They indeed have fixed textual platforms (editorials, reactions to certain contributions or open letters, etc.), but they also surface in other paratextual elements, such as footnotes and other paratexts. *Kritik*, moreover, shares the discursive phenomenon of ‘Herausgeber’ and ‘Redakteure’ with other text genres, among which the novel, as Uwe Wirth and Till Dembeck have shown in their study of ‘Herausgeberfiktionen’ in literature.<sup>96</sup>

## Fictional Societies

Secret societies or gatherings between people form a second category of collective identity in critical discourse. Ever since Christian Thomasius’ *Monatsgespräche*, the dialogue had been a staple scenography in German *Kritik*. The conversation between two or more people quickly gained poetic footing in the form of ‘Geselligkeit’. Schleiermacher formulates a theory of ‘geselliges’, i.e. purposeless, uneristic conversation that externalises the disinterested process of art judgement that Kant outlined in *Kritik der*

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<sup>94</sup> I would like to refer to the ERC-project ‘Agents of Change: Women Editors and Socio-Cultural Transformation in Europe, 1710-1920’ of Marianne van Remoortel, which focusses on female journalism and editorship in Europe.

<sup>95</sup> Habermas: *Strukturwandel*, p. 277.

<sup>96</sup> cf. Till Dembeck: *Texte rahmen: Grenzregionen literarischer Werke im 18. Jahrhundert (Gottsched, Wieland, Moritz, Jean Paul)*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007; Uwe Wirth: *Die Geburt des Autors aus dem Geist der Herausgeberfiktion: editoriale Rahmung im Roman um 1800: Wieland, Goethe, Brentano, Jean Paul und E. T. A. Hoffmann*. München: Fink 2008.

*Urteilkraft*.<sup>97</sup> Romantic aesthetics holds on to that conversation model, but extends its polemical and ironic potential.<sup>98</sup> The dialogic staging of *Kritik* is a general narrative template that authors extensively draw on throughout the 18th and 19th century, and well beyond. Secret societies and gatherings develop this widespread scenography into a specific discursive form of collective *Kritiker*-identity.

Over time, a lot of authors and artists have been drawn to the idea of belonging to a society of like-minded individuals. Wieland, Herder, Goethe and Schiller joined hands in a 'Weimarer Musenhof' and Wagner and Liszt were eager to reinvigorate that example by becoming the central pivots in a 'Neu-Weimar-Verein'.<sup>99</sup> While these are all ideal constellations that reinforced the artist's self-awareness, discussion and collaboration had become a social reality by the end of the 18th century. The salon was the central forum of – predominantly aesthetic – discussion between members of the middle-class, certainly in Berlin. Soon, individuals stepped out of that setting to address political topics. Those who attended such gatherings often formalised the content of the debates in a literary output. The *Deutsche Tischgesellschaft* (to which e.g. Brentano, von Arnim and Schleiermacher belonged) is a poignant example.

As we have seen, Koselleck dismisses secret societies as acts of political subversion. Under the banner of moral freedom, organisations as the Freemasons and the Illuminati undermine the state as *inimici intra muros* (cf. Chapter 1). Freedom, indeed, constitutes the main incentive to the 'Gelehrtenrepublik', the most prominent discursive society in 18th-century *Kritik*. The 'Gelehrtenrepublik' symbolises the independence of rationality. As an exchange between scholars in a virtual environment that surpasses the borders of nations and partisan ideology, it escaped clerical and state authority. Although elitist (as it recruited its members from academic ranks), the 'Gelehrtenrepublik' was inherently inclusive for its deep-rooted belief in the universal power of rational faculties. The Genie-cult and its belief in the supremacy of the individual mind, however, superseded the notion of inclusivity. Societies relied ever more on strategies of exclusion: its members

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<sup>97</sup> "Die gesellige Gruppe darf keinen außerhalb ihrer selbst liegenden Zweck verfolgen, muß sich selbst genug sein, der allgemeine Dialog darf nur gegenseitige Ergänzung, Austausch und Förderung zum Ziel haben. Da kein Handlungsziel intendiert ist, kein wie auch immer geartetes Diskussionsergebnis erreicht werden muß, dient der einzelne Kommunikationsbeitrag nur dem Ausdruck der von der eigenen Denkweise geprägten Ansicht der Sache ohne Überzeugungs- oder gar Übertrumpfungsabsicht." (Stefan Nienhaus: *Geschichte der deutschen Tischgesellschaft*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag 2003, p. 39); for a comprehensive survey of Schleiermacher's theory of 'Geselligkeit', see also Nienhaus, *Geschichte der deutschen Tischgesellschaft*, p. 36-44.

<sup>98</sup> cf. Günther Oesterle: 'Eigenarten romantischer Geselligkeit'. In: *Europäische Romantik. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven der Forschung*, ed. by Helmut Hühn and Joachim Schiedermaier. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2015, pp. 201-214.

<sup>99</sup> cf. Ehrhard Bahr: 'The Silver Age of Weimar. Franz Liszt as Goethe's Successor: A Study in Cultural Archaeology'. In: *Goethe Yearbook* 10 (2001), pp. 191-202; Dieter Borchmeyer: 'Liszt und Wagner: Allianz in Goethes und Schillers Spuren'. In: *Wagnerspectrum* 7/1 (2011), pp. 69-82.



isolated themselves from their inferior peers in the public sphere. The ‘Philister’-rhetoric is a common discursive strategy that formalises the idea of exclusion (cf. 3.1.2). Furthermore, we find it in a highly politicised, anti-semitic form in the *Deutsche Tischgesellschaft*.

Numerous literary examples of secret societies, too, emerge around 1800. E.T.A. Hoffmann has his ‘Serapionsbrüder’ discuss the most varied, aesthetic topics. Musicians, we might furthermore add, likewise indulged in the fictional assembly of like-minded souls. Weber established a ‘Harmonische Verein’ to further the interests of musicians and writers. In a letter to his brother, he describes the objective of the Harmonische Verein as follows:

Die so häufig einseitigen partheiischen Beurtheilungen von Kunstwerken, von Verlegern gedungene Lobpreiser ihres Verlags und die Schwierigkeit dem wahrhaft Guten, auch ohne großen Namen, in der Welt Platz und Würdigung zu verschaffen, bewogen, Carl Maria von Weber, Joh. G. M. Beer, Gottfried W. und Alexander von Dusch, einen Verein zu knüpfen, der zum Besten der Kunst sich gegenseitig thätig unterstützend, handeln und wirken könnte. Gleich großer Eifer für die Kunst, gleiche Ansichten derselben, die Nothwendigkeit besonders den ästhetischen Theil derselben mehr zu pflegen, waren die Hauptgründe des Vereins. – [...] Mit Recht glaubt sich der Verein der *Harmonische Verein* nennen zu dürfen, weil hier alles nur von Einem Eifer, Einer Ansicht beseelt, und in dem Entferntesten Eines ist.<sup>100</sup>

In the bylaws (‘Satzung’) of the Harmonische Verein, we encounter many typical elements of fictional societies, e.g. their secrecy<sup>101</sup> and exclusivity<sup>102</sup>.

The idea of secret gatherings soon seeped into *Kritik* as a discursive model. To that effect, not only the authors behind the texts, but the periodical as a whole was a metonymy for the retreat of the artist from his peers. Schiller founded *Die Horen* as a

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<sup>100</sup> Carl Maria von Weber: ‘Harmonischer Verein’. In: *Musiker-Briefe*, ed. by Ludwig Nohl. Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot 1867, p. 189-190.

<sup>101</sup> e.g. “§ 1. Die strengste Verschwiegenheit über die Existenz des Vereins ist eine Pflicht die aus der Natur der Sache entspringt. Alle Wirkungen desselben würden aufhören, wenn er bekannt wäre, denn schwerlich würde das Publikum einem solchen Verein Unpartheilichkeit und Wahrheit zutrauen.” (Weber: *Harmonischer Verein*, p. 190); “§ 11. Jeder Bruder muß sich einen Namen wählen, den er unter seine Rezensionen etc. setzt, wenn er nicht seinen eigenen unterzeichnet. Hiedurch wird möglichen Collisionen vorgebeugt, da jeder Bruder sogleich die Arbeiten des andern erkennt.” (ibid., p. 191).

<sup>102</sup> e.g. “§ 6. Eigentlich constituirende Mitglieder können nur die sein, die Componisten und Schriftsteller zugleich sind; besonders aber auch in Hinsicht ihres Charakters den wahren Gebrauch des Vereins nicht verunedeln” (ibid., p. 190); “§ 7. Außer diesen sollen auch noch *litterarische* Brüder aufgenommen werden, nämlich solche, welche ohne Componisten zu sein, Musikkenntniß mit schriftstellerischem Talente verbinden, und durch ihre Gedichte, und andere litterarischen Arbeiten der Tonkunst nützlich sein können. Sie genießen durchaus gleiche Rechte und Antheile wie die übrigen Brüder.” (ibid., p. 190-191).

‘Sozietät’ that discusses ‘schöne Literatur’ as the motor of a utopian society. “Kritik wird zu einem Kunstgespräch innerhalb einer literarischen Elite”, Klaus Berghahn points out.<sup>103</sup> For that reason, Astrid Urban regards *Die Horen* as a crucial precursor of the Romantic journal conception:

Der Hang zur Gruppenbildung, zum Zusammenschluß in kleinen Zirkeln, der hier erkennbar wird, setzt sich in den romantischen Zeitschriften verstärkt fort. In den Journalen Tieckes, Schellings oder der Brüder Schlegels korrespondiert die Exklusivität des Autorenstabes, die bezeichnenderweise kaum noch auf explizite Programmdeklarationen angewiesen ist, mit der Abwendung vom breiten Publikum. Die inhaltliche Spezialisierung, wie sie zeitgleich auch Goethe mit den *Propyläen* und mit *Über Kunst und Altertum* verfolgt, und der außerordentliche qualitative Anspruch der Zeitschriftenprojekte schlagen sich also letztlich in der Einschränkung des Adressatenkreises nieder.<sup>104</sup>

Schumann’s ‘Verein’-idea (cf. 1.3.1) can be placed in that same development. In the following chapters, we will extensively come to speak of the ‘Davidsbund’; Schumann continues the society-tradition, but at the same time persiflages it, as the members constantly quarrel and fail to reach a consensus.

The scenography of the secret society withdraws *Kritik* from the public sphere. Within their own walls, *Kritiker* can bow out from the rules and norms that society imposes on *Kritik*. The virtual environment warrants intellectual freedom and knows no censorship. Most importantly, members get an opportunity to amend the regulations of the public sphere. That is why many texts record a proper set of rules: Klopstock outlines the organisation and the constitution of his ‘Gelehrtenrepublik’,<sup>105</sup> the ‘Serapionsbrüder’ elaborately deliberate over the objectives of the gatherings on their first meeting and Weber draws up the statutes for the ‘Harmonische Verein’ (cf. supra).

On the other hand, discursive assembly models can work to improve the ethos of *Kritik* itself. The ‘Gelehrtenrepublik’, for instance, responds to the growing awareness that *Kritik* fosters negative discourse. It functions as a controlled discursive environment that regulates and suppresses polemical exchanges (cf. 4.2.1.2). Weber called for a similar congeniality between the members of the Harmonische Verein: “Das Schicksal erlaubte nicht, daß alle Theilnehmer an einem Orte vereint wirken konnten, und deswegen hielt man es für nothwendig eine Norm zu zweckmäßigem Gang des Ganzen zu entwerfen und festzusetzen. Die wahre untadelhafte Ansicht des Vereins ist bey jedem Gliede

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<sup>103</sup> Berghahn: *Von der klassizistischen zur klassischen Literaturkritik*, p. 69

<sup>104</sup> Urban: *Kunst der Kritik*, p. 130.

<sup>105</sup> cf. Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock: *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik. Band I: Text*, ed. by Rose-Maria Hurlebusch. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1975, p.. 3-92.

vorauszusetzen, und da manche schiefe Ansicht und Deutung möglich wäre, und auch manches Hinderniß nur durch Beharrlichkeit zu überwinden seyn wird, so wählte man zum Wahlspruch: *Beharrlichkeit führt zum Ziel.*”<sup>106</sup>

Furthermore, the open, unlicensed discussion between individuals evades the suspicion of dogmatism. Enlightenment critical poetics endowed every individual with, if not the right, then at least the ability to form a proper opinion. The authority of the *Kritiker*, as the persona of the ‘Kunstrichter’ shows, is at all times relative; he is a “Sprecher der Allgemeinheit”.<sup>107</sup> The dialogue between different voices gives a discursive shape to that sense of relativity.

Despite the egalitarian rationale behind this philosophy, *Kritik* still obtained a dominant position in the public sphere. By the end of the 18th century, the monopoly of periodicals such as the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* came under attack. In light of the symphilosophic, hermeneutic reinterpretation of knowledge, Romantic critics acknowledged the “Relativität von Kunsturteilen”.<sup>108</sup> The conversation between different fictional partners, then, brings back multi-perspectivism. In *Kunstkritik*, the scenography of these conversations, moreover, corresponds to the institutional framework of art. They often take place in scenographies of musea, galleries (e.g. A. W. Schlegel’s *Die Gemälde* (1799)) or concert halls<sup>109</sup> – venues that had made art accessible to the wider audience. At the same time, the setting in public places makes the discussion less secretive.



Whether as ‘Kunstrichter’, ‘Rezensent’ or as collectivity – the *Kritiker* is above all a discursive template that represents the institution of *Kritik* in the public sphere. That fact remains unchanged in Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik*. In the following, I will analyze main discursive trends in both authors’ identity as *Musikkritiker*. The above examples of the *Kritiker*’s discursive position, in that regard, have provided the necessary background to understand Schumann’s and Wagner’s models of identity. While I will not

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<sup>106</sup> cf. also bylaw 15: “ Hingegen da die Welt mit so viel schlechten Produkten überschwemmt wird, die oft nur durch Autoritäten und elende Rezensionen gehoben werden, so ist es eben so Pflicht, das aufzudecken, und davor zu warnen, wo man es findet. Doch hoffen wir daß dabei auch aller gewöhnliche Rezensententön vermieden werde.” (Weber: *Harmonischer Verein*, p. 191).

<sup>107</sup> Peter Uwe Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik und Öffentlichkeit*. München: Piper 1974, p. 16.

<sup>108</sup> Jochen Schulte-Sasse: ‘Der Begriff der Literaturkritik in der Romantik’. In: *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik*, p. 118.

<sup>109</sup> See for examples in Schumann’s *Musikkritik* 3.1. Wagner also often sets his texts in the concert hall, cf. the introduction to Part II & Intermezzo).

always mark them out explicitly, we will see that distinctive traits of the ‘Kunstrichter’, the ‘Rezensent’, the ‘Herausgeber’ or of fictional societies regularly flare up in their writings. On the one hand, Schumann and Wagner operate within a particular discursive legacy: they perpetuate a rich tradition of pseudonyms and their *Musikkritik* still shows traces of 18<sup>th</sup>-century debates about the right *Kritiker* have to judge art. On the other hand, Schumann and Wagner use specific discursive models of authorship. The staging of collective identities, for instance, characteristic of Schumann’s early *Musikkritik*, in particular. We will take these observations along in the following sections, yet, at the same time, investigate how Schumann and Wagner deviate from prevalent discursive models and adapt their *Musikkritiker*-identity to fit their own, critical agenda.

## 2.2 Schumann: Pseudonyms and Self-Competition

Schumann is an avid user of pseudonyms. In Enlightenment *Kritik*, pen names were common practice. Apart from their discursive function, they also had a sound political use (cf. supra). The latter obstacle was less of an issue to Schumann, however, whose NZfM seems to have been barely hindered by censorship measures.<sup>110</sup> Schumann fills the pages of his NZfM with a wide range of pseudonyms. What the exact appeal of multiple personalities was to Schumann, is hard to pinpoint. Various scholars explain Schumann’s love for split, fictional identities from his reverence for the many *Doppelgänger*-protagonists in Jean Paul’s epic prose.<sup>111</sup> Others owe it to Schumann’s poor mental health.<sup>112</sup> Whatever psychological causes might lie at the root of it, Schumann’s extensive use of pseudonyms surely enriches the face of his *Musikkritik* and makes for a striking discursive strategy. During his eleven years as *Musikkritiker* in the NZfM, Schumann uses no less than 42 different pseudonyms. They range from names to initials and even numerical *noms de guerre*. Certain characters also use different pen names; Florestan features as F., FF., Fl., Flor, Fn, F-n, for instance, Eusebius as E, E-s, Euseb. Furthermore,

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<sup>110</sup> Leon Plantinga: *Schumann as critic*. New York: Da Capo Press 1976, p. 48.

<sup>111</sup> e.g. Bernhard Appel: ‘Schumanns Davidsbund. Geistes- und sozialgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen einer romantischen Idee’. In: *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 38/1 (1981), pp. 1-23; John Daverio: *Robert Schumann. Herald of a ‘New Poetic Age’*. New York/Oxford: University Press 1997, p. 40; Christoph Bartscherer: ‘Kongenialität als Kompositionsprinzip. Robert Schumann auf den Spuren E.T.A. Hoffmanns und Jean Pauls’. In: *E.T.A. Hoffmann-Jahrbuch* 14 (2006), pp. 88-106.

<sup>112</sup> cf. Gerhard Granzow: ‘Florestan und Eusebius. Zur Psychologie Robert Schumanns’. In: *Die Musik* 20/2 (1928), pp. 660-663; Udo Rauchfleisch: *Robert Schumann: eine psychoanalytische Annäherung*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004 (esp. 28-30); Dagmar Hoffmann-Axthelm: *Robert Schumann. Eine musikalisch-psychologische Studie*. Stuttgart: Reclam 2010 (esp. p. 40-49).

Schumann sometimes engages a specific pseudonym for a specific context or goal: some names only appear in specific discursive settings (e.g. the 'Davidsbund'), others act in accordance with a preassigned discursive function (e.g. 'Die Redaction').

Research on Schumann's *Musikkritik* tends to focus on the multiple fictional identities that Schumann introduces as producers of his critical writings. In that manner, the reviews that Schumann signs with his own name have so far paradoxically received but little attention. And yet, these reviews make up a key collection of texts. They are instrumental to our understanding of how Schumann fashions himself as a *Musikkritiker*. Reviews that Schumann autographs with his given name inevitably expose his *Kritiker*-persona to crucial elements of his biographical identity. As we will see, however, this convergence does not at all complicate matters. Schumann rather takes advantage of it to authorise and certify his appearance as *Musikkritiker*. Despite the closeness they imply to his biographical identity, in fact, I wish to propose that we should still consider these personal signatures as pseudonyms, that is to say, as tokens of the fictional *Kritiker*-persona Schumann projects into the text. As with many of his other pseudonyms, Schumann has a specific aim in mind whenever he signs a review with his own name. He attributes a separate discursive function to such personal signatures. In the following, I will, therefore, examine those texts in more detail. I will show that Schumann does not only use personal pseudonyms to mark out his role as *Kritiker* and composer; he also ties them in with discursive strategies that canonise his reputation as *Kritiker*, and in its wake, the legacy of the NZfM.

### 2.2.1 What Schumann?

Of the 277 texts that Schumann wrote for his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, only 61 (i.e. close to a quarter) carry a personal signature.<sup>113</sup> Schumann uses his initials R. S. most of the time (thirty times), on other occasions, he prefers different pen names, like R. Schumann (eleven times), R. Sch. (five times) or just S. (seven times). Interestingly enough, Schumann signs only five reviews with his full name. A closer look at the way these personal pseudonyms<sup>114</sup> are distributed per publication year of the NZfM reveals an

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<sup>113</sup> I have only counted those reviews that are actually signed by (a pseudonym of) Schumann. A lot of the reviews that Schumann wrote, appeared anonymously because they were part of a larger review series. In those cases, only the final instalment carries the name of the author. The aim of this section, however, is not to identify the authorship of every single review, but rather to investigate how a pseudonym influences the image of the *Musikkritiker*. Furthermore, some review series feature multiple pseudonyms or are written by various authors, for example the 'Journalschau' (cf. 1.3.1) or the series on Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* (cf. Intermezzo).

<sup>114</sup> For variety's sake, I will use combinations with 'personal' to indicate pseudonyms Schumann used to sign reviews with his own name.

intriguing trend. In the early years of the NZfM, Schumann signs but little reviews with his own name. In 1834, he does not do so at all. The first time he uses a personal signature is in 1835, albeit still on a very limited basis, namely in three of the forty-five texts he writes that year. From then on, the habit begins to pick up steam: nine out of fifty-three texts carry Schumann's name in 1836, seven out thirty-four in 1837. The use of personal pseudonyms reaches an absolute peak in 1838. In that year, Schumann signs fourteen out of twenty-one texts with his own name. Afterwards, he builds off his presence as *Kritiker*. He guarantees a minimum use of his name at all times,<sup>115</sup> but, all in all, prefers more abstract signatures like 12. or 13.

The sudden rise in personal pseudonyms from 1838 onwards immediately catches the eye. Before we examine this increase in more detail, however, it is important to remark on several general characteristics of Schumann's personal pseudonyms. Schumann first used his own initials in 1835, in a review of Louis Spohr's *Die Weihe der Töne*. Thematically, Schumann's review of Spohr's symphony deviates from the standard review procedure; it does not, in fact, concern itself with a discussion of the symphony's musical quality, but rather with an evaluation of its poetic value, i.e. the 'idea' behind it (which Schumann, by the way, deems nonsensical as the symphony is the musical setting of a poem that in itself already describes and glorifies music).<sup>116</sup> The form of the text, in contrast, features all the elements which readers expect from a review: a clearly defined work is submitted to scrutiny, a manifest body of text carries out that task and the initials 'R. Sch.' signing the article put forward a *Kritiker* to be held accountable. The *Kritiker* maintains a consistent degree of presence throughout the review. R. Sch. makes ample reference to himself for the reader to acknowledge his existence. The *ich*'s, *mich*'s and *mir*'s diligently follow on each other and small expressions as "däucht mir" equally add a sense of ontology to the utterances. The repetition of personal pronouns or putative verbs is but one part of Schumann's attempt to assert his authority as *Kritiker*, however. R. Sch. is also very vocal on what he thinks and feels concerning the piece. He makes his opinion well known. At the end of the review, R. Sch. admittedly remarks that he is not in the position to assess the musical quality of the work because he cherishes a personal admiration for Spohr.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> 1839: 12 out of 30 reviews, 1840: 6/33, 1841: 2/25, 1842: 3/23, 1843: 5/20 and 1844: 1/2.

<sup>116</sup> cf. "Aber wie sonderbar wählte er, aber auch wie seiner Natur, seinem Wesen getreu! Er griff nicht nach Shakespeare, Goethe oder Schiller, [...] sondern nach einem fast Formenloseren, als die Musik selbst ist (wenn dies nicht zu überlegt gesagt ist), nach einem Lob auf die Tonkunst, nach einem Gedicht, das ihre zauberischen Wirkungen schildert, beschrieb also in Tönen die Töne, die der Dichter beschrieb, lobte die Musik mit Musik. [...] Der Dichter der „Weihe der Töne“ fing diese nun in einem schon ziemlich matten Spiegel auf und Spohr warf das Abgespiegelte noch einmal zurück." (Robert Schumann (R. Sch.): 'Die Weihe der Töne (Gedicht von Pfeiffer), charakteristische Symphonie von Spohr'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 1, Nr. 16, p. 66.)

<sup>117</sup> cf. "Welchen Rang aber die Symphonie als musikalisches Kunstwerk an sich unter den neuesten Erzeugnissen behauptet, darüber steht nicht mir, der ich mit Verehrung zu diesem Hochmeister aufblicke, ein Urtheil zu,

That does not prevent the *Kritiker* from forcefully speaking out about the work itself, however, as can be evidenced from this summary he gives of his opinion: “Und das ist’s, was mir nicht in den Sinn will”.<sup>118</sup> The reader, in short, encounters a decided *Kritiker* throughout the whole text: R. Sch. imposes an authoritative distance between himself and the reader, imparting onto the *Kritiker* a pronounced and clear-cut voice and identity.

The distance between *Kritiker* and reader in the review of *Die Weihe der Töne*, develops into a hallmark of Schumann’s *Musikkritik*. One central strategy quickly stands out from his critical writings: Schumann seeks to dissociate the way audiences read, hear or judge a piece of music, from the way he himself does so. These efforts shape the ‘Philister’-rhetoric prevalent in a lot of his early *Kritiken* (cf. 3.1.2) and they also characterise the texts that Schumann publishes under his own name. Schumann often evokes the opposition between the musical experience of *Kritiker* and audience implicitly, e.g. by lexical oppositions<sup>119</sup> or by expressing his unfamiliarity with the opinion of the audience.<sup>120</sup> On other occasions, Schumann puts in more forceful shows of authority. In a review of William Sterndale Bennet’s third piano concerto, for example, Robert Schumann – the name signing the text – explicitly distances his opinion from the ‘Urtheil des Publicums’:

“Hab ich mich in den vorigen Zeilen vielleicht zu sehr hinter das Urtheil des Publicums geflüchtet, oder wollte vollends Jemand einwenden, ich hätte darin zu viel Günstiges herausgelesen, so bin ich auch bereit, alles, was ich über die

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sondern dem berühmten Veteranen, der seine Ansicht in diesen Blättern niederzulegen versprochen.“ (Schumann: *Die Weihe der Töne*, p. 66).

<sup>118</sup> *ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>119</sup> “Ueber diesen, wie über die Componisten der folgenden Stücke hat die Zeitschrift schon so oft gesprochen, die öffentliche Meinung wie die Kritik steht über sie so fest bereits, daß sich nur wenig hinzufügen läßt, es wäre denn, sie selbst andere Richtungen einschlägen.” (Robert Schumann: ‘Kürzere Stücke für Pianoforte (Fortsetzung.)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1841, Vol. 2, Nr. 32, p. 126); “Die ‘Ischler Bilder’ desselben Componisten haben im Publicum, wie bei der Kritik so freundlicher Aufnahme gefunden, daß er ihnen eine ähnliche Reihe Tonstücke folgen läßt, denen wir gleichfalls Theilnahme versprechen dürften” (Robert Schumann: ‘Kürzere Stücke für Pianoforte (Fortsetzung.)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1841, Vol. 2, Nr. 24, p. 94).

<sup>120</sup> “Vom Eindruck auf das Publicum zu reden, das aus ungefähr 700 Köpfen, meistens Fremden, bestand, so schienen besonders die einfachen Choräle zu ergreifen. Im Uebrigen kann man sich denken, daß viel von ‘Gelehrtheit der Musik, strengem Generalbaß’ und endlich von der ‘großen Länge’ die Rede war, in welchem letztern Punct ihnen auch nicht gerade zu widersprechen, worüber zu reden aber an einen anderen Ort gehört” (Robert Schumann (S.): ‘Fest in Zwickau. Am 12ten Juli.’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1837, Vol. 2, Nr. 8, p. 31); “Vom Eindruck zu sprechen, den der außerordentliche Künstler in Dresden gemacht hat, so kenne ich den Beifallsthermometer des dortigen Publikums nicht genug, um darüber entscheiden zu können. Der Enthusiasmus wurde ein außerordentlicher genannt; freilich der Wiener schont seine Hände unter allen Deutschen wohl am wenigsten und hebt sich in Abgötterei wohl gar den geschlitzten Handschuh auf, mit dem er Liszt zugeklatscht. In Norddeutschland, wie gesagt, ist das anders” (Robert Schumann (R.S.): ‘Franz Liszt’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1840, Vol. 1, Nr. 26, p. 103).

Trefflichkeit des Concerts berichtet, allein zu vertreten. Denn zu sehr Noth tut es, daß wahrhaft musikalischen Künstlern die Ehren gesichert werden, mit denen man Virtuosen, die nichts als ihre Finger haben, oft so unbedacht überhäuft, und daß man beide voneinander trennen lerne. Ja, gäb' es nur noch viele Künstler, die in dem Sinne wie W. Bennett wirkten – und Niemandem dürfte mehr vor der Zukunft unsrer Kuust [sic] bange sein. –<sup>121</sup>

This paragraph exemplarily demonstrates how the *Kritiker* emancipates himself from the general public: he leaves the backdrop of popular opinion quite literally, only to step into the limelight with his proper judgement. Robert Schumann quickly objects to those readers who might contend that his judgement is too aligned with that of the audience; he claims that he alone is to be held accountable for his opinions. He evidently fears that a critical commonality will obscure his own views. Nevertheless, his concern rings hollow considered against a passage earlier on in the review, in which Robert Schumann had already imported a strong sense of individuality. There, he emphasise his aesthetic preferences (“Wünschte ich höchstens vielleicht im ersten Satz einige kleine Breiten weg, so ist das individuell”)<sup>122</sup> and underlined his closeness to the information he was relaying (“Wenn ich es auch nicht aus der ersten Quelle wüßte, [...]”).<sup>123</sup> The explicit distance Robert Schumann takes from the public later on in the article is, in result, an additional attempt to assert his suitability, authority and uniqueness as a *Kritiker*.

On top of that, we must at no moment underestimate the fact that Schumann signs the review with his own name – no initials, no abbreviations, just ‘Robert Schumann’. This move adds weight and legitimacy to his arguments, but it is a legitimacy that Schumann very much manipulates and stages himself. The signature, in fact, affirms his musical expertise. After the discussion of Bennet’s piano concerto, for example, the review draws the reader’s attention to the piano piece *Concert sans Orchestre*, “das das Schelmenpaar Florestan und Eusebius”, so the *Kritiker* explains, “unter dem Namen des Unterzeichneten herausgegeben”.<sup>124</sup> The reference to the ‘Unterzeichneten’ immediately exposes Robert Schumann as the composer of the work. By analogy, it testifies to his musical knowledge, thus consolidating his position as a *Musikkritiker*. A second technique that Robert Schumann employs to certify his expertise in matters of music, is his refusal to discuss the composition by Florestan and Eusebius. “Strafe ich sie für diesen Namenraub”, he writes, “daß ich selbst keine Sylbe über ihr Opus 14. verrathe”.<sup>125</sup> Instead, the article quotes a review from the hand of Ignaz Moscheles, the famous pianist to whom the *Concert*

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<sup>121</sup> Robert Schumann (Robert Schumann): 'Concerte für das Pianoforte. (Schluß)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1837, Vol. 1, Nr. 16, p. 65).

<sup>122</sup> Schumann: *Concerte für das Pianoforte. (Schluß)*, p. 64.

<sup>123</sup> *ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>124</sup> *ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>125</sup> *ibid.*, p. 65.



*sans Orchestre*, incidentally, was dedicated. In his review, Moscheles lauds the composition. He compares it to the work of Beethoven and Weber, and – most importantly, given Robert Schumann’s earlier attempt to distance himself from the mainstream opinion – claims that the piece does not at all cater to the tastes of the general audience. In his opinion, only earnest and experienced musicians can properly understand the work: “Der Ernst und die Leidenschaft, die im Ganzen herrschen, stehen sehr im Gegensatz mit dem, was ein Concert-Auditorium unserer Zeit erwartet. [...] Um dadurch nicht gestört oder beleidigt zu werden, muß man ein erfahrener Musiker sein, der im Voraus erräth und erwartet, wie sich alle Widersprüche lösen [...]”.<sup>126</sup> It is certainly no coincidence that Schumann quotes exactly these parts of Moscheles’ article (as editor of the journal, he was, moreover, in an excellent position to authorise the selection of these passages). The excerpts of the review all confirm Schumann’s expertise in matters of music. Moscheles does not only equal him with masters of the past; he also praises the exceptional quality of Schumann’s composition. As such, the entire article works toward a striking discursive convergence between Schumann’s *Kritiker*- and more public composer identity: Just as Schumann the *Kritiker*, Schumann the composer cannot be put on a par with popular musical tastes and preferences.<sup>127</sup>

Already early on, Schumann reserves concrete functions to signing reviews with his own name: it marks out his identity as a *Kritiker*, isolates the *Kritiker* from commonplace popular opinion and acts as a platform of self-advertisement. Schumann uses his own name, in other words, to legitimise his *Kritik*, but at the same time to make sure it works in favour of his musical ambitions as well. By distancing himself from the general opinion, he raises himself on a par with leading composers. It is no coincidence that we find his initials or name under reviews<sup>128</sup> of William Sterndale Bennet<sup>129</sup>, Luigi Cherubini<sup>130</sup>,

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<sup>126</sup> *ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>127</sup> I have based my selection on articles that have been signed under the full name, the initials or abbreviations of Schumann’s name: R. Sch. (5), R. S. (30), R. Schumann (11), Robert Schumann, Rob. Schumann (2), Sch. (3), S. (7), Die Redaction (2), Die Redaction: R. Schumann (1).

<sup>128</sup> That Schumann often signs his name under the last instalment of a review series, is also connected to build-up of review series. In the last instalment, namely, he always discusses the best compositions, cf. “Der verehrte Leser weiß, wie wir sein Interesse an so übersichtlichen Artikeln durch eine gewisse Rangordnung der Tonnummern zu steigern lieben, so dass er die besten immer zuletzt geschildert erhält“ (Robert Schumann (22.): ‘Variationen für Pianoforte’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1837, Vol. 2, Nr. 33, p. 131).

<sup>129</sup> cf. Robert Schumann (Robert Schumann): ‘Concerte für das Pianoforte. (Schluß.)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1837, Vol. 1, Nr. 16, pp. 64-65; Robert Schumann (R.Schumann): ‘Concertouverturen für Orchester’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 47, pp. 185-187; Robert Schumann (R.S.): ‘Phantasieen, Capricen etc. für Pianoforte. (Schluß.)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 2, Nr. 41, pp. 161-163.

<sup>130</sup> cf. Robert Schumann (R.S.): ‘Sechster Quartett-Morgen’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 2, Nr. 20, pp. 79-80.

Berlioz<sup>131</sup>, Taubert<sup>132</sup>, Henselt<sup>133</sup>, Chopin<sup>134</sup>, Franz Liszt<sup>135</sup>, Moscheles<sup>136</sup> and Schubert<sup>137</sup> – apart from the latter, at that time prominent performers and composers in the eye of the public, each and every one of them. Only a talented musician, so Schumann seems to imply, can assess the merits of other talents. Soon, however, Schumann would detach his role as *Kritiker* from the persona of composer. His personal pseudonyms, then, aid him in asserting a more autonomous *Musikkritiker* and work to enhance his reputation in that capacity.

## 2.2.2 Self-competition

In 1838, as we have seen, Schumann signed the absolute majority of his reviews with his proper name. Whether in full, as initials or abbreviated, Schumann started featuring his name far more prominently and regularly in his own *Musikkritik* from that year on. We are left to wonder why Schumann changed the review style he had adhered to so far. The key focus of scholars on the ‘Davidsbund’ and other, related issues has left little room for texts that digress from the customs and patterns of that fictional league. Sonja Klimek suggests that Schumann’s motives to feature his own name more saliently were of a pragmatic nature.<sup>138</sup> She relates it to Schumann’s stay in Vienna from October of 1838 until April 1839. Schumann had been contemplating to move his life (and as a consequence, the offices of the NZfM) to Vienna since March 1838. For one out of personal reasons, because Wieck had only allowed him to marry Clara on the condition that they lived in a bigger (read: other) city than Leipzig.<sup>139</sup> On the other hand, Schumann presumably saw commercial opportunities as well. The only music periodical at that time was the *Allgemeiner Musikalischer Anzeiger*, edited by Ignaz Franz Castelli since 1829.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> cf. Schumann: *Concertouverturen für Orchester*, pp. 185-187.

<sup>132</sup> cf. Schumann: *Phantasieen, Capricen etc. für Pianoforte*, pp. 161-163.

<sup>133</sup> cf. *ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> cf. Robert Schumann (R. Sch.): 'Trio's. (Schluß.)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 2, Nr. 52, pp. 207-208, Schumann: *Phantasieen, Capricen etc. für Pianoforte*, pp. 161-163.

<sup>135</sup> cf. Schumann: *Franz Liszt*, pp. 102-103.

<sup>136</sup> cf. Schumann: *Trio's. (Schluß.)*, pp. 207-208.

<sup>137</sup> cf. *ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Sonja Klimek: '»Betragt euch schön romantisch!« – Autorschaft als Rollenspiel in Robert Schumanns musikjournalistischem Werk'. In: *Medien der Autorschaft: Formen literarischer (Selbst-)Inszenierung von Brief und Tagebuch bis Fotografie und Interview*, ed. by Lucas Marco Gisi, Urs Meyer and Reto Sorg. München: Wilhelm Fink 2013, p. 35-36.

<sup>139</sup> cf. Eric Frederick Jensen: *Schumann*. Oxford: University Press 2001, p. 129.

<sup>140</sup> The 'Anzeiger' would be discontinued in 1840. In the 'Journalschau', Schumann was neither enthusiastic nor destructive for the journal (cf. 1.3.1).

While he resided in the Austrian capital, Schumann thus tried to lay the groundwork for his endeavours as composer and *Kritiker*. But with a journal enterprise still very much under the thumb of Metternich's censorship measures, a mysterious, fictitious debate club waging war against ignorant outsiders would not have come across favourably to the government officials.<sup>141</sup> Therefore, Schumann assumed a more recognizable face in his *Musikkritik*. In order to meet the conditions of the censorship office, he was forced to make the identity of the *Kritiker* more transparent to the reader. Plantinga and Fricker corroborate Klimek's explanation for the change in Schumann's pseudonym policy. They do not necessarily maintain that Schumann dispensed with the playful mysteries of the 'Davidsbündler' and their companions because he wanted his journal to be taken more seriously.<sup>142</sup> Still, they do document Schumann's struggles with the censorship office in Vienna and the crucial role these difficulties played in his decision to leave the city and abandon his plans.<sup>143</sup> Klimek focuses exclusively on the year 1839. Her argument leaves 1838 entirely unaccounted for, a year in which Schumann featured his own name on a far more frequent basis. Are there perhaps less biographical clues to account for the abrupt increase in personal pseudonyms that year, the NZfM itself potentially gives a significant indication.

The first contribution that Schumann published under his own name in 1838 was titled 'Erklärung'. It appeared in the seventh issue, making it the second article he wrote that

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<sup>141</sup> cf. Klimek: *Autorschaft als Rollenspiel*, p. 35. Rüdiger Görner also claims that Schumann was hindered by the censorship measures put in place by the Viennese government. The clash between Schumann and the authorities is more fundamental than the *Musikkritiken* alone, however. According to Görner, Schumann's anti-Biedermeier music, too, directly defied the reactionary policies of the authorities: "Wie gehört, richteten sich Schumanns frühe musikliterarische Feldzüge gegen das Biedermeierlich-Philiströse mit einer Intensität, die erklärt, weshalb sein Projekt scheitern musste, im Jahre 1839 die Redaktion seiner *Neuen Zeitschrift für Musik* nach Wien zu verlegen. Dort begegnete nicht nur die Metternichsche Zensur diesem neutönend komponierenden Intellektuellen mit größtem Argwohn. Hatte dieser Schumann etwa nicht behauptet, dass 'Chopins Werke unter Blumen eingesenkte Kanonen' seien und damit in der Lage, den restaurativen philistern den Garaus zu machen? Und hatte er damit nicht auch für so manche seiner eigenen Stücke gesprochen?" (Rüdiger Görner: 'Poetische Klangkreise. Über Schumann und sein Deuten Eichendorffs'. In: *200 Jahre Heidelberger Romantik*, ed. by Friedrich Strack (=Heidelberger Jahrbücher 51). Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer 2008, p. 85.

<sup>142</sup> Social prestige was perhaps not an unimportant added benefit to Schumann. Daverio remarks that since he became an editor in 1834, Schumann carried the title of 'Musikgelehrter' on his passport as of 1834. (Daverio: *Robert Schumann*, p. 111). Interesting, in this context, is that Schumann was awarded an honorary doctor's degree by the university of Jena in 1840 (cf. the announcement in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1840, p. 88). Every issue of the NZfM from then on would feature 'Dr. Robert Schumann' as 'Verantwortlicher Redacteur'.

<sup>143</sup> cf. Leon B. Plantinga: *Schumann as Critic*. New York: da Capo 1976, p. 48, Hans-Peter Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns: Versuch eines literaturwissenschaftlichen Zugangs*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1983, p. 22.

year.<sup>144</sup> Schumann wrote the ‘Erklärung’ in the capacity of editor and not as *Musikkritiker*. In the editorial, Schumann rejects the criticism that Ludwig Rellstab – the editor of the competing *Iris* – had subjected him and the NZfM to in the *Gazette musicale de Paris*. Rellstab “hat [...] einen Bericht über den Zustand der Musik in Deutschland drucken lassen”, Schumann explains, “in dem er auch unsere Zeitschrift erwähnt, ihr manches Gute nachrühmt, zuletzt mit der Bemerkung schliesst ‘dass sich ihre Mitarbeiter leider gar zu oft unter einander selbst lobten’”.<sup>145</sup> Naturally, Schumann sets out to dispute these claims. Among his arguments, he exposes himself as the true critical voice behind the ‘Davidsbündler’: “der die Redaction Unterzeichnende, der zugleich Alles, was mit der Bezeichnung ‘Davidsbündler’ versehen, mit seinem Namen vertritt, wie er schon vor vielen Jahren (Bd. I, S.152) erklärt hat”.<sup>146</sup> Schumann’s confession comes at a perhaps somewhat unexpected moment. It is striking that he felt the need to take responsibility for his authorship in front of his readership in order to rebuff allegations that were, essentially, of a different nature, to wit, that the NZfM indulged in the (self-)promotion of its collaborators. In his essay, furthermore, Rellstab does not once cite the ‘Davidsbündler’ as an obstacle for the esteem of the journal, let alone that he even mentions the league.<sup>147</sup> But after Schumann published this editorial, the ‘Davidsbund’ and other pseudonyms almost entirely disappeared from the NZfM; they would not make their appearance until late in 1839. This apparent reevaluation of his pseudonym use feeds the suspicion that Schumann took the potential lack of credibility very seriously. Not only did he feel obligated to write an ‘Erklärung’, but from that moment on he also puts the ludic aspect of the ‘Davidsbund’ (and the pseudonymic confusion that went with it) out of play in order to assert his persona more forcibly. This development might seem paradoxical; we might expect, for instance, that it rendered the critique of self-promotion

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<sup>144</sup> The first article was the first instalment of a new review series on etudes, signed with the pseudonym ‘12.’, cf. Robert Schumann (12.): ‘Etuden für Pianoforte’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 1, Nr. 6, pp. 21-22.

<sup>145</sup> Robert Schumann (Die Redaction: R. Schumann): ‘Erklärung’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 1, Nr. 7, p. 28.

<sup>146</sup> Schumann: *Erklärung*, p. 28; the full statement reads: “Es gehen mannichfache Gerüchte über die unterzeichnete Bündlerschaft. Da wir leider mit den Gründen unsrer Verschleierung noch zurückhalten müssen, so ersuchen wir Herrn Schumann (sollte dieser einer verehrlichen Redaction bekannt sein) uns in Fällen mit seinem Namen vertreten zu wollen. Die Davidsbündler. Ich thu’s mit Freuden. R. Schumann” (cf. Robert Schumann (Die Davidsbündler & R. Schumann): ‘Erklärung’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 38, p. 152).

<sup>147</sup> Still, Schumann mentions that “von Compositionen der Davidsbündler eine Sonate” was reviewed “über die Hr. Professor Moscheles in London einen Aufsatz lieferte [...] und scherzweise und vorübergehend einige kleinere Stücke” (Schumann: *Erklärung*, p. 28). Of course, Schumann is selective in the arguments he uses for his defence. He conveniently fails to mention the two-page clarification of his own Paganini-etudes he printed in 1836, cf. Robert Schumann (Robert Schumann): ‘Pianoforte. VI Etudes de Concert comp. d’après des caprices de Paganini. - Op. X - 20 Gr. - Leipzig, Hofmeister,’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 1, Nr. 32, pp. 134-135.

to which Rellstab readily exposed Schumann and his journal only more acute. But as he continues writing articles under his own name, the personal pseudonyms soon acquire a proper discursive function which validates Schumann's activities as a *Musikkritiker* and punctuates the consistency of his opinions.

### Self-canonising

According to Fricker, Schumann first contemplated compiling his critical writings and publishing them in book form in 1837.<sup>148</sup> He only realised this undertaking 17 years later with the *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (1854). The period around 1837 is significant, nonetheless, because it coincides with a striking discursive feature that emerges in Schumann's *Musikkritik*. Around that time, Schumann develops an engaging way to add cogency to his arguments. When Schumann signs a review under his own name, he increasingly refers to reviews that he has previously written. Schumann engages in a constant process of revalidation of his earlier reviews, to that effect, that he works towards self-canonizing his opinions as *Kritiker*. It is a commonplace in secondary literature to remark that Schumann's tenure as *Musikkritiker* spans the discovery of two prodigies:<sup>149</sup> On the one hand Chopin in the famous review (1831) of the 'Là ci darem la mano'-variations for the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, on the other hand, Brahms in the article *Neue Bahnen* 1853 on a final appearance in the NZfM. But Schumann himself very much contributed to and encouraged this perception; his *Musikkritik* continually promotes its own consistency.

What do I mean by that? We find an early example in a review about trio's of Moscheles, Chopin and Schubert, the conclusive instalment of a seven-part review series. The article opens as follows: "Welche hohe Stellen diese Componisten in unsern Blättern gesichert sind, braucht nicht wiederholt zu werden. Ueber Geist und Wesen ihrer Composition findet sich an verschiedenen Orten mit Wärme und Kenntniß Geschriebenes."<sup>150</sup> Schumann initially leaves the 'verschiedenen Orten' open, meaning that they can refer to his own as well as to other journals. Already soon, nonetheless, it becomes apparent that he – rather unsurprisingly – refers to his own *Musikkritik*. What's more, he credits himself for having discovered Chopin and having made the Polish composer popular. The subtle reference to his first 'Davidsbund'-review, 'Ein Opus II' (1831), leaves no doubt about that: "Vom Trio von Chopin setze ich voraus, daß es, schon vor einigen Jahren erschienen, den Meisten der Leser bekannt ist. Kann man es Florestan verdenken, wenn er sich etwas darauf einbildet, den wie aus einer unbekanntem Welt kommenden Jüngling zuerst, leider

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<sup>148</sup> Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns*, p. 21.

<sup>149</sup> see, for instance, Bartscherer: *Kongenialität als Kompositionsprinzip*, p. 95.

<sup>150</sup> Robert Schumann (R. Sch.): 'Trio's. (Schluß.)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 2, Nr. 52, p. 207.

an einem sehr einschläfernden Ort, in die Oeffentlichkeit eingeführt zu haben? Und wie hat Chopin die Prophezeiung wahr gemacht, [...]?”<sup>151</sup>

The review of Bennet’s third piano concerto, which we discussed above, further illustrates my point. At the beginning of the article, Robert Schumann makes a remark that at first sight seems like a rather inconspicuous moment of self-reflexivity: “Wenige Worte genügen für heute. Eusebius hat in der ersten Nummer dieses Bandes mir so aus der Seele heraus gelesen und geschrieben, daß ich jenem Umriß nur Weniges hinzuzufügen wüßte”.<sup>152</sup> Schumann duly perpetuates the authorship-fiction around which he had built much of his ‘Davidsbund’-*Kritiken*. For one, he acknowledges Eusebius’ previous opinion as one that follows from a separate, critical instance. Moreover, it adds to Eusebius’ credibility as *Kritiker* that he later, conveniently enough, turns out to be one of the self-proclaimed composers of the *Concert sans Orchestre*. In contrast to the passage at the end of the article (in which Robert Schumann forcefully distances himself from popular opinion in order to underline the uniqueness of his judgement; cf. supra), the *Kritiker* this time sides with Eusebius. In reality, of course, Schumann endorses his own opinion.

These short episodes, at first sight, seem unobtrusive, but they do point toward a growing trend in Schumann’s *Musikkritik*. Especially from 1839 onwards, we notice that Schumann enters into a peculiar contest with his former opinions. Klimek, as we have seen, cites 1839 as a significant year for Schumann because of his short-lived move to Vienna. But the remarkable self-competition that starts to manifest itself from then on is unrelated to those events, I believe. Rather, it is urged on by the considerable tenure the NZfM by that year. In fact, the NZfM already existed five years in 1839. Its run, by then, exceeded the expectations of the journalistic market at the time. Other journals, in fact, were not as fortunate to last as long as the NZfM had done up to that point. If we take a look at other music periodicals that were founded in the 1830s, only the NZfM and Rellstab’s *Iris im Gebiet der Tonkunst* managed to get a foothold. Others had to cease their activities fairly quickly: the *Schlesische Zeitung für Musik* (Breslau) ran from 1832 to 1835, the *Berliner musikalische Zeitung* only lasted through the year 1833. Other journals suffered similar fates e.g. the *Allgemeiner musikalischer Anzeiger* (Frankfurt am Main, 1834-1836) or *Der Minnesänger* (Mainz, 1834-1838).<sup>153</sup> No wonder, in other words, that in 1839 it started to look like the NZfM was turning into an established value.

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<sup>151</sup> Schumann: *Trio's. (Schluß.)*, p. 207; the ‘einschläfernden Ort’ can refer to Chopin’s home town Żelazowa Wola, but also to the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, in which the review ‘Ein Werk II’ appeared. Schumann later turned his back on the AMZ, cf. 1.3.1.

<sup>152</sup> Schumann: *Concerte für das Pianoforte. (Schluß.)*, p. 64-65.

<sup>153</sup> cf. Wilhelm Freystätter: *Die musikalischen Zeitschriften seit ihrer Entstehung bis zur Gegenwart. Chronologisches Verzeichnis der periodischen Schriften zur Musik*. München: Riedel 1884, p. 51-56.

Concurrently, Schumann struck a more historicising tone in his articles, particularly concerning his NZfM. Take the elegiac editorial “Zum neuen Jahr” that opens the 1839 volume. In the text, Schumann evaluates the achievements of the NZfM and looks back at the road the journal had covered so far. “So lägen denn neun Bände vor uns”, he opens his account, “und in ihnen ein getreues Bild menschlichen Strebens”.<sup>154</sup> Schumann compares the NZfM to a state, with its own turmoils and political agenda (namely defeating its enemies and winning over allies). He recalls how the journal started from “das Ideal einer grossen Künstlerbrüderschaft zur Verherrlichung deutscher tiefsinniger Kunst”,<sup>155</sup> but soon lost its sense of purpose due to the death of Ludwig Schunke and to discord among the remaining editors. When Schumann took over the reins entirely, however, he secured the journal’s future: “Acht Bände haben sich seitdem gefolgt; wir hoffen, es ist eine Tendenz in ihnen sichtbar worden. Mögen sich im Vordergrunde verschiedene Ansichten herumtummeln, die Erhebung deutschen Sinnes durch deutsche Kunst, geschah sie nun durch Hinweisung auf ältere grosse Muster, oder durch Bevorzugung jener jüngeren Talente [...] jene Erhebung mag noch jetzt als das Ziel unserer Bestrebungen angesehen werden.”<sup>156</sup> But the editorial is striking for more than one reason. It also gives us a brief insight into Schumann’s plans for the NZfM in Vienna<sup>157</sup> and it once and for all exposes the ‘Davidsbündler’ for what they are, i.e. a figment of the Schumann’s imagination: “Den rothen Faden er diesen Gedanken fortspinnt, könnte man allenfalls in der Geschichte der Davidsbündler verfolgen, eines wenn auch nur phantastisch auftretenden Bundes, dessen Mitglieder weniger durch äussere Abzeichen, als durch eine innere Aehnlichkeit sich erkennen lassen. Einen Damm gegen die Mittelmässigkeit aufzuwerfen, durch das Wort wie durch die That, werden sie auch künftighin trachten”.<sup>158</sup>

In addition to this historicising rhetoric, Schumann’s *Musikkritik* starts to exhibit a notable discourse of self-evaluation from 1839 onwards. Schumann measures his current opinions against judgements he passed on earlier in his career: he takes those previous judgements as points of reference *an sich*. He validates his review on the basis of them and proves himself right in the aftermath (indeed, he does not ever correct a former opinion). Scholars are often eager to point out that Schumann wanted to raise his *Musikkritik* to a higher, historicising plane. In order to counteract the myopia of his fellow *Musikkritiker*,

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<sup>154</sup> Robert Schumann (R.S.): 'Zum neuen Jahr'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 1, p. 1.

<sup>155</sup> Schumann: *Zum neuen Jahr*, p. 1.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>157</sup> Schumann mentions that he is writing “aus Oesterreichs prächtiger Hauptstadt, deren freundliche Bewohner auch noch länger zu fesseln vermöchten” (*ibid.*, p. 2).

<sup>158</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1-2.

Schumann set out to uncover the overarching ties between the past, present and future:<sup>159</sup> he championed the masters of the past and was simultaneously on a constant lookout for new talents and new musical forms.<sup>160</sup> While I agree with these claims up to a point, I believe that we must not discount that Schumann very much manipulated this narrative. As *Kritiker*, he surely benefitted from upholding it.<sup>161</sup> Many of the reviews that Schumann signs with his own name since 1839 follow a similar pattern: Schumann professes that he has already written about a certain composers, but that discussing them once more is justified, because they represent the future of music (in some cases exactly due to the fact that he brought them under the notice of the reader). The opening paragraph of a review about concert ouvertures concisely illustrates this strategy:

Der Zufall hat oben drei Namen aneinandergereiht, deren Träger als Repräsentanten wenigstens der jüngern Künstlergeneration dreier verschiedener Nationen betrachtet werden können [...] Der Name des letztern ist bekannt [Berlioz], der zweite fängt an sich Geltung zu machen [Bennet], wie auch der erste schon an Fremdartigkeit verloren durch öftere Erwähnung, namentlich schon in unserer Zeitschrift. Man mag sie sich sämtlich merken; sie werden, wie wir glauben, in der Geschichte der Musik jener Länder mit der Zeit Bedeutung erlangen.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Exemplary for this narrative is the following assessment Arnfried Edler gives of Schumann's critical poetics: "Hauptsächlich in der Fundierung und Verankerung des zeitgenössischen, vom Verlust normativer und überhaupt aller objektiven Bindungen bedrohten Kunstschaffens lag in Schumanns Augen der Sinn und Wert musikhistorischer Kenntnisse [...]. Schumanns Wirken fiel in die Anfangsepoche kritischer musikgeschichtlicher Forschung, und soweit es mit seiner beschriebenen Zielsetzung übereinstimmte, bemühte er sich intensiv um deren Beförderung [...] Der historisch gebildete Komponist steht gewissermaßen in ständigem Gedankenaustausch mit den großen Meistern der Vergangenheit, die sein Tun kontrollieren. [...] Wie beim mittelalterlichen Dombau sah Schumann den einzelnen Künstler als Glied einer viele Generationen umspannenden Gemeinschaft." (Arnfried Edler: *Robert Schumann und seine Zeit*. Laaber: Laaber 1982, p. 86).

<sup>160</sup> Matthias Wendt gives an in-depth overview of Schumann's correspondence with younger composers and of the ways in which he helped or advised them (e.g. finding a publisher or even getting their pieces performed), cf. Matthias Wendt: 'Keine 'Neue Bahnen'? – Schumann als Berater und Förderer junger (und weniger junger) Komponisten'. In: 'Neue Bahnen'. *Robert Schumann und seine musikalischen Zeitgenossen*, ed. by Bernhard R. Appel (= *Schumann Forschungen* 7). Mainz: Schott 2002, pp. 219-242.

<sup>161</sup> cf., for instance, the following remark in a review of smaller piano works: "Noch liegt uns eine Menge kürzerer Musikstücke von W. Taubert, A. Henselt, W. Sterndale Bennet und Chopin, vier der bedeutendsten der jüngeren Claviercomponisten vor, über deren Talente, Bildung und Richtung bereits schon öfters in der Zeitschrift die Rede war, daß wir uns kürzer fassen können im Lobe" (cf. Schumann: *Phantasieen, Capricen etc. für Pianoforte*, p. 161).

<sup>162</sup> Schumann: *Concertouverturen für Orchester*, p. 185.



The template is straightforward: Schumann introduces the composers, asserts that - partly due to the agency of his journal - readers are already familiar with them and he affirms their unique position in the history of music.

There is a clear development in Schumann's efforts to canonise his legacy as a *Musikkritiker*. For one, their form becomes shorter (generally appearing as short interjections) and more anonymous. Initially, Schumann often referred to a review of the 'Davidsbündler' to prove the consistency of his argument. In the above examples, for instance, Eusebius is the *Kritiker* who already wrote about Bennet, and Florestan originally introduced Chopin to the musical world. But as Schumann distances himself from the 'Davidsbund' in 1838, the sheer variety of pseudonyms that had typified the journal in its earlier days, diminishes accordingly. Schumann's *Musikkritik* of 1839 is in keeping with these circumstances. In result, we can observe a shift in the reference point that Schumann uses to validate his opinion: from the diachronic dialogue he mounts with the 'Davidsbund'-members to the NZfM itself. Indeed, Schumann increasingly contends that his ideas match earlier opinion produced by the periodical:<sup>163</sup> "Der schon früher in der Zeitschrift ausgesprochene Wunsch [...]",<sup>164</sup> "eine interessante Jugendarbeit Hiller's, die früher schon in der Zeitschrift besprochen ist"<sup>165</sup>, "Spohr war es wohl auch, der das erste Doppelquartett schrieb, wie schon in diesen Blättern ausgesprochen wurde",<sup>166</sup> etc. As such, he upgrades the NZfM to an encyclopaedic index in and of itself. The references to earlier reviews grow all the more specific, moreover. They increase the encyclopaedic quality Schumann attributes to the NZfM, as can be evidenced by this comment about Spohr's symphonies, for instance: "Von Spohr liegen uns zwei neue Symphonieen [sic] vor, die in dem Zeitraume von kaum drei Jahren erschienen. Der erste [...] wurde schon nach ihrer ersten Aufführung in Leipzig in diesen Blättern Bd. XIV. Nr. 17. ziemlich

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<sup>163</sup> cf. "Die Zeitschrift hat seit ihrem Entstehen ziemlich von allen Clavierconcerten berichtet; es mögen auf die vergangenen sechs Jahre kaum 16 bis 17 kommen, eine kleine Zahl im Vergleich zu früher" (Robert Schumann (R.Schumann): 'Das Clavier-Concert'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 2, p. 5); "Den schon in der Zeitschrift erwähnten zwei ersten Theilen [...]" (Robert Schumann (R.S.): 'Aeltere Claviermusik'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 39, p. 153); "Ref. versuchte bereits dasselbe in zwei vor schon längerer Zeit erschienenen Heften" (Robert Schumann (R.S.): 'Etuden für das Pianoforte (Schluß)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 2, Nr. 31, p. 123 (footnote); "Man vergleiche die Biographie, die früher diese Blätter brachten" (Robert Schumann (R.S.): 'Drei gute Liederhefte'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1840, Vol. 2, Nr. 30, p. 118); "W. H. Veit, der junge böhmische Tonsetzer, von dem sie schon öfter Gutes vermeldet" (Schumann: *Drei gute Liederhefte*, p. 119); "so freut es uns, diesen in der Zeitschrift schon öfters erwähnten Namen den des Hrn. Helsted hinzuzufügen" (Robert Schumann (R.S.): 'Lieder. (Schluß)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1843, Vol. 2, Nr. 9, p. 34).

<sup>164</sup> Schumann: *Aeltere Claviermusik*, p. 153.

<sup>165</sup> Robert Schumann (S.): 'Musikleben in Leipzig während des Winters 1839/1840. (Schluß)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1840, Vol. 1, Nr. 40, p. 159.

<sup>166</sup> Robert Schumann (S.): 'Symphonieen für Orchester'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1843, Vol. 1, Nr. 35, p. 141.

ausführlich besprochen [...] wir wüssten dem früher gesagten kaum etwas zuzusetzen”.<sup>167</sup> This strategy turns the NZfM into a reference work *per se*. Concurrently, Schumann makes the journal an ally in his search for new talents. We have observed this strategy in the review of concert overtures cited above, but it just as well transpires in the following comment about Liszt: “Seit ihrem Bestehen hat die Zeitschrift dem Künstler zu folgen gesucht, hat nichts verheimlicht, was für und wider ihn laut wurde, obwohl sich bei weitem die meisten Stimmen und namentlich aller grossen Künstler zum Lobe seines eminenten Talentes vereinigten”.<sup>168</sup> In his efforts to authenticate his opinions against the background of an autonomous and self-referential NZfM, finally, Schumann confirms his own periodical as an established value in the music-critical scene. The consistent confirmation of the fact that his judgements agree with other sources, does not only canonise his own opinions on music, but simultaneously imparts an authoritative status to the NZfM.

In the end, Schumann measures the readership of the journal against the same expectations he creates for himself and his periodical. As the latter two become mutually validating reference points, the *Musikkritiker* counts on the reader’s familiarity with the position of the journal. As such, the reader does not linger on the sidelines of the *Musikkritik* but acts as a crucial partner. Together with the *Musikkritiker* and the journal, the reader is validated as a critical entity in and of its own, e.g. “Der Zeitschrift Ansicht über diese Compositionsart wird als bekannt vorausgesetzt [...]”,<sup>169</sup> “Der Name des zuerst Gennanten ist wohl den meisten unserer Leser kein fremder mehr. Wie sich in seinen Kunstansichten, von denen diese Zeitschrift seit ihrer Entstehung öfters mittheilte, ein stets auf das würdigste Ziel der Kunst gerichteter Sinn aussprach, so war dies auch von ihm als Praktiker zu erwarten”.<sup>170</sup>

### 2.2.3 Conclusion

Schumann is a *Musikkritiker* with probably the most extensive ensemble of duties in comparison to any other of his colleagues. He was a - due to mental and physical problems, failed - virtuoso, a leading composer, an ambitious editor and, of course, a prolific *Musikkritiker*. In that last capacity, Schumann draws on an evenly varied range of pen names. Schumann later cites pragmatic reasons to support his rich use of pseudonyms. Assuming different personalities (especially in the ‘Davidsbund’) does not

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<sup>167</sup> Schumann: *Symphonien für Orchester*, p. 139.

<sup>168</sup> Schumann: *Drei gute Liederhefte*, p. 118.

<sup>169</sup> Robert Schumann (R.S.): ‘Phantasien, Capricen etc. für Pianoforte. (Schluß)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 52, p. 206.

<sup>170</sup> Schumann: *Lieder. (Schluß)*, p. 33.

only diversify the face of his reviews, but it also allows him to bring “verschiedene Ansichten der Kunstanschauung zur Aussprache”, in short: to render multiple opinions. It is interesting to observe that exactly the texts he signs with his own name, develop in the opposite, more consolidating direction. The longer Schumann stays on as *Musikkritiker*, the more he uses his own name as a pseudonym and the more he reduces his opinions to one consistent position over time. Schumann makes his own views and his own journal into a canon of music-critical thinking. Eventually, he would achieve the final step in securing his legacy near the end of his life, in his *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*.

When writing under his own name, Schumann stages a peculiar self-competition that discursively underpins the canonisation he eventually aims to achieve. He exhibits a tendency towards self-normativity that critical theories already asserted at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Schumann’s approach to the NZfM as an encyclopaedic resource furthers those efforts and chimes in with then circulating views on knowledge and *Wissensvermittlung: Kritik* as a self-sustaining system, as “potenziell unbegrenztes Weiterschreiben”,<sup>171</sup> as Andreas Kilcher points out with regard to the encyclopaedic tendencies in Friedrich Schlegel’s critical project. As the personal pseudonyms come more and more into the fore, Schumann fashions his *Musikkritiken* as chronicles of former reviews, so to speak. The texts boast a notable rhetoric of retrospection and reminiscence. Monika Schmitz-Emans coins this recollective aspect as a defining trait of the *Gesammelte Schriften*.<sup>172</sup> In the *Schriften*, she argues, Schumann exposes the ‘Davidsbündler’ for what they are, i.e. as fictitious and a pure embellishment of the critical style. As such, he bids a public farewell to the former standard-bearers of his critical project. The ‘Davidsbündler’ embody the “Distanz zwischen Gegenwart und Vergangenheit”<sup>173</sup> that Schumann contemplates in his *Gesammelte Schriften*; they reflect the “auf Vergangenes, statt auf Zukünftiges zu beziehende Einstellung”<sup>174</sup> of the anthology.

Still, as we have seen by now, there is more to Schumann’s *Musikkritik* than only reducing his writings to the ‘Davidsbündler’. If my analyses have detected one key trend in Schumann’s use of personal pseudonyms, it is that the recourse to the past decisively shapes the argumentative fabric of the *Musikkritiken* written under those pen names.

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<sup>171</sup> Andreas B. Kilcher: *mathesis und poiesis. Die Enzyklopädie der Literatur 1600-2000*. München: Wilhelm Fink 2003, p. 421.

<sup>172</sup> Schmitz-Emans traces Schumann’s development as writer and *Kritiker* by means of the ‘Davidsbund’. At every new stage in his textual output, whether in his diary, a novel project or in his *Musikkritik*, Schmitz-Emans argues, the ‘Davidsbund’ reflects Schumann’s creative and poetical mindset (cf. Monika Schmitz-Emans: ‘Der Davidsbund als literarische Fiktion’. In: *„Eine neue poetische Zeit“*. 175 Jahre Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, ed. by Michael Beiche and Armin Koch (= *Schumann Forschungen* 14). Mainz: Schott 2013, pp. 308-330).

<sup>173</sup> Monika Schmitz-Emans: *Der Davidsbund als literarische Fiktion*, p. 325.

<sup>174</sup> *ibid.*, p. 326.

Furthermore, the retrospective tone Schumann strikes in the *Gesammelte Schriften* is not different from the historicising rhetoric that accompanies the acts of self-canonisation from 1839 onwards. The crucial difference, however, lies in the function that the canonical occupies in both the *Musikkritik* for the NZfM and the *Gesammelte Schriften*. (Early-)romantic aesthetic theory freed the notion of canonicity from the national overtones German Idealism and the Weimarer Klassik attributed to it. A canon was viewed as a dynamic body, open to the challenges of the future.<sup>175</sup> But Schumann entertains less philosophical ambitions with his self-confirming back-and-forth between prior and current judgements. He uses his former appraisals as an argumentative, to wit apologetic strategy. Rather than memorialising his *Musikkritik* (as he would later design the *Gesammelte Schriften* for, pace Schmitz-Emans), Schumann very much tailors the constant references to earlier reviews and articles to his present appearance as *Musikkritiker*. Once the *Kritiker* enters the public sphere with his opinions, in fact, he opens himself up to the reciprocal scrutiny of *Antikritik*. Likewise, Schumann reverts to earlier appraisals to underpin his current opinions and engages in an epideictic move of self-immunisation. By inserting his musical opinion in an overarching, diachronic consistency, Schumann shields himself from the possible counterblasts by readers, colleagues and competitors. Although it diminishes the individuality and singularity of his reviews, Schumann gains decisive pragmatic profit from retroactively validating both his former and current opinions.

Schumann constantly balances on the tight-rope between outsider and insider to the music-critical enterprise. In due time, he would call upon initially the former and eventually the latter to patent his activities as *Musikkritiker*. Regardless of either position, Schumann rarely mentions an inherent quality he possesses as *Musikkritiker* to confirm himself in that position. From a discursive point of view, his opinions always gain their legitimacy from outer circumstances. During the first few years of the NZfM, he foregrounds his experience as a composer to maintain his credibility. More and more, however, he asserts himself as an autonomous *Musikkritiker*. But even then he remains bent on former viewpoints or positions in the NZfM to verify his own appraisal of composers, compositions and concerts.

The standard way of thinking about Schumann's activities as *Musikkritiker* has it that Schumann simply lives the great Romantic dream: a sympoetic fusion between between *Musiker* and *Kritiker*, between artist and theoretician. In the mind of early-19<sup>th</sup> century philosophers like the Schlegel brothers and Novalis, merging the aesthetic with the cerebral strengthens the autonomy of the *Kritiker*. While this claim could ring true

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<sup>175</sup> cf. Thomas Bleicher: 'Epilog. Wandel des literarischen Kanons.' In: *Die Wende von der Aufklärung zur Romantik. 1760-1820*, ed. by Horst Albert Glaser and György M. Vajda. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins 2001, p. 739-758.

pertaining Schumann's early attempts to certify his appraisals from his background as composer, it does not hold up over time, as we have seen. Quite the opposite, in fact: From a discursive point of view, I feel that Schumann forfeits much of his autonomy by making his judgement constantly relative to other instances. He essentially debunks his absolute authority. True enough, Schumann initially ascribes his opinions to personal experience. As he increasingly takes recourse to unspecified, earlier positions of the *NZfM*, however, Schumann depersonalises the reference point by means of which he vindicates his judgement. Regarding the discursive legitimation of the *Musikkritiker's* presence, this strategy undermines the *Kritiker* as an absolute standard (an aspect normally cited as the crux of Romantic critical poetics, cf. supra). Instead, Schumann opens up his judgement to external (re)evaluation – a move that will play a crucial role in fostering the reader's proper judgement (cf. 4.1).

## 2.3 Wagner: From Correspondent to Visionary

As we established in 1.3.2, the medium Wagner chooses for his *Musikkritik*, significantly shapes his critical discourse. The same, I will show, applies to Wagner's presence as *Musikkritiker*. This section will trace the different forms of identity Wagner uses as *Musikkritiker* in the decade between 1840 and 1850. I did not randomly select this period. My diachronic account corresponds to the central medial shift in Wagner's critical oeuvre: from a contributor to and correspondent for newspapers (2.3.1.) to a theoretician in aesthetic treatises (2.3.2.). In addition, my analyses address the pragmatic function of the *Musikkritiker*. Wagner always thinks together his two roles in the public sphere, namely that of *Musikkritiker* and of composer; he specifically uses his appearance as *Musikkritiker* to further his interests in the domain of music. To that effect, I will show that Wagner employs the office of *Musikkritiker* as a discursive platform from which he eliminates his competitors and brings his own compositions to the attention of the public sphere.

### 2.3.1 Wagner as Correspondent in Paris

In 1839, at the age of 26, Wagner left Riga, where he had been fired as musical director of the local theatre house, a position he had held since June 1837. Pursued by their creditors, Wagner and his wife Minna made the rocky crossing to London where they spent the greater part of the summer. Eventually, the couple set for Paris and arrived in the French capital on September 17<sup>th</sup>. The three following years would have a decisive impact on

Wagner's life and thinking. Many of his ideas about opera reform and the drama of the future can be traced back to that period,<sup>176</sup> as is the case for his life-long aversion to Meyerbeer. Initially, Wagner had high hopes for his stay in Paris. The city was the Mecca of everything that lived and breathed vocal drama. An aspiring opera composer himself, Wagner saw unlimited possibilities for himself in the city. By November 1840 he had finished *Rienzi*, one year later *Der fliegende Holländer* would follow.

But Wagner soon went through one of the major disillusionments in his life. He had severe difficulties getting his operas staged and did not find his way in the backroom dealings between composers, publishers and opera directors in Paris. Wagner ran into grave financial difficulties. He started arranging scores for other composers as well as writing *Musikkritik* in order to gain an extra source of income. In itself, the journalistic enterprise was not new to Wagner. Since 1834, he had already written about five essays of varying length in which he lamented the state of the German opera.<sup>177</sup> In Paris, Wagner applied himself much more consistently to the art of *Musikkritik*. His writings for German periodicals (Wagner indeed wrote for French journals as well, as we will see) feature him as a correspondent who explains the habits of the Paris opera scene to a German reader audience. The phenomenon of the German exile who is active as a correspondent was certainly not new in and of itself. As Susan Bernstein notes, Heinrich Heine had for several years already made a name for himself with it. According to Bernstein, the correspondent operates from a liminal position – a status that the exponential growth of the press industry profoundly facilitated. Drawing on Benedict Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities', she argues that the correspondent is geographically absent from the country for which he writes, but that the print language extends and delimits anew the national community, which was formerly defined by physical borders. What's more, the satellite position of the correspondent undermines the very concept of national identity: "The confidence of national unity induced by the common reading of the newspaper is concomitant with the apparition of the foreign correspondent, each of whose journalistic entries destabilises the natural-language border, by making explicit the discontinuity between place and linguistic identification".<sup>178</sup> Correspondingly, Heine and Wagner

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<sup>176</sup> At a conference on music-criticism in the 19th century in Lucca, I even suggested whether we could not speak of an 'aesthetics of rancour'.

<sup>177</sup> cf. Richard Wagner (anonymous): 'Die deutsche Oper'. In: *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* 1834, Nr. 111; Richard Wagner (Ng.): 'Pasticcio von Canto Spianato' in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 63 (pp. 250-252) & 64 (pp. 255-256); Richard Wagner (anonymous): 'Aus Magdeburg'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 2, Nr. 36, pp. 151-152; 'Der dramatische Gesang', written 1837, but only published posthumously in 1888; Richard Wagner: 'Bellini. Ein Wort zu seiner Zeit'. In: *Der Zuschauer* 1837; 'Über Meyerbeer's »Hugenotten«', presumably 1837, never published.

<sup>178</sup> Susan Bernstein: 'Journalism and German Identity: Communiqués from Heine, Wagner, and Adorno'. In: *New German Critique* 66/3 (1995), p. 71.

exchange the German identity they would normally graft on traits they share with their fellow countrymen, for the contrast between their own values and those of the French citizens amongst which they live. However – and this is significant – they distance themselves from a notion of Frenchness that they themselves define in their writings.<sup>179</sup> Wagner, in particular, remodels his personal failures in Paris into cultural generalisations that sublimate the geographical distance between Germany and France. He discovers an inner ‘home’ (i.e. an abstract, yet solid sense of Germanness) that remains uncorrupted in the face of the perverse influences of Frenchness that surrounds him.<sup>180</sup> German music, and specifically Beethoven’s, is the vehicle that allows him to probe his German nature and that, eventually, prepares his homecoming: “Wagner thus establishes himself by reinforcing boundaries between home and abroad, by attributing to them fixed values, and by making the split between them a temporary condition meant to be mended”.<sup>181</sup> In the essay *Was ist Deutsch?* (written 1865, first published 1878) Wagner would revisit those very issues of identity he had been struggling with since Paris.<sup>182</sup>

Bernstein unearths remarkable similarities between the strategies Heine and Wagner employ to assert their identity as correspondents. Heine also had a profound influence on Wagner’s style as *Kritiker*, as the latter openly admits to in his autobiography *Mein Leben* of 1880:

Um diesem die Spalten seiner ‘Abendzeitung’ zu füllen, verfuhr ich in wahrhaft unverschämter Weise, indem ich, was mir Anders und Lehrs, welche selbst nie etwas erlebten, des Abends teils aus Zeitungen, teils aus Table-d’hôte-Gesprächen erzählten, in der Weise zusammenstellte und durch die in neuer Zeit durch die Heinesche Manier im Journalstil herrschend gewordene Mode pikant herzurichten suchte, so daß ich wirklich nicht anders glaubte, als mein guter Hofrat Winkler würde eines Tages hinter das Geheimnis meiner Pariser Weltkenntnis geraten müssen.<sup>183</sup>

This passage immediately attests to Wagner’s conscious reflection on critical style. Wagner does not look upon the stylistic dimension of his *Musikkritik* as an aspect around which he can spin a personal, journalistic individuality. Instead, it serves as a discursive instrument that allows him to better articulate and communicate his message. Nicholas Vazsonyi reads Wagner’s writings from Paris in the same pragmatic vein. He observes

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<sup>179</sup> cf. Bernstein: *Journalism and German Identity*, p. 67.

<sup>180</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 72-76.

<sup>181</sup> *ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>182</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Was ist Deutsch (1865-1878)’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, ed. by Richard Sternfeld and Hans von Wolzogen. Volksausgabe. Vol. 10. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1916, p. 36-53.

<sup>183</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Mein Leben. Erster Teil: 1813-1842’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 13, p. 268.

that the *Musikkritik* from that period does not necessarily reflect or aims to remedy the traumas Wagner endured in the French capital. “Wagner instrumentalized his failure”,<sup>184</sup> Vazsonyi claims, and he consistently downplayed the commercial benefit he hoped to gain from his time in the city. Wagner marketed the image of an earnest yet exclusive, German composer. Whether we follow Bernstein or Vazsonyi in their account of those Paris days, both authors agree on the fact that the correspondent persona Wagner introduces in his *Musikkritik* around that period is but a pose. Once Wagner recognised his failure for what it was, he carefully arranged his texts so to anticipate his return to German soil. As such, we cannot eliminate that utilitarian aspect from his writings. I will continue to trail that pragmatic course, but rather by focussing more on the role Wagner plays as correspondent. In that capacity, he does not merely forestall an imminent return; as a discursive agent, the correspondent also increases the credibility of his own account.

### Wagner as Correspondent

Wagner’s persona as a correspondent is crucial in his attempt to reach out to his readership. A correspondent works from a distance and – a crucial advantage – presents an account that is one-sided and unverifiable. Readers, in other terms, can only rely on the information they receive from a correspondent; they have little opportunity to contradict it. In his role as correspondent, Wagner furthermore carefully cultivates his status as an outsider in Paris. He regularly underlines that he records events and facts from a distance, rather than having a personal interest in them. While in Paris, Wagner wrote for three German periodicals. In all of them, his *Kritik* on Paris was harsh and blunt. Wagner published an essay on Rossini’s *Stabat Mater* in Schumann’s *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (under the pseudonym H. Valentino, but introduced as “[v]on einem neuen Correspondenten”).<sup>185</sup> He strikes a similar tone in two contributions (this time under the pen name V. Freudenfeuer) for the journal *Europa* titled ‘Pariser Amusements’<sup>186</sup> and ‘Pariser Fatalitäten für Deutsche’,<sup>187</sup> respectively. But most of his correspondences can be found in The *Dresdener Abendzeitung* of Theodor Winkler. Wagner uses the articles as a platform *par excellence* to explicitly promote himself as a correspondent. Between February and December 1841 the *Abendzeitung* featured a series of nine letters, the *Pariser Berichte*, in which Wagner comments on musical life in the French capital. From the first

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<sup>184</sup> Nicholas Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner: Self-Promotion and the Making of a Brand*. Cambridge: University Press 2010, p. 12.

<sup>185</sup> Richard Wagner (H. Valentino): ‘Rossini’s *Stabat Mater*’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1841, Vol. 2, Nr. 52, pp. 205-208.

<sup>186</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Pariser Amusements. (1841)’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 31-45.

<sup>187</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Pariser Fatalitäten für Deutsche. (1841)’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, pp. 46-64.



instalment on, Wagner develops a set of recurrent strategies, geared at establishing a familiar rapport with the German reader.<sup>188</sup>

In the first place, there's the design of the texts. Wagner frames his *Pariser Berichte* as open letters to Theodor Winkler. In that way, they play to the public dimension of a medium that in itself requires a certain intimacy and reliability between the correspondents. In addition, the letter-form sustains the monologic situation typical of correspondent communication (cf. supra). Although a letter initiates or carries on a dialogue with the addressee(s), only one writer at a time gets the chance to speak his mind. As such, the letter-form first and foremost provides Wagner with the opportunity to assume a position of confidentiality vis-à-vis the reader. Furthermore, it permits him to structure and control the flow of information – often very explicitly, e.g. through comments as “Es würde mich jedenfalls hier zu weit führen, wenn [...]“<sup>189</sup> of „Es genüge zu wissen, daß [...]“.<sup>190</sup> Wagner's changing references to the intended addressee, moreover, reinforces his dominant position: now he turns to Winkler, then to his German readership. In the seventh instalment, for instance, Wagner addresses Winkler almost every two pages. Other contributions, on the other hand, are much more volatile. The last four pages of the second *Pariser Bericht*, for instance, appeal to as much as three addressees, to wit Winkler, the German reader and Wagner himself.<sup>191</sup> The apostrophe in general and the ability to directly as well as personally speak to individuals, a group of people or more abstract instances have had a great appeal to Wagner. ‘Pariser Amusements’, published in *Europa*, counts no less than seven different apostrophe subjects over mere fourteen pages. Wagner mostly turns to the reader in order to engage

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<sup>188</sup> Wagner admits that he caters the topics of his texts to his German reader audience, e.g. “Ich entsinne mich soeben, daß ich Ihnen noch kein Wort über die Heinefetter (Kathinka) geschrieben habe, und diese erfreuliche Erscheinung verdiente es vor allem, in einer deutschen Korrespondenz hervorgehoben zu werden.” (Richard Wagner: ‘Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). III.’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 93).

<sup>189</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). I.’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 70.

<sup>190</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 70.

<sup>191</sup> cf. “**Ich ewiger Träumer!** Von Bankiers bin ich unwillkürlich unter Musiker geraten. Neigung! Ich habe kein Geschick zur Spekulation und es wird mein Lebtage nichts Gescheites aus mir werden. Am schlechtesten taue ich zum Korrespondenten, und **ich bedauere Sie, daß Sie darunter leiden müssen.**” (Richard Wagner: ‘Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). II.’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 83); “**Mögen wir Deutschen** uns immerhin rühmen, am besten und innigsten Mozart's und Beethoven's Werke zu verstehen [...]” (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* II, p. 84); “**Ich sehe, verehrter Herr,** daß ich wieder viel geschwätzt habe, ohne doch auf manche und wichtige Punkte zu gerathen, deren Besprechung unerläßlicher als irgend etwas von der Welt ist. Ich muß Sie also wiederum auf eine nächste Mitteilung verweisen”. (ibid., p. 86).

him actively in the argument of the text;<sup>192</sup> other favourite conversation subjects include singers and composers (cf. *infra*).

In addition, Wagner uses the letter-form to improve his own status as speaker. From the first instalment on, he presents himself as a modest *vir bonus*. In the first instalment, he underlines that he wrote his letter at the request of Winkler: “Sie wünschten von mir Mitteilungen aus Paris”.<sup>193</sup> Wagner first and foremost legitimises himself as speaker in this way. As he continues his sentence, he inserts a *Bescheidenheitstopos*: “von mir, einem armen deutschen Musiker”.<sup>194</sup> The compassion and goodwill that this topos seeks to arouse in the reader, later on gains in cogency when it is opposed to Paris as the “Stadt voll Endlosigkeit, Glanz und Schmutz”.<sup>195</sup> This distance creates a contrast, first of all between the exile and his host city, but also between the exile and his fatherland. Furthermore, it makes up an intrinsic part of the scenario of the letter: a letter bridges the physical gap between two correspondents. The ‘Berichte’ posit themselves explicitly as a correspondence from Paris. The series’ title skilfully makes use of the journal’s name to emphasise that this remoteness drives the communicative situation: ‘*Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung*’ (my emphasis).

The outsider position, the apostrophes aimed at engaging the reader and establishing a relation of familiarity with the German audiences - Wagner takes all these and other discursive elements along in his persona as ‘Berichterstatter’ from Paris.<sup>196</sup> Time and again, Wagner stresses that he is politically neutral; he acts as a mere observer of the art scene in France’s capital – a toilsome task, so Wagner does not refrain from emphasising:

Befindet sich jeder Pariser bei diesem Zustande der Dinge schlecht, so ist ein Korrespondent noch viel schlimmer daran. Glücklicherweise der politische Berichterstatter; aus der Verlegenheit, in die ihn das Schweigen und die

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<sup>192</sup> e.g. “Forschen wir!” (Wagner: *Pariser Amusements*, p. 34), “so laßt mich nicht länger bei Duprez verweilen, sondern sehen wir lieber, was sich um ihn herbewegt!” (ibid., p. 36), “Ihr seht und könnt euch ungefähr einen Begriff davon machen, was Scribe ist!” (ibid., p. 41), “Ihr müßt wissen, worin ein solches Pariser Konzert besteht” (ibid., p. 42).

<sup>193</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 65.

<sup>194</sup> ibid., p. 65. This description is not at all exceptional in the discourse of artists and composers who are residing abroad. Beethoven regularly describes himself in his letters as „armen österreichischen Musikanten!“ (Ludwig van Beethoven: ‘An Ferdinand Ries [20.01.1816]’. In: *Ludwig van Beethovens Sämtliche Briefe*, ed. by Emerich Kastner. Nachdruck der völlig umgearbeiteten und wesentlich vermehrten Neuauflage von Dr. Julius Kapp (Unveränderter Nachdruck der Ausgabe Leipzig 1923). Tutzing: Hans Schneider 1975, p. 335) and Grillparzer poeticised it in his novella *Der arme Spielmann* (1848). Heine, too, describes himself in similar terms to enforce his role as correspondent-emigrant (cf. Bernstein: *Journalism and German Identity*, p. 65-69).

<sup>195</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 65.

<sup>196</sup> Vazsonyi speaks of several “rhetorical positions” (Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner*, p. 12) that Wagner assumes in those early days as *Musikkritiker* and which he would cultivate in his later writings as well: disinterest, Germanness, the avant-garde art-for-art attitude and anti-market critique (cf. ibid., p. 16-27).

Abwesenheit aller diplomatischen Wirksamkeit versetzt, hilft ihm der glückliche Umstand, daß die Pariser Journale genötigt sind, trotz alles Übels jeden Tag zu erscheinen. Was die nun in der Herzensangst zusammenlügen, das kann er getrost für bare Münze weiter schicken, denn mit der Angabe einiger Autoritäten weiß er, daß ihm jeder in Deutschland glaubt. Was nun aber Kunst und dergleichen schöne Dinge betrifft, so müßte man sich notwendig selbst etwas vorlügen, um andern vorlügen zu können, – und das hat seine Schwierigkeiten, besonders wenn es an Imagination fehlt, die der Deutsche in der Regel in Paris verliert. Da es Ihnen nun aber doch undenklich scheinen würde, wollte ich ihnen melden, daß sich in Paris seit meinem letzten Berichte gar nichts Denkwürdiges ereignet habe, so will ich wenigstens dem Vorwurfe zu entgehen suchen, als ob ich mich auf negatives Lügen einlasse, und mit meiner dürren Ausbeute an traurigen Wahrheiten nicht zurückhalten.<sup>197</sup>

Wagner bears out his trustworthiness and neutrality by disparaging his fellow political correspondents. He passes them off as bent on information and lost in the commercial turmoil of the modern press enterprise. But the negative justification of his own correspondence, that is to say, his compelling need to report at least something insignificant in order to evade the suspicion of dishonesty, adds to the credibility of the information that follows in subsequent paragraphs. Wagner frames art correspondence as a mode of communication that cannot perpetuate a system of news gathering, based on (false) authority. Consistent with his rejection of the frivolous, insincere Paris culture enterprise, Wagner asserts that judging art is a matter of integrity, and not of borrowing facts and opinions from other sources.

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<sup>197</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). VI.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 107-108; see also other examples: "Es wird dies eine aufregende Szene abgeben, und da ich jetzt vorzüglich der Ruhe bedarf, so muß ich mir vornehmen, einer dringenden Einladung zu diesem Konzert (jedenfalls, damit ich es in der 'Abend-Zeitung' gehörig herausstreichen möchte) nicht Folge zu leisten. **Ich überlasse es also Ihren politischen Correspondenten, über dieses Konzert zu berichten**, und behalte mir hier nur noch die Taufe und das Feuerwerk vor." (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* III, p. 95; bold emphasis mine) and a bit later down the page: "**Sie sehen, ich werde politisch; lassen Sie mich daher hier aufhören**, denn ein weiteres Vordringen im Felde der Taufen und Feuerwerke müßte mich endlich auf Abwege führen, aus denen ich mich vielleicht nur erst durch das nächste Konzert im Louvre wieder herausfinden würde;" ( *ibid.*, p. 95; bold emphasis mine). The insistence on his role as art correspondent appears in other forms too: "**Niemand verlangt aber von einem Pariser Korrespondenten Naturberichte; er darf nur von Kunst sprechen**. Da hier nun der Kunsttaumel immer mit eintretendem Herbst beginnt, so war es natürlich, daß ich bei so deutlich ausgesprochenen Witterungszuständen mich seit lange schon auf die Kunstjagd aufmachte; hier aber entdeckte ich von neuem, wie sehr sich die Pariser Kunst von der Natur entfernt" (Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). VIII.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 112; bold emphasis mine).

## Wagner as Composer

In that respect, it is striking to see how hesitant Wagner is to identify himself as a composer and as a musician. True enough, he sometimes makes a reference to his plight as a musician.<sup>198</sup> But, in general, he downplays his musical expertise or outright denies it. This hesitance seems to be at odds with the image that Wagner cultivates as an earnest composer. On closer examination, however, Wagner levels the relation between *Kritiker* and readership by withholding his background as composer. What's more, giving up his authority as an expert by identifying with laymen puts Wagner in an exceptional position to criticise the audiences in Germany:

Leider aber verstehe ich von allen diesen Dingen nichts und kann Ihnen deshalb nur einen Dilettantenbericht geben. Doch halt! auch dessen werden Sie mich überheben; auch Sie in Dresden haben ja vor nicht langer Zeit den Wundermann gehört. Somit brauche ich Ihnen nicht zu sagen, wer und was er ist, - und das ist mir sehr lieb, denn ich wüßte es auch wahrlich nicht zu tun. Ich bekam an diesem Tage so heftige Kopfschmerzen, so peinigende Nervenzuckungen, daß ich früh nach Hause gehen und mich in das Bett legen mußte.<sup>199</sup>

Wagner recurrently downplays his own musical capacities in his correspondences from Paris.<sup>200</sup> The strategy conveniently fits in with the *Bescheidenheitstopos* that Wagner employs on other occasions (cf. supra). All things considered, nevertheless, the *Dilettanten*-rhetoric does not fully add up. In fact, in the above paragraph, Wagner's inability to comment on Liszt's performance does not at all follow from a lack of musical expertise. On the contrary, it results from a direct physical response to the concert – a response that challenges the expectations one has of the profound, stern and sincere German musician Wagner depicts normally speaking (cf. supra). Such a sensualist reaction is easier to relate to for readers. The sudden interjection 'Doch halt!', followed

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<sup>198</sup> e.g. "Greifen wir aber den Dingen nicht vor, die sich in London zutragen sollen; ich muß in Paris bleiben, und hier wird bald leider nichts Wichtiges mehr vorgehen, das für meine Feder taugen könnte. Es kommt der Sommer, und somit die Staatsaktionen und Revolutionen – **ein schlimmes Kapitel, von dem ein deutscher Musiker sich fern halten muß.**" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* III, p. 94; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>199</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* II, p. 82.

<sup>200</sup> e.g. "ist es mir eben möglich geworden, des Meisters neueste Schöpfung zu sehen zu bekommen, noch ehe sie dem Publikum gezeigt wird, und ich ziehe aus diesem glücklichen Umstande den Vorteil, Ihnen sogleich darüber mitzuteilen, **was in meinen Kräften steht.**" (Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). VIII.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 123; bold emphasis mine); "Recht herzlich **wünsche ich Ihnen einen Berichterstatter, dessen Urteil gefaßter und anspruchsfähiger ist, als natürlicherweise das meinige sein kann,** und der Ihnen mit Besonnenheit alle die Herrlichkeiten darzulegen versteht, die dieses Meisterwerk enthält, und über die ich mich nicht anders, als mit der peinigenden Unklarheit eines schlecht geübten Kunstfreundes verbreiten könnte, [...]" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* VIII, p. 125; bold emphasis mine).

by an apostrophe in its most direct form (the nominative ‘Sie’), makes the account even more accessible. Wagner uses the interjection to parallel his concert experience with that of Winkler (*stricto sensu* still the recipient of his letter). In reality, however, Wagner attempts anything but to equate himself with the general audience. Indeed, he suddenly breaks off his account and implies that, while he himself was weary of the concert, Winkler sat the whole thing through. As a consequence, the latter is in a better position to recount the event. Wagner, alternatively, emphasises his negative, physical response to Liszt’s concert. As such, he upturns a dominant discursive mode in contemporary *Musikkritik* that depicts the elated responses of the masses to the concerts of virtuosi (cf. 3.1.2). In an indirect and careful way, Wagner criticises the audience for attending Liszt’s concerts in Dresden; he exposes its members as amateurs.

We should not get carried away by Wagner’s attempts to downplay his background as a musician and composer, and replace it with a persona as correspondent. It is a well-contemplated communication strategy, as we have seen, that simulates a closeness with the readership: the *Kritiker* comes on a par with his layman audience. By relinquishing his musical interests, Wagner furthermore eliminates the suspicion of harbouring ulterior motives. Instead, he can uphold an aura of aesthetic disinterest, a heritage from Kantian philosophy which permeates the discourse of his Parisian *Musikkritik*: real musicians do not seek gain from their profession. But Wagner, the correspondent, is only a façade; it acts as a primary ethos, to wit a discourse through which he can fortify his position as a composer.

During his stay in Paris, Wagner also wrote *Musikkritiken* that did not feature him as a correspondent. Their number is admittedly little, but these texts host a much more marked composer-persona. Once released from his responsibilities as a reporter, Wagner, the musician, comes all the more prominently to the fore. This is certainly the case for his novella instalments in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale* of Maurice Schlesinger: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand’ (November/December 1840)<sup>201</sup>, ‘Un Musicien Etranger à Paris’ (January/February 1841)<sup>202</sup> and ‘Une soirée heureuse;

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<sup>201</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 65, pp. 551-553 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* I]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 65, pp. 551-553 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* II]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite)’]. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 66, pp. 561-563 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* III]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 68, pp. 578-579 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* IV]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite et fin)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 68, pp. 583-585 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* V].

<sup>202</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Un Musicien Etranger à Paris’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 9, pp. 65-68 [= *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris* I]; Richard Wagner: ‘Un Musicien Etranger à Paris (Deuxième article)’. In: *Revue et Gazette*

fantaisie sur la musique pittoresque' (October/November 1841).<sup>203</sup> Although we generally know these stories under their German title (respectively: 'Eine Pilgerfahrt zu Beethoven', 'Ein Ende in Paris' and 'Ein glücklicher Abend'), they originally appeared in French.<sup>204</sup> In result, Wagner did no longer write in the capacity of correspondent, but simply as a German citizen living in Paris. A first remarkable difference, in this regard, is that, in contrast to their German translations, the French titles of these instalments all refer to music, the first two even explicitly introduce a musician-protagonist ('un musicien allemand' and 'Un Musicien Etranger', respectively). As he did in his correspondent-role, Wagner builds in distance to the musician-persona in the novelle as well, this time through the fictional framework: the protagonists are never identified but merely characterised in abstract references, such as 'R.', 'L'Anglais' or more un 'la ville de L.',<sup>205</sup> 'mon ami'<sup>206</sup> etc. The only character referred to by his proper name is Beethoven in the first instalment, thus fixing the time frame of that novella to some 20 odd years earlier. Scholars have been keen to stress that the autofictional or autobiographical content of the novella series reveals the self-advertising function of the texts. As is the case with any form of narrative fiction, it was eventually up to the individual readers, of course, to decide on how they interpreted the breadcrumbs that Wagner leaves to his person. Loyal readers of the *Revue et Gazette Musicale* were certainly familiar with the person of Richard Wagner. He wrote articles for the journal on a regular basis throughout 1840 and 1841,<sup>207</sup> and he was also sometimes reported on during those same years.<sup>208</sup> But

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*Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 11, pp. 83-84 [= *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris II*]; Richard Wagner: 'Un Musicien Etranger à Paris (Troisième et dernier article)'. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 11, pp. 91-94 [= *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris III*].

<sup>203</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Une soirée heureuse; fantaisie sur la musique pittoresque'. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 56, pp. 463-465 [= *Une soirée heureuse I*]; Richard Wagner: 'Une soirée heureuse; fantaisie sur la musique pittoresque (Suite et fin)'. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 58, pp. 487-489 [= *Une soirée heureuse II*].

<sup>204</sup> Egon Voss remarks that Wagner first wrote the texts in German. Afterwards, they were translated in French. (cf. Egon Voss: 'Vorwort der Herausgebers'. In: Richard Wagner: *Schriften eines revolutionären Genies*, ed. by Egon Voss. München/Wien: Langen 1976, p. 17). Given the significance that I attribute to the original publishing context of the *Musikkritiken*, I have decided to quote the articles from the original, French periodical they appeared in.

<sup>205</sup> Wagner: *Une Visite à Beethoven I*, p. 553.

<sup>206</sup> Wagner: *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris I*, p. 66.

<sup>207</sup> In 1840, Wagner also wrote the essays 'De la musique allemande' (pp. 375-378 & 395-398), 'Du métier de virtuose et de l'indépendance des compositeurs. Fantaisie Esthétique d'un musicien' (pp. 495-498) and a review of Rossini's *Stabat Mater* (pp. 492-493). In 1841, 'De l'ouverture' (pp. 15-19, 28-29 & 33-35), 'Caprices esthétiques. Extraits du Journal d'un musicien défunt. Le Musicien et la publicité' (pp. 203-204), 'Le Freischütz à Paris (1841). I. Le Freischütz' (pp. 277-279 & 285-287). The final essay Wagner wrote for *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* was in 1842, 'Halévy et la Reine de Chypre' (pp. 75-78, 100-102, 179-180 & 187-188).

<sup>208</sup> cf. the indexes at the end of each volume of *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*.

whether readers connected the dots between the mysterious R. from “une ville de moyenne importance”<sup>209</sup> in Germany (later specified as “la ville de L.”),<sup>210</sup> and the fact that Wagner himself hailed from Leipzig is highly doubtful. In that respect, the shift from a correspondent role in front of a German audience to the thematically strong prominence of composer-personae in Wagner’s writings for the French press is a far more telling property of Wagner’s handling of his composer background than any biographical resemblance.

If Wagner’s role as correspondent in his *Musikkritik* for a German audience is only a primary ethos, how then does he bring his secondary ethos, to wit that of composer, to the fore? I would like to suggest that Wagner exploits his exclusive power to regulate the critical discourse: Wagner expressly uses his correspondences to secure a position for himself in the field and cut off others from it. In his *Musikkritik*, he creates a virtual environment in which he can discard of his competitors and opponents. *Kritik* indeed inherently possesses this epideictic function (cf. 4.2.1.2), but Wagner brings it explicitly to the fore in his correspondences. Wagner’s inability to break through in the Paris opera scene (and his ensuing frustration) is well documented in secondary literature. The suggestion that Wagner compensates certain difficulties, issues or frustrations in his writings likewise resonates with a central topic in the ‘Wagner-Forschung’. Max Graf made a first psychoanalytic probe of the unresolved tensions and traumas in Wagner’s work.<sup>211</sup> He reads Wagner’s life as “ein Drama, reich an Überraschungen, Katastrophen, an Wechselfällen aller Art; ein Drama, welches stürmisch beginnt, mit Leidenschaften bis zum Rande angefüllt ist, dem es auch nicht an tiefen Abstürzen und Erhebungen fehlt”.<sup>212</sup> This dramatic biography, for its part, became the seed-bed of Wagner’s opera’s: ‘Was aber sind die Bilder des Dramas anderes als Visionen, in denen die inneren Kämpfe, des Dramatikers Gestalt gewinnen. Dem dramatischen Dichter ist das Schauspiel ein Mittel, seine eigenen psychischen Konflikte zur Austragung zu bringen’.<sup>213</sup> In his *Versuch über Wagner* (1964), Theodor Adorno moreover accuses Wagner of terror and destruction.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Wagner: *Une Visite à Beethoven I*, p. 551.

<sup>210</sup> *ibid.*, p. 553.

<sup>211</sup> Graf was a close friend of Freud and attended the latter’s *Psychologische Mittwoch-Gesellschaft*; cf. also *Préambule*, footnote 73.

<sup>212</sup> Max Graf: ‘Richard Wagner und das dramatische Schaffen’. In: *Österreichische Rundschau* 9 (1906), p. 111.

<sup>213</sup> Graf: *Richard Wagner und das dramatische Schaffen*, p. 113.

<sup>214</sup> “Eigenlob und Pomp – Züge der gesamten Wagnerschen Produktion und Existentialien des Faschismus – entspringen der Ahnung von der Unbeständigkeit des bürgerlichen Terrors, von der Todgeweihtheit des Heroismus, der sich selbst proklamiert. [...] Tod und Vernichtung stehen hinter der Wagnerschen Freiheitskulisse bereit [...]” (Theodor W. Adorno: ‘Versuch über Wagner’. In: *Gesammelte Schriften. Band 13: Die Musikalischen Monographien*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1971, p. 13; see also Murray Dineen: *Friendly Reminders. Essays in Musical Criticism After Adorno*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press 2011, p. 102-119).

And more recently, Jens Malte Fischer has equalled Wagner's heinous slander of Meyerbeer in *Das Judentum in der Musik* with an act of anti-Semitic "Vatermord".<sup>215</sup> Still, these interpretations all unearth suppressed emotions that emerged during a post-Parisian period or manifest themselves in musical works. In that respect, it is important to note that Wagner had already developed his strategy of discarding with opponents through *Musikkritik* during his stay in Paris.

Although Wagner does not publicly want to come forward as a composer, he still pushes others from and off the scene using his *Kritik*. In the texts, someone always disappears from Paris and – so Wagner might hope – needs to make way for him. The efforts to textually eliminate or push away his competitors quickly turn into a tried discursive strategy. Most often, they translate into a violent rhetoric, strongly associated with the polemical register (cf. 4.2). The primary targets of these polemics are French musicians and composers that have already made a name for themselves in Paris. The article 'Pariser Amüsemments', in particular, exhibits an eerie efficiency when it comes to dealing with the French competition: Wagner simply eliminates them. He muses about a world without Eugène Scribe, for instance (in those days the most successful and most solicited librettist of Grand Opéra). Wagner attacked Scribe on numerous occasions because the librettist embodied much of Wagner's aversion to Paris.<sup>216</sup> In 'Pariser Amüsemments', Wagner drives his violent rhetoric up a notch. He imagines Scribe's death and envisions how the practice of favouritism will die with him: "Ihr seht und könnt euch ungefähr einen Begriff davon machen, was Scribe ist! Wenn er stirbt, wird mit ihm eine merkwürdige wunderbare Routine sterben, denn kein Anderer wird im Stande sein, da in ihr fortzufahren, wohin er gekommen war".<sup>217</sup> It goes without saying that Wagner's death sentencing enhances the persuasive force of his arguments. These morbid phantasies even take on more extreme forms in 'Pariser Amüsemments'. Wagner continually sketches a bleak outcome for singers, musicians and other colleagues, turning 'Pariser Amüsemments' into quite a macabre reading. Wagner prophesies the impending death of the leading tenors Giovanni Batista Rubini<sup>218</sup> and Gilbert Duprez<sup>219</sup>, and expresses the

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<sup>215</sup> Jens Malte Fischer: *Richard Wagners 'Das Judentum in der Musik'. Eine kritische Dokumentation als Beitrag zur Geschichte des Antisemitismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Insel 2000, p. 79.

<sup>216</sup> cf. Chapter 3, footnote 44.

<sup>217</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Amüsemments*, p. 41.

<sup>218</sup> "Ihr seht, diese Last muß einen armen Sänger, der noch nicht zu jener philosophischen Ruhe des großen Rubini gelangt ist, notwendigerweise derart erdrücken, **daß sich ihm dann und wann die muntere Kehle zuschnürt und ein gräßliches Todesröcheln auspreßt**. Ich sehe schon jetzt den Ärmsten oft nur mit Entsetzen an; die Augen sind ihm bereits weit herausgetreten: er wird sie bald nicht mehr zudrücken können, um das besprochene herrliche Manöver Rubinis zu machen. **Ich sehe, wie gesagt, seinen frühen Tod voraus, welcher wahrscheinlich bald das letzte Amüsemment sein wird, das er den Parisern macht.**" (ibid., p. 36; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>219</sup> "Zunächst unserem Duprez erblicken wir auch eine dem nahen Tode Verfallene." (ibid., p. 36).



same premonitions about the Belgian soprano Julie Dorus-Gras (who had fled from Brussels to Paris after she had sung the role of Elvire in the production of *La Muette de Portici* that started the Belgian Revolution).<sup>220</sup> In addition to the personal benefit Wagner hoped to gain from his violent attacks, these episodes at the same time support his criticism on the commercialised, superficial nature of the Paris opera scene.<sup>221</sup> He saw Scribe, Rubini, Duprez, etc. as exponents of the same system. The victims are all French and other non-German nationals. Intestingly enough, however, Wagner also predicts an early death for the German singer Katharina Heinefetter should she continue her success in Paris and subsequently become another accomplice of the system:

An dem Tage, wo man sie für vollkommen erklären wird, wo man an ihren Gefühlsmomenten, an ihren Ahnungsseufzern, an ihren schmacksamen Koloraturen, an ihren kecken Intonationen nicht das mindeste mehr auszusetzen haben wird, kurz – wenn auch ihr das unbedingte Privilegium des Amüsierens zugeteilt sein wird, dann – wird auch sie dem Tode nahe sein. Gott schütze sie vor dieser banalen Vollkommenheit, die jedem Talente, [...] mit Gewalt aufgedrängt wird!<sup>222</sup>

Presumably, a German reader audience was more conditioned to a polemic against French musicians than it was to an attack on German artists. As Wagner mastered the art of adapting his discourse to his readership (cf. 3.2), this might explain why he still speaks in a more reserved and hypothetical way about Heinefetter's demise.

Let there be no mistake, however: German colleagues were as much of an economic threat to Wagner's chances in Paris as – from his perspective – foreign competitors were. Wagner also attempts to make room for himself apropos his fellow country(wo)men, albeit in a more indirect way. We find most cogent evidence of this, not in 'Pariser Amusements', but once more in the *Pariser Berichte*. Every time the texts bring a German composer or conductor on the Paris scene, their appearance is short-lived; Wagner cautiously sends them on a road out of Paris. A fellow opera composer – and thus direct

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<sup>220</sup> "so muß ich, als in dieser Art von Diagnose Erfahrener, ihr doch nothwendig **das traurige Prognostikon stellen, daß es auch um sie bald getan sein werde**. Jedoch wird sie lange noch ihren Tod zu kaschiren wissen; sie wird längst ihr Testament vollstreckt sehen, ehe die Pariser ihr Hinscheiden gewahr werden." (ibid., p. 37; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>221</sup> Wagner also keeps silent about the success that artist garner, for example in the case of Henri Vieuxtemps: "Und – wenn ich auch noch so ruhig sprechen wollte – so könnte ich doch nicht anders, als ihn noch mehr loben: ich müßte ihn lobpreisen und in den Himmel heben. [...] **deswegen schweige ich über Vieuxtemps**, um so williger, da es überhaupt meiner gar nicht bedarf, denn in neuester Zeit haben hundert französische Federn es ganz unmöglich gemacht, etwas Neues und Erschöpfendes über ihn zu sagen." (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* II, p. 83; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>222</sup> ibid., p. 37.

competitor - on whom Wagner reports, for instance, is Johann Georg Kastner. Wagner relays Kastner's predicament. He recounts how the latter had fallen victim to the favouritism in Paris and how the system had sabotaged him. Still, he also counsels an early exit for Kastner after hearing his opera *La Maschera* (based on a libretto the directors of the *Opéra Comique* forced on Kastner). Wagner acknowledges Kastner's modest merits,<sup>223</sup> but advises him to use them for any terrain but opera: "Mir schien es im übrigen, daß diese Musik dennoch manches Schöne enthielt, nur, glaube ich, müsse Herr Kastner geraten werden, von der dramatischen Musik abzustehen, um sich einem Genre zu widmen, der seinen, mit einer gewissen leidenschaftlosen Unbiegsamkeit ausgebildeten musikalischen Fähigkeiten mehr zusagt".<sup>224</sup>

The former - unpaid - secretary to Beethoven, Anton Schindler, is another victim of Wagner. Schindler regarded himself as the caretaker of Beethoven's musical estate. He prided himself on possessing more than 140 conversation notebooks of Beethoven (booklets he forged for a substantial part to embellish his relation with the composer, it would later turn out).<sup>225</sup> In 1840, Schindler published his Beethoven-biography; three more editions would follow.<sup>226</sup> His work was soon enough met with criticism, however. At a certain moment, indeed, Wagner found himself a privileged bystander to a small controversy. In Paris, Wagner had befriended a curious and impoverished German aristocrat going by the pseudonym of Gottfried Engelbert Anders. Anders had long since been working on a biography of Beethoven of his own and he even asked Wagner write the book together with him in order to counter Schindler's falsified account.<sup>227</sup> Schindler,

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<sup>223</sup> Possibly referring to Kastner's background as a theologian, Wagner describes him as a "geistvoller Theoretiker" who saw an "eine Gelegenheit, sich als dramatischer Komponist zu zeigen". (Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). IV'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 99).

<sup>224</sup> Wagner *Pariser Berichte* IV, p. 100.

<sup>225</sup> cf. Peter Stadlen: 'Schindler's Beethoven Forgeries'. In: *The Musical Times* 118 (1977), pp. 549-552; William S. Newman: 'Yet Another Major Beethoven Forgery by Schindler?'. In: *The Journal of Musicology* 3/4 (1984), pp. 397-422; Theodore Albrecht: 'Anton Schindler as destroyer and forger of Beethoven's conversation books: A case for decriminalization'. In: *Music's intellectual history*, ed. by Zdravko Blažekovic and Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie. RILM Perspectives I. New York: Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale 2009, pp. 169-182.

<sup>226</sup> cf. Anton Schindler *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven. Mit dem Portrait Beethovens und 2 Facsimiles*. Münster: Aschendorff 1840; Anton Schindler: *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven*. Second edition. Münster: Aschendorff 1845; Anton Schindler: *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven*, Third, expanded edition. 2 Volumes. Münster: Aschendorff 1860; Anton Schindler: *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven*, Fourth, inexpensive edition. 2 Volumes. Münster: Aschendorff 1871.

<sup>227</sup> Wagner describes the episode in a letter to Heinrich Laube of March 13th, 1841: "Mein Freund Anders, der Bibliothekar und gelehrteste Musikphilolog und Historiolog von der Welt hatte schon seit lange sich damit beschäftigt, die ausführlichsten und peinlichst genauesten Data über Beethoven und seine Werke zu sammeln; schon besaß er einen reichen Vorrat, als das Schindler'sche Buch erscheint, durch welches der Reichtum an Nachrichten über Beethoven noch unendlich angehäuft worden ist. Allgemein gesteht man zu, daß dies letztere

for his part, accused Anders of inaccuracies in the latter's French translation of the recollections that the Beethoven-pupil Ferdinand Ries and childhood friend Franz Wegeler had compiled in their *Biographische Notizen*. When Schindler visited Paris in 1841, Maurice Schlesinger, the editor of the *Revue et Gazette Musicale*, took the opportunity to summon Schindler and Anders to his offices so they could iron out their differences. Wagner attended this meeting as well. His second *Pariser Bericht* recounts how Schindler acknowledges that his polemic against Anders was unwarranted and that he promised to correct his mistake in the second edition of his Beethoven-autobiography (as far as I have been able to find out, no such public apology followed in either three of the later editions).<sup>228</sup> Wagner's complicated relation with Schindler surely accounts for the irony with which he describes the Beethoven-confidant. Throughout the second *Pariser Bericht*, Wagner ridicules him. He mocks Schindler in his appearance as a missionary of Beethoven and describes him in religious terms.<sup>229</sup> At the same time, we must not lose track of the

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Buch nur Materialien bei weitem aber noch keine wahre Biographie liefert. Anders hat sich nun mir angeboten, mir alle nur möglichen Materialien, an die Hand zu liefern, wenn ich das Buch schreiben wollte, und mit ihm Halbpant machte. Wir sind darin übereingekommen, daß dies eine ausführliche Geschichte Beethoven's werden solle, in der entfernt von aller pedantischen Citations-Gelehrsamkeit das Leben Beethoven's in einer leichten, vielleicht phantasievollen Sprache erzählt werden und zugleich die große musikalische Epoche besprochen und bezeichnet werden solle, wie sie sich nach dem aufeinanderfolgenden Erscheinen der Werke des Meisters entwickelte." (Richard Wagner: 'An Heinrich Laube [13.03.1841]'. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, ed. by Gertrud Strobel and Werner Wolf. Vol. 1. Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik 1967<sup>3</sup>, p. 453-454). Wagner made similar inquiries in letters to August Lewald (cf. Richard Wagner: 'An August Lewald [01.04.1841]'. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 1, p. 470-472) and Theodor Winkler (Richard Wagner: 'An Theodor Winkler [07.05.1841]'. In: *ibid.*, Vol.1, p. 481-486).

<sup>228</sup> For more on Schindler's notebooks, the quarrel with Anders and Wagner's involvement in the episode, see Klaus Kropfänger: *Wagner and Beethoven. Richard Wagner's reception of Beethoven*. Transl. by Peter Palmer. Cambridge: University Press 1991, p 59-60; William Kinderman: 'Introduction: The Challenge of Wagner's Parsifal'. In: *A Companion to Wagner's Parsifal*, ed. by William Kinderman and Katherine R. Syer. Rochester: Camden House 2005, p. 5; Heinrich Probst: *Breitkopf Und Hartel in Paris: the letters of their agent Heinrich Probst between 1833 and 1840*. Translation and commentary by Hans Lenneberg. Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press 1990, p.37; Thomas Grey: *Wagner's musical prose. Texts and contexts*. Cambridge: University Press 1995, p. 54-57.

<sup>229</sup> "[...] denn Er ist nun da, der Mann Beethoven's, wie er leibt und lebt – Schindler, der intime Schindler ist da. Er hat seine Heimat verlassen; – **die Stimme des Herrn trieb ihn zu predigen allen Heiden, denn noch ist kein Licht in der Welt, noch tappen wir im Dunkeln und erkennen die hohe Lehre nicht, die uns der Meister gab! – Ich muß mit Salbung reden, denn der Mann, von dem ich spreche, ist ein salbungsvoller Mann, der überdies eine frappante Ähnlichkeit mit irgend einem Apostel hat, auf dessen Aussehen ich mich nicht sogleich besinnen kann. Er hat ein kühnes Ansehen, milde Mienen und muntere Augen, trägt einen braunen Rock und gewöhnlich Beethoven's Porträt. Schindler ist auf seinen Missionsfahrten zuerst nach Paris gekommen, sicher um seinen Mut und seine Standhaftigkeit dadurch zu bewähren, daß er sich zunächst sogleich in das ärgste Heidennest warf.** In Wahrheit, hier gilt es, die Probe zu halten, denn die gottlosen Pariser wollen ihm durchaus nicht glauben, und was noch mehr ist, sie machen sich über ihn lustig. Könnte er lachen, so würde es vielleicht besser gehen; so aber, da er nicht einmal im Stande ist, über das Allerlächerlichste, über sich selbst, zu lachen, so fürchte ich, wird er an Paris scheitern." (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte II*, p. 84-85; bold emphasis mine).

fact that Schindler meant direct competition to Wagner. Schindler had appropriated a cloak that Wagner wanted to assume for himself, to wit that of the heir to Beethoven's legacy. No wonder the 'Pariser Bericht' expresses Wagner's hope for Schindler's swift departure from the French capital: "Dies Beispiel habe ich angeführt, um zu beweisen, wie groß die Sanftmut des herrlichen Schindler und wie stark die Kraft seiner überraschenden Logik ausgebildet ist. Es jammert mich daher, wenn ich sehe, wie erfolglos er seine eminenten Aufklärungskräfte an den heillosen Parisern vergeudet. Möge ihn sein guter Genius bald von hier hinwegführen! – –",<sup>230</sup>

To summarise, Wagner develops an ingenious way of immunising himself as a *Kritiker*. He maintains his ethos as neutral correspondent and justifies his indignance by verifying it against what happens to (or does not happen for) his fellow countrymen. At the same time, Wagner carefully nudges his competitors off the Parisian scene in order to make place for himself as a composer. The polemics against non-German artists in Paris taps into sentiments shared by many German *Musikkritiker*. But Wagner's texts are all the more notable because he essentially abandons that paradigm. He does retain the often aggressive rhetoric that readers surely recognised from other texts and other authors. Discursively, however, Wagner uses his status as a correspondent to indirectly eliminate direct, i.e. German competitors.

### 2.3.2 A Visionary in Retrospect: *Oper und Drama*

The most well-known piece of Wagnerian literature is probably the essay *Oper und Drama* (1851) that Wagner wrote while in exile in Zürich. In contrast to his reports on the daily affairs in Paris, Wagner places *Oper und Drama* - along with the other so-called 'Zürcher Kunstschriften' *Die Kunst und die Revolution* (1849) and *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (1850) - in the service of the future. At every turn, Wagner attempts to impress on his readers that his theoretical thinking champions revolution and progress. As a true *poeta vates*, he uses the treatise to grant his audience a glance into the music drama of the future and, in its wake, a new Golden Age for the German people.<sup>231</sup> Wagner's argumentation strategy, on

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<sup>230</sup> *ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>231</sup> "Und wahrlich, kein höheres Resultat verlangen wir von ihr für die menschliche Gesellschaft," Wagner cries out in *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, "um auf dieser einen Grundlage das herrlichste, reichste Gebäude der wirklichen schönen Kunst der Zukunft aufzubauen!" (Richard Wagner: 'Die Kunst und die Revolution'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 3, p. 37). And at the end of that pamphlet, he emphatically names Jesus and Apollo as high-priests of the "Altar der Zukunft" (Wagner: *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, p. 41). Already in the second Zürcher Kunstschrift, *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, which sketches society and art after the revolution, Wagner loses his religious fervour. The Hellenic legacy remains the sole benchmark for the 'Artwork of the Future'. Wagner does retain his concern for the civic quality of that Artwork, however. While *Die Kunst und die*

the other hand, exhibits less allegiance to the future: he consistently draws on attainments of others to justify his ambitions. His central preoccupation with the legacy of Ancient Greece and Beethoven adds causality and chronology to his own aspirations. Richard Wagner, then, emerges as the sole possible synthesis of the dialectics between past and future, as a prophet of the new path that music was destined to take.

Wagner's supporters soon embraced this discourse. In public debates, Wagner became synonymous with the aesthetic revolution that advanced a new, modern music. The paradigm had become so powerful and rampant, that Wagner himself was no longer able to control the narrative – or so he claims, at least. In the dedication to the second edition of *Oper und Drama*, Wagner complains that he has unwillingly been made into the standard-bearer of a new musical movement: “Die Überschrift des dritten Teiles: ‘Dichtkunst und Tonkunst im Drama der Zukunft’, ward eine ‘Zukunftsmusik’ entnommen, zur Bezeichnung einer neuesten ‘Richtung’ der Musik, als deren Begründer ich unvorsichtiger Weise zu völliger Weltberühmtheit gebracht worden bin.”<sup>232</sup> In the reissue of *Das Judenthum in der Musik* in 1869, Wagner even laments that his association with the term ‘Zukunftsmusik’ had become so dominant that it eclipsed his views on Jews and Judaism: “Von Nichts als meiner Verachtung aller großen Tonmeister, meiner Feindschaft gegen die Melodie, von meinem gräulichen Komponiren, kurz von ‘Zukunftsmusik’ war nur noch die Rede: von jenem Artikel über ‘das Judenthum in der Musik’ tauchte aber nie wieder das Mindeste auf”.<sup>233</sup> Wagner appears to have been at constant odds with the grunt of public opinion. Rather than venting his apparent reluctance of becoming too affiliated with the term ‘Zukunftsmusik’ and its proponents, he did remarkably little to counter the association. On the contrary, he published a letter he wrote the French translator of his libretti precisely under the title ‘Zukunftsmusik’ – a

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*Revolution* proclaims human society as the fundament of the art of the future, Wagner searches for the ‘Künstler der Zukunft’ in the concluding chapter of *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*. He eventually finds him in ‘das Volk’ in its entirety (cf. Richard Wagner: ‘Die Kunst und die Revolution’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 3, p. 160-177). Still a passive substrate earlier on, the people now become the motor of progress.

<sup>232</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Zur Widmung der zweiten Auflage von *Oper und Drama* an Constantin Frantz’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 8, p. 196. The topos of the future had since long been circulating in music-critical writing. Schumann built his ethos as *Musikkritiker* on it, making it his mission to look out for new talents and prodigies (cf. 2.2). As Martin Gregor-Dellin explains, moreover, Chopin, Liszt and Berlioz had all since long been promoted as musicians of the future. Gregor-Dellin situates the first use of the concept ‘Zukunftsmusik’ in a letter of Louis Spohr (1854) and in a review of concert by Liszt in 1856. Wagner himself, however, blamed Ludwig Bischoff, the editor of the *Niederrheinische Musikzeitung*, for linking up his name with the term. (Martin Gregor-Dellin: *Richard Wagner. Sein Leben - sein Werk - sein Jahrhundert. Anhang*. München: Piper 1980, p. 875-876)

<sup>233</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Zensuren. 5. Aufklärungen über ‘das Judenthum in der Musik’’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 8, p. 244.

decision, Martin Gregor-Dellin notes, that exposed the notion to a prominence it had not enjoyed before, thus stimulating further discussion in the press.<sup>234</sup>

Scholars have all too easily followed Wagner in his efforts to brand himself as a musical prophet. Titles as Barry Millington's recent *The Sorcerer of Bayreuth* (2013) do little to dispose of the shamanic mystique that surrounds Wagner's music and writings.<sup>235</sup> Such accounts of Wagner's 'Zürcher Kunstschriften' tend to stress the sheer innovation of the composer's concepts. Alternatively, they trace his ideas to their obscure origins in early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Romantic aesthetics and wonder at how aptly Wagner turned them into a coherent theoretical model. For Vazsonyi, the goal of *Oper und Drama* is straightforward: to prepare audiences for the *Ring des Nibelungen*.<sup>236</sup> Peter Hofmann essentially makes the same claim: "So provoziert Biographisches nun die Theorie: zunächst (und wiederum faktisch sekundär), um sich von dem in Mendelssohn und Meyerbeer personifizierten Feindbild abzusetzen, primär aber, um die in den Revolutionsschriften skizzierte Ästhetik ebenso systematisch voranzutreiben wie Text und Komposition der Nibelungen".<sup>237</sup>

Still, these interpretations of *Oper und Drama* do overlook one point: When one takes into consideration that the essay was published in 1851, one quickly observes that it would take another 14 years before a new music drama of Wagner was staged. After the world premiere of *Lohengrin* on May 28<sup>th</sup> 1850 (with Liszt conducting), the first new composition of Wagner to find its way to the audience on June 10<sup>th</sup> 1865 was *Tristan and Isolde*. For a considerable amount of time, in fact, Wagner's – self-proclaimed – revolutionary theories could only be measured against compositions that were available then.<sup>238</sup> Nicholas Vazsonyi rightfully observes that Wagner's critical output at that time "served to promote and advertise products often not yet available to the public".<sup>239</sup> Donald Mintz, moreover, indicates that "[t]he musical press was immediately full of discussion of Wagnerian theory [...]. As it happens, however, Wagner had not yet written much to demonstrate the practicality – or even what one might call the sounding

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<sup>234</sup> Gregor-Dellin: *Richard Wagner. Anhang*, p. 876.

<sup>235</sup> cf. Barry Millington: *The sorcerer of Bayreuth. Richard Wagner, his work, and his world*. New York: Oxford University Press 2012.

<sup>236</sup> Vazsonyi argues that other texts Wagner wrote in exile are equally self-serving. He labels the destructive attack on Meyerbeer in *Das Judenthum in der Musik* as "preemptive" (Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner*, p. 95); the article "functions to clear Meyerbeer and his products out of the way so that the resulting void may be filled by none other than Wagner's own artworks of the future, works which were only just being composed". (ibid., p. 95-96). As we have seen, the strategy of eliminating opponents through *Musikkritik* resembles similar patterns that already emerged during Wagner's Parisian period.

<sup>237</sup> Peter Hofmann: *Richard Wagners politische Theologie. Kunst zwischen Revolution und Religion*. Paderborn: München 2003, p. 168.

<sup>238</sup> cf. also Kropfinger: *Wagner and Beethoven*, p. 68-70.

<sup>239</sup> Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner*, p. 88.

expression - of his theories. There seems to have been general agreement that *Tannhäuser* of 1845 was but a step in the right direction. *Lohengrin*, first produced in 1850, was received with more enthusiasm both for itself and for its relation to Wagnerian theory”.<sup>240</sup>

The question to what extent Wagner’s existing work corroborated the premises of *Oper und Drama* was at the heart of public debate. The press eagerly contemplated the practical application of Wagner’s theories and likened them to his available work, most commonly *Lohengrin*. In *Die Wagnerfrage*, one of the first investigations into the Wagner-phenomenon, Joachim Raff even mentions a more prolonged latency between theory and music:

Ganz zufällig geschah es, daß das Publicum die genannten Schriften früher zur Hand bekam, als es die Opern ‘Tannhäuser’ und ‘Lohengrin’ hörte. Die Presse ist dem Producenten stets leichter zugänglich, als es die Bühnen sind. [...] So kam es, daß man die genannten Opern als Verwirklichungen der Grundsätze, welche in den vorerwähnten Schriften dargelegt sind, ansah. Natürliche Folge war, daß man diese Opern ‘Zukunftsobern’, und die Musik derselben insbesondere ‘Zukunftsmusik’ benamsete.<sup>241</sup>

Raff raises a significant issue: *Kritiker* indeed reacted to Wagner’s theories and ideas with remarkable speed. As early as May 1852 (seven months after the publication of *Oper und Drama*), for instance, Julius Schäffer published an essay in the *Berliner Musikzeitung*, called *Über Richard Wagner's Lohengrin mit Bezug auf seine Schrift ‘Oper und Drama’*. Schäffer offers a “Betrachtung der im Lohengrin angewendeten und in dem Werke „*Oper und Drama*“ entwickelten Kunstprincipien”.<sup>242</sup> He concludes that both works are compatible in terms of “die Versmelodie – deren Harmonisierung – die Kundgebung der Gebärde der Erinnerung und der Ahnung”.<sup>243</sup> In a follow-up article later that year, Schäffer underpins his claims with a meticulous and elaborate motif analysis of *Lohengrin*.<sup>244</sup>

But could it not be that these *Kritiker* play into Wagner’s hand? That, indeed, Wagner hoped to gain benefit from a comparison of *Oper und Drama* to his most recent compositions, if only because of the additional attention it would draw to *Lohengrin* or *Tannhäuser*, which at that moment were being performed, the former even for the first

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<sup>240</sup> Donald Mintz: ‘Marxian programmatic music: a stage in Mendelssohn’s musical development’. In: *Mendelssohn Studies*, ed. by Larry Todd. Cambridge: University Press 2006, p. 138.

<sup>241</sup> Joachim Raff: *Die Wagnerfrage. Erster Theil: Wagner’s letzte künstlerische Kundgebung im ‘Lohengrin’*. Braunschweig: Viehweg 1854, p. 5.

<sup>242</sup> Julius Schäffer: ‘Über Richard Wagners Lohengrin mit Bezug auf seine Schrift: ‘Oper und Drama’’. In: *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung* 1852, Nr. 20, p. 154.

<sup>243</sup> Schäffer: *Über Richard Wagners Lohengrin*, p. 171.

<sup>244</sup> cf. Julius Schäffer: ‘Über Richard Wagners Lohengrin mit Bezug auf seine Schrift: ‘Oper und Drama’’. Zweiter Artikel’. In: *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung* 1852, Nr. 25, p. 193-196 & Nr. 26, p. 201-204.

time? Critics wary of Wagner's hidden agenda have already suggested that Wagner went to great lengths to make sure he and his works garnished enough media attention. Vazsonyi hints that Wagner made his essays long-winded and complicated on purpose so that the ensuing misunderstandings spurred on discussions in the press.<sup>245</sup> In that regard, it is telling that Wagner decided to give two of three first-print copies of *Lohengrin* to the staunch Wagner-devotees Theodor Uhlig and Robert Franz – and the third one to Julius Schäffer,<sup>246</sup> whose article he had even only read in part<sup>247</sup>.

Given these indications of Wagner's efforts to manipulate public debate, I will examine how Wagner's ambivalent position between the past and the future surfaces in *Oper und Drama*. Instead of entertaining the compatibility between *Oper und Drama* and Wagner's pre-Zürich compositions, it is my aim to demonstrate that the image Wagner projects as future-oriented *Kritiker* primarily relies on a second role he assumes in the text, that of opera composer whose practical experiences prompt the argument of the essay. Reinforced by narrative and paratextual elements, this second discursive track challenges the otherwise dominant discourse pattern of future in *Oper und Drama*. Rather than perpetuating the progress-driven rhetoric, these aspects stimulate a reading that justifies operatic oeuvre up to then within the context of his aesthetic reforms.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner*, p. 87-88. Likewise, Egon Voss mentions that many contemporaries struggled with Wagner's prose. Voss considers Wagner's verbosity as an intrinsic trait of the texts: "Schließlich ließe sich auch noch argumentieren, daß gerade im Falle Wagners die Längen und die ausufernde Rhetorik zur Sache gehören, die zu vertuschen eine Verfälschung darstellen würde. Wagner schrieb expansiv, wie er ausschweifend redete. So beunruhigend und bestürzend das für die Zeitgenossen oft gewesen sein muß – viele Zeugnisse bestätigen es –, so notwendig ist es, sie zur Kenntnis zu nehmen." (Voss: *Vorwort der Herausgebers*, p. 18).

<sup>246</sup> cf. the following letter of Wagner to Theodor Uhlig, his attache, so to speak, in Germany while he was in exile: "Härtels haben mir Exemplare der Partitur von Lohengrin zugeschickt, von denen ich 3 zum Verschenken übrig behalte: Eines erhältst jedenfalls Du (da Du doch gewiß keines von Härtels bekommen hast) ein zweites denke ich Robert Franz zu verehren, und werde es Dir zum Zwecke der Besorgung an denselben mit zustellen. Wegen des dritten schwanke ich zwischen Bülow und Julius Schäffer: ich weiß nicht, ob sich der erstere soviel daraus macht; dem zweiten möchte ich beweisen, daß mich sein guter Wille und Fleiß gefreut hat." (Richard Wagner: 'An Theodor Uhlig [23.08.1852]'. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 4, p. 454).

<sup>247</sup> cf. An earlier letter from Wagner to Uhlig: "Als ich jetzt die zwei ersten artikel des Julius Schäffer in der N.B.M.Z. über mich las, hatte ich wieder sehr zu bedauern, daß der mann [sic] mein 'Vorwort' noch nicht gelesen hat." (Richard Wagner: 'An Theodor Uhlig [31.05.1852]'. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 4, p. 385).

<sup>248</sup> The necessity for such a double track also becomes evident from the reactions from Wagner-supporters. Raff, for instance, discounts any claim that Wagner's operas realised his theoretical ideas: "Die Wahrheit aber ist, daß die Opern lange vor den Schriften erschienen waren, und mit den in den letzteren dargelegten Theoremen wenig oder Nichts gemein haben" (Raff: *Die Wagnerfrage*, p. 5). Raff, however, immediately realises the predicament he gets Wagner's available compositions in by issuing this statement. In result, he does what he can to remedy the situation: "Was diese Opern an sich betrifft, so machen sie sich allerdings durch die wesentlichen Abweichungen von bisheriger Operndichtung und –Musik bemerklich, und es fehlt ihnen daher nicht an enthusiastischen Verehrern und hartnäckigen Gegnern" (ibid., p. 5).



There is certainly probable cause to entertain this line of reasoning. First of all, *Oper und Drama* is generally - and too readily, perhaps - viewed as an aesthetic prelude to *Der Ring des Nibelungen* on account of the fact that Wagner's early sketches of the *Ring* coincide with much of the work on *Oper und Drama*.<sup>249</sup> True enough, a lot of the elements and themes that Wagner addresses in *Oper und Drama* (among which, mythology or language theory) define the story world as well as the musical identity of the *Ring*-cycle. Still, those correspondences most of the time become apparent in retrospect, i.e. when we hear the finished *Ring des Nibelungen*. When Wagner wrote *Oper und Drama*, on the other hand, the tetralogy was still in a very premature stadium. Given its rocky genesis, there are too many provisions and conditionals to outright accept the fact that Wagner drafted *Opera und Drama* as a promotional stunt for the *Ring des Nibelungen* - or *Tristan und Isolde* and the *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1868), for that matter. *Oper und Drama* surely searches for answers to concrete and actual problems that faced Wagner during the conception of *Siegfried's Tod*, as Robert Bailey emphasises,<sup>250</sup> but it remains unclear to what extent the opposite holds true as well.

In addition, we tend to overlook that *Oper und Drama* also tackles practical issues that confronted Wagner during the creation of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. Klaus Kropfingger stresses that the treatise bears on "das bereits vollendete und nicht nur auf das noch zu vollbringende Werk".<sup>251</sup> While Wagner categorically refrains from mentioning his own opera's throughout the essay, he naturally draws on his own compositional experiences so far. Kropfingger documents several striking correspondences between a letter that Wagner wrote to Liszt, in which the former describes his dissatisfaction with rehearsals of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, and examples Wagner gives to illustrate the concepts of 'Gebärde', 'Ahnung' and 'Erinnerung' in *Oper und Drama*.<sup>252</sup> In result, we must reckon with the fact that, although in an abstract form, a significant part of the pre-1852 oeuvre severely influences and shapes the narrative of the essay.

Should Wagner outright reject his earlier work, finally, this move would not match the general argumentative template he follows in *Oper und Drama*. Wagner builds the essay on the premise of a dialectics between past and future (cf. supra). The impression that his earlier works constitute an anomaly in his oeuvre, i.e. a break from his later, aesthetically

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<sup>249</sup> Klaus Kropfingger: 'Nachwort'. In: Richard Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, ed. and comm. by Klaus Kropfingger. Stuttgart: Reclam 2000, p. 442-443.

<sup>250</sup> cf. Robert Bailey: 'Wagner's Musical Sketches for *Siegfried's Tod*'. In: *Studies in Music History. Essays for Oliver Strunk*, ed. by Harold Powers. Princeton: University Press 1968, pp. 459-94.

<sup>251</sup> Kropfingger: *Nachwort*, p. 442

<sup>252</sup> *ibid.*, p. 444-446.

‘mature’ compositions,<sup>253</sup> would not have been beneficial to the success of that rationale. Furthermore, it would have breached the ethos of consistency that Wagner had cultivated since his time in Paris (cf. supra). If *Oper und Drama* is geared towards Wagner’s future musical output, in other words, Wagner would have needed to skirt the criticism that his oeuvre up to then was inconsistent or out of touch with his own aesthetic beliefs. In that regard, the text is as much an essay on the future of music as it is an attempt to fit Wagner’s earlier, pre-exile compositions in that theoretical framework. Wagner was met with a significant challenge that compelled him to conflate two modes of discourse: not only did he need to come across as a visionary; it was just as vital that he appear as a visionary in retrospect too.

Wagner was very aware of his predicament – and worked to remedy it in the follow-up to *Oper und Drama*:<sup>254</sup> *Drei Operndichtungen nebst einer Mitteilung an meine Freunde* (December 1851). We mainly know the autobiographical essay by the last part of its title (‘eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde’), but the first part is as significant. In fact, the text served as a long drawn-out preface to the libretti of *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. The relation between *Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde* and *Oper und Drama* has yet to be examined in detail, but Wagner leaves no doubt about the connection between both texts. The opening paragraph of the ‘Mitteilung’ is very clear on the subject:

Die Veranlassung zu dieser ausführlichen ‘Mitteilung’ entsprang mir daraus, daß ich die Notwendigkeit fühlte, mich über den scheinbaren oder wirklichen Widerspruch zu erklären, in welchem die dichterische Eigenschaft und künstlerische Gestaltung meiner bisherigen Opern-Dichtungen und der aus ihnen entstandenen musikalischen Kompositionen, mit den Ansichten und Behauptungen stehen, die ich kürzlich ausführlicher niederschrieb und unter dem Titel ‘Oper und Drama’ der Öffentlichkeit vorlegte.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> We might assume that Wagner succeeded in his goal. In contrast to Adorno’s concept of ‘Spätstil’ (cf. Theodor W. Adorno: *Beethoven. Philosophie der Musik. Fragmente und Texte*. Ed. by Rolf Tiedemann. Frankfurt am Main: Stuttgart 2004, esp. p. 180-233; see also Michael Spitzer: *Adorno and Beethoven’s late style*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 2006), we generally tend to categorise Wagner’s music drama on the basis of biographical events or aesthetic beliefs rather than according to their chronology in the composer’s life. Peter Wapnewski, for example, distinguishes between, among others, ‘Die romantische Oper’ (*Der fliegende Holländer*, *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*), ‘Musikdrama’ (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) and ‘Das Bühnenweihfestspiel’ (*Parsifal*) (cf. Peter Wapnewski: ‘Die Oper Richard Wagners als Dichtung’. In: *Richard-Wagner-Handbuch*, ed. by Ulrich Müller and Peter Wapnewski. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner 1986, pp. 223-352).

<sup>254</sup> In a letter to Theodor Uhlig, Wagner significantly calls *Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde* an “Ergänzung von ‘Oper und Drama’” (Richard Wagner: ‘An Theodor Uhlig’. In: *Richard Wagner: Sämtliche Briefe*, Vol. 4, p. 240).

<sup>255</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde (1851)’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 4, p. 230.

Wagner plays an obvious game with the uncertainties and ambivalences surrounding the coherence between his operatic and his theoretical work (he deliberately does not settle the issue, leaving it hanging between 'scheinbar' or 'wirklich'). Still, this quote is probably the most explicit confirmation that Wagner was well aware of the challenge that his aesthetic treatises posed to his existing compositions. In the following, I will show that key aspects of the discursive structure in *Oper and Drama* reflect this realisation, namely the double-role Wagner assumes as *Kritiker* and *Künstler*, the narrative template that adds an experiential dimension to the essay and, finally, the footnotes in which Wagner explicitly addresses the relation between work and theory.

### Wagner as 'Kritiker-Künstler'

All in all, Wagner says very little about himself in *Oper und Drama*. Vazsonyi, for example, claims that Wagner adopts an outsider-perspective in the essay; he withholds his professional ties with the opera enterprise and stays in the background of the text.<sup>256</sup> Like the other Zürcher Kunstschriften, *Oper und Drama* is predominantly written from an inclusive, yet anonymous 'wir'-perspective. The first title of *Oper und Drama* was to be 'Das Wesen der modernen Oper'; Wagner intended to subtitle it 'von einem ehemaligen Opernkomponisten'.<sup>257</sup> But he soon abandoned that plan. Instead, he does include a composer-persona in *Oper und Drama*, one who allies to or conversely counteracts the *Kritiker* throughout the essay.

Wagner assumes an ambivalent position in *Oper und Drama*. On the one hand, he writes from the perspective of a *Musikkritiker* presenting his case and convincing the reader of his arguments. On the other hand, he plays off his persona as opera composer at crucial points in the essay. The preface to *Oper und Drama* grants us an early look at the interplay between these two roles. Wagner readily notifies readers of the aggressive rhetoric they are about to encounter in the text: "Viele, die es selbst gut mit mir meinen, werden es nicht begreifen können, wie ich es vor mir selbst vermochte, eine berühmte Persönlichkeit unserer heutigen Opernkomponistenwelt auf das Schonungsloseste anzugreifen, und dies in der Stellung als Opernkomponist, in der ich selbst mich befinde und den Vorwurf des unbezähmtesten Neides leicht auf mich ziehen müsste".<sup>258</sup> The 'berühmte Persönlichkeit unserer heutigen Opernkomponistenwelt', it is safe to say, alludes to Wagner's bitter attacks on Meyerbeer in the pages to follow. Suppressing Meyerbeer's identity and reducing it instead to the composer's renown and fame serves as a clear teaser, intended to kindle the lust for sensation of the reader. But the position that Wagner himself assumes in this passage is more significant. Wagner pitches himself

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<sup>256</sup> cf. Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner*, p. 99-100.

<sup>257</sup> cf. Kropfinger: *Nachwort*, p. 450.

<sup>258</sup> Richard Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, ed. and comm. by Klaus Kropfinger. Stuttgart: Reclam 2000, p. 7-8.

as a direct competitor and challenger of this famous 'Persönlichkeit'; both find themselves 'in der Stellung als Opernkomponist'. In result, a confrontation between two opera composers forms the very incentive for *Oper und Drama*.

Throughout the pamphlet, the intense polemical rhetoric will do its part to settle the argument in favour of the opera composer writing the text (cf. infra). But Wagner concurrently realises that this rhetorical violence exposes him to the potentially negative judgement of the public, citing the argument of 'Neid' as a conceivable reproach. To avoid and counter those claims, Wagner stages his sharp and biting language as a last resort. His decision is devoid of self-interest; he only made it after due deliberation:

Ich leugne nicht, daß ich lange mit mir gekämpft habe, ehe ich mich zu dem, was ich tat, und wie ich es tat, entschloß. Ich habe alles, was in diesem Angriff enthalten war, jede Wendung des zu Sagenden, jeden Ausdruck, nach der Abfassung ruhig überlesen und genau erwogen, ob ich es so der Öffentlichkeit übergeben sollte, – bis ich mich endlich davon überzeuge, daß ich – bei meiner haarscharf bestimmten Ansicht von der wichtigen Sache, um die es sich handelt – nur feig und unwürdig selbst besorgt sein würde, wenn ich mich über jene glänzendste Erscheinung der modernen Opernkompositionswelt nicht gerade so ausspräche, als ich es tat.<sup>259</sup>

Wagner uses the persona of opera composer as a crucial ally to justify the polemical style of *Oper und Drama*. From a discursive point of view, the role adds authority to his claims and allows him to engage in his confrontation as an equal, not an outsider. At the same time, the deliberate, well-considered nature of the violent attack evacuates Wagner's personal interest; worrying over the adverse effects on his reputation would, of all things, be 'unwürdig selbst besorgt'. Thus, the polemical rhetoric serves the sole advancement of his critical goals. Does his appearance as opera composer validate the contents of his account, in other words, it bears no responsibility for the way they are 'der Öffentlichkeit übergeben'.

Wagner elaborately marks out the double bind between insider and critical outsider in the introduction following the preface. There, he fashions himself more distinctly as a *Kritiker-Künstler*. Wagner again foregrounds his composer-persona, this time to vindicate the genre of *Oper und Drama*. He explicitly advertises the essay as *Musikkritik* – hence its prominence in a dissertation on the subject. We are witness to a significant medial development here. Whereas Wagner's earlier *Musikkritik* as a correspondent appeared in a broad selection of journals, all the *Zürcher Kunstschriften* (and the essay *Die Wibelungen. Weltgeschichte aus der Sage* before that in 1848) appeared in pamphlet-form, that is to say, as stand-alone publications under Wagner's own full name (cf. 4.2.3). *Das Judenthum in der*

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<sup>259</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 8.

*Musik* is the only exception from that period. Wagner published the article in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* under the pseudonym K. Freigedank.<sup>260</sup> *Oper und Drama*, by contrast, was published in Leipzig by J. J. Weber (his first cooperation with the publisher; previous essays had been circulated by Otto Wigand, also housed in Leipzig).

The introduction devotes a substantial part to publicising *Oper und Drama* as *Musikkritik*. Wagner decided on this particular genre because he noticed the disappointment of sincere artists. These artists inveigh against the “Verderbtheit des Geschmacks”<sup>261</sup> and the frivolity of the modern opera. Yet, they quickly came to realise that the shortcomings they so lamented, had already become inherent characteristics of the contemporary opera. Wagner labels this paradox as the ‘Rätsel’ of his time. He claims that *Kritik*, the institution which is responsible for resolving such issues, had so far been unable to solve the riddle. Furthermore, Wagner sees a fundamental difference between the artist and the *Kritiker*. While the sincere artist – in vain – seeks to break away from problems facing the modern opera, the *Kritiker* feels that solving the ‘riddle’ is not in his best interests: “Die Kritik lebt somit vom ‘allmählichen’ Fortschritte, d. h. der ewigen *Unterhaltung* des Irrtumes; sie fühlt, wird der Irrtum gründlich gebrochen, so tritt dann die wahre, nackte Wirklichkeit ein, die Wirklichkeit, an der man sich nur noch erfreuen, über die man aber unmöglich mehr kritisieren kann, [...]”.<sup>262</sup> *Kritik* perpetuates its own uncertainties: it lives from “‘Doch’ und ‘Aber’”<sup>263</sup> and “das feige, unmännliche ‘Jedoch’”<sup>264</sup> to secure the necessity of its presence. “Und doch”, Wagner claims (unaware, perhaps, that he has just sinned against his own criticism), “haben wir jetzt alle Hand die Kritik zu legen; denn durch sie allein kann der, durch die Erscheinungen enthüllte, Irrtum einer Kunstrichtung uns zum Bewußtsein kommen; nur aber durch das Wissen von einem Irrtume werden wir seiner ledig”.<sup>265</sup> Whereas the *Künstler*-persona certifies the claims Wagner makes in *Oper und Drama* and (based on his proper experience) emphasises their necessity, *Kritik* emerges as the only way to organise these findings in a logical argument – it brings them ‘zum Bewusstsein’, a central element of the narrative underpinning *Oper und Drama* (cf. *infra*). As such, the main, though perhaps low-key opera-composer that Wagner introduces in the preface assumes a much more outspoken double-role as *Kritiker* and *Künstler* in the introduction. Indeed, the only way out of this ‘Irrtum’, according to Wagner, is for the artist to become a *Kritiker* himself.: “Hatten die Künstler unbewußt

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<sup>260</sup> cf. Richard Wagner (K. Freigedank): ‘Das Judenthum in der Musik’. In. *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1850, Vol. 2., Nr. 19, pp. 101-107.

<sup>261</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 13.

<sup>262</sup> *ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>263</sup> *ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>264</sup> *ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>265</sup> *ibid.*, p. 15.

diesen Irrtum genährt und endlich bis zur Höhe seiner ferneren Unmöglichkeit gesteigert, so müssen sie, um ihn vollkommen zu überwinden, eine letzte männliche Anstrengung machen, selbst Kritik zu üben”.<sup>266</sup>

Throughout the main three chapters that make up *Oper und Drama*, Wagner brings the interplay between *Kritiker* and *Künstler* less to the fore. This development was perhaps to be expected. While the preface and the introduction state the ambitions and purpose of the essay, the remaining chapters deliver the argument itself. Furthermore, the discursive function of the introductory paratexts was to legitimise Wagner and his essay in the eyes of the reader. The ‘wir’-perspective that dominates the main argumentative body, on the other hand, does not tolerate a similar fragmentation of the critical voice. But near the end of the essay, having almost realised his goals, Wagner eventually does step out of his double role:

Wer mich hiergegen so verstanden hat, als wäre es mir darum zu tun gewesen, ein willkürlich erdachtes System aufzustellen, nach dem fortan Musiker und Dichter arbeiten sollten, der hat mich nicht verstehen wollen. - Wer ferner aber glauben will, das Neue, was ich etwa sagte, beruhe auf absoluter Annahme und sei nicht identisch mit der Erfahrung und der Natur des entwickelten Gegenstandes, der wird mich nicht verstehen können, auch wenn er es wollte. - Das Neue, das ich etwa sagte, ist nichts Anderes als das mir bewußt gewordene Unbewußte in der Natur der Sache, das mir als denkendem Künstler bewußt ward, da ich Das nach seinem Zusammenhange erfaßte, was von Künstlern bisher nur getrennt gefaßt worden ist. Ich habe somit nichts Neues *erfunden*, sondern nur jenen Zusammenhang *gefunden*.<sup>267</sup>

The voice of the *Kritiker* effaces to the benefit of the composer-persona. Wagner denies that there is any system to his proposals. Instead, he emphasises that his findings spring from a process of self-realisation rather than from analytic study. Wagner is not the outsider theoretician who imposes his views on ‘Musiker und Dichter’; instead, he identifies as an artist himself (albeit, he would have us believe, for the first time in history as a ‘thinking’ one), who works from his own experience and feeling.<sup>268</sup> Forfeiting the role

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<sup>266</sup> *ibid.*, p. 15. Gendering the object of his scrutiny is a tried tactic in Wagner’s oeuvre. The idea of a manly Beethoven had been a fixed topos in Musikkritik (Schumann would even posit a feminine Schubert against him; cf. *Préambule*). In *Oper und Drama*, Wagner metaphorises music into ‘ein Weib’ (cf. Grey: *Wagner’s musical prose*, p. 130-138) and compares the musical cultures of different nations to voluptuous, seductive women (Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner*, p. 97). In that regard, the transformation from an unmanly *Kritik* into a manly *Kritik* in the hands of the artist is new nor surprising.

<sup>267</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 365.

<sup>268</sup> Vazsonyi rightfully remarks that ‘das Neue’ that Wagner constantly advertises in *Oper und Drama*, the ‘riddle’ he sets out to solve, concerns more than just the artwork: “The concept extends beyond the work itself, to

of reasoning outsider (in the preface still a foil to immunise himself from criticism), eventually confirms Wagner's own merit in and contribution to solving the 'Rätsel' and finding the 'Zusammenhang'.

Neither the preface or the introduction mention specific works of Wagner. In and by itself, they hardly act as attractive signposts to Wagner's available compositions. In the entirety of *Oper und Drama*, however, these parts first and foremost establish Wagner as an opera composer. It is telling that he does so from the very beginning on: the voice of the *Künstler* provides the essay with authenticity and a concrete objective. The role of the *Kritiker*, then, neutralises Wagner's self-interest and involves the essay in a less self-serving cause, to wit as a method of solving the 'Irrtum'. Wagner mainly established an ethos of credibility (*Künstler*) and sincerity (*Kritiker*) in the preface and introduction. The persona of opera composer that accompanies the *Kritiker* in his duties is of crucial importance and, in fact, remains the primary protagonist by the end of *Oper und Drama*. Readers, he seems to want to make sure, need ultimately only remember his particular contributions. Wagner secures this effect in an additional and more elaborate way using a narrative template that attaches an experiential dimension to his account.

### The experiential dimension

The interplay that Wagner stages between his roles as *Kritiker* on the one hand, and as composer on the other hand does more than authenticate his theoretical propositions. It also adds linearity and purpose to his arguments. Wagner claims to write from experience, but, what's more, he also stages his findings as the result of an aesthetic thinking process he went through. *Oper und Drama* basically reproduces Wagner's search for a solution to problems he was once faced with. Wagner affirms his account by means of a minimal, yet fundamental narrative template. The template remains in a preliminary stage throughout *Oper und Drama*, but would later be upgraded to the main lead-off of *Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde* (cf. supra). In *Oper und Drama*, the narrative impulse mainly brings Wagner into a position from which he can argue that he has already moved beyond the problems he addresses in the essay.

The narrative foundation on which *Oper und Drama* grounds, ties in strongly with Wagner's identity as a *Künstler*. As such, it already features prominently in the introductory sections of the pamphlet. The preface, for example, once more comes to discuss "jener künstlerischen Persönlichkeit"<sup>269</sup> Wagner had already announced to attack somewhat earlier. He claims that he will only scrutinise its public appearance and leave

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encompass an experience (a 'sensation') over which Wagner exerts total control. Wagner's 'batteries' also power an explanatory narrative which contributes to the unique features of his 'brand.'" (Vazsonyi: *Richard Wagner*, p. 101).

<sup>269</sup> Richard Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 9.

out any ‘personal’ relations (with which he means the backroom favoritism in Paris) - “Beziehungen”, Wagner is quick to add, “[...] in denen auch ich einst mit ihr mich berührte, die von der künstlerischen Öffentlichkeit aber so vollkommen abgewandt liegen, daß sie nicht vor diese zu ziehen sind, – selbst wenn es mich fast dazu drängte, zu gestehen, wie auch ich mich einst irrte, – ein Geständnis, das ich gern und unumwunden leiste, sobald ich mich meines Irrtums bewußt geworden bin”.<sup>270</sup> Wagner subsequently recounts the consequences of his refusal to step into a dishonest system. He readily victimises himself. Wagner claims that his reluctance to conform to the demands of the political and artistic regime has made him into an exile. *Oper und Drama*, then, - and this is crucial - reports on the revolutionary roads he has since taken:

Konnte ich mich nun hierbei vor meinem Gewissen rechtfertigen, so hatte ich die Einwürfe der Klugheit um so weniger zu beachten, als ich mir vollkommen darüber klar sein muß, daß ich von da an, wo ich in meinen künstlerischen Arbeiten die Richtung einschlug, die ich mit dem vorliegenden Buche als Schriftsteller vertrete, vor unseren öffentlichen Kunstzuständen in die Ächtung verfiel, in der ich mich heute politisch und künstlerisch zugleich befinde, und aus der ich ganz gewiß nicht als einzelner erlöst werden kann.<sup>271</sup>

In the preface, a narrative unfolds which documents Wagner’s journey from an ally of an ‘Irrthum’ to the individual solving it. As such, *Oper und Drama* emerges as an alternative way of chronicling Wagner’s development as a composer – a development which, so he stresses, has been well underway in his “künstlerisch[e] Arbeiten”.<sup>272</sup>

The discursive element that most distinctly moulds the narrative direction Wagner gives to his essay, is the development from ‘unbewusst’ to ‘bewusst’ he time and again cites. In itself, this pre-Freudian journey Wagner undertakes through his own consciousness is already remarkable, for much of the music-critical discourse at the time fell back on more abstract metaphors to convey the process of gaining knowledge and coming to an understanding of things.<sup>273</sup> I have already indicated the central position of this discursive figure in my analyses of the preface, introduction and passages near the end of the essay. The step from ‘unbewusst’ to ‘bewusst’ also acts as an important argument in other parts of *Oper und Drama*. Wagner uses the concept pair for main

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<sup>270</sup> *ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>271</sup> *ibid.*, p. 9-10.

<sup>272</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>273</sup> Music-critical discourse in the 19th century most notably used the metaphor of depth to describe emotions, to indicate sincerity or to boast theoretical knowledge, cf. the insightful study Holly Watkins wrote about *Metaphors of depth in German musical thought: from E. T. A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg*. Cambridge: University Press 2011.



definitions,<sup>274</sup> to characterise the supreme innovation of Beethovens Ninth Symphony,<sup>275</sup> as a central strategy to undermine the state<sup>276</sup> and so on. In addition, the move from ‘unbewusst’ to ‘bewusst’ has the specific discursive function of adding an experiential quality to Wagner’s account. The process of gaining insight which is at the heart of *Oper und Drama*, imparts both causality and finality to the text. The essay essentially renders the solution that Wagner had already puzzled together in his artworks, in retrospect. The development from ‘unbewusst’ to ‘bewusst’ (the key to many of the problems Wagner cites) thus adds a personal motivation to *Oper und Drama*. The *Künstler*-persona, moreover, shares that very property and reinforces the experiential dimension that the narrative template opens up. While the link between work and theory is fundamental to, albeit still rather implicit in the narrative template, the footnotes of *Oper und Drama* foreground that relation more clearly.

## Footnotes

Readers encounter Wagner in different capacities and with changing prominence. In the main part of *Oper und Drama*, the ‘wir’-perspective pushes his presence to the background. When he does switch to the first person, he often does so in his tenure as *Kritiker* to

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<sup>274</sup> “Wollen wir nun das Werk des Dichters [...] genau bezeichnen, so müssen wir es *den aus dem klarsten menschlichen Bewußtsein gerechtfertigten, der Anschauung des immer gegenwärtigen Lebens entsprechend neu erfundenen und im Drama zur verständlichsten Darstellung gebrachten Mythos nennen*” (ibid., p. 227; bold emphasis mine); “Und doch! Sollen wir aufhören Künstler zu sein? [...] Wäre es aber kein Vorteil, nicht nur Künstler, sondern auch *Mann* zu sein, und sollte *eine künstliche Unwissenheit*, ein weibisches von uns Abweisen der Erkenntnis uns *mehr Vorteil bringen als ein kräftiges Bewußtsein*, das uns, wenn wir alle Selbstsucht beiseite setzen, Heiterkeit, Hoffnung und vor allem Mut zu Taten gibt, die uns erfreuen müssen, wenn sie auch noch so wenig von äußerem Erfolge gekrönt sind?” (ibid., p. 387; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>275</sup> “Welch ernstes, tiefes und sehnsüchtiges Sinnen entdeckte dem unendlich reichen Musiker endlich erst die schlichte Melodie, mit der er in die Worte des Dichters ausbrach: »Freude, schöner Götterfunken!« Mit dieser Melodie ist uns aber auch das Geheimnis der Musik gelöst: wir *wissen* nun, und *haben die Fähigkeit gewonnen, mit Bewußtsein organisch schaffende Künstler zu sein.*” (ibid., p. 113-114; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>276</sup> “*Das Unbewußte der menschlichen Natur in der Gesellschaft zum Bewußtsein bringen, und in diesem Bewußtsein nichts anderes zu wissen als eben die allen Gliedern der Gesellschaft gemeinsame Notwendigkeit der freien Selbstbestimmung des Individuums*, heißt aber soviel als - *den Staat vernichten*; denn der Staat schritt durch die Gesellschaft zur Verneinung der freien Selbstbestimmung des Individuums vor von ihrem Tode lebte er.” (ibid., p. 202; bold emphasis mine. cf. also the greater part of *Oper und Drama*, Part 2, section IV for Wagner’s reflections on the ‘Staat’ and ‘(Un)Bewußtsein’).

explicate his *modus operandi*<sup>277</sup> or propel his argument into a particular direction<sup>278</sup>. References to his composer-persona occur as well, as we have seen. First of all, in the preface and the introduction. But most of them fall outside of the full text, to is to say, in the footnotes of the essay.

In keeping with their physical position in the type page, the footnotes of *Oper und Drama* are a body of text that have so far remained in the periphery of academic literature. They amount to thirty-six in total and discuss a broad range of topics: Wagner writes about the relation between aria's and recitatives,<sup>279</sup> he dwells on Liszt<sup>280</sup> and even gives his take on horses.<sup>281</sup> In the truly technical parts of the essay (e.g. on etymology or declamation), moreover, Wagner uses footnotes to illustrate the point he makes.<sup>282</sup> Therefore, they have generally gone by as unobtrusive, but also insignificant paratexts.

The footnotes nonetheless make up an important communication strategy in *Oper und Drama*. More specifically, they document how Wagner positions himself vis-à-vis other composers, in relation to his own ideas and apropos the (reader) audience. Counteracting the dominant 'wir'-perspective in the full text of the essay, more than a third of the footnotes (fourteen to be precise) feature a prominent 'ich'. Wagner first experimented with footnotes in *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*. He used them to clarify standpoints<sup>283</sup> or to digress about topics like the "Theatergebäude der Zukunft"<sup>284</sup> and the emancipation of women.<sup>285</sup> But he also discovers their reflexive potential. Well into the half of *Das*

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<sup>277</sup> "**Ich habe mir nicht vorgenommen**, eine Kritik der Meyerbeerschen Opern zu geben, sondern an ihnen nur das Wesen der modernsten Oper, in ihrem Zusammenhange mit dem ganzen Genre überhaupt, darzustellen. War ich durch die Natur des Gegenstandes gezwungen, **meiner Darstellung oft den Charakter einer historischen zu geben**, so **durfte ich mich dennoch nicht verleitet fühlen**, dem eigentlichen historischen Detaillieren mich hinzugeben" (ibid., p. 106; bold emphasis mine), "**Ich habe nicht im Sinne**, hier die Darlegung des Wesens der Oper als im Einklange mit unsrer politischen Entwicklung [sic] stehend zu geben; [...]. **Es liegt mir vielmehr daran**, das Unnatürliche und Widerspruchsvolle dieses Kunstgenres, sowie seine offenkundige Unfähigkeit, die in ihm vorgegebene Absicht wirklich zu erreichen, **einzig aus seinem Wesen selbst zur Erklärung zu bringen**" (ibid., p. 52-53; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>278</sup> cf. interjections such as "wie ich mich zuvor bereits ausdrückte" (ibid., p. 184), but also more elaborate statements as "Da ich mir vorbehalten muß, zum Zweck der Darlegung der möglichen Einwirkung des Stabreimes auf unsere Musik, zu diesem Gegenstande selbst näher zurückzukehren, begnüge ich mich jetzt nur [...]" (ibid., p. 234-235) or "Ich habe nicht nötig, dies Gleichnis näher zu deuten, um mich über das Verhältnis in der Berührung der Worttonmelodie der menschlichen Stimme mit dem Orchester verständlich zu machen." (ibid., p. 328).

<sup>279</sup> cf. ibid., p. 116.

<sup>280</sup> cf. ibid., p. 132.

<sup>281</sup> cf. ibid., p. 227.

<sup>282</sup> e.g. ibid., p. 234, 282 & 284.

<sup>283</sup> Wagner: *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, p. 44 & 94.

<sup>284</sup> cf. ibid., p. 151

<sup>285</sup> cf. ibid., p. 135.

*Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, as a matter of fact, Wagner adds a comment about the essay itself. More so than for its precise content (Wagner basically acknowledges that his scope has so far been limited to music and its relation to other art forms),<sup>286</sup> the footnote is significant because Wagner puts forward the necessity for “nicht eines Buches, sondern vieler Bücher”<sup>287</sup> in order to examine the “Zusammenhan[g] unserer modernen Musik mit der Öffentlichkeit”.<sup>288</sup> It is unclear to what extent Wagner had already contemplated the need for *Oper und Drama* while he was writing *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*. Any inclination in that direction would have presumably been in an early stage. But Wagner’s comment shows that he sees the function of footnotes as more than just clarifying; they also act as a means to reflect on the nature of a text itself.

The clarifying function of the footnote remains unchanged in *Oper und Drama*. In one of its first footnotes, Wagner emphasises the continuity and cohesion of the essay with his earlier theoretical prose: “Schon in meinem ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’ verglich ich Beethoven mit Columbus: ich muß diesen Vergleich hier nochmals aufnehmen, weil in ihm noch eine wichtige, früher von mir nicht berührte Ähnlichkeit enthalten ist”.<sup>289</sup> More than anything, the footnotes in *Oper und Drama* provide Wagner with an ideal opportunity to define the position of his persona as composer within the line of reasoning that he develops and expounds as *Musikkritiker*. Whereas the polemical rhetoric does much to (re)engage the reader (cf. 4.2) in the text, the ‘wir’-perspective all in all leaves little room for personal reflection. As such, the footnotes constitute an important platform from which Wagner asserts his own views and distinguishes his image as composer from his competitors<sup>290</sup>. Especially near the end of *Oper und Drama* - indeed a strategic place in

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<sup>286</sup> The full passage reads: “So weit ich mich auch, im Verhältnis zu den anderen Kunstarten, über das Wesen der Musik hier verbreitet habe [...], so bin ich mir dennoch der mannigfachen Lückenhaftigkeit meiner Darstellung wohl bewußt; es bedürfte aber nicht eines Buches, sondern vieler Bücher, um das Unsittliche, Weichliche und Niederträchtige in den Bänden des Zusammenhanges unserer modernen Musik mit der Öffentlichkeit erschöpfend darzulegen” (ibid., p. 101-102).

<sup>287</sup> ibid., p. 102.

<sup>288</sup> ibid., p. 102.

<sup>289</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 74.

<sup>290</sup> Take the following description he gives of ‘German Opera’: “**Unter ‘deutscher’ Oper verstehe ich hier natürlich nicht die Weber’sche Oper, sondern diejenige moderne Erscheinung, von der man um so mehr spricht, je weniger sie in Wahrheit eigentlich vorhanden ist [...].** Das Besondere dieser Oper besteht darin, daß sie ein **Gedachtes und Gemachtes derjenigen modernen deutschen Komponisten** ist, die nicht dazu kommen, französische oder italienische Operntexte zu komponieren, was sie einzig verhindert, italienische oder französische Opern zu schreiben, und ihnen zum nachträglichen Troste die stolze Einbildung erweckt, etwas ganz Besonderes, Auserwähltes zu Stande bringen zu können, da sie doch *viel mehr Musik verstünden*, als die Italiener und Franzosen.“ (ibid., p. 120-121; bold emphasis mine). Wagner fashions himself in two distinct ways in this footnote. First of all, he distances himself from the Weberian legacy – not an insignificant move, given his staunch defence of *Der Freischütz* during his stay in Paris (cf. 3.2.2). As a correspondent, Wagner regularly used the operas of Weber in his critique on the French opera scene in the 1840s; Weber embodied German

terms of driving home one's point - Wagner most often inserts such references to himself. The last four footnotes all feature a prominent I. The most striking comment explicitly elaborates on Wagner's relation between his theoretical proposals and his compositions - I quote the footnote in its entirety exactly because of its significance:

Ich muß hier ausdrücklich meiner selbst Erwähnung tun, und zwar lediglich aus dem Grunde, den in meinem Leser etwa entstandenen Verdacht von mir abzuweisen, als ob ich mit der hier geschehenen Darstellung des vollendeten Dramas gleichsam einen Versuch zur Verständlichung meiner eigenen künstlerischen Arbeiten in dem Sinne unternommen hätte, daß ich die von mir gestellten Anforderungen in meinen Opern erfüllt, als dies gemeinte Drama selbst schon zu Stande gebracht hätte. Niemand kann es gegenwärtiger sein als mir, daß die Verwirklichung des von mir gemeinten Dramas von Bedingungen abhängt, die nicht in dem Willen, ja selbst nicht in der Fähigkeit des einzelnen, sei diese auch unendlich größer als die meinige, sondern nur in einem gemeinsamen Zustande und in einem durch ihn ermöglichten gemeinschaftlichen Zusammenwirken liegen, von denen jetzt gerade nur das volle Gegenteil vorhanden ist. Dennoch gestehe ich, daß meine künstlerischen Arbeiten wenigstens für mich von großer Wichtigkeit waren, denn sie müssen mir leider, so weit ich um mich sehe, als die einzigen Zeugnisse eines Strebens gelten, aus dessen Erfolgen, so gering sie sind, einzig das zu erlernen war, was ich - aus Unbewußtsein zum Bewußtsein gelangend - erlernte und - hoffentlich zum Heile der Kunst - jetzt mit voller Überzeugung aussprechen kann. Nicht auf meine Leistungen, sondern auf das, was mir aus ihnen so zum Bewußtsein gekommen ist, daß ich es als Überzeugung aussprechen kann, bin ich stolz.<sup>291</sup>

Wagner is as ambivalent in this footnote as he would later be in the opening paragraph of *Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde* (cf. supra). On the one hand, he claims that the societal conditions which would enable the drama he sketches out, have yet to be met. On the other hand, he confesses that his journey from 'Unbewußtsein zum Bewußtsein' (cf. infra) coincides with the creation of many of his 'künstlerisch[e] Arbeiten' so far. Wagner

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musical values. Wagner abuses Weber's legacy in a similar fashion in *Oper und Drama*. The only difference in *Oper und Drama* is that he does not champion, but, in contrast, sacrifices Weber to advance his own cause. With his usual flair of resentment, Wagner uses Weber as a foil to pit his notion of a German opera more successfully against the Italian and French competitors he would bitterly attack throughout *Oper und Drama*. German opera is modern, though not readily available to the general public, apart from the works by those composers that have opposed French and Italian musical styles - a feat on which he built his reputation as a *Musikkritiker* in Paris (do note the linkup between the the experiential and visionary strains of discourse). True enough, these remarks remain liable to conjecture: readers who were not familiar with Wagner's earlier critical prose, would still have read the footnote as a disavowal of Weberian, French and Italian opera, but would not have been able to grasp the implications it carries regarding Wagner's own changing relation vis-à-vis Weber.

<sup>291</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 371.

emphasises, in other words, that his current operas did act as a medium for his theoretical observations. In addition to the mixed message it conveys, the footnote profusely draws attention to Wagner, using a plethora of personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns. In every sentence, Wagner refers to himself using any of these deictic markers (in itself, not entirely a difficult feat, given the length of the sentences). Furthermore, he acts as the subject of eight (subordinate) clauses. A more detailed analysis reveals how closely the deictic structure of the footnote supports the message it wants to drive home. When Wagner argues that his operas cannot yet possibly be manifestations of the drama of the future, he does at no moment appear as a subject of a (subordinate) clause. The sentence likewise features but one possessive (*meinige*) and two personal (*mir*) pronouns, all located in its first half of the clause, moreover. We encounter an entirely opposite situation in the sentence directly following this concession (both sentences are, coincidentally, as long, namely 64 words). As Wagner intimates that his compositions, in essence, do correspond to his theories, he appears two times as the subject of the clause and is referred to by one possessive and three personal pronouns. This sudden rise in deictic presence reveals how strategically Wagner brings his identity as a composer to the fore when his own compositions are concerned.

While Wagner comments on the relation between his theory and his musical oeuvre in this annotation, the final footnote of *Oper und Drama* attempts to play into the reader's reception of the essay. Wagner clarifies what he surmises under 'das Publikum'. He rejects those listeners who take their cue from an abstract ideal. Instead, he confesses to favour audience members "die in ihrer Teilnahme daher nie auf die Verwendung der Kunstmittel, sondern einzig auf den durch sie verwirklichten Gegenstand der Kunst, das Drama, als vorgeführte allverständliche Handlung, gelenkt werden sollen".<sup>292</sup> It is remarkable, if not suspect that a *Kritiker* who has just detailed his aesthetic testament during the previous 300+ pages claims that the audience "ohne alle Kunstverstandesanstrengung genießen soll".<sup>293</sup> It essentially puts all his theoretical claims, and thus the *Kritiker* himself, out of play. These comments, on the other hand, could be expected from a writer who has since the beginning of the pamphlet tried to push through his identity as a *Künstler*. This *Künstler* has been confronted with the problems *Oper und Drama* outlines in his own opera compositions and strikes an ambivalent middle-ground between theory and work. Such a writer would surely benefit from readers who, when all fails, put away their theoretical reasoning and just listen to the music. Nothing less, but certainly nothing more.

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<sup>292</sup> *ibid.*, p. 385.

<sup>293</sup> *ibid.*, p. 385.

### 2.3.3 Conclusion

Wagner manages a conflicting appearance in *Oper und Drama*. He consistently blends two discursive modes that now complement, then challenge each other. On the one hand, he promotes himself as a *Kritiker* who designs the essay as a theoretical investigation into the future of opera and music. Against that visionary discourse of progress, he posits the *Künstler* or opera composer, a discursive mode that promotes the essay as the end product of an inquiry that grew from personally motivated aesthetic doubts and struggles. Wagner brings these two discursive tracks and the respective roles in which they materialise together to justify the causes for and the claims in *Oper und Drama*. The *Kritiker* neutralises charges of self-interest and directs the gaze of the pamphlet to the future. The *Künstler*-persona, for its part, authorises Wagner's account: in documenting his development as a composer; it adds an experiential dimension to his arguments.

Wagner makes no conclusive remarks about his compositions which lead us to infer that he most definitely saw *Oper und Drama* as an opportunity to align his operas with the theories he traces out in the essay. I never expected to find such results, nor was it my intention to unearth them. I did show, however, that key aspects of the discursive structure in *Oper und Drama* draw on Wagner's already realised attainments to license the theoretical, future-oriented premises it advances. The intrinsically experiential background of *Oper und Drama* (by virtue of the narrative template driving Wagner's assertions) most clearly assumes this function. Furthermore, the interaction between the *Kritiker*- and *Künstler*-persona that Wagner projects into the text, equally contributes to establishing the continuity between work and theory by justifying the style and genre of the pamphlet. In result, the dominant perception that *Oper und Drama* champions progress and future, must be subjected to a long overdue nuance: Wagner, indeed, does not only profess to predict the future of music. In and by itself, the discursive organisation of the essay also puts his musical discoveries to words. Wagner writes as a visionary, but in retrospect.

The in the full text often understated tokens of the apologetic look-back Wagner includes in *Oper und Drama*, make it difficult to assess to what extent readers were sensitive to this double discursive track. Some, like Julius Schäffer, apparently picked it up and painstakingly compared the theoretical concepts to operas that Wagner had already actually realised (cf. supra). Others finished *Oper und Drama* under the impression that they had just read a guidebook for his future compositions. Eduard Devrient, for instance, entered the following reaction to the text in his diary: "Richard Wagners *Oper und Drama* mit Anstrengung zu Ende gebracht. [...] Am deutlichsten tritt zuletzt doch das Bestreben heraus, auf seine nächste Oper aumerksam zu machen [...]"<sup>294</sup> These various

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<sup>294</sup> Quoted from Kropfinger: *Nachwort*, p. 499.

reactions to *Oper und Drama* ultimately teach us less about the reception of the essay than they do about the mixed message Wagner does succeed in sending out with the double discursive modes.

In the end, the question remains how Wagner shapes himself as a *Musikkritiker*, not only as a composer. Wagner explicitly advertises *Oper und Drama* as *Musikkritik* out of pragmatics motives. The reception of the essay has generally affirmed the document's status as a theoretical treatise. Today still, *Oper und Drama* is predominantly read as a visionary pamphlet on the future of music. The interaction between *Künstler* and *Kritiker* occupies a central discursive strategy in the text, as I have suggested, and nuances that account. As far as the specific role of the *Musikkritiker* is concerned, it is interesting to see that Wagner's persona of the ruminating *Musikkritiker* runs parallel with the emergence of the 'music intellectual', as Donald Mintz points out. By mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, leading figures in the music-critical scene were no longer virtuoso musicians or composers,<sup>295</sup> but musical amateurs at best. Neither Franz Brendel nor Eduard Hanslick, for instance, aspired careers as composers or performers. On the contrary, they were educated academics who rose to the upper echelons of musical debate and were solely occupied with matters of music-aesthetic theory. Brendel regularly taught courses on music history at the Leipzig Conservatory and Hanslick was a professor of music aesthetics in Vienna – to my knowledge, the first *Musikkritiker* in the German-speaking territory to combine both professions.<sup>296</sup> It is surely not unthinkable, in that respect, that Wagner –

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<sup>295</sup> Janina Klassen typologises the early to mid-19th century musician as a self-conscious, publicly omnipresent figure: "Mit Clara Wieck, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Frédéric Chopin, Franz Liszt und Robert Schumann traten in den 1830er Jahren junge Künstler neuen Typs auf, die die Zeichen einer anbrechenden 'poetischen' Zeit (Schumann) selbstbewusst definierten und mit profunder Professionalität nicht mehr nur ihre stupende Virtuosität vermarkteten, sondern zugleich ästhetisch hochwertige Musik vorstellten. Sie sahen sich als die aktiven Vertreter des Fortschritts und als die Kultur bildenden Kräfte der Nation an. In diesem Sinne übernahmen die neuen bürgerlichen Künstler Aufgaben, um die sich traditionell die Aristokratie gekümmert hatte. Man gedachte deren Rolle zu ersetzen. Dementsprechend beanspruchten sie einen prominenten Platz in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft. [...] Das neue Berufsfeld 'freischaffender Künstler und Künstlerin' etablierte sich in dem Maße, wie sich die Kunst als sinnstiftende Instanz neben Religion, Philosophie, Wissenschaft und Moral zu behaupten wusste. Dabei beeinflussten sich wechselseitig die ästhetische Aufwertung von Musik sowie die zunehmende Institutionalisierung der Kultur durch Konzerthäuser, Ausbildungsstätten oder Musikverlage, die zuverlässiges Aufführungsmaterial herstellten. Zur Etablierung von Kunst im allgemeinen Bewusstsein trug auch die dauerhafte mediale Präsenz der Stars bei. Sie wurde von der begleitenden Fachpublizistik und der einschlägigen Editions politik der Verlage wesentlich unterstützt." (Janina Klassen: *Clara Schumann: Musik und Öffentlichkeit*. Wien/Köln: Böhlau, p. 19-20). See also Ulrich Konrad: 'Deutschsprachige Komponistenschriften des 19. Jahrhunderts'. In: *"Eine neue poetische Zeit". 175 Jahre Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, ed. by Michael Beiche and Armin Koch (= Schumann Forschungen 14). Mainz: Schott 2013, pp. 233-243.

<sup>296</sup> Exactly because of his predominantly academic approach to *Musikkritik*, Helmut Fiechtner vilifies Hanslick: "Als Inhaber einer speziell für ihn errichteten Lehrkanzel für Geschichte und Ästhetik der Musik an der Wiener Universität, wo er sich 1856 habilitierte, übte er seit dem Jahr 1864 von einem zweiten Forum seine Macht auf

who kept in (close) contact with many contemporary *Kritiker* - recognised the changing times and decided to ride with it. The *Musikkritiker* was all the less a crossover between praxis and theory; on the contrary, he increasingly cloaked himself in the mantle of theoretical thinker. The firm emphasis on theory and aesthetics in *Oper und Drama* together with the fact that Wagner promotes the essay as *Musikkritik* should consequently not be dissociated from the changed sociological position of the *Musikkritiker* and the discursive consequences that it gave rise to. Wagner - in exile at that moment of writing *Oper und Drama* and without the prospect of delivering new works any time soon - readily embraced the new status of the *Musikkritiker* in the public sphere. Going by the sheer volume as well as the hermetic, theoretical complexity of *Oper und Drama*, he did so with great conviction and ambition.

We can even trace this shift in Wagner's own critical oeuvre. The break becomes apparent in the ten years separating Wagner's writings from Paris and the publication of *Oper und Drama*. The ironic, indignant correspondent emerging around 1840 makes way for the sound theoretician ten years later. The central element binding them together is the polemical fervour they display in their writings (cf. 4.2). At the same time, Wagner clearly grafts both appearances as *Musikkritiker* on popular models that circulate in the music-critical discourse of his day. His attitude as a reporter in Paris resonates with the image that Heine or Börne cultivated in their journalistic writings. Likewise, the deliberating, future-oriented *Musikkritiker* in *Oper und Drama* competes with learned academics rising to prominence ten odd years later. As I have indicated, however, these *Musikkritiker*-personae are only ever a foil. Not unlike fellow composer-critics, such as Schumann, albeit with more eminence perhaps, Wagner does not hesitate to use the public medium of *Musikkritik* to further his own ambitions as composer. His *Musikkritiker*, then, do much to counterbalance evident suspicions of self-involvement. To that effect, Wagner uses the prominent position of the *Musikkritiker*-personae to his benefit. Their sheer recognizability enhances the pragmatic, self-serving dimension of his writings: against the conduct of Wagner as *Musikkritiker* that for the most part complies with the discursive templates available to him from other *Kritiker*, those elements that do not fit that picture (e.g. the primary ethos as composer challenging the ethos as correspondent, the experiential dimension in *Oper und Drama*) gain a more marked presence. It is hard to

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das Wiener Musikleben aus. Hanslicks meist oder stets theoretisch sorgfältig fundierten Fehltritte sind Legion. Seine Tragödie – oder, wenn man nach einem passenderen Ausdruck sucht, der diesem selbstsicheren, eitlen und von persönlichen Rankünen keineswegs freien Mann besser entspricht: das Groteske und Lächerliche seiner Erscheinung und seiner Urteile – ist am ehesten damit zu erklären, daß er, der das Amt eines viel gelesenen und einflußreichen Musikkritikers ausübte, im Grunde – meiner Meinung nach – einfach unmusikalisch war, wenn man es gröber sagen will, daß er auf seinen Ohren saß; denn er hat wirklich an allem vorbeigehört, was groß und zukunftsweisend in seiner Zeit war". (Helmut A. Fiechtner: 'Österreich'. In: *Symposion für Musikkritik*, ed. by Harald Kaufmann. Graz: Institut für Wertungsforschung 1968, p. 82).



assess, of course, how and to what extent readers exactly responded to the double face Wagner consistently attributes to his identity as *Musikkritiker*. But the discursive organisation of his *Musikkritik* in Paris and later pamphlets does reveal what kind of reaction he anticipated: Wagner shapes his *Musikkritiker* as a counterpart to a competing composer ethos. The *Musikkritiker* balances out Wagner's self-involvement and shows itself highly adaptable to the expectations readers held of him. Still, the *Musikkritiker* develops into a crucial auxiliary agent that steers public debate. Whether from Paris or Zürich, the *Musikkritiker* assumes an essential satellite function that bridges Wagner's physical distance where music cannot, and fixes his appearance in and to the public sphere.

## 2.4 Conclusion

If Walter Benjamin aphorises that “Kritik ist Mortifikation der Werke”,<sup>297</sup> then it surely is ‘Vivifikation’ of the *Kritiker* as well. Throughout this chapter, we have reflected on the textual identity of the author in *Musikkritik*. We started from general observations about the relation between author and *Kritiker* and have afterwards fitted our findings to Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. I have assumed a discursive presence of the author in *Kritik*: the persona we encounter is at all times an idealised one. On the one hand, the *Kritiker* acts as the enunciator of opinions and appraisals; on the other hand, his main discursive responsibility is to validate the critical process. The reader, in other words, does not only need to be persuaded of the content of *Kritik*, but also of its necessity and legitimacy.

Schumann's and Wagner's critical writings feature many different manifestations of the *Musikkritiker*: the *Musikkritiker* appears in the form of fictional personae, under pseudonyms, as a theoretician, correspondent, self-hermeneutising agent, and so on. Above all, he is a blanket agent onto which Schumann and Wagner project different ethea. First of all, and most straightforwardly, the *Musikkritiker* improves the reputation of Schumann and Wagner as *Kritiker*. Schumann consistently validates earlier opinions and employs the *Musikkritiker* as a marker of consistency between past and present appraisals. Wagner, conversely, mitigates the possible adverse effect of his opinions on the reader by inserting narrative middlemen from which the *Musikkritiker* can thereupon distance himself. Moreover, an agreeable presence of the *Musikkritiker* reflects favourably on the

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<sup>297</sup> Walter Benjamin: ‘Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels’. In: *Gesammelte Schriften*. Volume 1/I, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1978, p. 356.

institution of *Musikkritik* itself. Schumann's self-competition, for instance, simultaneously supports his ambition to canonise the NZfM's legacy. The *Musikkritiker*, finally, also has extra-critical duties. Given their double talents as both *Kritiker* and *Künstler*, Schumann and Wagner use the *Musikkritiker* to further their interests as composers. Schumann vindicates his expertise as *Musikkritiker* by inserting references to his compositions and Wagner uses *Musikkritik* to propagate his aesthetic agenda or fit his compositions within that framework.

The comparison between Schumann and Wagner makes clear that the *Kritiker* has an outspoken pragmatic function which literary criticism has yet to consider to its full extent. To be sure, Schumann mainly uses his experience as musician in order to license his ethos as *Musikkritiker*. But Wagner sets upon *Musikkritik* with more explicit extra-critical ambitions. Most studies on *Kritik* have so far addressed the *Kritiker* in his capacity as textual agent. And while that is certainly the *Kritiker's* primary function, his influence also reaches beyond the institution of *Kritik*: the *Kritiker* is a crucial intermediary between the author, *Kritik* and the public sphere. In this chapter, I have primarily analyzed the discursive presence of the author in the text. And while I intentionally did not take the factual biographical background of Schumann or Wagner as my main point of departure, I have nonetheless shown that critical discourse often intersects with an autobiographical discourse that uncovers the pragmatic motives involved in fashioning a *Kritiker*: as a discursive abstract, the *Kritiker* is contingent on the traits that the author selects, passes on and lets circulate in the public sphere. As such, we need to be aware that the *Kritiker's* duties as an agent of *Kritik* interlocks with extra-critical ambitions.

The greatest responsibility of the *Kritiker* towards the public sphere, however, is his adamant outreach to the reader. If anything, the *Kritiker* personifies *Kritik* and gives a face to the institution. Ever since Christian Thomasius first commercialised *Kritik* in the *Monatsgespräche*, a dialogic impulse has propelled German critical discourse (cf. 1.2.2 & the introduction to Part II). For that reason, the second part of this study will focus on Schumann's and Wagner's interaction with the reader. Critical discourse inherently factors in an alterity that crystallises in a rhetoric of persuasion, on the one hand, and a discursive prefiguring of the reader, on the other hand. Part II will thus examine how Schumann and Wagner profile the reader of their *Musikkritik* (Chapter 3) and to what extent they grant him room for a proper opinion (Chapter 4).

# Intermezzo

## *The Unsayable rendered sayable: Musikkritik as the Debunking of Romantic Musical Aesthetics.\**

### The Romantic ‘Unsaybarkeitstopos’

In his essay ‘Romantik in der Musik’ (1848), Carl Kretschmann reflects on recent developments in music. Kretschmann explains that „die Musik eine der romantischen Künste im Gegensatz zu den antiken Kunstarten [...] ist“<sup>1</sup> and remains fixed on „eine Richtung [...], welche sich als die ‚romantische Musik‘ qualifiziert“<sup>2</sup>. According to Kretschmann, the symbiosis between word and music makes up the fiber of such ‘Romantic music’: „Sei es nun, dass die Musik Folie der Poesie, und fast mehr ihre Dienerin als ihre Genossin wurde – sicher unterliegt sie mit ihr einer Beurtheilung, und diejenige Poesie, welche sich mit der Musik zu einer vielgestaltigen und reichen Liederlyrik zusammenschloss, die romantische Poesie ist der Schlüssel zur romantischen Musik“.<sup>3</sup> This statement confirms that contemporaries already early on historicised Romanticism as the era of music *par excellence*.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, it is striking that Kretschmann claims

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\* This Intermezzo in part goes back on the book chapter Tobias Hermans: ‘Das Unsaybare als Sagbares: Die Musikkritik als Entlarvung der Romantischen Musikästhetik. Betrachtungen zu E. T. A. Hoffmann, Robert Schumann und Richard Wagner’. In: *Praxis und Diskurs der Romantik. 1800-1900*, ed. by Norman Kasper and Jochen Strobel. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh 2016, pp. 159-176. I have omitted the section on Wagner from this chapter because a great portion of my analysis had already been written for the introduction to Part 2. I will, however, summarise my main findings on the status of the ‘Unsaybarkeitstopos’ in Wagner’s *Musikkritik* further on.

<sup>1</sup> Carl Kretschmann: ‘Romantik in der Musik’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1848, Vol. 2, Nr. 1, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Kretschmann: *Romantik in der Musik*, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> In the context of his study on the heterogenous, pluralectic nature of Romantic art and philosophy, for instance, Rüdiger Görner remarks the following: “Die Romantik war in allen ihren Phasen vor allem ein musikalisches Ereignis wie keine Epoche vor oder nach ihr. Romantiker dachten, dichteten, ja, malten musikalisch und die romantischen Musiker komponierten dichtend. Noch Richard Wagner lebte von dieser Symbiose, nicht anders als sein schließlich kritischster Jünger, Friedrich Nietzsche, der Denkkompositionen in

that music depends on the presence of the word. - striking, for in its search for ‘the metaphysical’, Romantic aesthetics precisely equated music with the verbally intangible – the so-called ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’.<sup>5</sup> The somewhat problematic reconstruction of Romantic musical aesthetics later on, too, meets with similar difficulties in its search for the defining and definable features of Romantic music. While Carl Dahlhaus, for instance, argues that the notion of absolute music found fertile soil in Romantic musical aesthetics,<sup>6</sup> he later acknowledges that this paradigm constitutes a central impediment for reception history of the concept: “Der Begriff des musikalischen Werkes als einer ‘Welt für sich selbst’, wie ihn die Kunsttheorie der Romantik konzipierte, schließt den Gedanken ein, daß Musik, die Klassizität erreicht, der Geschichte enthoben sei”.<sup>7</sup>

Literary scholars circumnavigate such absolute notions of music by means of an intermedial interpretation of the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’. Their approach starts from the assumption that language is far from semiotically deficient, but actually bridges the gap between different media. In his pioneering work on intermediality, Paul Scher develops the notion of ‘verbal music’. In his analysis of „the fascinating poetic process of rendering in words the intellectual and emotional implications of music“<sup>8</sup>, Scher does not look for acoustic or structural imitations of music (‘word music’). Instead, his study focusses on the syntactic-rhetorical structures that mediate subjective reactions to music (‘verbal music’). Recent academic work particularly emphasises the aesthetic-theoretical context of the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’. More specifically, it shows that the supremacy of the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ around 1800 grows from a crisis of language. Language was deemed semantically deficient. Writers and philosophers alike lost faith in its ability to verbalise “die Seelenregungen des Menschen [...] mit Hilfe konventioneller Sprachzeichen“<sup>9</sup>. It is through music that language compensates this loss of expressiveness. In his study on the discourse history of musical aesthetics in literature, Thorsten Valk claims that the inadequacy of verbal expressiveness created the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’, i.e. the „Überzeugung, dass im Medium der Musik eine transzendente Welt aufscheint, die der

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oft dissonant musikalisierter Sprach-Form vorlegte”. (Rüdiger Görner: *Die Pluralektik der Romantik. Studien zu einer epochalen Denk- und Darstellungsform*. Wien, Köln e.a.: Böhlau 2010, p. 9). At the time, Romantic music had its opponents as well, of course, as Sanna Pederson demonstrates in ‘Romantic music under siege in 1848’. In: *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, ed. by Ian Bent. Cambridge: University Press 1996, pp. 57-74.

<sup>5</sup> Marshall Brown offers an insightful and clear overview of Romantic musical aesthetics in *The Tooth that nibbles at the Soul. Essays on Music and Poetry*. Seattle/London: University of Washington Press 2010, p. 63-78.

<sup>6</sup> cf. Carl Dahlhaus: *Die Idee der absoluten Musik*. Kassel: Bärenreiter 1978.

<sup>7</sup> Carl Dahlhaus: *Analyse und Werturteil*, Mainz: B. Schott’s Söhne 1970, p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> Steven Paul Scher: *Verbal Music in German Literature*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press 1968, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Thorsten Valk: *Literarische Musikästhetik. Eine Diskursgeschichte von 1800 bis 1950*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 2008, p. 15.

sprachlichen Verführungsgewalt entzogen ist“.<sup>10</sup> The idea that music can capture the linguistically intangible is the heart of a musical aesthetics that reaches from the early 1800s to Thomas Mann’s *Doktor Faustus* (1943). Furthermore, Valk problematises the theoretical status of the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’. He argues that the trope, as the hallmark of Romantic musical aesthetics, emerges at a time when notions of ‘Romantic’ compositions or theory have not yet been formulated. Neither would the Romantic generation<sup>11</sup> succeed in formulating a consistent musical theory. The ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’, as a result, articulates an aesthetic-philosophical problem that does not stem from concrete compositions but rather from abstract, poetic considerations: „Das Nachdenken über Musik besitzt die primäre Funktion, Antworten auf dichtungstheoretische Fragen zu finden, die sich um 1800 in einer zuvor nicht gekannten Dringlichkeit stellen“<sup>12</sup>. Ulrich Tadday regards the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ as one of many discursive manifestations of the Romantic itself. He reads the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ as a metaphysical trope that discursively rehabilitates the irrational dimensions of art.<sup>13</sup>

Scher, Valk, Tadday and other scholars<sup>14</sup> encounter concrete literary manifestations of the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ in the period around 1800. The problematic relation between music and language is omnipresent in the work of Wackenroder, Tieck, Hoffmann, and many other (early) Romantic writers. The paradox is, of course, that these authors conceptualise music as a vehicle of the ‘unsayable’ precisely in literature, i.e. through language. Musical aesthetics solved this ambiguity by extending the function of language. Romantic philosophers famously imputed a self-reflexive potential to language (most notably in the ‘progressive Universalpoesie’ of Schlegel and Novalis). Likewise, writers try „mit einer poetischen und von allen Schlacken der Alltagskommunikation gereinigten Sprache jenes Ausdrucksvermögen zu gewinnen, das Musik in Worte zu fassen vermag“<sup>15</sup>. Similar to Scher’s distinction between ‘word music’ and ‘verbal music’, Valk claims that

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<sup>10</sup> Valk: *Literarische Musikästhetik*, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup> cf. Charles Rosen: *The Romantic Generation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1995. Reinhard Kapp, on the other hand, prefers to speak of a ‘Schumann-generation’, cf. Reinhard Kapp: ‘Die Schumann-Generation’. In: *Robert und Clara Schumann und die nationalen Musikkulturen des 19. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Matthias Wendt (= *Schumann-Forschungen* 9). Mainz: Schott 2005, pp. 47-94.

<sup>12</sup> Valk: *Literarische Musikästhetik*, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup> cf. Ulrich Tadday: *Das schöne Unendliche. Ästhetik, Kritik, Geschichte der romantischen Musikanschauung*, Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1999, esp. p. 123-144. Tadday has expounded his central argument more concisely in ‚Zwischen Empfindung und Reflexion. Zur romantischen Musikästhetik‘. In: *Musikästhetik*, ed. by Helga de la Motte-Haber. Laaber: Laaber 2004, pp. 201-219.

<sup>14</sup> e.g. Sabine Bayerl: *Von der Sprache der Musik zur Musik der Sprache. Konzepte zur Spracherweiterung bei Adorno, Kristeva und Barthes*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2002, p. 35-44; Andreas Käuser: *Schreiben über Musik. Studien zum anthropologischen und musiktheoretischen Diskurs sowie zur literarischen Gattungstheorie*. München: Fink 1999, p. 203-228.

<sup>15</sup> Valk: *Literarische Musikästhetik*, p. 17.

the oscillation between distrust and belief in the semiotic potential of language elicits two techniques of medial transfer: on the one hand, a visual rendition of music in the text, and, on the other hand, a subjective strategy that conveys the "Schilderung von Zuhörerreaktionen".<sup>16</sup> In the end, language, through its poeticisation into a medium that manages to capture and convey musical meaning, achieves an autonomous, surreal status in fiction.

## 'Musikkritik' between Aesthetics and Pragmatics

While literature could poeticise language, the situation in *Musikkritik* is more complicated. *Musikkritik* cannot simply use language as a symbolic vehicle and retire to a fictional world. In the genre of *Musikkritik*, two topoi of the 19<sup>th</sup> century intersect: Romanticism as the age of music and as the era of *Kritik*, respectively. On that account, *Musikkritik* could almost be considered as the 'Urei' of Romantic aesthetics. The linguistic mediation of music it relies on, however, precisely undermines the leading notion of Romantic musical aesthetics: music as an infinite language and as a paragon of the absolute. Indeed, Schlegelian, aesthetic-metaphysical concepts of *Kritik* seem to be lost on *Musikkritik*. *Musikkritik* is first and foremost a medium of evaluation and epideixis. As a consequence, it inherently refers to specific objects and people. From a discursive point of view, this inherent referentiality introduces pragmatics to the debate, an issue that research on the textual form of the unsayable has so far not addressed. Still, the 'Unsagbarkeitstopos' is more than merely an issue of philosophical aesthetics. Leslie David Blasius, for instance, opposes *Musikkritik* to the Romantic piano etude, which conjoins mechanical skill and music. The etude, Blasius contends, brings together music theory with an „epistemology of sensation and association“.<sup>17</sup> The Romantic *Musikkritiker*, then, encounters the unsayable in his attempt to verbalise a theoretically inconceivable meaning:

Each [the piano method and the discursive domain of music criticism] addresses the musical experience directly [...] by constituting itself against the backdrop of sensationist epistemology. Both, in a sense, offer an analysis of the actual musical text, the critic as a posteriori analysis, the pedagogue as a priori analysis. [...] As with Hoffmann, the Romantic critic abandons the epistemology while awarding an

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<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>17</sup> Leslie David Blasius: 'The mechanics of sensation and the construction of the Romantic musical experience'. In: *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, ed. by Ian Bent. Cambridge: University Press 1996, p. 7.

urgency to the notion of sensation which authorizes flexible and powerful hermeneutics. The key move on the part of the critic is the stipulation of a transcendent presence embodied in the musical text, which, in standing beyond sensation and association, frustrates the creation of a fixed methodology.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to Blasius' interpretation of the hermeneutic responsibilities of the 'Romantic' *Kritiker*, the 'Unsagbarkeitstopos' emerges as an ethical category. By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the question of being able or allowed to say something crystallises as a crisis of legitimacy, in which the competences of the *Kritiker* are questioned. Notable examples are Lessing's *Der Kritiker braucht nicht besser machen zu können, was er tadelt* (1768) or the Winckelmann-Casanova-controversy.<sup>19</sup>

*Musikkritik* – and that is decisive – has little to gain when it upholds a notion of 'Unsagbarkeit'. Its activity is contingent on textual expression: the necessity to inform and convince prevents the acceptance of a medium that cannot be grasped verbally. *Musikkritik* debunks the 'Unsagbarkeitstopos'. As it 'depoeticises' the expressivity language had attained in fiction, so my argument, it again deepens the divide between music and word, a gap that Romantic musical aesthetics still deemed poetically surmountable. *Musikkritik* abandons a paradigm that detaches the meaning of music from language. As such, it voids the essence of the Romantical itself. Rüdiger Görner defines the loss of musical autonomy as a key trait of late Romantic literature: "Wusste sich die frühromantische Musik auf dem Weg zu ihrer Emanzipation vom deutenden Wort, so verweist zumindest die spätrromantische Literatur über Musik wieder auf die Gebundenheit der Klangwelt, ihre Abhängigkeit vom Instrument – eben auch dem Instrument Sprache".<sup>20</sup> From that point of view, *Musikkritik*, for which subjection of music to word was ontologically a *conditio sine qua non*, helps us to (re)evaluate the mediation of music in (late) Romanticism. In this Intermezzo, we will subsequently examine how the aesthetic demand for non-discursivity yields to a pragmatic need for discursivity.

In the following, the *Musikkritiken* of E.T.A. Hoffmann and Robert Schumann will illustrate how music-critical discourse undermines the Romantic 'Unsagbarkeitstopos'. Of course, such examples surface in the work of many other influential *Musikkritiker* as

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<sup>18</sup> Blasius: *The mechanics of sensation*, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> cf. Doris H. Lehmann: 'Johann Joachim Winckelmann und die gefälschte Antike: Kritikkompetenz und Streit von Künstlern und Gelehrten um 1760'. In: *Streitkultur. Okzidentale Traditionen des Streitens in Literatur, Geschichte und Kunst*, ed. by Uwe Baumann, Arnold Becker and Astrid Steiner-Weber. Göttingen: V&R unipress 2008, pp. 327-338.

<sup>20</sup> Görner: *Die Pluralektik der Romantik*, p. 16.

well, such as Ludwig Rellstab,<sup>21</sup> Heinrich Heine<sup>22</sup> and, naturally, Richard Wagner. The ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ certainly occupies a prominent place in Wagner’s aesthetic theory.<sup>23</sup> Poetically speaking, his writings pick up on the idea that music expresses something unsayable. From a discursive point, however, his *Musikkritik* neutralises the concept. Wagner verbally gets a hold of music as action. He does not portray it as an autonomous instance with a proper form and structure, but concentrates on music as event. Wagner’s depiction of the musical action shifts the focus from the score to the musical performance itself. In that capacity, musical action always acts as mediator: on the one hand, in the most literal sense, as the acoustic product of a musical act, on the other hand, metaphorically, as – after Nietzsche – „Ereignis der Seele“.<sup>24</sup> Music is unsayable because it cannot have a proper meaning, to begin with; it only gains that meaning in dialogue with the listener. Wagner’s concert accounts exemplify this focus of music as an acoustic product. In contrast to Hoffmann’s and Schumann’s analytic discourse (cf. infra), Wagner generally sketches the atmosphere during a performance. The review of Mendelssohn’s *Paulus* (1843), for instance, mentions the „tiefen Eindruck bei den besonders zahlreichen Zuhörern“.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, it assesses the success of the composition based on the concrete performance: „[D]och schien es, als ob uns das rechte Verständniß erst jetzt gekommen wäre, wo die unmittelbare persönliche Anführung des Meisters jeden der Exekutirenden mit besonderer Weihe erfüllte und in dem Grade begeisterte, daß der Werth der Aufführung fast die Höhe des Werkes selbst erreichte“.<sup>26</sup> The review sticks to this descriptive template. It lauds the performance of the ‘Exekutanten’ and assures the reader that despite the unsuitability of the oratorio for the „protestantischen Kirchencultus“,<sup>27</sup> „die Wirkung auch im Konzertsaal rührend und erhebend [war]“.<sup>28</sup> Wagner uses the acoustic musical product as a touchstone of the work’s quality. His *Kritik*

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<sup>21</sup> cf. Jürgen Rehm: *Zur Musikrezeption im vormärzlichen Berlin. Die Präsentation bürgerlichen Selbstverständnisses und biedermeierlicher Kunstanschauung in den Musikkritiken Ludwig Rellstabs*. Hildesheim/Zürich: Georg Olms 1983

<sup>22</sup> cf. Michael Mann: *Heinrich Heines Musikkritiken*. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe 1971; Peter Uwe Hohendahl: ‘Über Musik sprechen: Heine als Musikkritiker’. In: *Harry ... Heinrich ... Henri ... Heine. Deutscher, Jude, Europäer*, ed. by Dietmar Goltschnigg. Berlin: Erich Schmidt 2008, pp. 209-219.

<sup>23</sup> See also the chapter ‘Musik als Sprache des Unsagbaren: Musikästhetische Konzepte der Frühromantik und ihre Wirkungen auf Richard Wagner’ in Ulrike Kienzle: ‘... daß wissend würde die Welt!’. *Religion und Philosophie in Richard Wagners Musikdramen*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2005, p. 52-71.

<sup>24</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche: ‘An Heinrich Köselitz in Venedig (21. Januar 1887)’. In: *Nietzsche Briefwechsel. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Part 3, Vol. 5, ed. by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: De Gruyter 1975, p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Das Oratorium "Paulus" von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, ed. by Richard Sternfeld and Hans von Wolzogen. Volksausgabe. Vol. 12. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1916, p. 149.

<sup>26</sup> Wagner: *Das Oratorium "Paulus"*, p. 149

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p. 149-150

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p. 150



denies music any immanent claim to 'sayability'. As such, he overturns the transcendence that Romantic musical aesthetics assigned it. The individual is no longer immersed in a mystical, unconveyable musical language. Instead, the meaning of music only manifests itself as soon as an individual reaction to the acoustic event takes place.

Hoffmann and Schumann, on the other hand, generally appraised musical works not on the basis of concrete performances (i.e. music in its acoustic form), but rather by going on the score itself.<sup>29</sup> Hoffmann's and Schumann's reviews thus allow us to pay particular attention to the status of the musical materiality in the *Musikkritiken*. They prominently problematise issues of musical expressiveness and the mediation of music through language. Yet, they did not only probe the essence of 'the Romantical'. Above all, they significantly shaped the reception of Romanticism itself.

Hoffmann's frequently cited review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is a benchmark for Romantic musical aesthetics. Hoffmann draws on affective commonplaces (for instance when he claims to capture in words what he experienced "tief im Gemüte")<sup>30</sup> and traces out the leading reference points between music and Romanticism. In his afterword on Hoffmann's *Musikkritik*, Friedrich Schnapp observes that Hoffmann always attempts to understand „das Besondere im Blickfeld des Allgemeinen“.<sup>31</sup> Schnapp claims that Hoffmann's music-critical style offers the historical advantage that his writings still make „vergessen[e] Kompositionen kleinerer Meister“<sup>32</sup> accessible to current readers. Nonetheless, one could wonder to what extent Hoffmann's prosaic approach conforms to the demand of then musical aesthetics for a poetic or even symbolic representation of music.

While Hoffmann is mainly received on account of his renown as a literary author, Schumann is a central exponent of a generation of Romantic composers. As I stated in the introduction, scholars generally read Schumann's *Musikkritik* as a repository of musical aesthetics or as epigonal imitations of Hoffmann's and Jean Paul's epic prose. Such

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<sup>29</sup> Reviews in which Schumann does directly appraise musical performances most of the time occur as accounts of particular concert series. A good example are the 'Quartett Morgen'-texts, a string of reviews about string quartet concerts that Schumann attended in 1838, cf. Robert Schumann (R. S.): 'Erster Quartett-Morgen'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 1, Nr. 46, pp. 181-182; Robert Schumann (R. S.): 'Zweiter Quartett-Morgen. Quartette von C. Decker, C. S. Reissiger und L. Cherubini.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 1, Nr. 49, pp. 193-195; Robert Schumann (R. S.): 'Dritter Quartett-Morgen'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 2, Nr. 10, pp. 41-42; Robert Schumann (R. S.): 'Vierter und fünfter Quartett-Morgen'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 2, Nr. 3, pp. 51-52; Robert Schumann (R. S.): 'Sechster Quartett-Morgen'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 2, Nr. 20, pp. 79-80.

<sup>30</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann: 'Ludwig van Beethoven, 5. Sinfonie'. In: *Schriften zur Musik. Aufsätze und Rezensionen*. München: Winkler 1977, p. 34.

<sup>31</sup> Friedrich Schnapp: 'Nachwort'. In: *E.T.A. Hoffmann. Schriften zur Musik*. München: Winkler 1977, p. 410.

<sup>32</sup> Schnapp: *Nachwort*, p. 410.

interpretations centre on the fictional-narrative features of the texts and fail to interpret these stylistic markers in the context of *Musikkritik* itself, however. My analyses mainly concern Schumann's review series of Hector Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* which appeared between July, 3<sup>th</sup> and August, 14<sup>th</sup> 1835 in six instalments in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*.<sup>33</sup> Two speakers convey their opinions about the symphony to the reader: Florestan in the first part, 'R. Schumann' in the other five. Leon Plantinga regards the series as „the most detailed discussion of a piece of music ever written by a major composer“.<sup>34</sup> Hans-Peter Fricker, alternatively, remarks on the stylistic dimensions of the texts. He reads the analytic-technical sections in the reviews as a rhetorical conflict between polemics and the attempt, „die musikalische Schlagkraft eines Werkes für den noch Abseitsstehenden mit Kriterien, Argumenten und Erkenntnissen sicht-, vielleicht sogar hörbar zu machen“.<sup>35</sup> Fred Everett Maus, on the other hand, observes „a fluctuation of somewhat different perspectives within an apparently continuous discourse“.<sup>36</sup> He sees a central contrast between a psychological, poetical understanding of the music and an analytic, aloof approach to the symphony; the review is „an essay about analysis as well as an analytical essay“.<sup>37</sup> I endorse that interpretation. As disparate as the speaker roles in the different texts are, so heterogeneous is the style of the series as well. Merely distinguishing between a poetic Florestan and the analytic R. Schumann does not suffice, in that respect. On closer examination, in fact, the six instalments are a patchwork of different styles and each test a different approach to Berlioz' symphony. Above all, the series is an exercise in music-critical style; the search for the adequate discursive way of talking about music characterises each separate review.

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<sup>33</sup> The instalments are the following: Robert Schumann: “‘Aus dem Leben eines Künstlers.’ Phantastische Symphonie in 5 Abtheilungen von Hector Berlioz’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 1., pp. 1-2 [= *Symphonie fantastique* I]; Robert Schumann: ‘Hector Berlioz. Episode de la vie d’un Artiste. Grande Symphonie fantastique. Oeuv. 4. Partition de Piano par F. Liszt’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 9, pp. 33-35 [= *Symphonie fantastique* II]; Robert Schumann: ‘Hector Berlioz. Episode de la vie d’un Artiste etc. (Fortsetzung)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 10, pp. 37-38 [= *Symphonie fantastique* III]; Robert Schumann: ‘Hector Berlioz. Episode de la vie d’un Artiste etc. (Fortsetzung)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 11, pp. 41-44 [= *Symphonie fantastique* IV]; Robert Schumann: ‘Hector Berlioz. Episode de la vie d’un Artiste etc. (Fortsetzung)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 12, pp. 45-48 [= *Symphonie fantastique* V]; Robert Schumann: ‘Hector Berlioz. Episode de la vie d’un Artiste etc. (Schluß)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 13, pp. 49-51 [= *Symphonie fantastique* VI].

<sup>34</sup> Leon B. Plantinga: *Schumann as Critic*. New York: da Capo 1976, p. 245.

<sup>35</sup> Hans-Peter Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns: Versuch eines literaturwissenschaftlichen Zugangs*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1983, p. 216.

<sup>36</sup> Fred Everett Maus: ‘Intersubjectivity and analysis: Schumann’s essay on the Fantastic Symphony’. In: *Music Theory*, p. 131.

<sup>37</sup> Maus: *Intersubjectivity and analysis*, p. 137.

## Sublimating the Amorphous: Music as Form and Structure

On to the *Musikkritik* itself, then. A central discursive problem that confronts *Musikkritiker* in their attempt to make music ‘communicable’ is the issue of musical form. The 18<sup>th</sup> century notoriously looked to achieve musical expressivity through fetishist form prescriptions. By the end of that century, however, an obstinate line of thought emerged that understood music as amorphous and therefore structurally intangible.<sup>38</sup> In *Musikkritik*, nonetheless, the notion of musical formlessness is somewhat problematic. Certainly when the topic of the review revolves around musical structure itself, the concept of formlessness experiences all the more practical resistance. Schumann admits that his review of the *Symphonie Fantastique* pursues the hermeneutic goal to prove to „denen, die sie [die *Symphonie Fantastique*] kennen, ohne sie anerkennen zu wollen, [...] wie trotz der scheinbaren Formlosigkeit diesem Körper, [...] eine wunderbare symmetrische Ordnung innwohnt, des inneren Zusammenhangs gar nicht zu erwähnen“.<sup>39</sup> Hoffmann embarks on a similar quest in his review of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. He confesses that the work „den Zuhörer unwiderstehlich [...] in das wundervolle Geistreich des Unendlichen [forttreißt]“<sup>40</sup>. Ultimately, however, Hoffmann concludes that exactly the formal arrangement of the composition comprises Beethoven’s genius: „so entfaltet auch nur ein sehr tiefes Eingehen in die innere Struktur Beethovenscher Musik die hohe Besonnenheit des Meisters, welche von dem wahren Genie unzertrennlich ist und von dem anhaltenden Studium der Kunst genährt wird“.<sup>41</sup>

Hoffmann and Schumann experiment with techniques that enable language to convey the temporality of music efficiently. Hoffmann reviews the different building blocks of a composition in their chronological order, i.e. in the order in which they appear and resound. He isolates the movements of a piece from each other typographically or matches them to numbers, for instance in the discussion of Cagniez’ *Le Jugement de Salomon*.<sup>42</sup> In support of such paratextual markers of formalised temporality, Hoffmann uses a distinct analytic terminology to describe the development of music. In his overview of musical analysis in the 19th century, Ian Bent remarks that „Hoffmann’s response to Beethoven’s structures is that of the true theorist“.<sup>43</sup> An unmistakable theoretical

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<sup>38</sup> cf. Lewis Rowell: *Thinking about Music. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Music*. Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press 1984, p. 122-123.

<sup>39</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* III, p. 37.

<sup>40</sup> Hoffmann: *Ludwig van Beethoven*, p. 37.

<sup>41</sup> Ebd., p. 37.

<sup>42</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann: ‘Adrien Quaisin, Salomons Urteil (Le Jugement de Salomon)’. In: *Schriften zur Musik*, p. 17-19.

<sup>43</sup> Ian Bent (ed.): *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century. Volume 2: Hermeneutic Approaches*. Cambridge: University Press 1994, p. 143.

vocabulary indeed characterises Hoffmann's style, as the following assessment of Friedrich Witt's Fifth Symphony illustrates:

Nach einem wieder äußerst angenehmen Mittelsatze in der Dominante, imitieren erste Stimme und Baß einen Satz, der in einfacher Gestalt schon im funfzehnten Takte vorkam; es fehlt ihm zwar die Neuheit, er schreitet aber kräftig fort, und ist daher vorzüglich geeignet, wie hier, zum Schluß zu führen:



Im zweiten Teile folgt nun die weitere Ausarbeitung des ersten Thema wieder in Imitationen der ersten Stimme und des Basses, indem beide wechselweise die zweite Hälfte des Thema als Gegensatz zur ersten ausführen, wobei die Blasinstrumente die zum Grunde liegende Harmonie in haltenden Noten angeben oder hin und wieder die Melodie aufgreifen. Der weitere Gang des Allegro ist nach der gewöhnlichen Form, indem der erste Teil wieder eintritt und sich durch den Mittelsatz, der nun in der Tonika bleibt, zum Schlusse fortbewegt.<sup>44</sup>

The linguistic rendition of the interaction between 'erste Stimme' and bass line unfolds on the grounds of a horizontal model: metaphors of movement visualise music, just as the references to specific measures bring about a temporal indexing. The inclusion of the score excerpt is quite remarkable, in this regard. Mirroring the description that Hoffmann gives of the interplay between 'erste Stimme' and bass line in the symphony, text and image interlock as in a semiotic fugue. The music transcript does not serve mere illustrative purposes; the semiotic transition from text to score rather adds a narrative impulse to the description of the melody's development. The score, in other words, constitutes an inherent ingredient of the text's argumentative structure.

Schumann – not entirely unskilled in the art of musical notation – takes the attempt to embed musical structures in the text even further. The second installment in the review series of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* tackles the subject of 'form' and initially uses an extended metaphor of architecture. R. Schumann describes himself as a guide

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<sup>44</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann: 'Friedrich Witt, 5. Sinfonie'. In: *Schriften zur Musik*, p. 21.

through „die phantastisch verschlungenen Kreuzgänge“ who would like to accompany the reader „Trepp’ auf, Trepp’ab durch dieses abenteuerliche Gebäude“ to give him „ein Bild von seinen einzelnen Gemächern“<sup>45</sup>. The architectural metaphor constitutes the first step in a discursive evolution from formlessness into the visual fixation of musical shape. It gradually transforms into a discourse that is dominated by technical analysis. Examining the form of the symphony, Schumann at first combines the tour through the building with concrete page and even measure indications. In this way, a semiotic symbiosis arises that – in contrast to Hoffmann – is not visual in nature, but alternates between poetical description and an increasing degree of analytic analysis:

Erste Variation bis Tact 6, S. 5. Zwischensatz bis Tact 8, S. 6. Zweite Variation auf der Tenue der Bässe (wenigstens find’ ich in dem obligaten Horn die Intervalle des Themas, obgleich nur anklingend) bis T. 1, S. 7. Streben nach dem Allegro zu. Vorläufige Accorde. Wir treten aus der Vorhalle in’s Innere. Allegro. Wer beim Einzelnen lange stehen bleiben will, wird nicht nachkommen und sich verirren. Vom Anfangsthema überseheth rasch die ganze Seite bis zum ersten animato S.9.<sup>46</sup>

A short and trenchant style – almost as if one were reading a travel guide – glues together the technical analysis and metaphorical imagination. It equates the score with a building. The reader discovers the symphony as if he were in a labyrinth that cannot be captured from close by, but only from a distance.

Schumann himself, though, soon forsakes this bird’s-eye view. The more his review series progresses, the more precise and form-fixated the discourse becomes. The description of the musical structure and form gradually departs from the mental, architectural-metaphorical model. Instead, Schumann integrates it in the typeface of the score. The type-structural entry to the composition heightens the referential character of the review and develops into a discursive decor for the whole series. In the third installment, for example, R.Schumann casts the structure of the symphony in a scheme that depicts the thematic and harmonic developments of the composition as horizontal progressions (cf. Figure 1). In the three final installments, R. Schumann adds numerous page references and musical examples in a game of paratextuality in which text and footnote both visually and literarily struggle with each other (cf. Figures Figure 2 and 3). It goes without saying that Schumann’s music, too, promotes such a fusion of music and word. Yet, in this is literary analysis of *Musikkritik*, it is not my intention to dilate upon that interaction.

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<sup>45</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* II, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, p. 34.

## Orchester.

### Hector Berlioz, Episode de la vie d'un Artiste etc.

(Fortsetzung.)

Berlioz kann kaum mit größerem Schmerze den Kopf eines schönen Mörders auseinander genommen haben, als ich seinen ersten Satz. Und hab' ich noch dazu meinen Lesern mit der Section etwas genügt? Aber ich wollte dreierlei damit: erstens denen, welchen die Symphonie gänzlich unbekannt ist, zeigen, wie wenig ihnen in der Musik durch eine zergliedernde Kritik überhaupt klar gemacht werden kann, denen, die sie oberflächlich durchgesehen und weil sie nicht gleich wußten, wo aus und ein, sie vielleicht bei Seite legten, ein paar Höhenpunkte andeuten, endlich denen, die sie kennen, ohne sie anerkennen zu wollen, nachweisen, wie trotz der scheinbaren Formlosigkeit diesem Körper, in größeren Verhältnissen gemessen, eine wunderbare symmetrische Ordnung inwohnt, des inneren Zusammenhangs gar nicht zu erwähnen. Aber an dem Ungewohnten dieser neuen Form, des neuen Ausdrucks liegt wohl zum Theil der Grund zum unglücklichen Mißverständniß. Die Meisten haften beim ersten oder zweiten

Anhören zu sehr an den Einzelheiten und es verhält sich damit, wie mit dem Lesen einer schwierigen Handschrift, über deren Entzifferung einer, der sich bei jedem einzelnen Wort aufhält, ungleich mehr Zeit braucht, als der sie erst im Ganzen überfliegt, um Sinn und Absicht kennen zu lernen. Zudem, wie schon angedeutet, macht nichts so leicht Verdruß und Widerspruch als eine neue Form, die einen alten Namen trägt. Wollte z. B. Jemand etwas im Fünf=Viertel=Tact Geschriebenes einen Marsch, oder zwölf aneinander gereichte kleine Sätze eine Symphonie nennen, so nimmt er gewiß vorweg gegen sich ein, — indes untersuche man immer, was an der Sache ist. Je sonderbarer und kunstreicher also ein Werk augenscheinlich aussieht, je vorsichtiger sollte man urtheilen. Und gibt uns nicht die Erfahrung an Beethoven ein Beispiel, dessen, namentlich letzte Werke, sicherlich eben so ihrer eigenthümlichen Constructionen und Formen, in denen er so unerschöpflich erfand, wie des Geistes halber, den freilich Niemand läugnen konnte, im Anfang unverständlich gefunden wurden? Fassen wir jetzt, ohne uns durch kleine, allerdings oft scharf hervorspringende Ecken stören zu lassen, das ganze erste Allegro in weiteren Bogen zusammen, so stellt sich uns deutlich diese Form hervor:



Figure 1 The architectural metaphor makes way for a horizontal rendition of the musical progression.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* III, p. 37.

s'en suit forcément qu'il a inventé un art nouveau, un art inconnu, et pourtant un bel art. Ist nun das auch etwas in die Luft parlirt, so läßt es sich schon einmal anhören. Zudem finden sich solche krause Stellen nur ausnahmsweise<sup>a)</sup>: ich möchte sogar behaupten, seine Harmonie zeichne sich trotz der mannichfaltigen Combinationen, die er mit wenigem Material herstellt, durch eine gewisse Simplizität, jedenfalls aber durch eine Kernhaftigkeit und Gedrungenheit aus, wie man sie, freilich durchgebildeter, bei Beethoven antrifft. Oder entfernt er sich vielleicht zu sehr von der Haupttonart? Nehme man gleich die erste Abtheilung: erster Satz<sup>b)</sup> lauter C-Moll: hierauf bringt er dieselben Intervalle des ersten Gedankens ganz treu im Es-Dur<sup>c)</sup>: dann ruht er lange auf As<sup>d)</sup> und kommt leicht nach C-Dur. Wie das Allegro aus den einfachsten C-Dur, G-Dur und C-Moll gebaut, kann man in dem Umrisse nachsehen, den ich in der letzten Nummer zeigte. Und so ist's durchweg. Durch die ganze zweite Abtheilung klingt das helle A-Dur scharf durch, in der dritten das idyllische F-Dur mit dem verschwiferten C- und B-Dur, in der vierten G-Moll mit B- und Es-Dur; nur in der letzten geht es trotz des vorherrschenden C-Principis bunt durcheinander, wie es infernalischen Hochzeiten zukömmt. Doch stößt man auch oft auf platte und gem.eine<sup>e)</sup> Harmonieen, — auf fehlerhafte, wenigstens nach alten Regeln verbotene<sup>f)</sup>, von denen indess einige ganz prächtig klingen, — auf unklare und vage<sup>g)</sup>,

a) Vgl. jedoch S. 61. Z. 1. zu 2. — b) S. 1-3. Z. 5. c) S. 3. Z. 6. — d) S. 6. Z. 4. — e) S. 2. Z. 6. 7., S. 6. Z. 1-3., S. 8. Z. 1-8., S. 21.; letztes System 1-4., in der zweiten Abth. S. 35. Syst. 5. Z. 1-18. — f) Gleich im Tact 1. S. 1. das ♯ (wahrscheinlich ein Druckfehler), S. 3. Z. 2-4., S. 9. Z. 8. zu 9. Z. 15-19., S. 10. Z. 11-14., S. 20. Z. 8-18., S. 37. Z. 11-14. 28. zu 29., S. 48. Syst. 5. Z. 2. 3., S. 57. Syst. 5. Z. 3., S. 62. Z. 9-14., S. 78. Syst. 5. Z. 1-3. und alles folgende, S. 82. Syst. 4. Z. 1-2. und alles folgende, S. 83. Z. 13-17., S. 86. Z. 11-13., S. 87. Z. 5. 6. — Ich wiederhole, daß ich nur nach dem Clavierauszuge richte: in der Partitur mag vieles anders aussehen. — g) S. 20. Z. 3.; vielleicht sind die Harmonieen:

6 ~ 7 6 ~ 6 # 6 ♭ ~ 6 # 6 ~ 6 #  
 3 # - 3 - 3 ♭ - 3 - 3 -  
 Dis, E, F, Fis u. f. w.

S. 62. Syst. 5. Z. 1. 2., S. 65. Syst. 4. Z. 3., wahrscheinlich ein Spas von Liszt, der das Ausklingen der Becken nachmachen wollte. S. 79. Z. 8-10., S. 81. Z. 6. u. ff., S. 88. Z. 1-3. u. a. m.

auf schlecht klingende, gequälte, verzerrte<sup>a)</sup>). Die Zeit, die solche Stellen als schön functioniren wollte, möge nie über uns kommen, eben so wenig wie das Jahrhundert, das Bücklige oder Berrückte für Apollon und Kante an Schönheit und Verstand erklärte. Bei Berlioz hat es jedoch eine besondere Bewandtniß; man probire nur, irgend etwas zu ändern oder zu verbessern, wie es einem irgend geübten Harmoniker Kinderspiel ist, und sehe zu, wie matt und währig sich alles dagegen ausnimmt! Den ersten Ausbrüchen eines starken Jugendgemüthes wohnt nämlich eine ganz eigenthümliche unverwüsthliche Kraft innen; spreche sie sich noch so roh aus, sie wirkt um so mächtiger, je weniger man sie durch Kritik in das Kunstfach hinüber zu ziehen versucht. Man wird sich vergebens bemühen, sie durch Kunst verfeinern oder durch Zwang in Schranken halten zu wollen, sobald sie nicht selbst mit ihren Mitteln besonnener umgehen lernt und auf eigenem Wege Ziel und Richtschnur findet. Berlioz will auch gar nicht für artig und elegant gelten; was er haßt, fast er grimmig bei den Haaren, was er liebt, zerdrückt er vor Innigkeit, — ein paar Grade schwächer oder stärker, sehr es einmal einem feurigen Jünglinge nach, den man nicht nach Loth und Zoll taxiren kann! Wir wollen aber auch das viele Zarte und Schönoriginelle aufsuchen, das jenem Rohen und Bizarren die Wage hält. So ist der harmonische Bau des ganzen ersten Gesanges<sup>b)</sup> durchaus rein und edel, so dessen Wiederholung in Es<sup>c)</sup>. Von großer Wirkung mag das 14 Tacte lang gehaltene As der Bässe sein<sup>d)</sup>, eben so der Orgelpunct, der in den Mittelstimmen liegt<sup>e)</sup>. Die chromatischen, schwer auf und absteigenden Sextaccorde<sup>f)</sup> sagen an und für sich nichts, müssen aber an jener Stelle ungemein imponiren. Die Gänge, wo in den Nachahmungen zwischen Bass (oder Tenor) und Sopran greuliche Octaven und Querstände hindurchklingen<sup>g)</sup>, kann man nicht nach dem Clavierauszuge beurtheilen; sind die Octaven gut verdeckt, so muß es durch Mark und Bein erschüttern. — Der harmonische Grund zur zweiten Abtheilung ist bis auf einige Ausnahmen einfach und weniger tief. Die dritte kann sich an reinem

a) S. 2. Syst. 4., S. 5. Z. 1., S. 9. Z. 15-19., S. 17. von Z. 7. an eine ganze Weile fort, S. 30. Syst. 4. Z. 6. zu 7., S. 82. Z. 12-19. S. 88. Z. 1-3., u. a. m. — b) S. 1. von Z. 3. an. — c) S. 3. Z. 6. — d) S. 6. Z. 4. — e) S. 11. Z. 10. — f) S. 12. Z. 13. — g) S. 17. Z. 7.



Figure 2 Text and footnote, references and musical examples vie with each other.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* IV, p. 42.



harmonischen Gehalte mit jedem Meisterwerke messen: hier lebt jeder Ton. In der vierten ist alles interessant und im blüdigsten, kernigsten Styl. Die fünfte wühlt und wülfet zu kraus; sie ist bis auf einzelne neue Stellen<sup>a)</sup> un schön, grell und widerlich.

So sehr nun auch Berlioz das Einzelne vernachlässigt und es dem Ganzen opfert, so versteht er sich auch auf das kunstreichere, feingearbeitete Detail recht gut. Er preßt aber seine Themas nicht bis auf den letzten Tropfen aus, und verleidet einem, wie Andere so oft, die Lust an einem guten Gedanken durch langweilige thematische Durchführung; er gibt mehr Fingerzeige, daß er strenger ausarbeiten könnte, wenn er wollte und wo es gerade hinpaßt, — Skizzen in der geistreichen kurzen Weise Beethovens. Seine schönsten Gefühle sagt er meistens nur einmal und mehr wie im Vorübergehen<sup>b)</sup> 2).

Das Hauptmotiv zur Symphonie<sup>3)</sup>, an sich weder schön, noch zur contrapunctischen Arbeit geeignet, gewinnt immer mehr durch die späteren Stellungen. Schon vom

a) S. 76. vom Syst. 4. an, S. 80., wo der Ton Es in den Mittelstimmen gegen 29 Tacte lang still hält, S. 81. T. 20., der Orgelpunct auf der Dominante, S. 82. T. 11., wo ich vergebens die unangenehme Quinte, auf Syst. 4. von T. 1. zu 2., wegzubringen suchte. — b) S. 3. T. 2., S. 14. Syst. 4. T. 6—18., S. 16. Syst. 6. T. 1—8., S. 19. Syst. 5. T. 1—15., S. 40. Syst. 4. T. 1—16.

Anfange des zweiten Theils wird es interessanter und so immer fort<sup>a)</sup> 2), bis es sich durch schreiende Accorde zum E-Dur durchwindet<sup>b)</sup>. In der zweiten Abtheilung baut er es Note um Note in einem neuen Rhythmus und mit neuen Harmonieen als Trio ein<sup>c)</sup>. Biemlich am Schlusse bringt er es noch einmal, aber matt und aufhaltend<sup>d)</sup>. In der dritten Abtheilung tritt es vom Orchester unterbrochen recitativisch auf<sup>e)</sup>; hier nimmt es den Ausdruck der fürchterlichsten Leidenschaft bis zum schrillenden Aß, wo es wie ohnmächtig niederzustürzen scheint. Später<sup>f)</sup> erscheint es sanft und beruhigt, vom Hauptthema geführt. Im *marcho du supplics* will es noch einmal sprechen, wird aber durch den *coup fatal* abgeschnitten<sup>g)</sup>. In der *Wison* spielt es auf einer gemeinen E- und Es-Clarinetta<sup>h)</sup>, welk, entadelt und schmutzig. Berlioz machte das mit Absicht.

Das zweite Thema der ersten Abtheilung quillt wie unmittelbar aus dem ersten heraus<sup>i)</sup>; sie sind so seitfam ineinander verwachsen, daß man den Anfang und Schluß der Periode gar nicht recht bezeichnen kann, bis sich endlich der neue Gedanke löst<sup>4)</sup>, der kurz darauf fast un-

a) S. 16. Syst. 6. T. 3. — b) S. 19. T. 7. — c) S. 29. T. 1. — d) S. 35. Syst. 5. — e) S. 43., letzter Tact — f) S. 49. T. 3. 13. — g) S. 63. T. 4. — h) S. 67. T. 1. S. 68. T. 1. — i) S. 10. Syst. 5. T. 3.

2) *p p* *agitato* etc.

Hautbois

Clarin. et Bassons

3)

4)

Figure 3 Idem<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*, p. 43.



## The Score as Text

Hoffmann and Schumann ambitiously try to mediate musical structures without having recourse to a verbal apparatus. Nevertheless, a tenacious text-metaphorical foundation thwarts their efforts to dissociate music from linguistically fixed descriptions. Hoffmann's and Schumann's critical discourse exhibits the remarkable tendency to interpret the score as a textual phenomenon. Ian Bent discerns a „battery of formal-structural designators“<sup>50</sup> in Hoffmann's reviews and lists an inventory of terms, like 'Satz' or 'Thema' that exemplify such marked text-analytic vocabulary. The textual metaphors in *Musikkritik* transform music scores into a 'Textur', a term coined by Andreas Kilcher. The discourse embraces a „Schreibparadigma, das [...] in Richtung von fragmentarischen und kombinatorischen Schreibweisen hinausführt, sie förmlich in Richtung einer neuen *Litteratur* enzyklopädisiert“<sup>51</sup>. The encyclopedic indexing of the score complements the semiotic conflict between text and score: the review, formerly based on proper experiences, reverts into a *Kritik* derived directly from the score itself. This handling of the musical material chimes in with Friedrich Kittler's assertion that the early Romantic processing of acoustic data in letterpress printing puts the imagination of the reader out of play. In its place, writers reproduce a sound that is more faithful to the object itself.<sup>52</sup> Typically, the replication of the score as an index comprises concrete references to the music sheet itself. Hoffmann, for example, frequently uses short and concise, albeit very detailed remarks. In addition, he depicts the score as a system, as if it were a coordination grid that permits the reader to navigate through the music. Take, as a short illustration, the following comment about the score of the opera *I Virtuosi Ambulanti* of Valentino Fioravanti: „Der Stich ist deutlich und schön, jedoch nicht fehlerfrei. So z. B. steht Seite 11. Syst. 2 T. 7, vor a ein b, welches gar nicht hingehört“.<sup>53</sup>

Staging the score as a text has poetic consequences that irreversibly root music in a written paradigm. Hoffmann mainly uses score references as an index system, i.e. as an alternative way of visualising the musical form. Schumann, then, elevates the understanding of music as text from a metaphorical container to a leading principle of music mediation. Textuality thus becomes constitutive of the musical expression itself. The review of the *Symphonie Fantastique* reflects this notion on different levels. As we have

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<sup>50</sup> Bent: *Music Analysis*, p. 141.

<sup>51</sup> Andreas B. Kilcher: *mathesis und poiesis. Die Enzyklopädik der Literatur 1600-2000*. München: Wilhelm Fink 2003, p. 323.

<sup>52</sup> Friedrich A. Kittler: 'Über romantische Datenverarbeitung'. In: *Die Aktualität der Frühromantik*, ed. by Ernst Behler and Jochen Hörisch. Paderborn: Schöningh 1987, p. 139.

<sup>53</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann: 'Valentino Fioravanti, *I Virtuosi Ambulanti*'. In: *Schriften zur Musik*, p. 30.

seen, the architectural metaphor in the second instalment describes music as a textual building. Schumann quickly relinquishes this trope. In its stead, a visual model of description replaces an acoustical one: Florestan „sieht“<sup>54</sup> the symphony and makes it visually accessible as a „Notengebäude“. R. Schumann, for his part, equates hearing with reading and compares acoustic understanding to the exegesis of a manuscript: „Die Meisten haften beim ersten oder zweiten Anhören zu sehr an den Einzelheiten und es verhält sich damit, wie mit dem Lesen einer schwierigen Handschrift [...]“.<sup>55</sup> The symphony is not a formless mould that cannot be described in words, but materialises as a text. Florestan indeed believes that he „den Componisten kennen gelernt [hat]“<sup>56</sup> in the composition and he invites the reader to “read” the appearance of a woman in the symphony for himself.<sup>57</sup> R. Schumann catches the foundations of a „höheren, poetischen Interpunction“<sup>58</sup> in Berlioz’ work and criticises „die leichtsinnige Orthographie des Clavierauszugs“.<sup>59</sup>

In the end, R. Schumann wraps up his search for an adequate rendition of music through words in several poetic observations. First of all, he ponders on what senses one relies when experiencing music. When R. Schumann describes the symphonic chaos in the last movement of the *Symphonie Fantastique*, for instance, he concludes that „[o]hne Partitur [man] die letzten Seiten nur schlecht nehmen [kann]“.<sup>60</sup> At the same time, he puts an end to Florestan’s musings about the mimetic quality of the symphony with the decided words: „Genug, hier muß man hören“.<sup>61</sup> In addressing the gap between hearing and reading, R. Schumann furthermore problematises the position of the *Musikkritiker* himself. He wonders if the latter can even reliably mediate between music and listener. The competition between the senses impugns whether the *Kritiker* represents an added value to the formation of an opinion – a skepticism of which R. Schumann’s following observation is exemplary: „Ist einmal das Auge auf einen Punct geleitet, so urtheilt das Ohr nicht mehr selbstständig“.<sup>62</sup> What’s more, R. Schumann eventually questions whether meaning even inheres in music. The last paragraphs of the final instalment thus cite a problem that is as old as music itself: „Die Hauptsache bleibt, ob die Musik ohne

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<sup>54</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* I, p. 1.

<sup>55</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* III, p. 37.

<sup>56</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* I, p. 1.

<sup>57</sup> “Ich denke mir dies weibliche Wesen, wie den Hauptgedanken der ganzen Symphonie, blaß, lilienschlank, verschleiert, still, beinahe kalt; - - - aber das Wort geht schläfrig und seine Töne brennen bis ins Eingeweide, - leset es in der Symphonie selbst [...]” (ibid., p. 2).

<sup>58</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* III, p. 38.

<sup>59</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* V, p. 47.

<sup>60</sup> ibid., p. 46.

<sup>61</sup> ibid., p. 47.

<sup>62</sup> Schumann: *Symphonie fantastique* VI, p. 50.

Text und Erläuterung an sich etwas ist und vorzüglich, ob ihr Geist inwohnt“<sup>63</sup> – a question that R. Schumann outright affirms.

## Conclusion

Does R. Schumann, when he presupposes an autonomous, musical meaning, jeopardise my thesis that *Musikkritik* debunks the ‘Unsagbarkeit’ of music because of its inextricable reliance on language? On the contrary: an extensive burden of proof shows that *Musikkritiker* reduce music to a discourse of ‘Sprachlichkeit’. Music regains its expressivity through a polysemiosis of the discourse: the analysis of the musical structure perforce pins down the musical form linguistically, though not necessarily verbally. As Hoffmann and Schumann depoeticise the elevated status music had attained in fiction, they metaphorise language itself. The reviews thus relinquish the aesthetic notion of ‘unsayability’. They conversely objectify music and rebrand it in a discourse that likens musical expression to textual concepts.

The ‘Schlüssel der Poesie’, with which Carl Kretschmann tried to gain insight into Romantic music, at the same time decrypts Romantic silence. The dominant paradigm of the ‘Unsagbarkeit’ has the practical effect that *Musikkritik* becomes susceptible for a wide range of discourses and rhetorical templates. I have shown that Schumann and Hoffmann tie in their concern for musical form with new ways of musical expression. The sheer interchangeability of discourse levels, in casu *Poesie* vs. *Kritik*, redefines the step from discourse to practice as the act of discourse as practice, in the sense of Foucault. The ‘Unsagbarkeit’, in that respect, is not merely prohibitive. As a discursive strategy, it turns into an act of speaking itself. Not in its metaphysical sense, but exactly as an institutional phenomenon it „tend à exercer sur les autres discours [...] une sorte de pression et comme un pouvoir de contrainte“.<sup>64</sup> Thus, the transformation from unsayable into sayable materialises as a ‘commentaire’, i.e. as „discours qui sont à l'origine d'un certain nombre d'actes nouveaux de paroles qui les reprennent, les transforment ou parlent d'eux“.<sup>65</sup> This act of rhetorical rebellion, which particularly manifests itself in the polemical register (cf. 4.2), excavates another dimension of ‘(Un)Sagbarkeit’: the organising of the discourse, of the field and of differences, i.e. the silencing of one’s competitors. The rhetorical

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<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>64</sup> Michel Foucault: *L'ordre du discours*. Paris: Gallimard 1971, p. 20.

<sup>65</sup> Foucault: *L'orde du discours*, p. 24.

rehabilitation of 'Unsagbarkeit' fits in with the development into 'Metakritik', for which Herder considered language decisive<sup>66</sup>. The rebirth of the sayable, so to speak, is most clear in Nietzsche's case and can even be found in Adorno's work, as Albrecht Riethmüller argues.<sup>67</sup> Especially in the category of the 'höhere Kritik' in which „Subjektivität [sich] als Objektivität maskiert und den ‚Zeitgeist‘ reden lässt“<sup>68</sup>, so Carl Dahlhaus, we encounter a music-critical template that extends from Wagner's *Oper und Drama* (1851) and Nietzsche's *Der Fall Wagner* (1888) to Adorno's polemics against Stravinsky in *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (1949). As a consequence, the debunking of the 'Unsagbarkeitstopos' in *Musikkritik* does not only realign the aesthetic balance between word and music in Romanticism. In addition, it looks at discourses as practices and compels us to take into consideration the design or even 'madness' of *Kritik*. The music-critical meta-discursivity in this way exposes the artificial character of Romantic musical aesthetics and its reliance on verbal organisation. An insight that Florestan, in the end, already arrived at long before we did: „Die Aesthetik der einen Kunst ist die der andern; nur das Material ist verschieden“.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Kurt Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis : zur Geschichte des Kritikbegriffs von Kant bis Marx*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1975, p. 113-114.

<sup>67</sup> vgl. Albrecht Riethmüller: 'Adorno Musicus', in: *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 47/1 (1990), p. 14.

<sup>68</sup> Carl Dahlhaus: 'Das Problem der "höheren Kritik". Adornos Polemik gegen Stravinsky'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 148/5 (1987), p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> Robert Schumann: 'Aus Meisters Raro's, Florestan's und Eusebius' Denk- und Dicht-Büchlein. In: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*. Vol. 1. Reprint of the Leipzig-Edition of 1854. Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel 1985, p. 43.

## Part II: Fashioning the Reader

The first part of this study has homed in on the discursive instances that instigate communication in *Musikkritik*. Schumann and Wagner work within the margins of a public institution that licenses critical discourse and that organises the way authors convey *Kritik*. Their personae as *Musikkritiker*, moreover, broadcast the values and norms by which they judge. At the same time, they aim to improve their standing in the public sphere. Rather than a mere act of self-fashioning or legitimation, however, a process of persuasion also inheres in *Kritik*. *Kritik* takes shape in the public sphere exactly in order to disseminate opinions and guarantee a more widespread access to information and knowledge. *Kritik*, to that effect, is always meant for someone else.

The second part of this study concentrates on that alterity and, more specifically, on the position of the reader in *Musikkritik*. First of all, I will investigate how Schumann and Wagner enlist the reader in the rationale of their *Musikkritik*; in other words, how they attempt to persuade their readership. (cf. Chapter 4). Secondly, I will consider whether the reader is given room to become involved in *Kritik*: to what extent, for instance, can they reflect on or even counter the opinions of Schumann and Wagner? Before I move on to address these questions, however, I shall discuss the general textual and discursive identity of readers, not only in *Kritik*, but most importantly in *Musikkritik*, where they are reduced to second-hand listeners.

### Readers as Discursive Agents

The relation between *Kritiker* and reader is vital to understand the position *Kritik* attempts to carve out for itself in the public sphere. The place of the reader in *Kritik* has mostly been broached in the margins of poetic surveys. Such poetic approaches are not unproblematic, however, as different readings often contradict each other. Hohendahl,

for example, argues that Schiller first initiated a “Desintegration des Publikums”.<sup>1</sup> In his infamous rejection of Gottfried August Bürger’s poems as popular and populist, Schiller *de facto* rejected the Enlightenment’s striving for a homogenous *Öffentlichkeit*. Romanticism thereupon carried forward this development. Although prominent intellectuals such as the Schlegel brothers or Schleiermacher expounded their philosophical and aesthetic ideas in academic lectures<sup>2</sup> that were open to a broad audience, early Romantic poetics championed a ‘demancipation’ of the public: “[I]n der Durchbildung der Kunsttheorie, aus der sich der spezifisch romantische Begriff der Kritik ableitete, ist für die Öffentlichkeit als einen legitimierenden Gesprächspartner keinen Platz mehr”.<sup>3</sup> Kathleen Wheeler, for her part, takes a different view to Hohendahl. She claims that authors viewed the reader as “a fellow labourer”<sup>4</sup> in the Romantic age. In her opinion, Jean Paul’s or Novalis’s aesthetic theories very much advocate that the reader become involved in texts, for example by means of the fragment: “The fragment form was meant then to represent the incomplete nature of language, communication, and art as parts representing the unattainable perfection toward which they strove, while at the same time the fragment genre instructed the reader in his role as an actively participating to create the relations which the artifact could stimulate rather than in the role of passive recipient or observer of someone else’s striving”.<sup>5</sup>

Hohendahl’s poetics of reader estrangement and Wheeler’s aesthetics of reader collaboration are radically opposed to each other. If anything, their different interpretations of the reader’s role in *Kritik* demonstrates that a poetical answer to the question yields a distorted, if not incomplete view on the matter. Poetics, in other words, does not constitute a sound parameter to discuss the relation between *Kritiker* and reader. Alternatively, I propose to determine the place the reader occupies in *Kritik* from the critical discourse. As Steffen Martus remarks:

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Uwe Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik und Öffentlichkeit*. München: Piper 1974, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> One could interject that public lectures superseded written communication as the preferred form of interaction with the public sphere. Be that as it may, the shift from written to oral interaction sincerely affects the function of the reader in *Kritik*, as Schlegel makes clear in Lyceums-Fragment 86: “Der Zweck der Kritik, sagt man, sei, Leser zu bilden! - Wer gebildet sein will, mag sich doch selbst bilden. Dies ist unhöflich: es steht aber nicht zu ändern.” (Friedrich Schlegel: ‘Kritische Fragmente (Lyceums’-Fragmente)’. In: *Fragmente der Frühromantik: Edition und Kommentar*, ed. by Friedrich Strack and Martina Eicheldinger. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2011, p. 16. On the relation between *Kritiker* and reader in Romantic critical poetics see also Dominic Berlemann: *Wertvolle Werke. Reputation im Literatursystem*. Bielefeld: transscript 2011, p. 327-337.

<sup>3</sup> Hohendahl: *Literaturkritik und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Kathleen M. Wheeler: ‘Introduction’. In: *German aesthetic and literary criticism: The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, ed. by Kathleen M. Wheeler. Cambridge: University Press 1984, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Wheeler: *Introduction*, p. 11.

Die Etablierung von Negativität hängt mit einer veränderten Rollenverteilung zusammen: In der nach Maßgabe der Rhetorik organisierten literarischen Kultur sind Produzenten auch Rezipienten und umgekehrt. Danach spalten sich die Rollen auf, es entstehen Leser und Autoren. [...] Man muß jetzt aber neue Operationen vornehmen, um den Worten Besonderheit zu vermitteln bzw. um die Worte, die allen Sprechern gehören, zu eigenen Worten zu machen. Die fremde Rede läßt sich nurmehr auf neuen Umwegen in die eigene Überführen.<sup>6</sup>

Critical discourse, to put it differently, *de facto* factors in an alterity. In order to circulate in the public sphere, *Kritik* expresses itself through written language. It shares that language with numerous other institutions and individuals and conforms it to the conditions that the public sphere imposes. In that sense, *Kritik* always tunes to an otherness. The question of importance is to what extent that otherness leaves behind traces in the discourse of *Kritik*. The most defining alterity are undoubtedly readers: readers constitute a crucial factor in the success of *Kritik's* pragmatic ambitions. Indeed, Enlightenment philosophers and *Kritiker* regarded the reader as the main beneficiary of *Kritik*.<sup>7</sup> In Kant's infamous words, the Enlightenment aims to bring about the "Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit".<sup>8</sup> *Kritik* was no longer the object of its own gain (i.e. the fostering of scientific knowledge), but was promoted to a *raison d'être*, an epistemic rationale.<sup>9</sup> *Kritik* bartered opinions and came to understand

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<sup>6</sup> Steffen Martus: *Werkpolitik. Zur Literaturgeschichte kritischer Kommunikation vom 17. bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007, p. 66.

<sup>7</sup> cf. "So nimmt sowohl der kritische Diskurs über die Legitimität des (absolutistischen) Staates als auch der ästhetische Diskurs (beispielsweise in der klassizistischen Geschmacksdebatte oder der Lektüredebatte des ausgehenden 18. Jh.) an der Ausfaltung der Begriffe Publikum, öffentlich, Öffentlichkeit teil und bereichert sie inhaltlich. Von dieser übergreifenden Tendenz im Gebrauch profitiert letztlich das Moment der kritischen Intervention: Vor allem der Begriff der Öffentlichkeit selbst hat schon in der Aufklärung eine kritische Spitze. Er richtet sich indirekt oder direkt gegen politische und gesellschaftliche Strukturen der traditionellen vormodernen Gesellschaft. Im Unterschied zum älteren Gebrauch trennen sich insbesondere der Begriff des Staates und der staatlichen Gewalt und der Begriff des Publikums und der öffentlichen Meinung (>public opinion<, >opinion publique<)." (Peter Uwe Hohendahl: 'Öffentlichkeit/Publikum' in: *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe. Historisches Wörterbuch in sieben Bänden*, ed. by Karlheinz Barck. Vol. 4. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 2001, p. 584); Foucault, moreover, argues that *Kritik* fundamentally reach out to an unattainable alterity: „Après tout, la critique n'existe qu'en rapport avec autre chose qu'elle-même : elle est instrument, moyen pour un avenir ou une vérité qu'elle ne saura pas et qu'elle ne sera pas, elle est un regard sur un domaine où elle veut bien faire la police et où elle n'est pas capable de faire la loi.“ (Michel Foucault: ‚Que'est-ce-que la critique? [Critique et Aufklärung]‘. In: *Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie* 84/2 (1990), p. 36).

<sup>8</sup> Immanuel Kant: 'Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?'. In: *Was ist Aufklärung? Ausgewählte kleine Schriften*, ed. by Horst D. Brandt. Hamburg Felix Meiner 1999, p. 20.

<sup>9</sup> cf. Kant in *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*: "Ich verstehe aber hierunter nicht eine Kritik der Bücher und Systeme, sondern die des Vernunftvermögens überhaupt in Ansehung aller Erkenntnisse, zu denen sie unabhängig von aller Erfahrung streben mag, mithin die Entscheidung der Möglichkeit oder Unmöglichkeit einer Metaphysik überhaupt und die Bestimmung sowohl der Quellen, als des Umfangs und der Gränzen derselben, alles aber aus Principien." (Immanuel Kant: *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner 1956, p. 7-8).

itself as an inherently dialogic enterprise (cf. supra). Consequently, it confirmed the reader as a necessary conversation partner. 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Kritik* developed distinct discursive strategies to include and textually materialise the indispensable presence of the reader. In that sense, readers, as discursive agents, act as personifications of a public sphere, with which the *Kritiker* can now more actively engage.

Accordingly, I rely on a heuristic understanding of the reader. In *Kritik*, the reader is essential: as a historical individual, of course, though also – and most decisively – as a discursively realised partner. I have already made this case based on Booth’s notion of the implied reader (cf. 2.1.1). Likewise, I draw near to the text-pragmatic agent of the ‘implicit reader’ that Wolfgang Iser describes. “Der implizite Leser”, Iser explains,

besitzt [...] keine reale Existenz, denn er verkörpert die Gesamtheit der Vororientierungen, die ein fiktionaler Text seinen möglichen Lesern als Rezeptionsbedingungen anbietet. Folglich ist der implizite Leser nicht in einem empirischen Substrat verankert, sondern in der Struktur der Texte selbst fundiert. Wenn wir davon ausgehen, daß Texte erst im Gelesenwerden ihre Realität gewinnen, so heißt dies, daß dem Verfaßtsein der Texte Aktualisierungsbedingungen eingezeichnet sein müssen, die es erlauben, den Sinn des Textes im Rezeptionsbewußtsein des Empfängers zu konstituieren. Daher bezeichnet das Konzept des impliziten Lesers eine Textstruktur, durch die der Empfänger immer schon vorgedacht ist, und die Besetzung dieser strukturierten Hohlform läßt sich auch dort nicht verhindern, wo sich Texte durch ihre Leserfiktion erklärtermaßen um einen Empfänger nicht zu kümmern scheinen oder gar ihr mögliches Publikum durch die verwendeten Strategien auszuschließen trachten. So rückt das Konzept des impliziten Lesers die Wirkungsstrukturen des Textes in den Blick, durch die der Empfänger zum Text situiert und mit diesem durch die von ihm ausgelösten Erfassungsakte verbunden wird.<sup>10</sup>

To widen Iser’s concept from fictional to textual communication tout court, I believe that authors, in addition to an implicit reader, also have an ideal *reaction* in mind and that they gear their *Kritik* to that reaction. On the one hand, texts fashion a reader in advance (‘Textstruktur’).<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, however, the success of these operations depends on the actual response by the individual reader after the reading act (‘Aktstruktur’). In

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<sup>10</sup> Wolfgang Iser: *Der Akt des Lesens*. München: Wilhelm Fink 1994, p. 60-61.

<sup>11</sup> cf. “Daher bezeichnet das Konzept des impliziten Lesers eine Textstruktur, durch die der Empfänger immer schon vorgedacht ist, und die Besetzung dieser strukturierten Hohlform läßt sich auch dort nicht verhindern, wo sich Texte durch ihre Leserfiktion erklärtermaßen um einen Empfänger nicht zu kümmern scheinen oder gar ihr mögliches Publikum durch die verwendeten Strategien auszuschließen trachten. So rückt das Konzept des impliziten Lesers die Wirkungsstrukturen des Textes in den Blick, durch die der Empfänger zum Text situiert und mit diesem durch die von ihm ausgelösten Erfassungsakte verbunden wird.” (Iser: *Der Akt des Lesens*, p. 61).



that sense, *Kritik* contains an intrinsic interactive quality; I regard the author as the principal force guiding that interaction.

Critical discourse accommodates the fact that individual acts of reception interfere with the author's concept of an ideal reaction. Authors soon realised, indeed, that their communication vis-à-vis the reader could not be based on an abstract, ideal conception of readership:

Den meisten Journalunternehmern mit höheren Ansprüchen war klar, daß ihnen ein heterogenes und schwer zu bindendes Publikum gegenüberstand. Nicht alle Leser konnten oder wollten im Sinne des Herausgebers lesen. Außerdem kannten die Autoren um 1770 den Geschmack der meisten Leser noch nicht gut genug, so daß sie gelegentlich ihr Ziel verfehlten. Vermutlich entsprachen, wie Wieland 1773 errechnete, nur 50 von 1000 Lesern dem idealen Leser. Wenn bei einer zweiten Lektüre weitere 200 reagierten wie die 50, so wollte er sich zufriedengeben.<sup>12</sup>

Much aware of the disparate makeup of the reader audience,<sup>13</sup> *Kritik* put distinct methods in place to retain its grip over the communication process. A case in point is the genre of 'Antikritik', which enabled those affected by *Kritik* to directly respond in the *Zeitschrift* itself. Irina Denissenko observes an "inszenierte Öffentlichkeit des Streites".<sup>14</sup> She cites the genre of the *Antikritik* as a distinct textual format that periodicals developed to spark the interaction with the readership. *Antikritiken* sacrifice the ideal of universal validity in favour of reader emancipation, publicity and journalistic self-promotion. In that way, Denissenko notes, *Antikritiken* very much reckon in the presence of the reader: "Wichtig ist, dass in der Antikritik die Stimme eines Literaturkonsumenten vernehmbar wird, welcher konkrete Vorstellungen mit Blick auf einen für geeigneten Lesestoff zu haben scheint".<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, other discursive strategies acknowledge the reader by having recourse to the act of reading itself. The most notable development in that regard is the shift from anonymity to the reader apostrophe. Stephan Pabst reminds us that the readership

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<sup>12</sup> John A. McCarthy: 'Literarisch-kulturelle Zeitschriften'. In: *Almanach bis Zeitung: ein Handbuch der Medien in Deutschland 1700-1800*, ed. by Ernst Fischer and Wilhelm Haefs. München: Beck 1999, p. 179.

<sup>13</sup> Monika Neukirchen, for instance, draws up a typology of four reader types: the numismatic reader (i.e. a reader who pays – very – close attention to the details of the text), the skimming reader, the non-reading reader and the reading reader, who is the most moderate of all and assumes a modest, yet basic critical stance vis-à-vis the text (cf. Monika Neukirchen: 'Die Geburt der Kritik aus dem Geiste des Gesprächs'. In: *Hat Literatur die Kritik nötig? Antwort auf die Preisfrage der Deutschen Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung vom Jahr 1987*. Frankfurt am Main: Luchterhand 1989, p. 127-128).

<sup>14</sup> Irina Denissenko: 'Die inszenierte Öffentlichkeit des Streites. Die Gattung Antikritik und das kritische Profil der Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung' In: *Organisation der Kritik. Die Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung in Jena 1785-1803*, ed. by Stefan Matuschek. Heidelberg: Winter 2004, p. 113.

<sup>15</sup> Denissenko: *Die inszenierte Öffentlichkeit des Streites*, p. 121-122.

eventually undermined the practice of anonymity. Originally, anonymity protected authors from political repercussions and allowed *Kritiker* to emerge as a voice from the masses (cf. 2.1.2). However, the public upon which *Kritiker* called, was only ever a virtual one.<sup>16</sup> Over time, it lost touch with the empirical readership it was grafted on: “Berief sich der Kritiker bisher mit seiner Anonymität auf ein kritisches Kollektiv – das Publikum – und legitimierte sich damit als Kritiker, so läuft er nun Gefahr, seiner eigenen Legimitationsstrategie zum Opfer zu fallen, indem sich dieses Publikum und die ihm zugeordnete Rolles eines Vernunftrealisators als bloße Hypothese erweisen”.<sup>17</sup> The relation between the (anonymous) *Kritiker* and the reader was long based on the blanket rule that the *Kritiker*, as *vox populi*, expressed the same opinions and beliefs as its readership. In reality, however, the reading public expanded and became increasingly sociologically diversified. *Kritiker*, as a result, had no particular legitimacy as they represented a voice among many discordant voices.<sup>18</sup> Since the public no longer felt any kinship to the anonymous author, it expected a *Kritiker*-persona with whom it could interact. The consequences were twofold. On the one hand, the *Kritiker* asserted himself as a more prominent, identifiable force that needed to be reckoned with.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, *Kritik* embedded the reader in its discursive structures: “Das Modell der mündlichen Kommunikation, an dem sich bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts viele Zeitschriften wenngleich nur noch metaphorisch orientierten, war inzwischen ganz in einer schriftlich organisierten Öffentlichkeit aufgegangen. Dadurch erübrigte sich die Notwendigkeit der persönlichen Adressierung [...] Von nun an richtet sich in der Wahrnehmung ihrer Kritiker die anonyme Rezension von niemandem an niemanden”.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> For Pabst, the practice of anonymity in the ALZ inevitably implies the de facto creation of a ‘hypothetical audience’. As a virtual construct, the readership is allotted a specific pragmatic role in the critical process: “Das Publikum, das die A. L. Z. vorausgesetzt hatte, erweist sich als Fiktion einer einstimmigen Vernunft, in deren namen der Kritiker auftrat. [...] Die Fiktion der einstimmigen Vernunft war der Umweg, auf dem sich das Sprechen aus dem Publikum doch wieder in ein Sprechen für das Publikum verwandelte [...]” (Stephan Pabst: ‘Der anonyme Rezensent und das hypothetische Publikum. Zum Öffentlichkeitsverständnis der Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung’. In: *Organisation der Kritik*, p. 45). According to Pabst, the staging of a hypothetical audience forebodes the creation of an “entfremdete Öffentlichkeit” (Pabst: *Der anonyme Rezensent*, p. 49), as it would be sustained under the generation of Romantic *Kritiker*.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 42-49; cf. “Mit der Regelmäßigkeit wird gleichzeitig ein Kommunikationsprozeß eingeleitet, das die Resultate der Kritik vom Publikum anhand der beurteilten Werke unmittelbar überprüft, revidiert oder bestätigt werden können. Das Publikum erhält über mündliche Diskussionen, hinaus prinzipiell die Möglichkeit, Autor- und damit Kritikerfunktion zu übernehmen; d. h., das Medium Zeitschrift, das nicht zwingend an einen einzigen Urheber gebunden ist, läßt die unmittelbare öffentliche Reaktion vieler Stimmen zu.” (Ute Schneider: ‘Literaturkritische Zeitschriften’. In: *Almanach bis Zeitung*, p. 197).

<sup>19</sup> cf. Pabst: *Der anonyme Rezensent*, p. 49

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, p. 49.

Critical discourse reflects the growing interest of *Kritik* in the reader. It stages scenographies that simulate the oral exchange of opinions between different interlocutors (cf. 2.1.2.3), for instance. Moreover, critical discourse internalises the attempts to boost communication and interaction. On such occasions, *Kritik* strikes up a direct conversation with the reader: the *Kritiker* directly addresses readers and, as such, confirms them as legitimate participants. The most apparent strategy to address the reader is the apostrophe. The dialogue form and the apostrophe are not far removed from each other in terms of pragmatic ambition. Both essentially heighten the acceptability of opinions. Whereas dialogues are more indirect in that they allow different fictional discussion partners to express their respective views in a seemingly spontaneously, the apostrophe leaves readers with less distance from the opinions they are reading. Early on already, authors recognised the pragmatic affinity between the scenography of the conversation and the apostrophic - though always monologic<sup>21</sup> - interaction. Christian Thomasius' *Monatsgespräche* (generally credited as the first popular periodical in the German territory) exemplifies that development.<sup>22</sup> In the genre of *Leserbriefe*, the

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<sup>21</sup> cf. Frank Grunert: 'Von polylogischer zu monologischer Aufklärung. Die Monatsgespräche von Christian Thomasius'. In: *Die Philosophie und die Belles-Lettres*, ed. by Martin Fontius und Werner Schneiders. Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1997, pp. 20-38. Monika Neukirchen describes *Kritik* as a conversation, but acknowledges that its inherent dialogism sometimes flags: "Dieses Bild gilt es, im Auge zu wahren: ein Gesprächspartner, nach vorne gelehnt, in Antizipation des da Kommenden. Behalten wir es noch einen Augenblick lang, bevor wir uns das abrupte Brechen des Tisches zwischen beiden vorstellen, wenn mit einem aufwendigen Geräusch das Gegenüber, der Angesprochene, in unserem Bilde der Gefragte, derjenige, dem gegenüber man sich vorgelehnt hatte, um ihm höchste Bereitschaft und Interesse an seiner Antwort anzuzeigen, ja, wenn mit lautem Geräusch er zu verstehen gibt - durch welche Mittel auch immer -, daß er zu einer Antwort nicht bereit ist. Der Redende hat gesprochen, der Zuhörer ihm nicht geantwortet. Der Fragende hat sich geöffnet, die Antwort aber blieb aus". (Neukirchen: *Die Geburt der Kritik aus dem Geiste des Gesprächs*, p. 124-125). Neukirchen furthermore argues that literature and *Kritik* engage in a symbiotic, Lacian 'Sich-Verhalten-Zu'. *Kritik* is the 'reader' of literature: the former responds to the questions the latter asks (cf. *ibid.*, 130-134).

<sup>22</sup> The title *Monatsgespräche* indicates that dialogism was an early characteristic of German *Kritik*. In the first two years of the periodical, Thomasius simulated conversations between four different speakers which would each reprise the role in the following installments of the journal. These four agents interacted with each other, but always conformed to the reactions that readers expected from them (Stephanie Dreyfürst: *Stimmen aus dem Jenseits: David Fassmanns historisch-politisches Journal "Gespräche in dem Reiche derer Todten" (1718 - 1740)*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2014, p. 119-120). These were easily recognizable opinion templates for the reader, in other words. As a result, Thomasius did not only revolutionise the stylistic face of late 17th-century *Kritik*. The dialogic mode also had an ingenious reader-oriented purpose: Thomasius "erschloß [...] einen neuen Leserkreis. Und zwar einen, der erst durch das Medium selbst geschaffen, ausgebildet und geschult werden mußte" (Dreyfürst: *Stimmen aus dem Jenseits*, p. 118). Over time, however, Thomasius relinquished these fictive, narrative dialogues. Instead, he sought to engage the reader in a more direct conversation. This had particular pragmatic benefits, as Steffen Martus notes: "Die darstellungstechnischen Probleme dialogischer Kritik reflektiert Thomasius schließlich in der Vorrede zum dritten Band der Monatsgespräche, denn von hier an wechselt er zur monologischen Kritik, dies allerdings in durchaus kolloquialer Form durch die Anrede der Leser. Die Vorteile

apostrophic reader address grew into a standard of critical communication one generation later. Gottsched, for instance, was a well-known supporter of reader's letters, to such an extent, even, that he fictionalised them into a new discursive scenography:

Die publizierten Zuschriften echter sowie vom Herausgeber erfundener Leser und Leserinnen verleihen den Wochenschriften den Charakter eines öffentlichen Forums des Austausches privater Individuen. Im Dienst des gesellschaftlichen Partizipationsideals der Aufklärung kann der Herausgeber, laut Wolfgang Martens, 'indem er gleichsam die Partei des Publikums übernimmt, das Publikum selbst aktivieren, ihm die Mitarbeit sozusagen vorexerzieren und es damit aus autoritätsgewohnter Passivität herauslocken zur Bildung eigener verantwortlicher Meinung'<sup>23</sup>

The case of the apostrophe illustrates the main task in the following chapters: to assess how Schumann and Wagner fashion their readers by means of the discursive structures they put in place. The place of the reader is essentially one that the author prefigures in terms of an ideal reaction. The success of that strategy is of course contingent on the extent to which the reader responds in line with the ideal reaction. But given the heterogeneous nature of that response, I will focus on the reader as a discursively prefigured agent.

## The Reader as Second-Hand Listener

We do not know much about the readers of *Musikkritik* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Schumann kept an extensive list of all the correspondents who wrote reports for the NZfM,<sup>24</sup> but very little about number of 'Subscribenten' to the periodical. Generally speaking, I believe it is safe to assume that the audiences of concerts and opera performances<sup>25</sup> made up the

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des Gesprächs bestehen demnach in der unterhaltenden Form der Themenpräsentation und in der Möglichkeit, Tadel auf eine verdeckte Weise zu formulieren." (Martus: *Werkpolitik*, p. 77-78). cf. also the previous footnote.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Nolden: *An einen jungen Dichter: Studien zur epistolaren Poetik*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 1995, p. 58.

<sup>24</sup> cf. Isabel Tentler: 'Das Briefverzeichnis als Portobuch für die NZfM'. In: In: "*Eine neue poetische Zeit*". 175 Jahre *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, ed. by Michael Beiche and Armin Koch (= Schumann Forschungen 14). Mainz: Schott 2013, pp. 61-76.

<sup>25</sup> cf. Hans Erich Bödeker/Patrice Veit/Michael Werner (ed.): *Le concert et son public: mutations de la vie musicale en Europe de 1780 à 1914 (France, Allemagne, Angleterre)*. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme 2002; Sven Oliver Müller: *Das Publikum macht die Musik. Musikleben in Berlin, London und Wien im 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2014.

greater part of the readership. In addition – and here lies my interest, in particular –, the way *Musikkritiker* convey music and speak about it, gives us an insightful idea about the reader profile they want to reach.

To begin with, readers of *Musikkritik* have a distinct profile in comparison to the general discursive identity of the reader in *Kritik*. Indeed, the intermedial translation from music into language that underlies *Musikkritik*, presumes a reader that is not a *prima facie* observer, but rather a second-hand listener. In contrast to *Literaturkritik*, for instance, where the review and reviewed work (to wit, texts) remain within the same semiotic system, readers of *Musikkritik* come across music as mediated renditions: as descriptions or interpretations, in score excerpts etc. (cf. *Intermezzo*). This is the case for most of *Kunstkritik*. In *Laokoon oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie* (1766), Lessing famously brought to notice that the medial difference between visual arts and language affects the rhetorical make-up of *Kritik*. And as we have seen, a similar sense of semiotic distance between music and language gave rise to the poetic ‘*Unsagbarkeitstopos*’ in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. *Intermezzo*).

Apart from rhetorical consequences, the intermedial processes that inhere in *Musikkritik* also influence the position of its readers. Authors might well fall back on general strategies, such as the apostrophe,<sup>26</sup> in order to confirm readers as legitimate, discursive agents. The intermedial foundation, however, inescapably puts readers in a position of dependence and exposes them to pragmatic considerations. Authors of *Musikkritik* translate personal impressions of music through language and attach an interpretation to that rendition. Readers of *Musikkritik*, as a consequence, need not only withstand rhetorical strategies of persuasion to form a proper opinion. To begin with, they must base their judgement on the filtered information that authors feed them.

All theoretical rumination aside, some assumptions are best explained when they are exemplified. We find a notable illustration of the reader’s ‘second-hand’ status in the ‘*Geschichte der schwarzen Ritter*’ that Wagner relates in the second of his *Pariser Berichte*. In the text, Wagner reports on a production of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* that he witnessed in Paris and during which he grew quite bored. As he fell asleep, he dreamt of the „beiden heillosen schwarzen Rittern“.<sup>27</sup> The appearances of these ‘Black Knights’ go back to Wagner’s time in Dresden, when he attended the performance of a wandering theatre company. The production was so amateurish that – as Wagner puts it – „der reißen-

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<sup>26</sup> cf. “Oftmals ist festgestellt worden, dass Hoffmann in auffällig ausgeprägter Weise mit dem Mittel der Leseranrede arbeitet, um sein Publikum an die in der Regel von der eigenen Erfahrungswerten abweichenden Inhalte der Texte zu binden” (Stefan Willer: ‘Systematische Aspekte - Poetik des Konjunktivs/Leseransprache’. In: *E.T.A. Hoffmann: Leben - Werk - Wirkung*, ed. by Detlef Kremer. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2009, p. 532).

<sup>27</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘*Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung*. II’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, ed. by Richard Sternfeld and Hans von Wolzogen. Volksausgabe. Vol. 12. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1916, p. 78.

Strom der Aktion stockte“:<sup>28</sup> actors changed their costumes too slowly, the change of scene took too long or the actor playing the ‚Eremit‘ simply did not appear on stage because he was still in the pub. The dramatic build-up gets interrupted in this manner, and every time that happens, two black knights appear on stage. Crying out „Ha, das sollst du mir büßen!“,<sup>29</sup> they charge at each other and fly at each other’s throats. In her study about Wagner’s dramatic style, Katherine Syer interprets the appearance of the two black knights as an expression of anti-French hostility. She sees an „ongoing need for a redeemer figure of the ilk that fought so valiantly against Napoleon in 1813“<sup>30</sup> in the two figures. That the Black Knights attest to a certain artistic resentment that runs through most texts of Wagner’s Paris period (cf. 2.3.1 & 4.2.2), can already be evinced from the cry „Ha, das sollst du mir büßen!“. Contrary to a nationalist interpretation à la Syer, however, I wish to highlight the particular discursive function of the Black Knights. First of all, Wagner draws the two characters from an experience he had in his home town of Dresden. This alleged autobiographical inspiration revises the assumption that the knights are merely metaphorical levers of a French-German culture war. Furthermore, the motif has a structural function. Wagner interweaves it through the whole essay and on each repetition, uses it to reflect on the critical process itself.

As a dream motif – here, Heine’s influence is not far<sup>31</sup> – the Black Knights spring from a personal experience with the musical material. Wagner, however, employs the Black Knights as a discursive strategy that allows him to diminish the deictic references to his critical I. As such, indeed, they exactly suppress the subjective foundation of the review. Moreover, Wagner uses the Black Knights to filter negatively appraised parts of a performance or composition out of the ‚Bericht‘. He replaces those sections with the brawl of the Knights. As a result, the ‚bad‘ parts remain unmentioned and semiotically unmarked. Wagner radically alters the structure as well as the course of music and recounts it according to his own experience and feeling. The profound effect of this intrusion becomes all the more evident when Wagner, after the anecdote about the Knight’s first appearance in Dresden, continues his review of the *Don Giovanni*-

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<sup>28</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* II, p. 78.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>30</sup> Katherine Syer: *Wagner's Visions: Poetry, Politics, and the Psyche in the Operas Through "Die Walkure"*. Rochester: University Press 2014, p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> cf. Hans-Jürgen Schrader: “‘Die Bilderflut in eines Spiegels Rahmen’: Imaginierte Bildlichkeit in Heines Traumbildern’. In: *Heinrich Heine und die Kunstkritik seiner Zeit*, ed. by Ralph Häfner. Heidelberg: Winter 2010, pp. 199-226. More on the motif of the dream in Wagner’s work can be found in Edward A. Lippman: *The Philosophy & Aesthetics of Music*. Lincoln Mall: University of Nebraska Press 1999, p. 210-238. In one of the most exceptional essays I came across while writing this dissertation, Johanna Dombois drafts a register of all references to dreams Wagner either directly or indirectly (i.e. in conversations) made, cf. Johanna Dombois: ‘Ein Thesaurus für Träume. Register der Träume Richard Wagners’. In: *Richard Wagner und seine Medien. Für eine kritische Praxis des Musiktheaters*, ed. by Johanna Dombois and Richard Klein. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta 2012, pp. 345-369.

performance in Paris. Wagner realises that the dream sequence about the Black Knights filled the gap in the narrated time that he created by falling asleep. And while he was asleep, he evidently did not notice that Mozart's *Don Giovanni* suddenly made way for Rossini's *Wilhelm Tell*:

Auch in dem Traume, den ich in der Pariser Großen Oper träumte, als ich (wunderbar ist es zu sagen!) über 'Don Juan' eingeschlafen war, erschienen mir die beiden schwarzen Ritter. Ihr Kampf war lebhaft und wurde immer erbitterter; diesmal schienen sie sich wirklich den Tod geschworen zu haben, und ich freute mich in meinem Innern, diese beiden Unholde nun auf immer los zu werden. [...] Das Publikum jubelte, die Ouverture zu ‚Wilhelm Tell‘ war eben zu Ende. Man sieht, welches Unwesen auch hier die schwarzen Ritter treiben: – der Sänger der Partie des 'Don Juan' war heiser geworden; die Ouverture und ein Akt des 'Wilhelm Tell' mußten aushelfen. Mich hatte mein Traum angegriffen und ich ging nach Hause.<sup>32</sup>

As a discursive strategy, the Black Knights fill a narrative void: they replace those aspects that are not worth talking about, as the transition from the dream sequence to the final chords of the *Wilhelm Tell*-overture illustrates. The Knights continue to appear as a discursive replacement strategy, for instance in a concert of Liszt.<sup>33</sup> During the course of the essay, they eventually evolve into a strict foil for the subjective impressions of the *Kritiker* and come forward as an absolute evaluation criterion and as a personification of that what music is intrinsically lacking. Wagner, for instance, relates the following words about the violinist Henri Vieuxtemps: „Er ist nach England abgereist; er wird durch alle Weltteile ziehen, um wie ein Halbgott alle schwarzen Ritter zu erschlagen.“<sup>34</sup>

The 'Geschichte der schwarzen Ritter' shows that the intermedial translation from music into word, on which *Musikkritik* relies, facilitates the author's manipulation of the reader. In his appraisal, Wagner leaves out crucial elements and replaces negative experiences by a narrative sequence. This strategy illustrates that readers of *Musikkritik* by all means depend on the information they get from the author, but also on the intermedial strategies the author decides on. I will take that subordinate position of the reader along in the following chapters. In Chapter 3, we will analyze how Schumann and Wagner create a discursive identity for the reader. The intermedial rendition of music in their texts, we shall see, reveals a fundamental contrast in the authors' strategies for reader management: Schumann preselects his reader audience by means of a technical and analytic discourse, whereas Wagner emotionalises his readers. Chapter 4, finally, investigates to what extent the reader receives an opportunity to become engaged in

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<sup>32</sup> cf. Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* II, p. 78-79.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, p. 83.

*Musikkritik*. There as well, the intermedial hurdle for a great part sets the epistemological conditions for that involvement.



## Chapter 3 Forcing the Reader to side with the ‘Musikkritiker’

We have established throughout Part I that Schumann and Wagner convey more than opinions or appraisals in their writings; they attempt to impress a particular ethos on the reader, as well. As a result, *Musikkritik* – and *Kritik* in general – is fundamentally intersubjective: authorial purpose is only justified when we relate it to the audience that it is intended for and aimed at. *De terminis*, that intersubjectivity goes both ways: the reader is likewise exposed to pragmatic considerations on the part of the *Musikkritiker*. His identity is not exclusively an individual, historical one. Rather, authors fashion readers into ideal recipients of their *Kritik*: they prefigure a textual identity and anticipate a preferred reaction. Rhetorical persuasion thus goes hand in hand with the discursive positioning of the reader.

This chapter examines the interrelation between the rhetorical and discursive identity of the reader in Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik*. We will determine how Schumann and Wagner attempt to convince their readers by constraining them to a specific reader profile. Schumann does so *ex negativo* by means of an anti-masses rhetoric. His incessant disparaging remarks about audiences and masses hold a mirror up to the readership’s face. He confronts his readers with discursive models of non-identification. Wagner, by contrast, is more obliging. He writes for different reader audiences and knows marvellously well how to adapt to each of them so as to effectively play into their good graces. As such, his *Kritik* conforms its rhetorical structure to the sensibilities of the reader he addresses.

### 3.1 Schumann contra the Masses

As we have seen in 2.2, Schumann recurrently distances himself from the audiences of his time. He isolates his judgement from that of the general public and often quite forcibly, by explicitly leaving the backdrop of popular opinion. I have also shown that Schumann canonises his own reputation as *Kritiker* and that of his journal. The discursive means by which he does so, however, open up his opinion to reevaluation. Schumann validates his current opinions through former appraisals. As such, he makes his judgement relative to other instances. In 4.1., we will see how Schumann encourages his readership, in particular, to take part in that process of reevaluation. Before I make that point, however, I wish to demonstrate how he steers the judgement of his readers and coaxes them into identifying with his position. More specifically, Schumann prefigures the profile of his reader audience using two rhetorical strategies: on the one hand, an anti-masses discourse and on the other hand, non-verbal elements, such as score excerpts .

Schumann's anti-masses discourse comes in many different shapes, but we can discern three main recurring forms. A first format is the conversation between audience members in the concert hall. These accounts basically satirise the way concertgoers interact with each other and respond to music. They are often internally focalised: the *Kritiker* reports on the discussions, yet in the actual conversation he gets snowed under by the different interlocutors. The following passage is a typical example of this course of events:

Oft trifft es sich, daß wir Künstler, nachdem wir redlich einen halben Tag gegessen und studirt, unter eine Schaar Dilettanten gerathen, und zwar unter die gefährlichsten, denn sie kennen die Beethovenschen Symphonieen. Herr, fängt der Eine an, die wahre Kunst hat mit Beethoven den Culminationspunct erreicht; d'rüber hinaus ist alles Sünde; wir müssen durchaus in die alte Bahn einlenken. Herr, antwortet der Andre, Sie kennen den jungen Berlioz nicht; mit ihm beginnt eine neue Aera; die Musik wird wieder dahin zurückkehren, von wo sie ausgegangen ist, von der Sprache zur Sprache. Deutlich genug, fällt der Erste ein, scheint dies auch Mendelssohn in seinen Ouverturen zu wollen u. s. w. — Unser einer sitzt aber kochend und stumm dazwischen (leider können wir Musiker Alles, außer reden und beweisen) und gießt in bester Laune das Ueberlaufende in Dorn'sche und ähnliche Divertissements.<sup>1</sup>

The *Kritiker* brings his distance to the audience to a head by identifying as an 'artist' and a 'musician'. He is the knowledgeable pendant to the ignorant public. Coming forward as

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Schumann (22., 2., 12., R.S.): 'Pianoforte. Kurze Stücke. (Fortsetzung)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 1, Nr. 38, p. 157.

a *Musiker*, renders the fact that the *Kritiker* is incapable of giving *Kritik* at a moment when *Kritik* is due, all the more remarkable, however. The bleak performance of the narrator in the company of laymen points toward a key element of the antagonising, anti-audience rhetoric that Schumann uses throughout his writings. The satirical style that characterises much of this and other episodes (e.g. the blabbering listeners, their populist opinions and lack of sound musical and historical knowledge) confirms my earlier findings concerning the discursive vulnerability of the *Kritiker* (cf. 2.2.3). The conversation format, too, entails an inherent exposure to the opinions of others. The *Kritiker* is not as despotic as his rhetoric might have us believe. In fact, every time the audience members subdue, interrupt or ignore him, they diminish his authority and affirm the relative nature of his opinion.

Slating the audience with a verbal show of contempt and disdain as a way of making up for a lack of critical potency? The idea is certainly worth entertaining and adds nuance to the exclusively Romantic-elitist tenor with which scholars generally read Schumann's *Musikkritik* (cf. Prambule). The *Kritiker* hangs his verdict in the balance. In the end, it seems that the readers, ultimately, will have to decide what position they follow (although the disparaging rhetoric might give a nudge in favour of the *Kritiker*, of course). At this point, we are met with concerns that are of a pragmatic nature. By opening up his judgement to the involvement of audience members (and as the author of his *Musikkritik*, we must note, he could well have opted for another course of events), Schumann provides readers with the opportunity of becoming more critical themselves – an observation we will make on different occasions throughout this chapter. The concert-conversation-model still has a minimal opinion-inducing effect on the reader, however. Compared to more explicit attempts to foster the reader's appraisal and involvement, it first and foremost realises a discursive demoting of the *Kritiker* rather than that it relies on a full-fledged espousal of the public. Two other instances of anti-masses discourse exhibit a more engaged outreach to the reader: the *Virtuosenkritik* and the 'Philister'-rhetoric.

### 3.1.1 'Virtuosenkritik'

During the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, *Musikkritik* tended to pit the sensation-crazed attitude of the audience against the flamboyant, ecstatic and commercially lucrative performances of the individual virtuoso. The potentially seductive and destructive force of music had been a topos in music writing for quite some time already.<sup>2</sup> The virtuoso embodied these fears and provided a welcome explanation for the frantic reactions of the

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<sup>2</sup> cf. Nicolas Gess: *Gewalt der Musik: Literatur und Musikkritik um 1800*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach 2011.

audiences at the time. Schumann is no exception to this all.<sup>3</sup> When talking about virtuosi, he takes up many of the prevalent commonplaces that music-critical discourse uses to capture the phenomenon. Most of his *Virtuosenkritik* centres around the enticement that radiates from the virtuoso. He draws the public to him and magnetises its members in order to bring them under his spell. Quite literally, virtuosi captivate their audiences. The following comparison Florestan makes between the Belgian violinist Vieuxtemps and the ur-virtuoso Niccolò Paganini<sup>4</sup> features elements that make up the stock of Schumann's *Virtuosenkritik*:

Wenn man von Vieuxtemps spricht, kann man wohl an Paganini denken. – Als ich diesen zuerst hören sollte, meinte ich, er würde mit einem nie dagewesenen Ton anfangen. Dann begann er und so dünn, klein, ja schneiderartig! Wie er nun locker, kaum sichtbar seine Magnetketten in die Massen wirft, so schwankten diese herüber und hinüber. Nun wurden die Ringe wunderbarer, verschlungener; die Menschen drängten sich enger; nun schnürte er immer fester an, bis sie nach und nach wie zu einem einzigen zusammenschmolzen, dem Meister sich gleichwiegend gegenüber zu stellen, als Eines vom Andern von ihm zu empfangen.<sup>5</sup>

This account runs parallel to that of contemporary *Musikkritiker*, like Heine<sup>6</sup>, Gottfried Wilhelm Fink<sup>7</sup>. Wagner, too, declares himself against virtuosi. In 1840, he published the article 'Du Métier du Virtuose et de l'indépendance des compositeurs. Fantaisie esthétique d'un musicien'. Virtuoso singers, in particular bother Wagner because they go

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<sup>3</sup> Florian Edler shows that the question of the virtuoso and his relation to the audience constituted a main point of concern for Schumann and the staff of the NZfM. The essays of most contributors (e.g. Hermann Hirschbach, Zuccamaglio, Carl Koßmaly) are characterised by a strong distrust of the virtuoso performer. The latter disturbed the balance between composer and performer and lent an all too improvising quality to interpretation, cf. Florian Edler: *Reflexionen über Kunst und Leben. Musikanschauung im Schumann-Kreis 1834 bis 1847*. Sinzig: Studio 2013, p. 115-209.

<sup>4</sup> cf. Mai Kawabata: *Paganini: The 'demonic' Virtuoso*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Schumann (F-n.): 'Henri Vieuxtemps und Louis Lacombe'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 8, p. 31. Schumann would later also weigh Franz Liszt against Paganini: "Nun rührte der Dämon seine Kräfte; als ob er das Publicum prüfen wollte, spielte er gleichsam mit ihm, gab ihm dann Tiefsinnigeres zu hören, bis er mit seiner Kunst gleichsam jeden einzeln umspinnen hatte, und nun das Ganze hob und schob, wie er eben wollte. **Diese Kraft, ein Publicum sich zu unterjochen, es zu heben, tragen und fallen zu lassen, mag wohl bei keinem Künstler, Paganini ausgenommen, in so hohem Grade anzutreffen sein.**" (Robert Schumann (R.S.): 'Franz Liszt'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1840, Vol. 1, Nr. 26, p. 102).

<sup>6</sup> cf. Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller: 'Heine und die Pariser Klaviervirtuoson'. In: *Übergänge. Zwischen Künsten und Kulturen*, pp. 25-35; the chapter 'Virtuosity and the Experience of Listening in Heinrich Heine's Music Criticism and 'Florentine Nights'' in Katherine Hirt: *When Machines Play Chopin. Musical Spirit and Automation in Nineteenth-Century German Literature*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2010, p. 92-121.

<sup>7</sup> cf. Dana Gooley: 'The Battle Against Instrumental Virtuosity in the Early Nineteenth Century'. In: *Franz Liszt and his World*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs and Dana Gooley. Princeton: University Press 2006, pp. 75-111.

against the will of the composer.<sup>8</sup> But Schumann experiences the excessive success of the virtuoso as a threat for yet another reason. The ego-cult that they are representative of also translates in a loss of individuality for the listener. In the dialogic concert-conversation-model (in itself a legacy of Enlightenment *Kritik*; cf. 2.1.2.3), Schumann's discursive position created an opening for (laymen) peers to intervene in his *Musikkritik* and engage with it. His opinions were not absolute givens; he rather made them subject to discussion. The character of the virtuoso, then, is at odds with the spirit of activating the critical faculties of the individual reader. Schumann's diatribes depict virtuosi as performers who attempt to subdue their audience into a trance-like state. He does so to such an extent, all the more, that the attentiveness of the listeners amalgamates ('zusammenschmelzen') into a general sensation of awe.

Virtuosi do more than deprive listeners of their critical faculties - they put the very institution of *Musikkritik* under pressure as well. The manner in which virtuosi hypnotise the audience intrinsically changes the way audiences perceive music. Virtuosi tap into sensory experiences that go beyond mere auditory sensations. As such, they confirm a scepticism that Schumann since long harbours against visual imagination. His *Musikkritik* regularly declares itself against dreaming up visual phantasies about music. In the review of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*, for instance, he brings this sentiment to a poignant close: "Ist einmal das Auge auf einen Punct geleitet, so urtheilt das Ohr nicht mehr selbstständig".<sup>9</sup> Schumann's distrust also leads to doubts about *Kritik* itself and about the way it can properly capture the meaning of music:

Man wird fragen, zu welchem Capitel, welcher Scene, weshalb, zu welchem Zweck? Denn Kritiker wollen immer gern wissen, was ihnen die Componisten selbst nicht sagen können, und Kritiker verstehen oft kaum den zehnten Theil von dem was sie besprechen. Himmel, wann endlich wird die Zeit kommen, wo man uns nicht mehr frägt, was wir gewollt mit unsern göttlichen Compositionen; sucht die Quinten und laßt uns in Ruhe.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> cf. Richard Wagner: 'Du Métier du Virtuose et de l'indépendance des compositeurs. Fantaisie esthétique d'un musicien'. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Vol. 58, pp. 495-498.

<sup>9</sup> As we have seen in the Intermezzo, the question of musical meaning is at the core of the *Symphonie Fantastique*-series. Characteristic for Schumann's opinions on the review series, is the following, closing statement: „Die Hauptsache bleibt, ob die Musik ohne Text und Erläuterung an sich etwas ist und vorzüglich, ob ihr Geist inwohnt. Vom ersten glaub' ich einiges nachgewiesen zu haben; das zweite kann wohl niemand läugnen, auch nicht einmal da, wo Berlioz offenbar fehlte.“ (Robert Schumann (R.Schumann): 'Orchester. Hector Berlioz, Episode de la vie d'un Artiste etc. (Schluß)'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 13, p. 50).

<sup>10</sup> Robert Schumann (R.Schumann): 'Concertouverturen für Orchester'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 47, p. 187. Do note that the *Musikkritiker* steps forward as composer in this review. He displays his musical expertise in order to dissociate himself from his colleagues. As Schumann continues, he reflects on the

The relation between music and imagery, between musical meaning and linguistic expression constitutes a central preoccupation for Schumann. Virtuosi deepen his scepticism concerning visuality and render it more tangible. In the aphorism 'Das Sehen in der Musik', Florestan recounts a concert by the piano virtuoso Johann Baptist Cramer. He describes how the audience becomes fixed on the hand of the pianist and wonders about it. Eusebius thereupon explains that this scene is representative of the concert culture of the time: "Doch scheint dies das Publicum zu charakterisiren, das am Virtuosen, wie im Concerte überhaupt, auch etwas sehen will".<sup>11</sup> Concerts of virtuosi, to put it differently, force listeners to complement their auditory sensation with a visual component. Schumann realises that this development does not merely affect the way audiences engage with music. It moreover confronts *Kritiker* with practical obstacles. They have to adapt their way of writing about music to a new concert practice in which acoustic signals rival with visual impulses.<sup>12</sup> This concern is perhaps at the heart of Schumann's *Virtuosenkritik*. Following his comparison between Vieuxtemps and Paganini, for example, Florestan eventually discusses the difficulties that virtuosi confront *Musikkritiker* with. He realises that virtuosi do not only endanger the moral and physical health of the audience. Their sensation-driven performances also supplement originally auditory-based happenings with non-acoustic, sensual experiences. As such, virtuosi create a fundamental semiotic obstacle for writing about music:




Andere Kunstzauberer haben andere Formeln. Bei Vieuxtemps sind es nicht die einzelnen Schönheiten, die wir festhalten könnten, noch ist es jenes allmähliche Verengen, wie bei Paganini, oder das Ausdehnen des Maßes, wie bei anderen hohen Künstlern. Wir stehen hier unvermuthet vom ersten bis zum letzten Ton wie in einem Zauberkreis, der um uns gezogen, ohne daß wir Anfang und Ende finden

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inadequacies of *Musikkritik*: "[...] wünscht ich dich im Augenblicke nichts, als ein Orchester stimmte die Overture an und die gesammte Leserschaft sässe herum, alles mit eigenen Augen zu prüfen. **Ein Leichtes wär' es mir, die Overture zu schildern, sei's auf poetische Weise durch Abdruck der Bilder, die sie in mir mannichfaltig angeregt, sei's durch Zergliederung des Mechanismus im Werke. Beide Arten, Musik zu verdeutlichen, haben etwas, die erste wenigstens den Mangel an Trockenheit für sich, in die die zweite wohl oder übel fällt. Mit einem Worte, Berlioz'sche Musik muss gehört werden;** selbst der Anblick der Partitur reicht nicht hin, wie man sich auch vergebens mühen würde, sie sich auf dem Clavier zu versinnlichen. Oft sind es geradezu nur Schall- und Klangwirkungen, eigen hingeworfene Accordklumpen, die den Auschlag geben, oft sonderbare Umhüllungen, die sich auch das geübte Ohr nach bloßem Anblick der Noten auf dem Papier nicht deutlich vorzustellen vermag." (Schumann: *Concertouverturen für Orchester*, p. 187).

<sup>11</sup> Robert Schumann (R-o, Euseb., Florestan): 'Grobes und Feines. (Von den Davidsbündlern.): Das Sehen der Musik'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 37, p. 147.

<sup>12</sup> For more on intermedial difficulties cf. Gesa von Essen: '«... wie eine melodische Agonie der Erscheinungswelt». Literarische und feuilletonistische Liszt-Paraphrasen aus der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts'. In: *Virtuosität: Kult und Krise der Artistik in Literatur und Kunst der Moderne*, ed. by Hans-Georg von Arburg, Dominik Müller, Hans-Jürgen Schrader and Ulrich Stadler. Göttingen: Wallstein 2006, p. 188 – 194.

könnten. Wenn man daher die erste Art der Virtuosität mit der Figur  die zweite mit , die dritte mit  ausdrücken könnte, so wählte ich für die letzte das Zeichen des Kreisbogens am liebsten”<sup>13</sup>

True to his stylistic earmark, Florestan retains his ironic spirit despite his difficulty to capture the expressive quality of different virtuosi in writing. He meets the semiotic uncertainty that virtuosi force on *Musikkritiker* with a non-verbal solution. The drawings he proposes constitute a playful and insincere effort to tackle the problem. Still, their whimsical nature renders the issue that lies at the heart of the solution all the more germane; it reaffirms a fundamental impotence on the part of the *Kritiker*. From a general perspective, the inclusion of non-verbal signs directs our attention to an aspect of Schumann’s *Musikkritik* that I have yet to address. While Florestan’s drawings remain nonsensical throughout and do not have any added value in terms of argumentation, non-verbal elements acquire a decisive role in the ‘Philister’-rhetoric that Schumann profusely employs in his writings, namely as a manner of prefiguring the profile of his reader audience.

### 3.1.2 ‘Philisterrhetorik’

The ‘Philister’ helps us discover the darker regions of critical discourse. He<sup>14</sup> is a cultural phenomenon that, if anything, has always served as an instrument of exclusion and opposition: students, poets and nationalist movements alike have used the ‘Philister’ as a counterpart from which they distance themselves and subsequently identify themselves with *ex negativo*.<sup>15</sup> Its roots lie in two episodes in the Old Testament the Book of Judges chronicles Samson’s love-hate relationship with the Philistines (chapters 13 to 16) and in the Books of Samuel, the young David defeats the giant Goliath (chapter 17). Needless to say, Schumann’s ‘Davidsbündler’ set out to emulate that latter feat. Around the end of the

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<sup>13</sup> Schumann: *Henri Vieuxtemps und Louis Lacombe*, p. 31.

<sup>14</sup> The ‘Philister’ is commonly a male character. For a diachronic survey of the female ‘Philister’, see Ursula Geitner: ‘Betrachtungen des Philisters. 1800 /1900 /1924’. In: *Philister: Problemgeschichte einer Sozialfigur der neueren deutschen Literatur*, ed. by Remigius Bunia, Till Dembeck, Georg Stanitzek. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2011, pp. 121-141.

<sup>15</sup> cf. “Gegenüber der philiströsen Tagesordnung reklamiert der Nicht-Philister für sich und andere als bessere Weltordnung und besseres Dasein: alles das, was der Philister *nicht* ist. [...] Da im Ziechen von ‘Philister’ immer die anderen es sind, die dem Desideratum moderner Existenz nicht genügen, zieht allerdings auch das auserwählte Dasein den kritischen Blick auf sich. So fällt auf, daß sich der Nicht-Philister grundsätzlich *ex negativo* definiert. Eine positive Selbstdefinierung geht diesem Typus ab.” (Jutta Schich: *Literarische Authentizität: Prinzip und Geschichte*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2000, p. 69).

17<sup>th</sup> century, students in Jena started using the term “Philister” to eschew the ‘normal’ citizens of the town.<sup>16</sup> Later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, *Sturm und Drang* played off the mediocre, ignorant ‘Philister’ against the Genie (e.g. Albert vs. Werther) to enforce its poetic claims. Romanticism, for its part, used the ‘Philister’ to enhance the we-they rhetoric and in its perhaps darkest hour, the term became the motor of anti-Semitic discourse, most notably in the ‘Deutsche Tischgesellschaft’ of Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim.<sup>17</sup> Nietzsche, finally, rediscovers the polemical value of the ‘Philister’-concept. *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen* (1873) devotes a part to belittling David Strauss as a *Bildungsphilister*, i.e. as someone who believes himself to be “Musensohn und Kulturmensch” and who is firmly convinced of the fact

dass seine „Bildung“ gerade der satte Ausdruck der rechten deutschen Kultur sei: und da er überall Gebildete seiner Art vorfindet, und alle öffentlichen Institutionen, Schul- Bildungs- und Kunstanstalten gemäss seiner Gebildetheit und nach seinen Bedürfnissen eingerichtet sind, so trägt er auch überallhin das siegreiche Gefühl mit sich herum, der würdige Vertreter der jetzigen deutschen Kultur zu sein und macht dem entsprechend seine Forderungen und Ansprüche.<sup>18</sup>

From its earliest metonymical redefinition in university environments to Nietzsche’s *Bildungsphilister*: the term ‘Philister’ always carries with it tokens of exclusion and of defamation. Its use in *Kritik* does not deviate from that pattern.<sup>19</sup> The ‘Philister’-rhetoric in critical discourse is an ingenious way of introducing an opponent, a counterpart while at the same time wooing the reader. By inveighing forcefully against a social, yet always

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<sup>16</sup> Tradition has it that the name ‘Philister’ first appeared in a sermon of 1690 by the superintendant Goeze after a student had been murdered by a civilian. In the sermon, Goeze made a reference to the biblical quote ‘Philister über dir Simson’. That account can be questioned, however. First of all, there is no transcript of the sermon, which makes it hard to determine the precise date. Secondly, the depreciative, non-biblical connotation of the term can already be recorded before 1690, to wit 1672. Friedrich Kluge: *Wortforschung und Wortgeschichte: Aufsätze zum deutschen Sprachschatz. Aufsätze zum deutschen Sprachschatz*. Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer 1912, p. 20-45.

<sup>17</sup> cf. Günter Oesterle: ‘Juden, Philister und romantische Intellektuelle. Überlegungen zum Antisemitismus in der Romantik’. In: *Athenäum* 2 (1992), pp. 55-91; Steffen Nienhaus: *Geschichte der deutschen Tischgesellschaft*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 2003, esp. p. 182-215.

<sup>18</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche: ‘Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen I: David Strauss, der Bekenner und der Schriftsteller.’. In: *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Giorgio Colli und Mazzino Montinari. Vol. 1. Berlin/New York: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag (Walter de Gruyter) 1988, p. 165.

<sup>19</sup> The argument of ‘Philistertum’ can also be used against *Kritik*. *Sturm und Drang*-artists saw periodicals and *Kritik* as major accomplishments of the Enlightenment, its ideological archenemy. They regarded *Kritik* as an attempt to rationalise aesthetics rather than letting sentiment and *Einführung* reign free. The central ‘Philister’-‘Genie’-dichotomy that drives much of *Sturm und Drang*-rhetorics gives vent to that scepticism: it turns it back on *Kritik*’s pursuit of facilitating universal knowledge and the exegetic discourse that lies at its heart. (cf. Remigius Bunia/Till Dembeck/Georg Stanitzek: ‘Elemente einer Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte des Philisters. Einleitung’. In: *Philister*, ed. by Bunia, Dembeck, Stanitzek, p. 28).



virtual and - as the history of the concept shows - semantically variable opponent, *Kritiker* compel the reader to identify with their views and ideas.<sup>20</sup> For otherwise, indeed, the diatribe against the 'Philister' would apply to the reader itself. The Weimarer Klassik made use of the 'Philister' to propagate its views and ideas. Klaus Berghahn explains that Schiller in particular had become utterly disappointed in the German readership ever since he was forced to put an end to his journal project *Die Horen* in 1797:

Jetzt kommt es zu jener radikalen Frontstellung gegen das Publikum, wonach der Krieg das einzige Verhältnis zu ihm sei, das einen nicht reuen könne. Die Abrechnung mit dem >Land der Philister< war schon zwei Jahre früher erfolgt, in jenen giftigen Gastgeschenken, >Xenien< genannt, mit denen Schiller und Goethe im Musenalmanach für das Jahr 1797 gegen all jene polemisierten, die ihre neue Kunstauffassung nicht teilten. [...] Sie richteten sich gegen die Revolutionsschwärmer, die inzwischen längst isoliert oder verstorben waren, gegen die Spätaufklärung und ihre Journale, die auf der Verständlichkeit und Gemeinnützigkeit der Literatur insistierten; gegen den Lesepöbel und den Publikumsgeschmack, der zu philiströs ist, um sie zu verstehen; kurz gegen alle, die sie nicht verstanden oder kritisierten - und [...] sich dem Kunstdiktat der Weimeraner [sic] nicht unterwerfen wollten.<sup>21</sup>

Goethe and Schiller instigate a "Privatisierung der Kritik zu Werkstattgesprächen";<sup>22</sup> the once universally valid opinion falls into the hands of an elite, a 'schöne Öffentlichkeit'. The turn away from the public explains the appeal of the 'Philister'-rhetoric: readers get drawn into a privileged alliance with the *Kritiker* as long as they resign themselves to his judgement. The affinity in understanding between *Kritiker* and reader finds various exponents in critical discourse. *Kritiker* stage fictive meetings between sympathisers, artists and art lovers (cf. supra). They coalesce in secret clubs, far away from interference from the public. Such group discussions utilise the polarity between insiders and outsider to enhance the polemical force of *Kritik*. Nevertheless, they are not excluded from becoming philistine themselves, as they in fact resemble similar motives of bourgeois 'Geselligkeit' (cf. supra). E.T.A. Hoffmann brings up this point at the beginning of *Die*

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<sup>20</sup> cf. "Insbesondere lassen sich aber große Teile der Philisterabhandlung Brentanos wie eine Anwendung des Lächerlichkeitskriteriums Schleiermachers auf die versammelte Tischgenossenschaft lesen: Wer sich entsprechend dem in der Tischrede entwickelten Erkennungsmuster als Philister gebärdet, macht sich in diesem Kreis lächerlich, und das Lachen soll ihn als den per definitionem Ungeselligen schon von vornherein aus der Gesellschaft fernhalten". (Nienhaus: *Geschichte der deutschen Tischgesellschaft*, p. 44).

<sup>21</sup> Klaus Berghahn: 'Von der klassizistischen zur klassischen Literaturkritik'. In: *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik (1730-1980)*, ed. by Peter Uwe Hohendahl. Stuttgart: Carl Ernst Poeschel 1985, p. 72.

<sup>22</sup> Berghahn: *Von der klassizistischen zur klassischen Literaturkritik*, p. 73.

*Serapionsbrüder*, his own contribution to the literary motif of group discussions (cf. 2.1.2.3):

Also! - wir wollen keine Philister sein [...] Auch ich gebe meine Stimme zu Ottmars Vorschlag, daß wir uns wöchentlich an einem bestimmten Tage zusammenfinden wollen. Ich denke, die Zeit mit ihren wunderbarsten Ereignissen hat dafür gesorgt, daß wir, lag auch wirklich, wie ich indessen gar nicht glauben und zugeben will, einige Anlage dazu in unserm Innern, keine Philister werden konnten. Ist es denn möglich, daß unsere Zusammenkünfte jemals in den Philistrismus eines Klubs ausarten können?<sup>23</sup>

The 'Philister' would not be of any further concern to the 'Serapionsbrüder' in later texts. Still, the concept time and again proves a staple technique of critical discourse, not in the least in Schumann's *Musikkritik*.

The 'Davidsbund', probably the aspect of Schumann's critical writings that has always appealed most to the imagination of readers and listeners alike, was specifically founded to offer a counterweight to philistinism. In Schumann's very first review, 'Ein Opus II', main protagonists we would later come across more frequently, have yet to band together in the mysterious League of David. As a consequence, we encounter little to no talk about 'Philister' in text, or of the "Davidsbund", for that matter. As soon as the secret league surfaces, however, - and that happens for the first time in 'Die Davidsbündler' for the journal *Der Komet* in 1833 - the 'Philister'-rhetoric likewise takes the stage. The article features the by now familiar rhetoric from the very first sentences: "Kein wahrer Davidsbündler bist Du, Eusebius, sondern ein rechter, lederner Philister mit tauben Ohren. - Es gab ein Gesetz der Griechen, schöne Statuen schweigend anzuschauen, nun vollends eine athmende und tönende. Ein rechter Philister bist Du, Eusebius! Fl."<sup>24</sup> In the NZfM, anti-'Philister'-episodes grows more frequent. The 'Davidsbündler' see Philistines as their arch enemies and they incessantly attack them. Florestan's *Fastnachtsrede* most famously illustrates this. The text opens as follows (and do note the reference to the *Der Komet*-article):

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<sup>23</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann: *Die Serapionsbrüder*. München: Winkler 1976, p. 16-17.

<sup>24</sup> Alfred Schumann: *Der junge Schumann. Dichtungen und Briefe*. Leipzig: Insel 1917, p. 18.

Florestan stieg auf den Flügel und sprach:

Versammelte Davidsbündler, d.i. Jünglinge und Männer, die Ihr todtschlagen sollet die Philister, musikalische und sonstige, vorzüglich die längsten (S. Comet 1833<sup>25</sup> die letzten Nummern),<sup>26</sup>

Gradually, the ‘Davidsbündler’ lost the rejection of philistinism as their critical prerogative. ‘Philister’ acquired a place in the broader anti-masses discourse that Schumann mounts<sup>27</sup>. As a derogatory term, moreover, *Philistertum* was extended to compositions<sup>28</sup>, composers<sup>29</sup> and even *Musikkritik*<sup>30</sup> itself.

As we have seen above, ‘Philister’ are an instrument of rejection and opposition, but also a negative model of identification. By strongly inveighing against them, the *Kritiker* compels readers to identify with his views. Reading the ‘Philister’-‘Davidsbund’ opposition from that point of view opens up an intriguing new way of assessing the pragmatic function of the ‘Philister’-rhetoric in Schumann’s *Musikkritik*. The antagonistic tone of the ‘Davidsbund’-‘Philister’-discourse eventually coaxes readers into siding with the ‘Davidsbündler’. It divides a reader audience based on the criterion of who can identify with the League’s rhetorical bombast and who does not.

In addition, discursive elements often reinforce the appeal to the reader profiles that the specific ‘Philister’-rhetoric aims to single out. Many of those texts, as a matter of fact, contain examples from the compositions that the *Kritiker* discusses. They are inserted as direct, musical notation without any further description or explanation. These non-verbal features activate a skillset that only a specific segment of the readership possesses. It resonates with readers that are proficient enough in reading music. They will be able to follow the argument in full; those that do not have that competence, are excluded from that opportunity. As such, the identification with (or, alternatively, alienation from) the

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<sup>25</sup> The publication year Schumann prints, is not intelligible; it can be either ‘1833’ and ‘1838’. In the *Gesammelte Schriften*, in any case, Schumann unequivocally writes ‘1833’.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Schumann (Anonymous): ‘Fastnachtsrede von Florestan. Gehalten nach einer Aufführung der letzten Symphonie von Beethoven.’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 1, Nr. 29, p.116.

<sup>27</sup> e.g. “O Drittel vom Publicum! man sollte dich in eine Kanone laden, um das zweite der Philister todt zu schießen!” (Schumann (F-n.): ‘Grobes und Feines. (Von den Davidsbündlern.): Das öffentliche Auswendigspielen’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 37, p. 147).

<sup>28</sup> e.g. “Ein Goliath von einem Philister starrte uns an aus dem Quartet” (Robert Schumann (R.S.): ‘Sechster Quartett-Morgen’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1838, Vol. 2, Nr. 20, p. 80).

<sup>29</sup> e.g. “Wer sich immer in denselben Formen und Verhältnissen bewegt, wird zuletzt Manierist oder Philister; es ist dem Künstler nichts schädlicher, als langes ausruhen in bequemer Form” (Robert Schumann: ‘Etuden für das Pianoforte’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 19, p. 74).


<sup>30</sup> “eine strengere Kritik wäre da philisterhaft” (Robert Schumann: ‘Kürzere Stücke für Pianoforte (Fortsetzung.)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1841, Vol. 2, Nr. 32, p. 126).

*Kritiker* does not solely hinge on an aggressive rhetoric of estrangement, but it also is engendered by non-verbal elements in the text.

Schumann frequently combines 'Philister'- or *Publikumskritik* with detailed, music-technical analyses or even with musical excerpts from the score without any additional explanation. A technical segment, for instance, often goes together with depreciative comments about the audience. When Florestan discusses C. Stein's 'Das Komische in der Musik', for example, he opens his article with a typical rebuff of the audience:

Ueber den Aufsatz: das Komische in der Musik [...] erlaub' ich mir, wie über die Sache selbst, später einen zweiten. Nur so viel, daß die weniger gebildeten Menschen im Ganzen geneigt, aus der Musik ohne Text nur Schmerz oder nur Freude, oder (was mitten inne liegt) Wehmuth herauszuhören, die feineren Schattirungen der Leidenschaft aber [...] zu finden nicht im Stande sind, daher ihnen auch das Verständnis von Meistern [...], die jeden Lebenszustand in die Tonsprache übersetzen konnten, so schwer wird.<sup>31</sup>

By now, we have become acclimated to this rhetoric that chides laymen for their complete incomprehension of music. Florestan adds insult to the injury, however, and includes specific score examples in the following paragraphs. Having reproved its members for their incompetence, Florestan is well aware that his audience is ignorant in matters of music. Still, his argument relies on elements that require concrete technical knowledge. Furthermore, he does not explain or analyse these excerpts. Text and musical notation are semiotically and semantically on a par (cf. Figure 4). Given the subject of the review (i.e. humour in music), Florestan's inclusion of score excerpts is not free from irony. He makes his comments on musical humour as technical as possible in order to disparage accounts that simply read too much into music; he labels such interpretations as "zu individuell".<sup>32</sup> Much of the score examples, as a result, counterbalance the psychologising analyses of others, as this short passage shows:

Die im himmlischen Adagio der Bdur-Symphonie  ist zumal im Baß oder in der Pauke ein ordentlicher Falstaff. Ein anderer wollte einen ein

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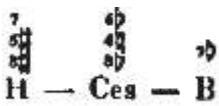
<sup>31</sup> Robert Schumann (Fn.): 'Ueber den Aufsatz: Das Komische in der Musik von C. Stein im 60. Hft. Der Cäcilia.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 3, p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> Schumann: *Ueber den Aufsatz: Das Komische in der Musik*, p. 10. Florestan mocks listeners who read the biography of the composer into music: "So glaub ich in einzelnen *moments musicaux* [sic] von Schubert sogar Schneiderrechnungen zu erkennen, die er nicht zu bezahlen im Stande, so ein spießbürgerlicher Verdruß schwebt darüber. In einem seiner Märsche sieht man recht deutlich den ganzen österreichischen Landsturm mit Sackpfeifen vorn und Schinken am Bajonette" (cf. *ibid.*, p. 10).

Liebespaar ansamsenden Maikäfer in einer zauberischen Mondnacht darin hören, was offenbar zu gesucht und specialisirt ist.<sup>33</sup>

A review of Kalliwoda's first overture seven issues later employs the same strategy:

Das Volk will dabei wenig aufsuchen und nachdenken, es gibt noch dies und das vor Schauspielanfang, vor dem eigentlichen Concert abzumachen – da sind denn musikalische Allgemeinheiten, leichte, hübsch gestellte Redensarten am rechten Ort.

Die erste, D. moll. Die Harmonien  fast zu kühn für manche Ohren.<sup>34</sup>

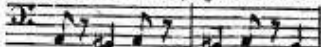
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<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Schumann (12.): 'Kalliwoda, 1, Ouverture à grand Orchestre. Oe. 38. 2. Ouvert. Oe. 44. à 2 Rühle. - Dieselben zu vier Händen à 16 gr. - Leipz., Peters.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 10, p. 38.

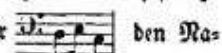
fennen, die er nicht zu bezahlen im Stande, so ein spieß-  
bürgerlicher Verdruß schwebt darüber. In einem seiner  
Märsche sieht man recht deutlich den ganzen österreichischen  
Landsturm mit Sackpfeifen vorn und Schinken am  
Bajonette. Doch ist das zu individuell.

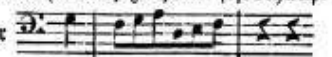
Von rein komischen Instrumentaleffecten führe ich aber  
an die in der Octave gestimmten Pauken im Scherzo der Dmoll-

Symphonie, die Hornstelle 


indem der Adur-Symphonie von Beethoven, überhaupt die  
verschiedenen Einschnitte in Ddur im langsamen Tempo,  
mit denen er plötzlich aufhört und zu dreimalen erschreckt  
(wie denn der ganze letzte Satz derselben Symphonie das  
Höchste im Humor ist, was die Instrumentalmusik auf-  
zuweisen), dann das Pizzicato im Scherzo der Emolls  
Symphonie, obwohl etwas dahinter dröhnt.

So fängt bei einer Stelle im letzten Satz der Fdur-Sym-  
phonie ein ganzes wohlbekanntes und geübtes Orchester zu


lachen an, weil es in der Bass-Figur  den Na-

men eines geschätzten Mitglieds (Becke) zu hören fest behauptet.  
Auch die fragende Figur 


im Contraviolon der Emoll-Symphonie wirkt lustig.  
Die im himmlischen Adagio der Ddur-Symphonie

 ist zumal im Bass oder in der

Pauke ein ordentlicher Falstaff. Ein Anderer wollte ei-  
nen ein Liebespaar ansumfenden Maikäfer in einer zauberischen  
Mondnacht darin hören, was offenbar zu gesucht und specialisirt ist.  
Einen rein humoristischen Eindruck bringt auch der letzte Satz im Quintett (Werk 29)

hervor von der schnippischen Figur 

an bis zum plötzlichen Eintritt des Zweivierteltacts, der  
den gegenkämpfenden Sechschüler durchaus niedermachen  
will. Gewiß ist, daß Beethoven im Andante scherzoso  
selbst eintritt (wie etwa Grabbe mit der Laterne in seinem  
Lustspiel) oder ein Selbstgespräch hält, das sich anfängt:  
Himmel — was hast du da angerichtet! — da werden  
die Perrücken die Köpfe schütteln (eigentlich umgedreht) u.  
Gar spaßhaft sind dann die Schlüsse im Scherzo der  
Adur-Symphonie, im Allegretto der achten. Man  
sieht den Componisten ordentlich die Feder wegwerfen, die  
wahrscheinlich schlecht genug gewesen. Dann die Hörer  
am Schluß des Scherzos der D-Symphonie, die mit

 noch einmal wie recht ausholen wol-

len. — Wie viel findet sich dann im Haydn (im idealischen  
Mozart weniger). Unter den Neuereu darf, außer  
Weber, namentlich Marschner nicht unerwähnt bleiben,

Figure 4 Text and musical notation are semiotically on a par in Florestan's examples of humour in music.

### 3.1.3 The Reader as crypto-‘Kritiker’

Many instances of ‘Philister’-rhetoric unfold along this pattern. Their interaction with non-verbal musical notation<sup>35</sup> exposes notable pragmatic elements in Schumann’s *Musikkritik*. The ‘Davidsbündler’s crusade against ‘Philister’ has long been regarded as a testament to Schumann’s Romantic elitism and his disdain for laymen and readers alike. While the aggressive tone does seemingly grant us little flexibility to refute that impression, his anti-masses rhetoric acts within a broader strategy of prefiguring reader profiles.

Our analyses so far have shown that Schumann’s *Musikkritik* oscillates between two corresponding discursive trends. On the one hand, the anti-masses sentiments produce a remarkable demotion of the *Kritiker*: as ironic and satiric as their style might be, the intermissions by concertgoers and the inability of the *Kritiker* to counter those roguish claims, erect an aura of critical fallibility. They emphasise the relativity of opinions and erode the authority of the *Kritiker* – features we earlier recorded as discursive side-effects of Schumann’s self-canonisation later in his career as *Musikkritiker*. On the other hand, Schumann acknowledges the reader as a crypto-*Kritiker*, a potential ally to his critical ambitions. Despite its vilifying and antagonising rhetoric, the anti-masses discourse upholds the pragmatic bedrock of persuasion in which *Kritik* grounds. It starts from a fundamental outreach to the reader. That reader, by all means, does not constitute a passive, anonymous collectivity that blindly responds to the cues the *Kritiker* gives him (as is more the case in Wagner’s *Musikkritik*, cf. 4.2). On the contrary: the specific addressee often only materialises during the course of a review. Schumann has a particular audience in mind and he tailors the discourse of his *Kritik* to that specific segment of readers. We should read the ‘Philister’-rhetoric within that context of pragmatic reader profiling. Schumann’s *Musikkritik* rids the ‘Philister’ of the nationalist overtones that had begun to eclipse it during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He rediscovers the ‘Philister’ as an instrument of *Kritik*: the rhetoric of exclusion essentially serves a purpose of reader inclusion. The ‘Philister’ is a discursive model that readers can steer clear off. At the same time, it produces an affinity between *Kritiker* and reader which Schumann reinforces through non-verbal cues in the form of score excerpts. Whereas the verbal aggression

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<sup>35</sup> Other notable examples include: Robert Schumann (Euseb., Florestan, Rohr & d. Red.): ‘Die Davidsbündler. II. Heinrich Dorn’s Tonblumen.’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 25, pp. 97-98; Robert Schumann (Florestan): ‘Die dritte Symphonie von C. G. Müller’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 1, Nr. 12, pp. 48-49; Robert Schumann (Eusebius & Florestan): ‘Kritik. (9) Sonaten für Pianoforte’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 1, Nr. 31, pp. 125-127; Robert Schumann: ‘Orchester. Hector Berlioz, Episode de la vie d’un Artiste etc. (Fortsetzung)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 12, pp. 45-48 (cf. also Intermezzo); Robert Schumann (FF.): ‘Bericht an Jeanquirit in Augsburg über den letzten kunsthistorischen Ball beim Redacteur.’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1837, Vol. 1, Nr. 40, pp. 159-161; Robert Schumann (R.S.): ‘Phantasieen, Capricen etc. für Pianoforte. (Schluß)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1839, Vol. 1, Nr. 52, pp. 205-206.

and the mocking of nonsensical, unsubstantiated opinions about music raise a spectre of deterrence, the score examples speak to the intellectual faculties of the musically proficient reader.

Let there be no doubt about it, however: Schumann keeps a tight rein in his *Musikkritik*. Are we to infer from his discursive preselection that Schumann has a selfless belief in the critical capacities of the reader, then we overlook that the seeming emancipation of that reader in reality only follows from a non-argumentative approach. The ‘Philister’-rhetoric invests all its efforts in eschewing ignorant listeners. The score examples, for their part, appear in a semiotically autonomous format and are purposefully designed to make sense without any form of clarification. Schumann gives readers little concrete information to go on and limits their freedom of decision to a polarised choice: they are not expected to make a proper contribution to the discussion, but to only agree or disagree with the *Kritiker* – and the table is set to favour the former option.

Schumann does experiment with fostering the reader’s proper judgement. Paradoxically enough, perhaps, he does so through the setting of the ‘Davidsbund’. As we will see in section 4.1., the reason of existence for Schumann’s ‘Davidsbund’ was to offer a counterweight to Philistinism. The League would continue to march on the Philistines in works as the *Davidsbündlertänze* (op. 6) or *Carnaval* (op. 9). Eventually, the ‘Davidsbund’ founders on dissension within its own ranks, however. As the members consistently quarrel among each other, they fail to reach a consensus and fall short at their duties as *Kritiker*. In the critical void that the ‘Davidsbündler’ thus leave, the reader eventually steps in to determine his own position and opinion.

### 3.2 Wagner: Adapting to the Reader Audience

Chapter 2 has shown that Wagner’s position as a correspondent guarantees him a more effective outreach to his readership. Wagner fashions himself as an outsider, a German in Paris who observes the dealings of the Frenchmen from a distance. Over time, however, Wagner abandons this strategy, perhaps because it loses cogency. The longer Wagner is in Paris, the lesser he can maintain that he is not integrated into Paris society or that he is not granted access to the daily happenings of the city. In fact, the many reviews of concerts, opera performances or exhibitions in the *Pariser Berichte*, etc. de facto contradict that narrative. Wagner’s attacks on Paris surely remain ever-present and their polemical force becomes more intense. At the same time, they get less anecdotal and less centred on what Germans in Paris have to suffer. Instead, they tend to focus on the inherent malpractices of the cultural institutions in the capital. Whereas the first *Pariser Bericht*, for instance, pillories the injustice that befalls German artists in Paris, or while the third



instalment underlines how badly Berlioz interprets Beethoven because he is, *au fond*, still a Frenchman,<sup>36</sup> later articles render more general overviews of the different theatre and opera houses in Paris, and the artists that work for them: the singer Rubini bathes in luxury, for example, or Scribe writes at such a pace that the quality of his work murders people.<sup>37</sup>

Wagner's ethos throughout the correspondence series mirrors the move he makes from outsider to insider. In the first four articles, he identifies elaborately with his fellow countrymen. He does so one time referring to his own person ("von mir, einem armen deutschen Musiker");<sup>38</sup> other than that he uses a plural form like 'wir Deutschen' which implies that he and the reader have a national affinity.<sup>39</sup> Safe from a brief lapse in the very last article (cf. *infra*), such discursive tools of familiarity between speaker and reader suddenly disappear after the fourth instalment. Incidental or not, the abrupt shift comes after a report Wagner had given about Heinrich Heine. Wagner's account goes as follows: Salomon Strauss paid the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung* to print a story that he had humiliated Heine in public. The newspaper mocked Heine and reported that the poet had fled to the Pyrenees. Wagner defends Heine in his fourth 'Pariser Bericht'. He rejects Salomon's claims and criticises the Germans for going along so easily with unsubstantiated stories about their greatest poet. Heine did not flee, Wagner announces, but "befindet sich in diesem Augenblicke in einem Pyrenäenbade und liegt auf den Tod krank".<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> e.g. "Aus unsrem Deutschland herüber hat ihn der Geist Beethovens angeweht, und gewiß hat es Stunden gegeben, in denen Berlioz wünschte, Deutscher zu sein; [...] So wie er aber die Feder ergriff, **trat die natürliche Wallung seines französischen Blutes wieder ein** [...] Berlioz aber kannte, je noch mehr, er verstand sie [Beethovens Symphonien], sie hatten ihn begeistert, sie hatten seinen Geist berauscht - und dennoch ward er daran erinnert, **daß französisches Blut in seinen Adern flösse.**" (Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). III.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 88; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>37</sup> "Aber auch an der Komischen Oper kommen tragische Begebenheiten zum Vorschein: - kürzlich hat ein Operntext von Scribe einen Komponisten an den Rand des Grabes gebracht, einen andern aber wirklich hineingestürzt. Man denke sich! - ein Operntext, den Scribe in zwei Tagen macht! - Welch ein erdrückender Koloß muß doch das Genie Scribe's sein! - -" (Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). VI.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 110).

<sup>38</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). I.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 65.

<sup>39</sup> e.g. "Hier liegt das Mittel, Paris uns Deutschen vollkommen verständlich zu machen, [...]" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 66)., "Gewöhnlich machen zumal wir Deutschen uns doch noch einen zu oberflächlichen Begriff von der Würde [...]" (Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). II.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 84), "Endlich ward es mir klar, und ich kann unsern Landsleuten versichern, daß [...]" (Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). IV.'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 96).

<sup>40</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* IV, p. 102.

This episode is remarkable for several reasons. First of all, because Wagner publicly defends Heine with such zeal that it stands in sharp contrast to *Das Judenthum in der Musik* ten years later, in which he would utterly blaspheme the poet. Within the scope of the *Pariser Berichte* themselves, secondly, Wagner had up to that point incessantly made the case that Germans in Paris are predestined to fail because the cultural institution in Paris thwart their efforts and block their progress. But Heine's case must have been a turning point in that perception that Wagner had so diligently attempted to pin down in his writings. We must not forget that Heine was less of an artistic example than he was a journalistic model to Wagner; they both were correspondents (cf. 2.3). And just as Heine is compelled "aufzuhören, Deutscher zu sein, während er doch nimmermehr Pariser werden kann"<sup>41</sup>, Wagner realises that the solitary predicament he over and over again thematises in his texts, might well extend to the virtual, textual reality he upheld in his *Berichte*. Writing apparently does not sufficiently bridge the physical distance with his home country, so the case of Heine's public defamation teaches Wagner. For that reason, Wagner quickly rebuffs the attitude of his countrymen. His rhetoric at once becomes less antagonistic. He even holds up to the German readers the French as a positive example in an effort, it almost seems, to shame the readership in its 'Schadenfreude':

Soviel ist gewiß; die Franzosen, die allerdings ihren Dichter auch besser gewahrt haben würden, hätten bei ganz gleichen Umständen sich besser zu benehmen gewußt, trotzdem sie genug witzige Köpfe besitzen, die aus einem solchen Skandale einen flüchtigen Stoff zu Späßen zu ziehen sich gedrungen gefühlt haben würden; gelästert aber hätten sie ihren Dichter nicht, zumal, ohne ihn selbst gehört zu haben. Ich habe keinen Grund, für die Franzosen passionirt zu sein; hier aber nehme ich sie mir zum Vorbilde.<sup>42</sup>

There is little sense looking for irony here (a notable characteristic of many of the preceding *Berichte*). Wagner sheds his satiric discontent and appears to genuinely pay compliments to the French. He maintains these spare moments of positive outlook in the following five *Berichte*. In and by itself, this shift from an *argumentum per* to an *argumentum ad*, yes even *contra lectorem* is not exceptional, perhaps. It striking, however, because it breaks the rhetoric pattern that Wagner had diligently built up in previous articles. From that point of view, the last instalment is even more remarkable. If the first article did everything it could to drive home that Germans could not ever be at home in Paris, the last article reaches a totally opposite conclusion:

Dafür ist dies aber auch ein modern Pariser Lustspiel im vollsten Sinne des Wortes und somit von großer Wichtigkeit, denn Paris ist und bleibt nun einmal ein großes

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<sup>41</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* IV, p. 102.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p. 102-103.

Stück Welt, und wer diese studiren will, der tut nicht übel, Paris kennen zu lernen. Ich empfehle Ihnen dieses Lustspiel und wünsche nur, daß man es in Deutschland ganz in dem Geiste und besonders mit dem großen Wohlanstande geben möge, als ich es von den Schauspielern des *Théâtre français* spielen sah; wohl bin ich überzeugt, daß unsere deutschen Schauspieler gewiß die Gabe besitzen, auch jenen Vorzug der Franzosen sich zu eigen zu machen, denn unser Charakter ist Vielseitigkeit, – nur wünsche ich auch, daß sie den Fleiß der Franzosen nachahmen möchten, denn ich bin inne geworden, daß nächst ihrem großen Talente die Schauspieler des *Théâtre français* die seine Vollendung ihres Zusammenspiels hauptsächlich ihrem außerordentlichen Fleiße verdanken. Und wahrlich, ein Stück, wie diese ‘Kette’ Scribe's verdient es und bedarf dessen, denn die gelungene Aufführung ist ebensogut Grundlage seiner Existenz, wie Paris, die Stadt der Welt, selbst. –<sup>43</sup>

The paragraph is surprising, to say the least. Wagner recycles plural forms that establish a national affinity between *Kritiker* and reader from earlier *Berichte* (e.g. ‘unsere deutschen Schauspieler’), yet this time from an inferior position: Germans can only hope to copy the diligence of the French. Likewise, the French are suddenly creative and perseverant, and Eugene Scribe, whom Wagner had attacked in three of the nine articles,<sup>44</sup> has become an example worth emulating. The same feeling of amazement applies to Paris as ‘Stadt der Welt’. Why did Wagner suddenly come round, we could wonder? Because he finally saw an opportunity to make his breakthrough in Paris and he did not want to jeopardise his chances? Such biographical conjectures are not at the core of this study. Furthermore, it is highly doubtful that the *Dresdner Abendzeitung* had such a profound impact on decision making in the Parisian opera houses that its directors would have suddenly turned round on their opinion of Wagner’s operas. I rather want to find out *how* Wagner makes his sudden change of heart acceptable to the reader. How do the writings facilitate and enable the shift from polemical confrontations between France and Germany to a more conciliatory stance on Paris and its cultural institutions? How can we explain the flexibility of Wagner’s antagonism?

A first observation to be made is that the aggressive position Wagner assumes with respect to Paris is much more situational and pragmatic than (auto)biographical accounts would have us believe. A tenacious nationalist discourse, coloured by his proper experiences in the French capital, indeed drives Wagner’s *Kritik*. Nevertheless, this discourse roots in a general agonistic template that Wagner readily engages for other contexts and different audiences. The opposition between France and Germany is without

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<sup>43</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). IX.’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 130.

<sup>44</sup> To wit, in Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* II, p. 81, Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* VI, p. 110-111 and Richard Wagner: ‘Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). VII.’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 116;118.

a doubt *the* predominant mode of Wagner's polemical rhetoric. It reaches back to a long-standing cultural feud between both nations. We should not construct Wagner's Parisian *Kritik* around a categorical opposition between the French and the Germans, however. Doing so would play down the fact that Wagner's aggressive tone is more a general strategy of communication than that it is innate to the specific expression of anti-Paris sentiments. It just as well surfaces with regard to the English (cf. *infra*), the Italians or even Wagner's fellow countrymen (cf. *supra*). A common strategy of the agonistic template, for instance, is the use of association. Wagner's *Kritik* is steeped in stereotypes and *epitheta ornantia* that he repeats on a regular basis. By re-introducing them, he makes his arguments more concise and implicit. Wagner's preferred epithet is certainly that of luxury. The word 'Glanz' illustrates Wagner's recurring use of epithets. The opening sentence of the first *Pariser Bericht* describes Paris as a diamond in the rough, a "Stadt voll Endlosigkeit, Glanz und Schmuß".<sup>45</sup> Wagner will time and again use this association with 'Glanz' to ridicule, belittle and criticise the French capital and its cultural institutions.<sup>46</sup> The idea behind the epithet is, of course, that the whole of Paris is but a façade, an effect without meaning. In that regard, we encounter it most often in relation to the celebrity cults in Paris, and to Rubini in particular. The following passage illustrates the line of attack best: "Ach, in welches Trauerhaus glaubte ich geraten zu sein, als ich am Abend der Eröffnung in die glänzend restaurierte Salle Ventadour trat! Glanz, Glanz, überall Glanz, und doch diese düstere Trauer über all den Glanz ausgebreitet! – O glänzendes Elend, o elender Glanz! – *Rubini* – – die Stimme versagt mir, soll ich von dem reden, dem sie nie versagte!"<sup>47</sup>

Second of all, Wagner has a talent for adapting his texts to his reader audience. He readily presents arguments through different viewpoints and caters them to the

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<sup>45</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 65.

<sup>46</sup> e.g. "Ähnlich geht es in dem *Cirque Olympique* her, wo man jetzt *Murat's* Biographie von Anfang bis zu Ende alle Abende dargestellt sehen kann. **Da gibt es** Schlachten und Scharmützel, **Glanz und Pferde, daß einem die Augen davon übergehen.** –" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* VII, p. 120; bold emphasis mine); "Brillante Renommeen und **glänzende Namen** sind wohl im Stande, den Direktoren und Entrepreneurs einzig zu imponieren; **das Publikum läßt sich aber nicht dadurch verblenden**" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 67; bold emphasis mine); "Dennoch soll meine Korrespondenz **einen glänzenden, politisch-historischen Schluß** bekommen: was könnte historischer, **politischer und glänzender** sein, als die *Taufe des Grafen von Paris* und die damit verbundenen Feuerwerke?" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* III, p. 94-95; bold emphasis mine). As an ironic strategy, Wagner regularly transposes the topos of 'Glanz' to his own *Musikkritik*: "[...] ich wußte wohl, daß ich noch einer recht großen Neuigkeit bedürfte, um **meinen diesmaligen Berichten den erforderlichen und unerläßlichen Glanz** zu geben" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* IX, p. 127; bold emphasis mine); "Eine Zeitlang war ich verwirrt, und wußte nicht sogleich, auf welches Terrain ich mich werfen sollte, um **Ihrem Wunsche am glänzendsten zu genügen.**" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 65; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>47</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* IV, p. 113; cf. also "Die glänzenden Hotels – ach, wie beklage ich sie! Ihre sammtnen, parfümirten ehemaligen Bewohner – wie bejammere ich sie! Denn – *Rubini* wird nie wiederkommen." (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* IV, p. 100-101).

sensibilities of his readers. In the diptych ‘Pariser Amusements’ and ‘Pariser Fatalitäten für Deutsche’, for example, Wagner aptly focalises his arguments through the perspective of the French audiences and the German artist, respectively. ‘Pariser Amusements’ mockingly chronicles the superficial world of luxury, favouritism and stardom in the French capital; ‘Pariser Fatalitäten für Deutsche’, conversely, familiarises readers with the difficulties that German artists experience in trying to adapt to the Parisian way of doing things. As I have indicated before, many contemporary critics, not in the least Schumann, exhibited the same disdain for the musical scene in Paris, and its virtuosi in particular (cf. 3.1.1). Reader audiences in Germany, for their part, were thus familiar with and susceptible to many aspects of anti-France rhetoric. Wagner did not exclusively write for German periodicals, however. At the time, he actually penned the greater part of his *Musikkritik* for the French journal *Revue et Gazette Musicale* edited by Maurice Schlesinger. On top of that, texts that today still count as hallmarks of Wagner’s critical oeuvre, were originally published in the *Revue*. Wagner faces an entirely different readership in the *Revue*, a readership that is far less open to his personal frustrations and not at all conditioned to *Kritik* on French culture politics. As his home advantage disappears, Wagner develops other ways of connecting with his readers in order to make his point. For that reason exactly, the articles in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale* form an ideal case study to reveal how Wagner caters his *Kritik* to his readership.

### 3.2.1 The Beethoven novellas

Wagner cannot be as critical of Paris and France in the *Revue* as he is in his articles for German periodicals. Let us not be mistaken, however: Wagner’s *Revue*-articles are modelled after the same agonistic template he employs in other texts; he simply confronts different parties to each other. The instalment novellas *Une Visite à Beethoven*<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 65, pp. 551-553 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* I]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 65, pp. 551-553 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* II]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 66, pp. 561-563 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* III]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 68, pp. 578-579 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* IV]; Richard Wagner: ‘Une Visite à Beethoven, épisode de la vie d’un musicien allemand. (Suite et fin)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1840, Nr. 68, pp. 583-585 [= *Une Visite à Beethoven* V].

and *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris*<sup>49</sup> are perfect illustrations of this technique.<sup>50</sup> In the first text, a certain R. travels from Germany to Vienna to visit Beethoven; the second novella recounts the misfortunes of a German composer in Paris. This second text, in particular, constitutes an ideal platform for Wagner to continue the fervent attacks he mounts on Paris in his writings for German periodicals. Wagner does include such *Kritik*, yet in an indirect way. The title of that second novella actually steers clear from potential conflicts between the German composer and the inhabitants of the French capital; it merely refers to the protagonist as “un musicien étranger”.<sup>51</sup> We will revisit Wagner’s way of mediating and defusing his *Kritik* on Paris in more detail further on. Before I do so, however, I wish to draw attention to the key role of ‘l’Anglais’ in both novellas. This element might seem inconspicuous at first sight, but in truth, it perfectly illustrates how Wagner shapes his agonistic discourse in function of his reader audience.

The prominent appearance of the Englishman in both novellas is noteworthy. Apart from these early texts, Wagner’s writings rarely mention England. He lashes out at specific composers, Jews and – naturally – the French, but hardly ever at his English colleagues. Scholars have so far not shared my perplexity. They hardly call the role of ‘l’Anglais’ into question. This might in part be because Wagner’s novellas are general read in German, in the format that they appear as in the *Dresdener Abendzeitung*<sup>52</sup> or his *Gesammelte Schriften*<sup>53</sup>. However, they were first published in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale*

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<sup>49</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Un Musicien Etranger à Paris’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 9, pp. 65-68 [= *Un Musicien Etranger I*]; Richard Wagner: ‘Un Musicien Etranger à Paris (Deuxième article)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 11, pp. 83-84 [= *Un Musicien Etranger II*]; Richard Wagner: ‘Un Musicien Etranger à Paris (Troisième et dernier article)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 11, pp. 91-94 [= *Un Musicien Etranger III*].

<sup>50</sup> Wagner also wrote a third and final novella series, titled *Une soirée heureuse* (cf. Richard Wagner: ‘Une soirée heureuse; fantaisie sur la musique pittoresque’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 56, pp. 463-465; Richard Wagner: ‘Une soirée heureuse; fantaisie sur la musique pittoresque (Suite et fin)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 58, pp. 487-489). In the text, a certain R. and the narrator discuss Beethoven’s seventh symphony. The text is essentially a dialogue between two characters and very much reads as a programmatic manifesto on Beethoven and his aesthetic legacy. The novella raises issues that are crucial for Wagner’s reception of Beethoven. As far as style goes, however, *Une soirée heureuse* has a far less ambitious composition than the previous two novellas. In contrast to *Une Visite à Beethoven* and *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris*, for instance, Wagner does not once break the narrative pattern. For that reason, I will not include *Une soirée heureuse* in my analysis and concentrate on *Une Visite à Beethoven* and *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris*.

<sup>51</sup> Wagner: *Un Musicien Etranger I*, p. 65.

<sup>52</sup> ‘Une visite a Beethoven’ was published as ‘Eine Pilgerfahrt zu Beethoven’ in the *Dresdener Abendzeitung* between 30 July and 5 August 1841, ‘Un musicien étranger a Paris’ as ‘Das Ende in Paris’ between 6-11 August 1841; the title in the *Sämtliche Schriften* is ‘Ein Ende in Paris’.

<sup>53</sup> cf. Richard Wagner: ‘Ein deutscher Musiker in Paris. Novellen und Aufsätze (1840 und 1841). 1. Eine Pilgerfahrt zu Beethoven’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 1, pp. 90-114; Richard Wagner: ‘Ein deutscher Musiker

– and thus in French. That makes all the difference, of course: from the perspective of a French, post-Napoleonic reader, the obtrusive Englishman elicits an entirely different range of sentiments than it would for a German reader.<sup>54</sup>

*Une Visite à Beethoven*<sup>55</sup> essentially relates how ‘L’Anglais’ thwarts and almost destroys all of the protagonist R.’s, chances to meet Beethoven. In *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris*<sup>56</sup>, the

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in Paris. Novellen und Aufsätze (1840 und 1841). II. Ein Ende in Paris’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 1, pp. 114-136.

<sup>54</sup> The long-standing animosity between the British and the French is well documented in Isabelle Tombs/Robert Tombs: *That Sweet Enemy: The British and the French from the Sun King to the Present*. London: Pimlico 2006. For the tense relation between British tourists and expats in Paris during the Second Restoration, see p. 314-318 and p. 334-335, in particular.

<sup>55</sup> R. first encounters the Englishman on the road to Vienna; both are on their way to Beethoven. Despite his logistic disadvantage (R. prides himself on going on foot, while the Englishman travels to Vienna with his carriage and servants), R. meets the Englishman two other times during his pilgrimage. Eventually, nevertheless, they go their separate ways. Once in Vienna, the Englishman constantly thwarts R.’s attempts to meet Beethoven. Beethoven, it appears, has taken a dislike to all the Englishmen that come and visit him. As he is constantly stalked by his British companion, R. has no way of reaching Beethoven. After writing a letter to the reclusive composer, R. does manage to get an invitation, but again, he is followed by the Englishman. In the end, the Englishman achieves what he came for, that is, to give his compositions to Beethoven. Thereupon, R. has an amicable chat with Beethoven and the two end up mocking the music of the Englishman together. R. meets his bothersome travel companion one more time: on his way to Italy to visit Rossini, the Englishman greets the protagonist.

<sup>56</sup> The role of the Englishman in *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris* is somewhat smaller, but therefore not less pivotal. In the novella, an unknown narrator looks back on the last year of R. in Paris. The narrator meets his friend on several occasions during that year, but each time in worse shape than the previous time. R. never sees his ambitions and dreams realised, gets lost in his idealism and, at the end of the novella, dictates his musical testament to the narrator, only to die several moments later. The Englishman appears at the very beginning of *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris*: “Nous venons de le mettre en terre! le temps était sombre et glacial, et nous n’étions qu’en bien petit nombre. L’Anglais était encore là; il veut maintenant lui élever un monument. – Il aurait bien mieux fait de lui payer ses dettes!” (Wagner: *Un Musicien Etranger* I, p. 65). Wagner builds up the narrative tension: we all surmise that the Englishman played a crucial role in the death of a – then still unidentified – ‘il’, but we are still left in the dark as to what happened and how it came to be. The answer comes late in the second instalment. Some time has passed since the first encounter between the narrator and R. The narrator sees R. again, who is shouting in front of a theatre. The narrator immediately notices that R. is no longer accompanied by his dog. As the narrator inquires into the whereabouts of the dog, the following exchange ensues:

Son regard d’assombrit: - Volé! répondit-il laconiquement.  
- Pas vendu? dis-je à mon tour.  
- Misérable! répondit-il d’une voix creuse, tu es donc aussi comme l’Anglais, toi?  
Je ne compris pas ce qu’il voulait dire par ces mots. – (Wagner: *Un Musicien Etranger* II, p. 84)

After a while, the Englishman appears on his horse. A dog accompanies him. R. gets excited and starts shouting at the Englishman. The narrator goes in pursuit of the Englishman, albeit unsuccessfully. He also loses track of R. The third and final instalment eventually reveals the pivotal role that the ‘Anglais’ played in the death of R. The Englishman (whom R. consistently refers to as ‘le diable’) had offered numerous times to buy the dog from

Englishman steals R.'s dog. By doing so, he seals R.'s fate and expedites his untimely death. The 'Anglais' testifies to the emblematic and stereotypical nature of Wagner's nationalist discourse. Without any seeming difficulty, he adapts it to a different reader audience in a trice. The fact that the Englishman is the primary antagonist of the narrative shows that Wagner very well understood how to play into the sensibilities of his French readers. Similar to the articles in the *Dresdner Abendzeitung*, Wagner draws on the epithet of luxury to introduce and describe the 'Anglais'. *Une Visite à Beethoven* establishes that motif of wealth even before the Englishman speaks his first sentence:

Nous [Wagner and several wandering musicians] étions arrivés au finale quand une chaise de poste élégante, que nous n'avions pu apercevoir à cause du coude de la chaussée, s'arrêta silencieusement en face de nous. Un jeune homme d'une taille excessivement élancée, et d'un blond non moins exagéré, était étendu sur les coussins, et prêtait à nos accords une oreille attentive; puis il tira de sa poche un agenda pour y consigner quelques notes, et après avoir jeté devant nous une pièce d'or, il continua sa route en adressant à son domestique quelques mots d'anglais.<sup>57</sup>

Note that Wagner hints at the opulence of the Englishman long before the word 'anglais' is even mentioned. Wagner later reiterates the associations with luxury and wealth. On their second encounter, R. sees the Englishman eating "un compieux diner".<sup>58</sup> He ponders about the profession of the Englishman and reflects about his luxurious travel arrangements: "Jamais je n'avais entendu parler d'artiste anglais en tournée, et je jugeai que celui-ci devait faire de bien bonnes affaires pour courir le pays en si brillant équipage".<sup>59</sup> *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris*, finally, impresses on the Englishman an image of wealth and extravagance: "A ce moment passait sur un magnifique cheval un homme élégant qu'à sa physionomie et à la coupe de ses habits on reconnaissait pour un Anglais. A ses côtés courait en aboyant fièrement un grand et beau chien de Terre-Neuve".<sup>60</sup> This description unfolds in exactly the same way as the Englishman was introduced in *Une Visite à Beethoven*. First, the narrator describes the means of transportation, then the outward appearance and on the basis of these elements, finally, he comes to identify the character as an 'Anglais'.

Wagner did not choose random qualities to describe the Englishman. He was well aware of the fact that his description of 'l'Anglais' as rude, obtrusive and rich struck a

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R. The latter each time refused, however. Thereupon, 'L'Anglais' stole the dog and rid R. of his only remaining joy in life.

<sup>57</sup> Wagner: *Une Visite à Beethoven* I, p. 552.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*, p. 552.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, p. 553.

<sup>60</sup> Wagner: *Un Musicien Etranger* II, p. 84.



chord with French readers. In other texts he wrote during that period, in fact, he confirms these topoi. The fifth 'Pariser Bericht', for example, observes that the French always depict the "Engländer durch Grobheit, Steifheit und Beefsteaks".<sup>61</sup> And in 'Pariser Fatalitäten für Deutsche', Wagner comments on the deep-seated hate of the French for, albeit at the same time ambivalent position towards the English:

Die Franzosen hassen zwar die Engländer; dieß ist indeß, wie Jedermann weiß, ein politischer Haß, und geht von der Nation als Masse aus. Jeder einzelne Franzose liebt aber jeden einzelnen Engländer bis zum Sterben, er überschüttet ihn mit Achtung und Ehrenbezeugungen, denn jeder Engländer ist in seinen Augen reich, er möge sich selbst oft auch noch so arm vorkommen. Welche größere Schmeichelei kann uns also ein Franzose sagen, als: 'Pardon, monsieur, vous êtes Anglais?'<sup>62</sup>

Wagner, in other words, carefully selects the traits of the 'Anglais'. The Englishman acts as a lightning rod in the novellas, a discursive agent that draws antipathy to itself – antipathy to which French readers can relate and that prompts them to sympathise with the plights of the narrator.

The 'Anglais' is more than a mere thematic conduit, however. Wagner also employs him in a text-structural capacity, i.e. by capitalising on the narrative architecture of the novellas. Given the centrality of Paris in his German writings, it remains striking that Wagner does not at all mention the capital in *Une Visite à Beethoven*. In *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris*, he does get to criticising Paris, though always in an indirect and mediated manner. As a matter of fact, Wagner mitigates his *Kritik* by embedding it in a dialogue between the narrator and R. In contrast to the *Pariser Berichte* (where he carefully fashions a proper correspondent-ego; cf. 2.3.1), the *Kritik* in *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris* remains within the narrative logic of the novella – and is, thus, always anonymous. Whenever R. outlines his ambitions or one of his naïve plans, the narrator shatters his hopes with a cynical retort that conveys his *Kritik*. For example: R. hopes to find "moyen de faire germer enfin le grain d'ambition que le ciel m'a mis au coeur"<sup>63</sup>. The ever pragmatic narrator thereupon advises him to either win the lottery or to gain "la faveur et la protection, soit de quelque parent haut placé, soit de quelque personnage important, de telle sorte que tu te trouves assuré d'un revenu passable au moins pour dix bonnes années".<sup>64</sup> The same pattern emerges with respect to R.'s aspirations of becoming a successful opera composer. He

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<sup>61</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). V. Pariser Sonntagseindrücke'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 106.

<sup>62</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Fatalitäten für Deutsche'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 48.

<sup>63</sup> Wagner: *Un Musicien Etranger* I, p. 66.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, p. 66.

ardently puts his trust in the press, the public<sup>65</sup> and free market of competition: “[...] mais enfin, ces obstacles, en quoi peuvent-ils consister, après tout? Uniquement dans la concurrence. Les plus grands talents se trouvant, réunis, ici, chacun, à l'envi vient offrir ses oeuvres; or, il est la devoir des directeurs de soumettre ces oeuvres à un examen sévère et consciencieux ; la lice doit être impitoyablement fermée aux médiocrités, et il ne peut être donné qu'aux travaux d'un mérite avéré d'avoir l'honneur d'être choisis entre tous”.<sup>66</sup> Once more, however, the narrator must disappoint him: “Le public , m'écriai-je , tu as raison. Je suis aussi d'avis qu'avec ton talent tu pourrais espérer de réussir, si tu n'avais affaire qu'au public seul; mais c'est précisément dans le plus ou le moins de facilité d'arriver jusqu'à lui que tu te trompes lourdement, mon pauvre ami. Ce n'est pas la concurrence des talents contre laquelle tu auras à combattre, mais bien celle des réputations établies et des intérêts particuliers”.<sup>67</sup> Even Beethoven falls victim to this dialectics of ambition and disillusionment. R. is sure that his music will find favourable reception in the “véritable culte à notre Beethoven”<sup>68</sup> in Paris. But again, the narrator is forced to point out that Paris marches to a different drummer: “Beethoven est déifié, tu as parfaitement raison; mais fais bien attention que sa réputation et son nom sont maintenant choses reçues et consacrées”.<sup>69</sup>

The novella *Un Musicien Etranger* undeniably includes *Kritik* on Paris, to summarise, though at all times in a couched and mediated form. The dialogic setting between R. and the narrator imposes a narrative latency which obscures to what extent the views of the narrator or R. reflect the opinions of Wagner (who, in the end, signs the text with his own name). Going on his other *Kritik*, the narrator's cynicism closely mirrors the sentiments Wagner conveys in his articles for German periodicals. Nevertheless, French readers were presumably not familiar with these texts. And Wagner further complicates matters. In the middle of his conversation with R., the narrator turns to the reader in an unusual aside. He distances himself from the arguments he throws at R.:

(Je n'ai nul besoin, je pense, de faire remarquer au lecteur que, dans les objections don't je me sers et don't j'aurai encore à me servir vis-à-vis de mon ami, il ne s'agit nullement de voir l'expression complète de ma conviction personnelle, mais seulement une série d'arguments que je regardais comme urgent d'employer pour amener mon enthousiasme à abandonner ses plans chimériques, sans diminuer pourtant en rien sa confiance en son talent.)<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, p. 67.

This is a crucial passage, for it once again shows that Wagner very consciously articulates his *Kritik* in function of his reader audience. Wagner omitted this paragraph in later German editions of the text. For that reason, presumably, it has so far gone by unnoticed in secondary literature. The aside constitutes Wagner's most direct effort to disavow his own *Kritik*: The narrator is keen to declare that his readers should certainly not take his - all in all already carefully conveyed - critique too seriously nor personally.

The novellas *Une Visite à Beethoven* and *Un Musicien Etranger à Paris* give us a glimpse of the pragmatic rapport between critical discourse and reader audience in Wagner's *Musikkritik*. The novellas make up a unique set of texts in his critical oeuvre. Not only are they less polemical or combative, but the style as a whole also differs from the majority of Wagner's earlier and later writings. The epic-fictional model, for example, has no direct counterpart in Wagner's *Kritik* for German journals, nor does Wagner use it again for other publications in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale*. Instead, he reverts to the more essayistic, anecdotal style that characterises the bulk of his (German) *Musikkritik*. Naturally, such a change of style and approach affects the pragmatic face of the texts. Whereas Wagner managed the novellas in such a way that they mitigate his opinions or even disavow them, the relation between author and content is more causal in the essays. This calls for new strategies to reach a similar effect. In that respect, the different stylistic circumstances under which Wagner later proceeds, intrinsically affected the way he catered his critical discourse to his readers. To examine these changes in more detail, I will highlight the inherent adjustability of the critical discourse to the readership in two essays that Wagner wrote about the same topic: the production of *Der Freischütz* in Paris. He wrote each article for the *Revue* and the *Dresdener Abendzeitung*, respectively, and thus for a different audience of readers.

### 3.2.2 Two 'Freischütz'-articles

On June 7 1841, Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* premiered on French soil at the *Académie royale de musique*.<sup>71</sup> The event attracted a lot of attention in the press and gave rise to heated discussions between supporters and opponents. In itself, the opera was not really a novelty to the Parisian audiences. Against the explicit wishes of Weber, the *Opéra Comique* had commissioned an adaptation from the critic Castil-Blaze in 1824, which was eventually titled *Robin des Bois*. The production was a travesty: among the many major revisions to the opera, Castil-Blaze moved the setting from Bohemia during the Thirty

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<sup>71</sup> The performance history of *Der Freischütz* in Paris is wonderfully documented by Yaël Hêche. She also comments on the texts Wagner wrote for the production of 1841 (cf. Yaël Hêche: "Wie ist mir wohl, daß ich ein Deutscher bin!": Le "Freischütz" à Paris (1841) et les doutes de Richard Wagner face au grand opéra français'. In: *Revue de Musicologie* 91/1 (2005), pp. 73-97). The information in this paragraph is largely based on her essay.

Year's War to Yorkshire under the reign of Charles I. Furthermore, he omitted or added scenes. Between 1829 and 1931, furthermore, a German travelling opera company headed by August Röckel performed *Der Freischütz* at the *Theatre Italien*. The production of 1841 in the *Académie royale de musique*, however, was meant as a rediscovery of the work, the 'original' *Freischütz* as it had not been heard in Paris before.

That claim to authenticity, however, was utterly unfounded. The director of the *Académie* demanded that a ballet be added to the opera, for instance. Also, the spoken parts were to be replaced by recitatives, as listeners were used to from French Grand Opéra. Hector Berlioz was taken on to guarantee the quality of the different adjustments. A violent discussion ensued about the correct genre for the opera in the press. Blaze de Bury vehemently defended the work of his father, Castil-Blaze, in *Revue des deux Mondes*, whereas Richard Otto Spazier, the nephew of Jean Paul, protested to the article in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*. Wagner also got entangled in the discussion. In an essay for the *Revue*, he explained the German view on the matter (Spazier, however, could have easily made that claim as well). Furthermore, Wagner tried to warm the French audiences for the opera. After the first performances of *Der Freischütz* had been given at the *Académie*, Wagner published an article in the *Dresdner Abendzeitung* in which he reviewed the production.

## Similarities

Although the French and German essay document different stages of the *Freischütz*-production (Wagner wrote the former as a warm-up to the opera, the latter as a review of a performance), they make the topic accessible to their readers in a similar manner. Both texts are structured around Wagner's ambition to reveal the deeper nature of the work to the reader. Wagner ties in his hermeneutic efforts<sup>72</sup> with the agonistic template that propels many of his other texts. Each essay spins out one characteristic that typifies the way in which the opposing party understands *Der Freischütz*. Wagner manages to retain a strategical distance to his readers in this manner. By shifting the focal point of his essay to a group of people that has no stake in the communication between reader and *Kritiker*, he builds in caution and lowers the risk of offending his readership.

In the French text, Wagner explains to his Paris readers that they can only understand *Der Freischütz* once they understand the irrational nature of the Germans. After a two-page summary of the work, he concludes that “[l]a tradition du *Freischütz* porte d’ailleurs

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<sup>72</sup> Hêche speaks of “un style pédagogique” (Hêche: *Le "Freischütz" à Paris*, p. 84), though only with regard to the French article. She calls the German article “un véritable réquisitoire [...] à l'égard d'une production de l'Opéra qu'il considère comme ratée.” (ibid., p. 85).

profondément l’empreinte de la nationalité allemande”.<sup>73</sup> Wagner describes this ‘empreinte’ in a stereotypical vocabulary of the *Schauerromantik*: “Mais ce n’est que chez les Allemands que l’élément démoniaque pouvait se manifester sous des formes aussi mystiques, avec le caractère d mélancolie rêveuse”.<sup>74</sup> The essay subsequently emphasises these ‘typically German’ qualities repeatedly.<sup>75</sup> At the end of the article, Wagner expresses the hope that his French readers get initiated in “cette vie intime et méditative de l’âme qui est l’apanage de la nation allemande”<sup>76</sup> and that they might start to understand “cette horreur mystérieuse, ces sensations indéfinissables”.<sup>77</sup> Wagner wilfully sets himself up as the translator of German sentiments. We have good reason to doubt whether he performs this self-imposed task in good faith, however. Wagner caters the aura of mystery and irrationality that he depicts as typically German to prevalent views French readers held about German art, in fact. In the ‘Freischütz’-article for the *Dresdner Abendzeitung*, he admits to his strategical use of national commonplaces and stereotypes: “Nebenbei wies ich sie auf die böhmischen Wälder und die deutsche Träumerei an, denn ohne Wälder und Träumerei kann sich nun einmal kein Franzose einen Deutschen denken [...]”.<sup>78</sup>

Despite the entirely opposite argument Wagner makes in the German ‘Freischütz’-essay, the text still displays notable similarities to the French version. Wagner likewise singles out one particular element in order to clarify an interpretation of *Der Freischütz* that is alien to his readers. The German article has even more to gain from this strategy. Wagner’s incessant critical riff on how bad the French have dealt with *Der Freischütz* justifies the abundant irony and ridicule he uses to sweep the German reader along in his judgement. Wagner puts the ‘Logik’ of the French at the heart of his *Kritik* and builds his essay around that very crux: “Logik ist die verzehrende Passion der Franzosen, und so richten sie denn auch überall ihr Urteil darnach ein”.<sup>79</sup> This quote follows near the end of the essay and ushers in a tirade about the biased press in Paris; the diatribe eventually ends in a declaration of war on French culture (cf. infra). The entire episode is the result of a tension carefully built up throughout the article. Wagner continually insists on the

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<sup>73</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Le Freischütz’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 34, p. 279 [= *Le Freischütz* I].

<sup>74</sup> Wagner: *Le Freischütz* I, p. 279.

<sup>75</sup> He recognises a “nature si étrangement sauvage” (Richard Wagner: ‘Le Freischütz (Second article)’. In: *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* 1841, Nr. 34, p. 286 [= *Le Freischütz* II]) in the work and claims that “dans la sentimentalité, dans la rêverie allemande il y a quelque chose qui échappera toujours aux étrangers, si spirituell qu’ils puissent être” (Wagner: *Le Freischütz* II, p. 286). Likewise, Wagner identifies a “forme primitive, qui est une partie essentielle de son [de l’ouvrage] originalité” (ibid., p. 286).

<sup>76</sup> ibid., p. 287.

<sup>77</sup> ibid., p. 287.

<sup>78</sup> Richard Wagner: ‘Der Freischütz in Paris (1841). 2. “Le Freischütz” [sic]. Bericht nach Deutschland’. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 1, p. 225.

<sup>79</sup> Wagner: *Der Freischütz in Paris*, p. 236.

logic of the Paris audience. In the opening paragraphs of the essay, for instance, he announces that he will write his essay “wie es die Franzosen so außerordentlich gern tun, logisch verfahren”.<sup>80</sup> Further on, he claims that the French translated the libretto of *Der Freischütz* in French because they found “keine Logik”<sup>81</sup> in it. And an important obstacle that caused Weber’s opera to fail in Paris, moreover, was that “den logischen Gemütern der Franzosen besonders die Zahl der Teufelskugeln ein großes Ärgernis gab”.<sup>82</sup>

More so than its French counterpart, the German ‘Freischütz’-essay enlists the hermeneutic foundation to support the line of attack against the French. For example, Wagner suggests that the *Freischütz*’ lack of success in Paris springs from the fact that the performers relinquished their born love for logic: they simply wanted to become too German. He especially enjoys mocking the singer who plays the part of Samiel who “übertrieb die träumerische Verwirrung sowie seine Herabgestimmtheit”<sup>83</sup>, Wagner ironically remarks, and thus erred on the intonation of the key. These objections run parallel to Wagner’s general *Kritik* of the Paris production of *Der Freischütz*:

Im allgemeinen kann man annehmen, daß das ganze Personal der großen Pariser Oper träumte: – daran mochte ich Unglücklicher durch meinen Aufsatz mit Schuld haben, als ich das Publikum auf Wälder und Träumerei anwies. Man hatte, wie es mir schien, meine Andeutung mit einer entsetzlichen Pünktlichkeit verstanden und ausgeführt; – an Wald hatten es die Dekorationsmaler natürlich nicht fehlen lassen, somit schien den Sängern nichts übrig geblieben zu sein, als für ihr Teil sich der Träumerei zu überlassen.<sup>84</sup>

Both the French and the German ‘Freischütz’-article essentially follow a manicheist outline. They pit the German public against French readers, and vice versa. The continuously mocking tone in the German version left no doubt about that particular

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<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, p. 234.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*, p. 226; Wagner uses the same line of argumentation against the costumes of the production. These are orientally inspired, something that Wagners admits to appreciate: “jedenfalls war der Gedanke aber romantisch, gewissermaßen sogar orientalisches” (*ibid.*, p. 230). Still, they do not suffice because – and here Wagner becomes a bit too logical himself – the Turks never reached Bohemia, where the *Freischütz* is set. Another episode in which Wagner opposes the aesthetic preferences of the French to the true spirit of the opera, is his description of the recitatives by Berlioz. Knowing the composer’s ‘Produktionskraft’ (*ibid.*, p. 230), Wagner had expected interesting musical additions of Berlioz. Nonetheless, the recitative were utterly “langweilig” (*ibid.*, p. 230), as “Herr Berlioz bei der Abfassung der Rezitative von aller ehrgeizigen Absicht vollkommen abgestanden war und sich bemüht hatte, seine Arbeit gänzlich in den Hintergrund zu stellen” (*ibid.*, p. 230). Berlioz catered the recitatives to the tastes of the French audience, but they had the adverse effect: Germans were against them anyhow, and the recitatives sounded so casual, that the French audience grew bored by them.

intention of the text. And the French article likewise upholds this spirit of confrontation. What's more, the editors of the *Revue* openly contribute to and explicitly encourage it. In a footnote to the first instalment of the article, they clarify their reasons for including Wagner's essay. They conceive of the text as a contest between French and German opinion on the subject:

Bien que l'auteur de cet article professe sur la représentation du *Freischütz* à L'Opéra des idées contraires à celles qu'un de nos collaborateurs a déjà exprimées, nous avons cru devoir accueillir son travail, parce qu'en toutes choses il est bon d'entendre les deux parties, et qu'il nous a semblé que nos lecteurs verraient avec plaisir le *Freischütz* considéré exclusivement sous son aspect germanique.<sup>85</sup>

In the following analyses, we will encounter many more instances of the inherent antagonism that runs through both articles. Nevertheless, the analogies between the French and German 'Freischütz'-essay halt at the hermeneutic point of departure and the agonistic blueprint. More than anything, crucial differences stand out between both texts. In keeping with the topic of this chapter, I will concentrate on the changing position Wagner assumes vis-à-vis the reader and the different forms of address he uses in the texts, to illustrate the differences in reader communication. Both aspects document the techniques Wagner employs to cater the essays to the sensibilities of their respective reader audiences.

### **Between Recognition and Estrangement**

Wagner pursues two distinct ambitions in his *Freischütz*-essays. Despite certain aggressive episodes, the French version aims to soften the French audience up for the opera. Wagner wants to capture their interest at any rate. Even after he broadly advertised his indignation at the many changes to *Der Freischütz* that the *Académie royale de musique* implemented, he remains true to his ultimate goal, i.e. familiarising the reader with the opera: "Dans tous les cas, cela vaut la peine d'aller à la représentation que donnera l'Académie royale de musique, et de chercher à se transporter par la pensée au milieu du monde merveilleux qui se révèle dans *le Freischütz*".<sup>86</sup> The article for the *Dresdner Abendzeitung*, on the other hand, purposefully sets the German readers against the French audience. Wagner makes no secret out of this:

Ich muß aber das Oftgesagte zu neuer Beherzigung anführen, weil sich seit einiger Zeit bei uns die Idee gebildet hatte, daß zwischen Deutschen und Franzosen, zumal im Kunstgeschmacke, eine Annäherung stattfindet. [...] [D]er 'Freischütz' hat

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<sup>85</sup> Wagner: *Le Freischütz* II, p. 287.

<sup>86</sup> *ibid.*, p. 287.

namentlich dazu beigetragen, die Franzosen neuerdings von den Deutschen zu entfernen. Hierüber dürfen wir uns keine Illusionen [sic] machen; in vielen Punkten werden uns die Franzosen immer fremd bleiben [...]”.<sup>87</sup>

All in all, the French article aims to engender a more compliant attitude from its reader audience. True enough, Wagner regularly doubts whether the Parisians truly understand the opera. But time and again, he neutralises these concerns. One time, he cordially invites his French readers to visit Germany; in another instance, he acknowledges their sincere willingness to actually get to know *Der Freischütz*:

Mais ce que vous chantez, le compreniez-vous? j'en doute fort. D'abord vous n'avez pas vu cette nature si étrangement sauvage; et puis dans la sentimentalité, dans la rêverie allemande il y a quelque chose qui échappera toujours aux étrangers, si spirituels qu'ils puissent être. Nous sommes un peuple singulier; l'air de *Freischütz*: A travers les bois, fait couler nos larmes, tandis que nos yeux restent secs quand, au lieu d'une patrie commune, nous n'apercevons que trente-quatre principautés. C'est peut-être là une faiblesse, mais vous nous la pardonnerez, car c'est à elle que vous devez une admirable partition, qui mérite bien, du reste, la peine de faire un voyage, et de visiter les lieux où Samiel avait sa résidence. Un voyage à Carlsbad vous en offrirait facilement l'occasion. Si vous pensez que cela n'en vaut pas la peine, si vous ne pouvez renoncer pour une seule soirée à vos habitudes et à tout ce qui fait le charme de la vie parisienne, alors vous ne comprendrez pas le *Freischütz*, et pourtant vous voulez le comprendre, vous voulez l'entendre et le voir tel qu'il est; c'est fort bien, et c'est toute justice, car vous en agissez de même avec le *Fidèle Berger*.<sup>88</sup>

Wagner imparts his French readers with an amicable invitation to Germany. He woos them by citing their intrinsic openness to the work. Wagner even admits to the weaknesses of the Germans and criticises their internal divisions.<sup>89</sup> Later in the article, he makes yet another attempt at winning over the reader. To his great dissatisfaction, the management of French opera decided to replace the original spoken parts in the *Freischütz* by accompanied recitatives. The German article right out pillories this interference,

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<sup>87</sup> Wagner: *Der Freischütz in Paris*, p. 237-238.

<sup>88</sup> Wagner: *Le Freischütz II*, p. 286.

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.*, p. 286; the more attentive reader would have remarked the sweet irony in Wagner's invitation to Karlsbad. Karlsbad is a cultural landmark in German history: it was a luxurious 'Kurort' where the rich and famous spent their summers. In this capacity, it also became known as the town where the famous Karlsbader Beschlüsse were signed. The decrees enforced reactionary, anti-revolutionary Metternich-policies in the Austrian Empire and much of the small kingdoms of the then German territory. The place Wagner invites his readers to is thus, in reality, the town where German, political freedom was curbed – a freedom, which the revolutions of 1848 (Wagner included) would fight to regain.



chiding it as an absolute mockery (cf. *infra*). But in the French essay, Wagner makes notable efforts to curb his usually all too aggressive rhetoric. Instead, he pays tribute to the opera tradition of the French and shows respect for their Grand Opéra. When spoken dialogues would suddenly start emerging in operas like *La Muette de Portici* or *La Juive*, he remarks, “[s]ans doute vous en seriez choqués, et avec raison. Or, ce qui est un nécessité esthétique pour les opéras de grande dimension, deviendrait, par une raison contraire, un fléau pour le *Freischütz*, où les morceaux de chant sont beaucoup moins étendus”.<sup>90</sup> The French ‘*Freischütz*’-article is unmistakably designed to steer clear of confrontation. Wagner builds up a distance between the readers and his specific *Kritik* and evacuates them as much as possible from the potentially offensive nature of his arguments. We have encountered this strategy in other texts for the *Revue* as well (cf. *Un musicien étranger*, *supra*). Wagner mitigates and nuances his opinions, shaping them into arguments that he expects will resonate with the readership. His specific line of reasoning should likewise be read as an effort to shield the reader from *Kritik*. Wagner solely focusses his *Kritik* on the musical institutions of Paris. We recall that Wagner invited the French readers to Germany. Immediately after that passage, Wagner contrasts their sincere willingness to understand *Der Freischütz* to the irrational demands of the *Académie royale de musique*: “Mais L’ Académie royale de musique a ses exigences, auxquelles notre pauvre *Freischütz* ne saurait satisfaire dans sa forme primitive”.<sup>91</sup> During the entire essay, Wagner focuses his argument on the musical institutions in Paris. He repeatedly claims that the French audiences will grow disappointed with the opera because of the aesthetic regulations of the *Académie* enforced, e.g.:

L’appareil extérieur que l’on aura adapté à l’oeuvre de Weber ne servira qu’à provoquer chez vous le besoin de sensations auxquelles répondent les ouvrages qui se produisent habituellement devant vous sous cette forme; et vous serez trompés dans votre attente, car cet ouvrage a été créé par son auteur dans des vues bien différentes, et nullement pour satisfaire aux exigences du public ordinaire de l’Académie royale de musique.<sup>92</sup>

The German ‘*Freischütz*’-article is the opposite of the French version. While the latter is lenient towards the reader, the former is utterly provocative. Wagner uses an extensive set of rhetorical strategies to take the reader along in his sometimes relentless *Kritik*. First of all, the butt of Wagner’s attacks shifts: from an exclusive focus on the *Académie* to a general feeling of contempt for the French people and culture. Wagner remains to hold “[d]er Direktor der großen Oper” accountable for the failure of *Der Freischütz*, but he

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<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*, p. 286-287.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*, p. 286.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*, p. 287.

simultaneously sees him “als höchster Repräsentant des französischen Kunstvolkwillens”.<sup>93</sup> Wagner puts controversy and polemics at the centre of his essays. In the French article, he carefully designs his arguments to exempt the French readers from his *Kritik* and avoid conflict. The German text, however, argues for the sake of having an argument. Wagner does not hold back on his *Kritik*. A case in point are the two different renditions he gives of the decision that prompted the *Académie* to make changes to *Der Freischütz*. The first version relays that the French were drawn to Weber’s opera out of curiosity for the work’s success in Germany:

So kam es denn auch, daß die vollkommenste Nation der Erde – denn alle Welt [sic] weiß, daß die Franzosen sich dafür wenigstens halten – eines Tages Luft bekam, den allgemeinen Völkerbrauch nachzuahmen, um auch einmal zu sehen, was denn eigentlich ihre ehrenwerthen Nachbarn zum Austausch für die tausend herrlichen Dinge zu bieten hätten [...] Die Franzosen hatten gehört, daß der ‘Freischütz’ eine vortreffliche Sache sein solle, und beschlossen daher einmal zu erfahren, was daran sei.<sup>94</sup>

The *Académie* soon staged a mock-*Freischütz* in 1824, Wagner continues (to wit *Robin de Bois*, composed by the music critic Castil-Blaze; cf. supra). That opera had become so far removed from the original, however, that the opera house commissioned a new version, truer to the original, “[um] das deutsche Nationalprodukt in Wahrheit kennen zu lernen”.<sup>95</sup> The second rendition of the events leading up to the performance of *Der Freischütz* in Paris sheds light on “eine andre Tradition von dieser Pariser Freischützsage”.<sup>96</sup> This time around, the *Académie* decided to stage *Der Freischütz* because of its lucrative potential: “Beschlossen ward also, der ‘Freischütz’ solle gegeben werden wie er ist, hauptsächlich deßwegen, weil man die Bearbeitung als ‘Robin des bois’ – das Eigentum der *Opéra comique* – nicht geben durfte, und weil auf der anderen Seite diese Bearbeitung durch ihren außerordentlichen Erfolg bewiesen hatte, daß hinter diesem Freischützen etwas Herrliches stecken müsse, nämlich lauter Silber, Gold und Banknoten”.<sup>97</sup> Wagner uses a rhetoric of luxury and wealth that readers would have been familiar with from his *Pariser Berichte*. His main objective is to elicit indignation and build up a tension of resentment against the French. At the end of the essay, then, he aims for the most direct of confrontations. Wagner advocates a halt on the cultural collaboration between Germany and France. Only a war against France, he interjects, will give Germans the opportunity to take revenge for the humiliations they have had to endure in Paris:

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<sup>93</sup> Wagner: *Der Freischütz in Paris*, p. 221.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>96</sup> *ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*, p. 222.

Was? – Wir, das begabteste Volk, unter denen Gott einen Mozart und Beethoven entstehen ließ, sollten dazu gemacht sein, das Gespött der Pariser Salons abzugeben? [...] Bei alle dem ist es aber in der Natur hergebracht, daß es Zeiten des Krieges, wie des Friedens giebt; wollt ihr daher einmal in Kriegszeiten an den Franzosen Rache nehmen, so könntet ihr sie nicht empfindlicher bestrafen, als wenn ihr ihnen die Emissäre ihres heiligen Geistes, ‘Fra Diavolo’ ‘Zampa’ ‘den treuen Schäfer’ [...] eines schönen Tages mit Extrapost zurückschicktet. [...] Dies, meine deutschen Landsleute, wäre eine schöne und wohlverdiente Strafe für die Mishandlungen, die hier unser lieber, lieber ‘Freischütz’ erlitt”.<sup>98</sup>

The central contrast between lenience towards the reader and evoking the reader’s indignation can also be read from the remarks Wagner makes about Berlioz in both articles. Part of adapting the critical discourse to the reader audience as *Kritiker* is sensing where where one’s limits are. The case of Berlioz illustrates Wagner’s mastery in this matter. The French article touts Berlioz’ musical abilities: he is the perfect candidate for the job, to wit even a true genius.<sup>99</sup> The German version depicts the French composer in the exact opposite way. Wagner practically insinuates that the French have entrusted the opera to their national buffoon: “[...] um an die Komposition von Rezitativen zum deutschen ‘Freischützen’ gehen zu können, so musste man natürlich einen Franzosen dazu wählen, und da herr Berlioz schon so viel närrische und exzentrische Musik geschrieben hatte, so konnte dem Glauben des Entdeckungsrates nach niemand geeigneter sein als er, zu diesem närrischen, originellen ‘Freischützen’ noch etwas Musik hinzuzufügen”.<sup>100</sup> For a moment, Berlioz does seem to inspire confidence in Wagner.<sup>101</sup> Yet, somewhat later, Wagner readily criticises the composer for being boring:

Ich fand bei der Aufführung, – wunderbar, daß ich es sage! – zu meinem Bedauern, daß Herr Berlioz bei der Abfassung der Rezitative von aller ehrgeizigen Absicht vollkommen abgestanden war und sich bemüht hatte, seine Arbeit gänzlich in den Hintergrund zu stellen. Zu meinem Bedauern, sagte ich, habe ich dieß gefunden,

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<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>99</sup> e.g. “Parmi tous les compositeurs français de nos jours, je n'en connais pas qui comprît aussi bien la partition du Freischütz, et qui fût aussi capable de la compléter, si toutefois cela était nécessaire. **L'auteur de la Symphonie fantastique est un homme de génie; personne plus que moi ne reconnaît l'énergie irrésistible de sa verve poétique;** [...] c'est précisément à cause des éminentes qualités qui distinguent M. Berlioz que je lui soumets en toute confiance mes observations au sujet de ce travail” (Wagner: *Le Freischütz* II, p. 286; bold emphasis mine). Wagner does not at all make the argument of his *Kritik* into a nationalistic contest between France and Germany; he solely raises objections with regard to the work itself, for example: “Non, il s'agit de mettre une oeuvre originale, complète, en harmonie avec des exigences extérieures qui lui sont étrangers” (*ibid.*, p. 286).

<sup>100</sup> Wagner: *Der Freischütz in Paris*, p. 224.

<sup>101</sup> cf. “**Trotzdem ich aber somit unseren geliebten Freischützen in den besten französischen Händen wußte,** [...]”. (*ibid.*, p. 224).

weil der 'Freischütz' bei diesem Verfahren nicht nur, wie es vorauszusehen war, entstellt, sondern zugleich grenzenlos langweilig gemacht worden ist. Dieser Übelstand äußerte sich zumal in dem Eindrucke, den er auf die Franzosen hervorbrachte, für welche Herrn Berlioz' Arbeit am Ende doch einzig berechnet war.<sup>102</sup>

The French and German 'Freischütz'-article versions, to briefly summarise, lean on a central disparity when it comes to their attitude towards the reader: the French essay seeks to draw a lenient reaction from the reader; the German version, on the other hand, opposes the reader to their French counterparts through irony, ridicule and a provocative, polemical register (cf. 4.2). The rhetorical structure of the texts brings about a distinctive effect of recognition and estrangement, respectively. The extent to which Wagner addresses the reader furthermore reinforces these impressions.

The French 'Freischütz'-article has a clear addressee: Wagner maintains a constant deictic reference to the second plural ('vous') throughout the text. This makes for an outgoing focus on the reader. When he raises the argumentative tension of the essay, Wagner occasionally sets this 'vous' against a 'nous', but hardly ever more than that and certainly not on a consistent basis. In line with observations we made earlier on, Wagner avoids a too direct confrontation at any cost. He also hesitantly play out national identities against each other. In the first instalment, Wagner keeps his distance and talks about "la nationalité allemande"<sup>103</sup> and "les Allemands"<sup>104</sup> in quite an aloof manner. He does not identify with these 'Allemands', however, nor does he pit the reader against them. The second instalment initially continues this tendency - Wagner only breaks the pattern for the first time when he describes the impression the opera made on him as a child: "Et moi-même je me rappelle qu'étant enfant, je m'efforçais de donner une expression diabolique à cet air si âpre, si sauvage".<sup>105</sup> On closer observation, we notice that this 'moi' remains anonymous and impersonal throughout. Wagner never truly personifies it or brings it up later in the text to brandy an ethos out of it, e.g. as he chose to do with regard to his outsider-position as a correspondent (cf. supra). Indeed, Wagner's sole focus seems to be on his reader audience. He engages with his readers by directly appealing to them, generally enforced by forceful apostrophes, e.g. "Et vous aussi, qui vous promenez au bois de Boulogne, vous avez chanté les airs du *Freischütz!*".<sup>106</sup> The next

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<sup>102</sup> *ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>103</sup> Wagner: *Le Freischütz* I, p. 279.

<sup>104</sup> *ibid.*, p. 279.

<sup>105</sup> Wagner: *Le Freischütz* II, p. 287.

<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*, p. 286. The apostrophe establishes a direct rapport with the reader, just as the reference to the reader's direct environment makes the story more relatable: the woods of Boulogne take the place of the woods of Bohemia.

paragraphs briefly describe habits of the German people<sup>107</sup> or accommodates personal reflections of Wagner.<sup>108</sup> However, the ‘vous’-perspective prevails for the duration of the article. It guarantees a constant outreach to the reader that chimes in with the hermeneutic intentions on which Wagner models his communication with the reader (cf. supra).

The German ‘Freischütz’-article, in contrast, has a much more dynamic deictic fabric, so to speak. Congenial to the confusion that Wagner experienced during the Paris performance, the article seems to be equally lost amidst an ever-changing field of addressees and focalisations. The German ‘Freischütz’-article redeploys the second plural address that so dominantly featured in the French essay, yet only at strategic points in the essay: its beginning and ending. The ‘Ihr’-address moreover comes paired with other viewpoints. Wagner often conjoins his perspective with that of the reader; it merges the alliance between *Kritiker* and reader into a combative ‘wir’.<sup>109</sup> Early in the article, Wagner appeals to his fellow countrymen. He emphasises the rapport of mutual understanding that exists between them: “Ihr aber, meine hochbegabten deutschen Landsleute, werdet nicht lachen; ihr werdet mich verstehen, wenn ich euch sage [...]”.<sup>110</sup> Wagner briefly describes how he cried during a performance of the *Freischütz* in Paris, but soon shifts back to the tried and tested apostrophe: “Ihr wisset ohne Zweifel zur Genüge, meine beglückten deutschen Landsleute, [...]”.<sup>111</sup> Afterwards, the ‘Ihr’-address disappears into

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<sup>107</sup> cf. “**Nous sommes un peuple singulier**; l'air de *Freischütz*: A travers les bois, fait couler nos larmes, tandis que nos yeux restent secs quand, au lieu d'une patrie commune, nous n'apercevons que trente-quatre principautés. C'est peut-être là une faiblesse, mais vous nous la pardonnerez, car c'est à elle que vous devez une admirable partition, qui mérite bien, du reste, la peine de faire un voyage, et de visiter les lieux où Samiel avait sa résidence” (ibid., p. 286; bold emphasis mine)

<sup>108</sup> cf. also supra, footnote 84 about Berlioz.

<sup>109</sup> e.g. “Wenn **wir aus tausend Gründen, die wir dazu haben können, uns ihnen nähern wollen, so sind wir genötigt, ein gutes Stück unsrer besten Eigentümlichkeiten von uns zu werfen**: es ist darin nicht möglich die Franzosen zu betrügen, und sie durch Äußerlichkeiten glauben zu machen, wir machten z.B. französische Musik, wenn nicht die ganze innere Empfindung nach dem gemodelt ist, was sie ihre Logik nennen.” (Wagner: *Der Freischütz in Paris*, p. 238; bold emphasis mine). In her work on ethos (cf. 2.1.1), Ruth Amossy examines the indexical traces that speakers leave behind in the discourse in greater detail. The balances and contrasts that the use (or disuse) of the pronouns ‘je’ – ‘tu’ – ‘il’ and ‘nous’ elicits, make up an important aspect of the author’s identity in the text, she claims. Whereas the pronoun ‘je’ confers an awareness of subjectivity and identity, the rapport between ‘je’ and ‘tu’ defines self-presentation as “pratique sociale: la question de la subjectivité et de l’identité, de la capacité à dire et se dire pour agir, de la relation réciproque qui unit indissolublement le ‘je’ au ‘tu’” (Ruth Amossy: *La présentation de soi : ethos et identité verbale*. Paris: PUF 2010, p. 104). The pronoun ‘nous’ expands this social dimension of ethos. By adding a collective front behind which the speaker can hide, the ‘nous’-perspective imparts pragmatic strategies of “enjeux sociaux et politiques” (Amossy: *La présentation de soi*, p. 156).

<sup>110</sup> Wagner: *Der Freischütz in Paris*, p. 220.

<sup>111</sup> ibid., p. 221.

the background for a considerable amount of time. Wagner takes it up a final time at the end of the essay. At that stage in the article, the rhetoric has gradually changed, adopting a more aggressive and polemical tone towards the French. The use of the ‘Ihr’-apostrophe serves the specific goal, then, to aid Wagner in his efforts to take the readers along in his indignation and activate their own resentment: “Soll ich euch sagen, meine deutschen Landsleute, was mich bestimmt hat, über den letztgenannten Artikel nicht zu lachen, so sollt ihr erfahren, daß [...]”.<sup>112</sup> Other instances of the ‘Ihr’-apostrophe<sup>113</sup> attest to similar attempts Wagner makes in order to set the German reader against the French opera audience. Still, the second plural address only occurs at the margins of the text. It encloses a middle part that trades in the alternation between deictic markers for different instances of focalisation. Wagner narrates the course of events from the point of view of the opera directors<sup>114</sup> or that of the French audience<sup>115</sup> to underline – and ridicule – their skewed logic or narrow-minded attitude. Similarly, he vents his amazement about the tedious performance by focalising through one of the singers in the productions.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.2.3 ‘Musikkritik’ tailored to the Reader’s Sensibility

Wagner, to summarise, develops two entirely different strategies of reader management. In the ‘Freischütz’-article for the *Revue*, the ‘vous’-apostrophe enables a consistent outreach to the reader, an observation that aligns with Wagner’s reluctance to confront the reader too directly in the Beethoven-novellas (e.g. the narrative mediation of opinion). The German text, on the other hand, feature various ways of inciting and exciting the reader, a quality that is also at the heart of the polemical register in Wagner’s writings (cf. 4.2). The alternation between various addressees and different instances of focalisation, for instance, lends a highly dynamic quality to the articles.

Wagner consciously models his *Musikkritik* around the sensibilities of his readers. One could easily cast doubt on this approach and question its sincerity. If Wagner simply reiterates prevalent views and designs his appraisals to fit the mind-set of his readers, his *Kritik* quickly lapses into a base imitation of the readership’s opinions. Still, it is equally important to recognise the pragmatic advantages this strategy brings. To begin with, Wagner hardly acknowledges his readers as individual partners to his *Musikkritik*. He copiously addresses them in their capacity as a collectivity (e.g. ‘vous’, ‘ihr’, ‘wir

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<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>113</sup> cf. “Wisset ihr, daß ihr durch diese Engelstugend diesem lachlustigen Volke noch überdies zum Gespött werdet? Wisset ihr, was sie erzählen, um euch vor den Augen der Pariser Welt lächerlich zu machen?” (*ibid.*, p. 239).

<sup>114</sup> e.g. *ibid.*, p. 222-224.

<sup>115</sup> e.g. *ibid.*, p. 234-235.

<sup>116</sup> e.g. *ibid.*, p. 233.

Deutschen') and pre-empts all too particular interventions by invoking broad cultural generalisations. As such, Wagner counts on an emotional, i.e. non-argumentative outreach to coax the reader into identifying with his opinion. This observation also puts Wagner's use of strong rhetoric into perspective. Although Wagner's writings generally start from elementary, eristic templates, his *Musikkritik* at the same time features indirect confrontations. The *Kritiker* immunises readers from blame or reproof by rallying them against opponents that they - so he counts on - already harbour a (cultural) aversion to.

Conjoined with these pragmatic effects, the different strategies Wagner uses to reach out to the reader have a central structural function. From a stylistic point of view, his *Musikkritik* often works rhapsodically, merging a plethora of topics with a striking variety of discourses. In 4.2, we will focus on the use of the polemical register in Wagner's *Musikkritik* to assess that structural function of discourse in his writings. There, I will argue that Wagner uses the polemical register on an episodic basis in order to emotionalise the critical discourse and to actualise the attention of the reader.

### 3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has not engaged the reader as a historic individual, but rather as a textual alterity that authors fashion in function of their arguments. I have contended that general, discursive templates of reader identity accommodate and, in effect, steer the reaction of individual readers to *Musikkritik*. Readers, thus, are an abstracted instance - a readership in the true sense of the word. My analyses, indeed, have shown that Schumann and Wagner address readers as a virtual collectivity. Schumann preselects his readership on account of its theoretical familiarity with music. Furthermore, he forces through an allegiance with the *Musikkritiker* by means of a stigmatising 'Philister'-rhetoric. Wagner, for his part, embraces an affirmative model of reader management. In his texts, he woos the readers' good graces and steers clear of any manoeuvre that might antagonise them. To that aim, he caters his *Kritik* to the sensibilities of the readership. Consequently, we come upon a central difference between Schumann and Wagner's approach to the reader: whereas Schumann matches the readership to his arguments, Wagner matches his arguments to the readership.

Schumann and Wagner use opposite rhetorical strategies to prefigure particular reader profiles. Schumann predominantly relies on a rational outreach to the reader. In part, this follows from the fact that Schumann often judges from the score rather than going on a concrete performance. True enough, the 'Philister'-rhetoric builds on strong shows of polemical, i.e. affective rhetoric. Yet, in the end, the theoretical discourse complementing the 'Philister'-rhetoric constitutes the heart of the *Kritik* and speaks to

the intellectual prowess of the reader. Schumann's fashioning of his readership goes hand in hand with the search for adequate expression forms. In that respect, he skilfully exploits the intermedial advantage he holds over the reader. The semiotic translation of music into language that is a necessary precondition for *Musikkritik*, de facto reduces readers to second-hand listeners (cf. the introduction to Part II). When Schumann places linguistic and non-linguistic renditions of music on an equal footing, as a result, he confirms the reader in that secondary position.

Wagner, on the other hand, appeals to his readers in an emotionalising manner. He hardly employs a theoretical discourse and, instead, works from individualised cases, which, he expects, will resonate with the readers' sensibilities. Wagner resorts to a more affective communication. That, in itself, is all the more striking because it clashes with the ethos of theoretician he adopts as *Musikkritiker* around 1850. The Beethoven-novellas and the 'Freischütz'-articles we have concentrated on, indeed date back to an earlier period in Wagner's music-critical career, a period in which he mainly comes across as an indignant correspondent. Despite the later shift to a more cerebral ethos, however, we will see in 4.2 that Wagner at all times relies on an affective outreach to the reader. In the patchwork of styles and discursive modes that characterise his texts, the polemical register stands out as a central strategy to emotionalise the discourse.

In addition, Schumann and Wagner boast a different closeness to the institutional organisation of *Musikkritik*. That affects their opposite styles of reader management as well. Schumann faces a rather consistent readership. He publishes the absolute majority of his *Musikkritiken* in the NZfM and, thus, falls back on a greater familiarity with its readers. As an editor, furthermore, Schumann had a keen insight in the make-up of his readership and could even sway whom the journal was read by (cf. 1.3.1). Wagner, on the contrary, moves between different periodicals that each address a different readership. Thus, Wagner had less opportunity to tighten the bonds with his readers. Instead, he had to assert the cogency of his *Kritik* within the scope of a singular article. The contrast in institutional involvement accounts for the fact why Schumann invests more effort in prefiguring the reader's profile itself, while Wagner straight-out aims at placating the reader.

Is the reader, then, merely an easy victim of Schumann's and Wagner's machinations? Certainly not. Since the Enlightenment, the reader was acknowledged as a legitimate partner of *Kritik*. Although that central position was put under increasing pressure in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the reader nonetheless remained *Kritik*'s main beneficiary. The following chapter will examine to what extent Schumann and Wagner enable the reader to become engaged in the *Musikkritiken*. As we have seen, the *Musikkritiker* embodies the norms and values that *Kritik* upholds as an institution. The question, then, is to what degree Schumann and Wagner grant the reader room to set upon *Kritik* with his own set of norms. I will not investigate, to be sure, with what values readers enter upon the *Musikkritiken*.



Rather, I wish to examine what freedom Schumann and Wagner grant the reader to do so in the first place.



## Chapter 4 Activating the Reader's Judgement

The previous chapter has shown that Schumann's and Wagner's critical discourse prefigures particular reader profiles that strengthen the rhetorical structure of their *Musikkritiken*. I have analyzed the reader as an abstracted, textual agent that authors coerce into assuming a certain stance on the topic at hand. Chapter 3 has predominantly determined how Schumann and Wagner prefigure the identity of the reader. This chapter, then, examines how they individualise those general reader profiles: Schumann and Wagner spur readers to become actively involved in the *Kritiken* and foster their judgement. Indeed, contrary to popular academic belief, Schumann and Wagner seldom act as authoritative *Musikkritiker* who forcefully impose their opinions on the reader. On the contrary. We will learn that Schumann and Wagner very much attempt to stimulate readers during the act of reading itself. I will show that despite its notable 'Philister'-rhetoric (cf. 3.1.2), Schumann's 'Davidsbund'-model creates a vacuum of opinion that the reader fills. The different 'Davidsbündler' constantly bicker amongst each other. However, a narrative instance is lacking that can bring the different views to a consensus. The reader, then, is invited to step into that narrative gap and determine a proper judgement in the midst of the many 'Davidsbündler'-opinions. Wagner, finally, activates the affective compass of a text to retain the reader's attention. I will subject Wagner's use of the polemical register to a comprehensive, diachronic analysis and conclude that the flexible, stylistic modes he manages, guides the reader's attention to the specific arguments he wishes to make.

### 4.1 The 'Davidsbund': Narrative Gaps

The 'Davidsbund' has since long counted as the flagship of Schumann's *Musikkritik*. It has captivated scholars from various disciplines, giving proof of Schumann's extensive interweaving of music and literature. The 'Davidsbund' even branched out to other forms

of *Kritik* and served as a model to the *Literaturpapst* Alfred Kerr in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Prambule, footnote 5). Despite its aesthetic appeal, however, the question remains what the ‘Davidsbund’ brings in terms of *Kritik*. Although the league has come to epitomise Schumann’s *Kritik*, it only appears in 41 of the 277 reviews. The other texts are ‘normal’, standalone articles with *Kritiker* who do not step into (or only briefly skim along) the universe of the ‘Davidsbndler’. It goes without saying, to put it differently, that Schumann sees added value in the ‘Davidsbund’-model; he associates a particular use with it that ‘classic’ reviews lend themselves less to.

From a literary point of view, the ‘Davidsbund’ continues a long tradition of dialogic *Kritik*. Plato’s *Dialogues* established a first bench-mark. During the Enlightenment, moreover, the strategy became a staple technique of critical discourse: Christian Thomasius’ *Monatsgesprche*,<sup>1</sup> Diderot’s *Salons*<sup>2</sup> and many other texts demonstrate a similar dialogic approach to the composition of *Kritik*.<sup>3</sup> In 19<sup>th</sup> century German *Kunstkritik*, in particular, E.T.A Hoffmann’s use of a critical frame narrative in *Die Serapionsbrder* (1819–1821) constitutes a much-emulated example.<sup>4</sup> The narrative organisation of *Kritik* had moreover gained in poetological importance since the end of the eighteenth century: theoreticians such as Karl Philipp Moritz and August Wilhelm Schlegel advocated an aesthetic analogy between art and language in the essays *Die Signatur des Schnen* (1788) and *Die Gemlde* (1798), respectively. They fitted the (fictive) dialogue in with their theories on rendering art through language: if language, so they argue, seeks to aptly represent a work of art, it must itself aspire to poetic expression.<sup>5</sup> Art can only be described through another instance of art.

Readers of Schumann’s *Musikkritik* would thus have been familiar with the general idea of passing *Kritik* through fictional characters. As a stylistic technique, the ‘Davidsbund’s narrative form was certainly not exceptional. The pragmatic function connected with the dialogic staging of the League, on the other hand, very much is. I will argue that the ‘Davidsbund’ falls back on key narrative operations that do not comprise mere stylistic

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<sup>1</sup> cf. the introduction to Part II, footnote 21 and 22.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Roland Galle: ‘Diderot – oder die Dialogisierung der Aufklrung’. In: *Europische Aufklrung* III, ed. by Jrgen Stackelberg. Wiesbaden: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft 1980, pp. 209-247.

<sup>3</sup> Schumann’s relocation of narrative dialogues to the genre of *Musikkritik* does not necessarily indicate any shortcoming or lack of originality on his side. It rather exemplifies the hierarchy between genres and discourses that the author chooses from, as Monika Fludernik remarks: „Speakers, I would argue, start out from a universe of discourses, and within that universe pick out the genre that seems to most appropriate to their current concerns.“ (Monika Fludernik: ‘Genres, Text Types, or Discourse Modes? Narrative Modalities and Generic Categorization’. In: *Style* 34/2 (2000), p. 286).

<sup>4</sup> As we recall from the introduction, there is a crucial difference between Hoffmann’s ‘Serapionsbrder’ and Schumann’s ‘Davidsbund’. Whereas Hoffmann only supplied the narrative frame in retrospect, i.e. when he reprinted his *Kritiken*, Schumann already used the frame on the initial publication of the ‘Davidsbund’-reviews.

<sup>5</sup> cf. Corina Caduff: *Die Literarisierung von Musik und bildender Kunst um 1800*. Mnchen: Wilhelm Fink 2003, p. 53.

phenomena, but that also shape the critical communication with the reader. The narrative frame of the 'Davidsbund', I will show, profoundly affects the texts' pragmatic outreach to the reader: the *Kritiker's* voice gets fragmented into different sub-reviews, but the discord between the 'Davidsbund'-members remains unresolved due to the absence of an extradiegetic narrator. As such, Schumann creates a vacuum of opinion which encourages the readers to take a position of their own. Before I move on to make my case about the meta-critical function of the 'Davidsbund', I will discuss main narrative features of the League. I will do so by means of a string of reviews that Schumann bundled under the name *Schwärmbriefe* and that sum up the 'Davidsbund' as a critical project.

#### 4.1.1 The 'Schwärmbriefe': outlines of a critical project

The *Schwärmbriefe* are a set of four texts written by different members of the 'Davidsbund'.<sup>6</sup> These self-proclaimed love letters appeared in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* between October and December of the year 1835. The sentimental title is hardly an indicator of their content, however. True enough, the texts host some highly affective romanticisms:<sup>7</sup> Chiara<sup>8</sup> concludes her second letter with "Oft klingen, wie von Geisterhand berührt, des Nachts Saiten an, dann denke, dass ich an dich denke."<sup>9</sup>, to which Eusebius replies with the amorous caveat: "Der Briefträger wuchs mir zur Blume entgegen, als ich

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Schumann (Eusebius): 'Schwärmbriefe. Eusebius an Chiara.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 32, pp.126-127 [= *Schwärmbriefe* I]; Robert Schumann (Chiara): 'Schwärmbriefe. An Eusebius.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 37, p. 147 [= *Schwärmbriefe* II]; Robert Schumann (Eusebius, Florestan): 'Schwärmbriefe. An Chiara.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 38, pp. 151-152 [= *Schwärmbriefe* III]; Robert Schumann (Serpentinus): 'Schwärmbriefe. An Chiara.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 46, pp. 182-183 [= *Schwärmbriefe* IV].

<sup>7</sup> The romantic atmosphere in the letters should come as no surprise. Indeed, as Janet Gurkin Altman observes, "the letter form seems tailored for the love plot, with its emphasis on separation and reunion." (Janet Gurkin Altman: *Epistolarity. Approaches to a form*. Ohio: State University Press 1982, p. 14). Furthermore, the letter had since long been an established scenography in *Kritik* (e.g. Lessing's *Briefe, die Neueste Litteratur betreffend* (1759-1765) and *Briefe, antiquarischen Inhalts* (1768-1769) or Schiller's *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (1793)) and in the 19th century, writers and *Kritiker* began to rediscover its aesthetic value, cf. with regard to Schumann, Jocelyne Kolb: 'Ästhetische Korrespondenzen. Der Brief als Kunstmittel bei Heine und Schumann'. In: *Übergänge. Zwischen Künsten und Kulturen. Internationaler Kongress zum 150. Todesjahr von Heinrich Heine und Robert Schumann*, ed. by Henriette Herwig, Volker Kalisch, Bernd Kortländer, Joseph A. Kruse and Bernd Witte. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 2007, pp. 67-74.

<sup>8</sup> I would like to thank Jan Christoph Meister for drawing my attention to the fact that Chiara is also a character in E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr* (1819-1821). This analogy prompts us to pay particular attention to the trans- and interfictional configuration of the characters in Schumann's *Musikkritik*.

<sup>9</sup> Schumann: *Schwärmbriefe* II, p. 147.

das rothschimmerende ‘Milano’ auf Deinem Briefe sah”.<sup>10</sup> Other than that, the letters are first and foremost a platform Schumann uses to appraise a series of concerts in Leipzig under the baton of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. The scenography of the letter has several advantages. On a formal level, it allows Schumann to split up his account in various narratives, thus kindling the interaction between the characters. In addition, the fragmentation into multiple reviews provides Schumann with a playground of stylistic versatility. In a self-reflexive turn, Florestan hints at this advantage in a post-script to the third Schwärmbrief: “Livia bittet mich, über Concerte doch etwas in die \*\*\*sche Zeit zu liefern. Du weisst, wie ich abhorrescire vor publiken Musik-Schreibereien, namentlich vor den gutmüthig-arcadischen. Dies liesse sich etwa durch eine freiere, etwa Brief-Form erträglich machen”.<sup>11</sup>

The letter-format indeed allows Schumann to present a dynamic and expressive account of the concerts in Leipzig. The letter, in its elementary communicative dialectics of statement and answer, opens up a vivid interactive field: the protagonists can agree with one another, argue each other’s views and opinions, but also refer to preceding letters (pre-narratives) or anticipate follow-ups (post-narratives) to capture, captivate and guide the reader’s attention. In the first letter, for instance, Eusebius refers to a question that Clara asked in a previous letter (a question that we as reader never got to read in the first place): “Du fragst [sic], ob Maria dieselbe Theilnahme, wie früher, in Firlenz finden würde. Wie kannst du daran Zweifeln”.<sup>12</sup> At the conclusion of the same letter, Eusebius similarly announces an anecdote that he will disclose in further detail in a future letter: “Eben zur Mitternachtsstunde tritt Florestan herein mit Jonathan, einem neuen Davidsbündler, sehr gegen einander fechtend über Aristokratie des Geistes und Republik der Meinungen. [...] Über diesen Mächtigen erfährst du später mehr”.<sup>13</sup> The quarrel Eusebius announces, however, would never be published. Still, the references to earlier and future letters create a narrative suspense and give the reader the impression that he is witness to a greater, long-term correspondence.

The narrative fragmentation in the *Schwärmbriefe* is not only achieved through the authorship of three different writers. The letters also feature different hypodiegetic voices. In fact, the diegetic narratives of the texts hardly ever pass on criticism. Most of the time, they do so in the form of intradiegetic dialogues, e. g. by recounting a conversation between or with audience members: “‘Welche Ouverture von F. Meritis mir die liebste [sei]?’ fragte mich ein Einfältiger [...] und ich wußte keine bessere Antwort, als

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<sup>10</sup> Schumann: *Schwärmbriefe* III, p. 151

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 152

<sup>12</sup> Schumann: *Schwärmbriefe* I, p. 127.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p. 127.

die beste 'jede'".<sup>14</sup> As a result, the diegetic narrators rarely have a true responsibility as *Kritiker*. Instead, they will recall utterances of hypodiegetic characters in which, conversely, criticism is couched. Florestan is the favoured sage, in this respect. He is quoted the most, probably because he never writes a letter of his own and can therefore not occupy any position on the diegetic level: "doch fiel mir der Ausspruch Florestans auf"<sup>15</sup>; "und dabei fällt mir Florestans lakonisches Wort ein"<sup>16</sup>. Meister Raro is given the floor in a similar manner: "Und bei diesem fessellosen Genie bestätigt sich wieder recht Meisters Raros Ausspruch".<sup>17</sup> The animated interaction between the different narrative instances makes for flexible transitions between the diegetic levels. A short fragment from the last letter illustrates how smoothly the crossing from one level to the other can happen and how frail the narrative borders are. Serpentin, the author of the letter, recounts how he attended a concert and - much against his will - became part of a nonsensical conversation between his two neighbours:

Eben war ein Flötenconcert beendet. "Ich wünschte sehr," meint der zur Rechten, "die Flöte hätte vorhin Violine gespielt" - "Sie haben Recht" (der Linke) "ich höre gern Flöte, aber besonders Piccolo, die schneidet einem so recht wohltuend ins - dabei schnitt aber der Tituschor so in mein Ohr [...] dass ich die Worte des Empfindsamen verlor."<sup>18</sup>

But one hyphen and a shared expression ('einem ins Ohr schneiden') establish the changeover from the hypodiegetic to the diegetic level and simultaneously attest to the fluidity between the narrative frames.

The 'Davidsbund' pushes the steadfast *Kritiker* to the background of the text. This has much to do with the challenging task narrative *Kritik* sets itself: it stages a fictional environment in order to comment on actual, existent referents. The reviews, in other terms, must at a certain point always tilt toward these actual referents in order to become tangible and relatable for the reader. The 'Davidsbund'-universe never bases on a direct mediation of the extra-fictional world; the cracks between both rather heighten the fictionality of the letters. The core members Eusebius, Florestan and Meister Raro as well as the occasional letter-writers Serpentin and Jonathan seem to possess no counterpart in real life. Other protagonists, then again, are far less mysterious: The conductor F.

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>16</sup> Schumann: *Schwärmbriefe* II, p. 147.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>18</sup> Schumann: *Schwärmbriefe* IV, p. 183.

Meritis is grafted on the person of Felix Mendelssohn<sup>19</sup> and the repeatedly wooed addressee Clara Wieck (later Schumann) is referred to under the Italianised version 'Chiara' or under a derivate of the patron saint of music Cecilia herself, 'Zilia'.<sup>20</sup> Even Leipzig, the place where the concerts are performed, is reduced to the mock name 'Firlenz'. One must not get caught in the web of biographical protagonists and their fictional counterparts, however. From a pragmatic point of view, the fictional universe that the 'Davidsbündler' and their reviews maintain, enable Schumann to keep a low profile in his *Musikkritik* and to step into the background of the review.

In the *Schwärmbriefe*, the 'Davidsbündler' tend to engage in chaotic discussions. The reviews are fragmentary, parts of the correspondence are failing (cf. supra) and more playful members, like Florestan, annotate the letters with postscripts. The disorganised impression the letters make, however, do not mean that they are unregulated. On the contrary: we encounter a 'Herausgeber' who briefly intervenes, but exactly for that reason rids us of any doubt about the narrative structure of the texts. Granted, the extradiegetic level of the letters does not often come to light. One might therefore be inclined to assume that the individual letters exist separately from each other. The different letter writers would accordingly act as narrators in parallel frame narratives. The *Schwärmbriefe*, however, do reveal the presence of an extra-diegetic narrator in the capacity of an editor. He intervenes, not only in words, but also in deeds. A short footnote gives most evident proof of his presence. In her letter to Eusebius, Chiara mentions the performance of a certain 'Felicitas'. In a small reference at the bottom of the page, an until then unfeatured voice feels the need to clarify the identity of said Felicitas: "Wir vermuthen, dass hier die Malibran gemeint ist; auch der Vorname passt".<sup>21</sup> The footnote,

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<sup>19</sup> Through small remarks, for example, the narrator severs Mendelssohn the conductor from Mendelssohn the composer: "Der F. Meritis dirigirte, als hätte er die Ouverture selbst componirt" (Schumann: *Schwärmbriefe I*, p. 127). One might wonder why Schumann, as author, so decidedly wants to rupture the borders between fact and fiction. In this specific case of F. Meritis, it might be a narratological strategy to delineate and reinforce the subject of the review 'Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt': it is the performance of the piece that the *Kritiker* scrutinises, not the composition itself. Within the scope of the text as a whole, however, a more valid reason might well be that Schumann wants to simulate (though not necessarily achieve) critical objectivity.

<sup>20</sup> In the same letter of Serpentin to Chiara, the need for such a distance becomes clear. The subject of the latter, in fact, is a concert that Clara Wieck herself gave. One can easily imagine the deontological problem Schumann was faced with: he had to appraise the concert of his beloved one. As a solution to this dilemma, Schumann created a triple narrative break from Clara. The extrafictional Clara Wieck becomes the narrative character 'Chiara'; whereas Eusebius in the first letter still wrote to Clara, Serpentin now writes to 'Chiara'. But this is just an intermediate step, for it would be quite redundant if Serpentin would write a review to Chiara about her own concert. As a consequence, Chiara is mediated into yet another character on a underlying narrative frame, i.e. 'Zilia'. Zilia performs together with F. Meritis and a certain Walt. As a result, the account of Clara Wieck's concert takes place within three narrative frames: (i) Serpentin writes to (ii) Chiara about a concert of (iii) Zilia.

<sup>21</sup> Schumann: *Schwärmbriefe II*, p. 147.



as we can see, is short, but teaches us three fundamental aspects about this and other narrators of the extradiegetic ‘Davidsbund’-frame (cf. *infra*). First of all, the narrator of the extradiegetic frame is not an omniscient narrator, but has to ‘presume’ things.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, he mediates between the extrafictional and the fictional world, in that he connects the fictional ‘Davidsbund’-referent ‘Felicitas’ to her extrafictional surname ‘Malibran’, a famous Spanish mezzo-soprano in Schumann’s age. Whereas the characters within the diegetic narrative all take up each other’s remarks or turn to other ‘Davidsbündler’, furthermore, the narrator as editor approaches the reader. The form of the footnote itself, already takes him outside of the physical design of the diegetic narrative frame. The footnote of the editor, moreover, indicates that the extradiegetic narrator has the ability to directly influence the form and rendition of the letters in the journal. The fact that all the letters lack a formal salutation suggests, for instance, that the editor manipulates the texts’ formal appearance. We are only made familiar with the precise addressee through small additions under the title: ‘An Eusebius’ or ‘An Clara’. Even if this by itself does not attest to major editorial interferences, it shows that the reader is not presented with the full version of the letters. The second and fourth letter, as a matter of fact, open *in medias res* and the hyphens at the beginning of the texts indicate that opening parts have been cut out.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, the narrator has more than a mere narratorial presence. In his capacity editor, he also intervenes on a formal level.

The *Schwärmbriefe* can be seen as an exercise in narrative *Kritik*. The communicative outline of the letter-form inherently sets up the texts as a narrative: the writer is obligated to relay his experiences of the concert as a retrospective account. As such, the need to narrate arises in and by itself. Likewise, the letters confirm the addressee in the position that readers *de facto* assume in *Musikkritik*, i.e. as second-hand listener. The *Schwärmbriefe* do not only render music into text through strictly descriptive, intermedial means, but they also evoke a mood.<sup>24</sup> Besides recounting the concert itself, the various

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<sup>22</sup> The indication of ‘not knowing something’ is of course a typical attempt to give omniscient narrators a more realistic cachet. The fact that this strategy is here marked by a *Herausgeberfiktion* – in itself already a strong sign of simulated extratextual authority – hints at irony: the inability to do something constitutes a modality of the text’s ludic nature.

<sup>23</sup> Fragmenting the scenography of the letter was a staple technique in then novellistic writing, of course, not in the least in Hoffmann’s *Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr* (1819–1821).

<sup>24</sup> With ‘mood’ I refer to all ingredients that contribute to and influence the reception of music. They are “intimately connected to factors over which artists have virtually no control!” (Noël Carroll: ‘Art and Mood: Preliminary Notes and Conjectures’. In: *Monist* 86 (2003), p. 539). These factors may include aspects that are not restricted to aural sensory experiences, like place, setting, moment in time, personal well-being etc. For a more profound reflection the relationship between music and mood, see the discussion between Carroll: *Art and Mood* and Peter Kivy: ‘Mood and Music: Some Reflections for Noël Carroll’. In: *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 64/2 (2006), pp. 271–281. An interesting exploration of the engendering of moods through narratives can be found in Carl Plantinga: ‘Art Moods and Human Moods in Narrative Cinema’. In: *New Literary History* 43/3 (2012), pp. 455–475.

letter writers invest their efforts in sketching the ambience (e.g. what happens when they enter the concert hall, how the public behaves and interacts; cf. supra). Schumann uses the narrative frame to include those aspects that indirectly affect the response to music. In that regard, the *Schwärmbriefe* contemplate on the extent to which *Kritik* and *Kritiker* can fully convey not only the content, but also the experience of music.

The notion of delivering *Kritik* through epistolary means captures the critical project that Schumann undertakes with the ‘Davidsbund’ in a nutshell. The ‘Davidsbund’ enables Schumann to recreate and simulate the sensory experience of and cognitive reaction to music by capitalising on the textual pragmatic means that he has at his disposal. The staging of a dialogue generates a dynamic interaction between the diegetic levels. At the same time, vital aspects of passing *Kritik* are shifted from the extradiegetic narrator to the diegetic instances. To that extent, even, that the *Kritiker*, as speaker, does not longer manage to get his point across and a vacuum of opinion arise. The ‘Davidsbund’-model encourages the reader to become actively involved in the process of critical decision-making. As a narratee of the extradiegetic narrator, the reader is made into a pivotal player in the complex narrative scaffolding that Schumann mounts.

#### 4.1.2 The ‘Davidsbund’s Eristic Template

Schumann recognises the wide range of possibilities that the ‘Davidsbund’-model offers from early on. The narrative structure allows for an unrivalled flexibility in terms of style and form, but also with regard to critical perspective and the textual identity of the *Kritiker*. From its very inception, furthermore, Schumann places interaction at the heart of the ‘Davidsbund’. When he looks back on his tenure as *Musikkritiker* in 1854, he recalls inventing the ‘Davidsbund’ “[um] verschiedene Ansichten der Kunstanschauung zur Aussprache zu bringen”.<sup>25</sup> This multiperspectivism translates in an eristic undercurrent that propels the many exchanges between the different members. Fun and engaging as this might be, it also jeopardises the effectiveness of the Davidbund’s *Kritik*. Schumann often test the limits of the ‘Davidsbund’-model, expanding the spectrum of his opinion to such a degree that the narrative fabric can no longer support the extreme diffusion of critical voices. Readers, then, are left facing a plethora of different opinions on which they must base their own judgement.

Interaction is a crucial asset of the ‘Davidsbund’. Within a text, the ‘Davidsbund’ members actively engage with and comment on each other. Out of the 41 ‘Davidsbund’-texts, only 13 feature multiple interlocutors (Florestan being an active participant in all of them). This means that a great part of the interplay between the ‘Davidsbündler’ also

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<sup>25</sup> Robert Schumann: ‘Einleitendes’. In: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*. Vol. 1. Reprint of the Leipzig-Edition of 1854. Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel 1985, p. V.

takes place across the boundaries of individual reviews. A 1835 review series of piano sonatas exemplifies this: Florestan and Eusebius together provide the first instalment for the series, and when Raro writes the follow-up, he opens his discussion of a sonata of Taubert by explicitly criticising the preceding review of his two pupils.<sup>26</sup> Schumann furthermore credits intra-and intertextual exchanges as a structural form of communication. He institutionalises the *Schwärmbriefe*, (in itself already inherently interactive by way of the letter-form, cf. supra) in his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* as the ‘Davidsbündlerbriefe’, a platform for correspondents abroad.

As a strategy of passing on *Kritik*, the interaction between the ‘Davidsbündler’ puts the members in the position that they can either affirm or reject each other’s opinion. There are certainly uncommon shows of solidarity in which the competition that is engrained in the ‘Davidsbund’-model centres on discussions about critical style or calls the authority and qualifications of *Kritik* itself into question.<sup>27</sup> But in the majority of the cases, the

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<sup>26</sup> “Den ersten Satz dieser Sonate halt’ ich für den ersten, den zweiten für den zweiten, den dritten für den letzten – in absteigender Schönheitslinie.’ So etwa würdest du, mein Liebling Florestan, deine Rede anfangen. Ihr dürft mir aber nicht darüber, Jünglinge, die ihr gleich eure Eselskinnbacken anlegt! Denn wie Florestan eine merkwürdige Feinheit besitzt, die Mängel eines Werkes im Nu auszuspüren, so findet dagegen Eusebius mit seiner weichen Hand schnell die Schönheiten auf, mit denen er gar oft auch die Irrthümer zu überdecken weiß. Beide haltet ihr euch jedoch, wie Jünglinge pflegen, am liebsten und längsten bei Dichtungen auf, in denen das phantastische Element vorwaltet. Zu den letzteren gehört unsere Composition nicht”. (Robert Schumann (Raro): ‘Kritik. (9) Sonaten für Pianoforte. (Fortsetzung.) 3. (Die von Taubert.)’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 1, Nr. 33, p.133).

<sup>27</sup> Sometimes, the ‘Davidsbündler’ do support each other. Serpentinus’, Florestan’s and Raro’s opinions about six songs by Ferdinand Oelschläger miraculously all fit together harmoniously, for instance. Serpentinus fills three quarters of the review (which in its entirety is less than one column long) with his reflections about the songs. He makes several careful remarks about “kleine Anstößigkeiten im Satz” (Robert Schumann (Serpentinus, Flor., Raro): ‘Gesang. F. Oelschläger’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1835, Vol. 2, Nr. 44, p. 175) or “einige Schwächen und Stillstände in der Haltung des Ganzen” (Schumann: *F. Oelschläger*, p. 175). At the same time, he is eager to point out that this “[ihm] eben außer dem Elemente des Componisten zu liegen scheint”. (ibid., p. 175) The ambivalence between work and composer essentially turns Serpentinus’ account into one prolonged praeteritio. The review remains non-committal throughout and refuses to bring the character of the composer up for discussion; only the quality of the specific composition matters: “Das alles würde ich aber nicht erwähnen, sondern die Lieder zu den vielen mit ewigem Schweigem gesegneten legen, wenn nicht aus Interesse am Talente des Componisten, drum möge sich auch nur dieser um den Tadel kümmern, die übrigen froh sein, einmal Besser zu erhalten” (ibid., p. 175). Serpentinus’ somewhat lukewarm account prompts the other ‘Davidsbündler’ to intervene on his behalf and put an edge on the review. Florestan responds with a decisive “Deutlicher gesagt” (ibid., p. 175) and situates Oelschläger somewhere in between a dilettant and a musician. He spots “viel Talent und natürliches richtig treffendes Gefühl” (ibid., p. 175), but his conclusion ultimately remains as opaque as that of Serpentinus: “[a]us diesen Werkchen kann man indeß den Wärmegrad des Talents des Componisten noch nicht ersehen” (ibid., p. 175). Raro still finds Florestan’s too hesitant and closes the review with a poignant judgement: “Noch deutlicher gesagt sind die Gesänge geradezu zu loben, also zu empfehlen” (ibid., p. 175). There is an interesting analogy to be drawn here between opinion and discourse. Serpentinus, Florestan and Raro do not only discuss Oelschläger’s songs. Their *Kritik* also mirrors the criteria according to which the different

arguments between the members set out to discredit each other as *Kritiker*. Schumann purposely pits the opinions of ‘Davidsbündler’ against each other. A case in point is the review series ‘Museum’ that Schumann introduced in 1837 in order to spotlight leading composers and musicians. The opening instalment is modelled around a contest between Florestan and Eusebius. Both ‘Davidsbündler’ vie for the honour of inducting the first name into the gallery. They each have their own candidate: Eusebius chooses Adolph Henselt, Florestan champions Stephan Heller. Both opponents have ample room to make their case. They gladly embrace the eristic objective of the article. Florestan and Eusebius moreover include outspoken interactive qualities in their speeches. They involve each other in their arguments, for instance. Both speeches open with a direct address of the respective opponent.<sup>28</sup> In addition, Eusebius and Florestan make their position more relatable for one another by recalling an experience they shared. Eusebius brings his piano rehearsals together with Florestan to mind: “Du weißt, Florestan, viel haben wir am Clavier zusammenstudirt, geschweigt in Fingerübungen und Beethoven, besten Ton zu erlangen. Was ich aber Wohllaut, Klangzauber nenne, ist mir noch nie in einem höhern

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*Kritiker* interact with on another: they comment on the verbosity and style of each other’s *Kritik*, not the qualities of the *Kritiker* himself. Just like Serpentinus only comments on the style of the songs and refuses to doubt the qualities of Oelschläger himself, the ‘Davidsbündler’ correct each other’s long-winded interventions. This is not an isolated occurrence. On other occasions as well, the usual eristic modus operandi the ‘Davidsbündler’ adopt, runs parallel with self-conscious reflections on the nature of that *Kritik* itself. The ‘Davidsbündler’ complement the specific object of their reviews with a meta-critical component. We also detect this double-track in a review about Chopin’s two piano concertos, for instance. Florestan and Eusebius both give their view on the subject. Or actually only Eusebius, because Florestan dedicates his section to questioning whether *Kritik* even holds good for Chopin’s works. He emphasises this point over and over again, (conveniently making use of the situation to start a diatribe against a certain ‘Pantoffel-Zeitung’ while he is at it), and brings up the issue one last time at the end of his account: “Noch einmal, warum über Chopin schreiben? Warum Leser zur Langeweile zwingen? Warum nicht aus erster Hand schöpfen, selbst spielen, selbst schreiben, selbst componiren? Zum letztenmal fort mit den musikalischen Zeitungen, besonderen und sonstigen!” (Robert Schumann (Florestan., Eusebius.): ‘Pianoforte. Concerte.’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 1, Nr. 33, p. 138). Always the first to call Florestan to order, Eusebius opens his discussion of Chopin’s piano concertos with a strong rebuttal of Florestan’s claims: “Ginge es dem Tollkopf, dem Florestan nach, so wäre er im Stande, Obiges eine Recension zu nennen, ja mit selbiger die ganze Zeitung zu schließen” (Schumann: *Pianoforte. Concerte*, p. 138).

<sup>28</sup> Eusebius: “Mit einiger Freundschaft mehr betrachte ich Dich oft, **mein Florestan**, daß Du mit gutem Griff aus der Schaar der Jünger die Besten herausfühltest und sie zuert in die Welt, d.i. in die Zeitschrift einführtest als künftige Würden-, wo nicht Lorbeerträger. Sonderbar waren sie gerade von den verschiedensten Völkerschaften [...] Wann endlich, dacht ich da of traurig, wird denn auch einmal ein Deutscher kommen!” (Robert Schumann (Eusebius., Florestan): ‘Museum’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1837, Vol. 2, Nr. 18, p. 69.

<sup>28</sup> Schumann: *Museum*, p. 69; my emphasis). Florestan: “**Damit aber mein Eusebius nicht etwa überschäume**, wie ein hochgeschwungener Pokal, stell’ ich ihm einen eben so jungen deutschen Künstler gegenüber, Stephan Heller, der die Vorzüge seines Lieblings zwar nicht in so hohem Grade theilt, außer dem aber die Vielseitigkeit der Erfindung, Phantasie und Witz die Fülle hat” (Schumann: *Museum*, p. 70; bold emphasis mine).

Grade vorgekommen, als in Henselt's [sic] Compositionen".<sup>29</sup> Florestan, for his part, emphasises how much Eusebius and he have in common with Heller: "du erinnerst dich, Eusebius, wir hatten einmal etwas der Wina aus den 'Flegeljahren' zugeeignet; die Dedication der Impromptus nennt auch eine Jean Paul'sche Himmelsgestalt, Liana v. Froulay – wie wir denn überhaupt Manches gemein haben, welches Geständnis Niemand falsch deuten wolle; es liegt zu deutlich da".<sup>30</sup> An additional interactive quality of the speeches is that Florestan and Eusebius attempt to draw their fellow 'Davidsbündler' into the discussion. Eusebius enlists the help of other 'Davidsbündler' to make his arguments more compelling, e.g. "ich stimme der Davidsbündlerin Sara bei, daß sie ihn, den noch wenig Gehörten, ihn, der kaum Opus eins hinter den Rücken hat, gleich den Besten der jungen Künstlerschaft anreihet".<sup>31</sup> Florestan, vice versa, mentions that Heller had sent him a letter, begging for the 'Davidsbündler' to judge his works because of the affinity he feels towards them – a convincing reason for Florestan to oblige Heller's request: "Beste Freunde, - sagte ich meinen -, nach solchen Briefstellen ist nichts zu thun, als auf die Composition zuzufiegen und den Mann an der Wurzel kennen zu lernen, dessen Namen ein so fatales Widerspiel seines Inhabers".<sup>32</sup>

The dispute between Florestan and Eusebius is certainly entertaining. Still, a crucial element is missing: a consensus. The quarrelsome friends can mount the most eloquent attempts to convince each other, but in the end, neither of them wins the argument. The lack of consensus is all the more striking, perhaps, because there actually is a third party in the text who might bring the opposing views together, i.e. 'Die Redaction'. 'Die Redaction' opens the article and signals that it acts as a mediator of the 'Davidsbund': "Unter diesem Titel [Museum] erhielten wir vor Kurzem einige Beiträge der *Davidsbündlerschaft* mit der Anfrage [...]".<sup>33</sup> All in all, however, 'Die Redaction' remains distant and detached. It does comply with the 'Anfrage', yet merely signals his consent with the apathetic comment "die Bündlerschaft sollte nur";<sup>34</sup> other than that, it does not intervene any further in the dealings of the 'Bündlerschaft'. Given the prominence with which the editorial team makes itself known, the lack of a consensus is somewhat surprising. Indeed, it defies expectations that an editor would leave his readers without a clear opinion. Nevertheless, the incompetent, mediating editor makes a frequent appearance in the 'Davidsbund'-texts. As we have seen, he plays a key part in involving the reader in the narrative structure of the text. His inability to bring the different views on a subject together and consolidate them into a single opinion coaxes the reader into

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<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, p. 69.

taking a stand of his own. Schumann fosters the critical competence of the reader by presenting him with the opportunity to fill up the narrative blind spots that result from the ‘Davidsbund’-interactions – a pattern that propels many of the ‘Davidsbund’-*Kritiken*.

### 4.1.3 Narrative Gaps

The ‘Davidsbündler’ time and again display their eagerness to cross swords. Especially on early appearances, they are keen to disagree with each other. Sometimes, the members even get so caught up in the argument that they continue the discussion at all costs and do not reach a conclusion at all. Fricker calls these confrontations ‘kontradiktorisch’, exactly because they lack any form of consensus. But what Fricker labels as the “Auffächerung voneinander abweichender Standpunkte in verschiedene Sprecher”<sup>35</sup> and later on as a reflection on the critical process itself,<sup>36</sup> should actually be reconsidered in terms of its pragmatic effect on the reader. If we explore these so called ‘kontradiktorische Schriften’ in greater detail, we see that a similar pattern unfolds in all of them: the different interlocutors are each allotted a separate paragraph to expound their views about a given subject. They use much of that room to copiously quarrel with and gibe at each other, however. Eventually, Meister Raro puts an end to all disputes with a closing, though hardly successful, conciliatory statement.

Whenever ‘Davidsbündler’ face each other within one and the same review, inconclusiveness is generally the result. A short but striking example can be found in Schumann’s review of Johann Nepomuk Hummel’s etudes. It is a classical review in the sense that the title foregrounds one clear object to be criticised. The etudes serve as the thematic framework of the review. The true discussion, nonetheless, eventually revolves about the position of Hummel within music history. In the text, three different narrators give three different views on Hummel and his etudes: Eusebius, Florestan and a short interjection by Meister Raro. Eusebius sees Hummel as the legitimate successor of Mozart and Beethoven. Florestan on the other hand, dismisses the etudes – and Hummel altogether – as outdated. He considers the works as mere obstacles for younger composers. Meister Raro, for his part, does not take issue with both ‘Jünglinge’. By means of a quote from Goethe, he makes clear that Florestan and Eusebius are too much concerned with names and reproves them for not focussing enough on the original subject of the review, i.e. the etudes themselves. This small summary already shows that the fragmentation of critical opinion is quite elaborate in the review. It not only

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<sup>35</sup> Hans-Peter Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns: Versuch eines literaturwissenschaftlichen Zugangs*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1983, p. 122.

<sup>36</sup> cf. Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns*, p. 149-151.

delineates and sharpens the different views that might exist on the subject at hand, but also allows for a vivid interaction between the narratives themselves. The characters are constantly locked in battle with each other, they even anticipate each other's arguments<sup>37</sup> and copiously refer to one another. Multiple apostrophes mirror this interaction rhetorically: "Florestan – wenn Du ein größerer König wärest [...] "<sup>38</sup>; "Schönes Eusebiusgemüth, du machst mich wahrhaftig zum Lachen."<sup>39</sup>; "Jünglinge, Ihr irrt beide"<sup>40</sup> etc. These tokens of interaction do not at any moment result in a hard-fought consensus of opinion, however: in everything they say, Eusebius and Florestan are at odds with each other, and Meister Raro persists in his neutrality.

The same course of events unfolds in 'Monument für Beethoven. Vier Stimmen darüber'. The title already indicates the marked multiperspectivism in the text: Florestan and Eusebius, in a rare moment of concord, seem to agree on the necessity of a monument but strongly differ on the reasons why; Jonathan, a second-tier 'Davidsbündler', mainly talks about Bach and asks to be released from the heavy duty of declaring himself against or in favour of a monument. Meister Raro, finally, also sympathises with the striving for a Beethoven-Monument. Quite redundantly, he lists all the cities that already contributed to the cause, making a call for, though not establishing unity at the end. There is a remarkable centrifugal move away from a leading critical voice in the article. More specifically, we happen upon a distinctly interactive web of multiple voices in the text. The narrative structure, indeed, can be described in few words: one voice per opinion (the subtitle of the article about Beethoven's Monument congenially reads 'Vier Stimmen Darüber'). In their respective accounts, the individual characters intensely interact with each other. As in the Hummel-review, the comments that the companions of the 'Davidsbund' make about each other comprise a myriad of apostrophes in: "Seh' ich es dir doch an, Euseb, wie dich meine Worte ärgern"<sup>41</sup>, "du aber, Florestan, beleidigst mich durch dein grobes Auftreten"<sup>42</sup> or "Jünglinge, Ihr irrt beide – nur Du schöner, Eusebius!"<sup>43</sup>. Furthermore, the characters themselves often employ subnarratives (frame stories)<sup>44</sup> to

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<sup>37</sup> e.g. "Auch den Vorwurf, den ich auf Deinen Lippen schweben sehe, Florestan, daß nämlich im Werk nichts neues vorzufinden wäre [...]" (Robert Schumann (Eusebius, Florestan & Raro): 'Die Davidsbündler. I. Hummel's Pianofortestudien.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 19, p. 73).

<sup>38</sup> Schumann: *Hummel's Pianofortestudien*, p. 74.

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>41</sup> Robert Schumann (Florestan, Jonathan, Eusebius, Raro): 'Monument für Beethoven. Vier Stimmen darüber.'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1836, Vol. 1, Nr. 51, p. 211.

<sup>42</sup> Schumann: *Monument für Beethoven*, p. 212.

<sup>43</sup> Schumann: *Hummel's Pianofortestudien*, p. 75.

<sup>44</sup> cf. Werner Wolf: 'Framing Borders in Frame Stories'. In: *Framing Borders in Literature and Other Media*, ed. by Werner Wolf and Walter Bernhart, Amsterdam: Rodopi 2006, pp. 179-206.

arouse the interest of the other ‘Davidsbündler’. To enforce his arguments, Jonathan, for instance, recounts his futile nightly search for the grave of Bach in Leipzig. Eusebius similarly tells the story of four successful performing sisters who erected a statue as a token of their gratitude to their deceased tutor. He begins the anecdote with the warning words: “Ich will euch ein Beispiel vor die Augen rücken. Spiegelt euch daran!”.<sup>45</sup> Meister Raro’s proved practice of reflecting on the arguments of his ‘Davidsbund’-youngsters rather than formulating an opinion of his own, moreover, likewise indicates the strong tie between critical judgement and the different narratives. Paradoxically, the never-ending remarks that the ‘Davidsbündler’ make about the opinion of their fellow members severely undermines the authority of the different interlocutors. Meister Raro does indeed attempt to set himself up as a binding agent between all actors, but at the end of ‘Monument für Beethoven’ he must admit his inability to fully do so with the resigned, though telling words: “Vereinigt euch also!”.<sup>46</sup> In other words: in terms of straightforward criticism, the texts apparently do not seem to get very far. On the contrary, the elaborate narrative set-up exactly prevents the formation of a decisive judgement. The reader, for his part, does not encounter a critical authority to which he can relate. A critical void is created.

The indecisiveness that speaks from many of the ‘Davidsbund’-reviews can manifest itself with regard to many different aspects of the text. In the review of Heinrich Dorn’s *Bouquet Musical* (Op. 10), for example, Eusebius, Florestan and a certain Rohr give three entirely different stylistic renditions of the piece. Eusebius prefers a poetic, metaphorical approach. He describes the sentiments each musical flower elicits in him: “Was spricht denn die Hyacinthe? [...] Und die Narcisse? [...] Und das Veilchen erzählt [...]”.<sup>47</sup> Florestan, on the other hand, takes umbrage at the French title of the pieces. He employs his familiar sarcasm to jump from such cultural language issues to Dorn’s musical language itself. Rohr, finally, offers a detailed analysis of the first piece, ‘La narcissé’. He uses a music-technical style and includes examples from the score. As far as *Kritik* itself goes, the interlocutors are less at odds with each other than in previous texts I cited. Eusebius acknowledges Dorn as an early mentor<sup>48</sup> and Florestan is carefully inclined to

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<sup>45</sup> Schumann: *Monument für Beethoven*, p. 212.

<sup>46</sup> Schumann: *Monument für Beethoven*, p. 213.

<sup>47</sup> Robert Schumann (Euseb., Florestan, Rohr & d. Red.): ‘Die Davidsbündler. II. Heinrich Dorn's Tonblumen’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1834, Vol. 1, Nr. 25, p. 98.

<sup>48</sup> “Das könnte ich mir bei euch denken, ihr Blumen, wäret ihr auch nicht von dem mann gezogen, der mir Aufklimmenden zuerst die Hand gab, und als ich zu zweifeln anfind, mich wohl höher zog, damit ich vom gemeinen Menschentreiben weniger sähe und mehr vom reinen Kunstäther” (Schumann: *Heinrich Dorn's Tonblumen*, p. 97).



think positively of the work.<sup>49</sup> Rohr, on the other hand, is much more decisive in his appraisal of the composition: “Abgesehen vom Werth oder Unwerth des Malens mit Tönen überhaupt tragen diese kurzen abgerissenen Sätze (es sind deren drei) das Gepräge einer schlagenden Charakteristik”.<sup>50</sup> Unlike the texts we have discussed so far, furthermore, the ‘Davidsbündler’ do not directly engage with each other. They all stay within the margins of their own review. The only party still trying to set the members against each other is the editor. In a brief addendum to the texts, he suggests that Florestan - in a cunning attempt to parody Eusebius - is the true hand behind the analysis of Rohr: “Es bedarf wohl kaum der Bemerkung, daß wir Nr.3 für eine Florestan’sche Persiflage auf die Recension des Eusebius halten”.<sup>51</sup> In her essay on authorship in Schumann’s critical writings, Sonja Klimek cites this postscript as a typical instance of Romantic roleplaying:

Dieser Kommentar muss als fiktional gewertet werden, denn Schumann als empirischer Autor weiß natürlich, dass weder Florestan noch Eusebius wirklich existieren. Das, was Musikkritiker üblicherweise produzieren, ist für Schumanns inszenierte Autorfiguren demnach höchstens ein Scherz. Der empirische Autor Schumann tritt hier als anonymen Redakteur völlig hinter die fingierte Autorschaft seiner fiktiven Figuren zurück.<sup>52</sup>

Klimek makes valid observations when it comes to the poetical substance of the text. Nevertheless, the pragmatic effect of the intervention remains unaccounted for. Likewise, Daverio contends that the diverse critical styles represent the quintessential properties that a *Musikkritiker* must possess in Schumann’s eyes: “Schumann illuminates the object of his critical attention from different but complementary angles. The ideal critic, he implies, must be both poet and pragmatist, dreamer and realist, Florestan and Eusebius”.<sup>53</sup> I wish to suggest, on the other hand, that the fragmentation into different critical styles acts as a strategy to appeal to an ideal reader. Readers encounter three totally different accounts in the review of Heinrich Dorn’s *Tonblumen*. This time they do tentatively seem to agree when it comes to the musical quality of the work. Instead, the

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<sup>49</sup> “Möglich ist es, daß dem Tauben die Blume eben so duftet, als dem Blinden der Ton klingt. [...] So unterscheiden sich auch diese Bilder von anderen klingenden, wie Porzellanblumen von lebenden. Nur der Duft ist oben weggenommen, der Geist der Blume” (ibid., p. 98).

<sup>50</sup> ibid., p. 98.

<sup>51</sup> ibid., p. 99.

<sup>52</sup> Sonja Klimek: ‘»Betragt euch schön romantisch!« – Autorschaft als Rollenspiel in Robert Schumanns musikjournalistischem Werk’. In: *Medien der Autorschaft: Formen literarischer (Selbst-)Inszenierung von Brief und Tagebuch bis Fotografie und Interview*, ed. by Lucas Marco Gisi, Urs Meyer and Reto Sorg. München: Wilhelm Fink 2013, p. 34.

<sup>53</sup> John Daverio: *Robert Schumann. Herald of a ‘New Poetic Age’*. New York/Oxford: University Press 1997, p. 128.

main discussion in the text revolves around matters of style, i.e. how to fittingly describe the work. Interestingly enough, Schumann does what he can to advertise the third review of Rohr. It is by far the longest and, in terms of *Kritik*, most transparent one. The editor's postscript also draws additional attention to it. Furthermore, Schumann appeals to a specific reader profile in Rohr's piece. Much in line with the strategies we discussed in 3.1, he caters the review to musically knowledgeable readers. Rohr explicitly incites "der geschätzte Leser und Spieler"<sup>54</sup> to form a proper opinion of the work on the basis of his analysis. And this analysis is very technical: it brims with theoretical terms and concepts, and contains multiple musical examples. In addition, the editor pitches Rohr's text as a direct counterpart to the vague, metaphorical descriptions of Eusebius. Only a musically savvy reader would be able to follow the argument in its entirety.

The examples cited so far document how the narrative structure of the 'Davidsbund'-model prefigures the reader's profile. The verdict of the *Musikkritiker* about specific composers and compositions goes itself, conversely, disappears all the more to the background of the text. Of course, one can interject, Schumann, being a composer himself, must have had a clear opinion on the musical issues he wrote about. Undoubtedly. Schumann was a staunch defender of the erection of a Beethoven monument. He shared that enthusiasm with A. W. Schlegel (who was the president of the *Bonner Verein für Beethovens Monument*)<sup>55</sup> and Franz Liszt. Schumann even initially titled the *Fantasie* in C-major (op. 17) as *Obolen auf Beethovens Monument. Ruinen, Trophaeen, Palmen. Grosse Sonate für das Pianoforte für Beethovens Monument von Florestan u. Eusebius*.<sup>56</sup> The proceeds of the sale would sponsor the monument; the project never materialised, however. Hummel, for his part, though of an older generation, was still a famous composer in the 1830s. He was a former pupil of Mozart and strongly believed in Schumann's abilities as a composer (although he was somewhat put off by the latter's innovative musical language).<sup>57</sup> Schumann, likewise, had great respect for Hummel. He even contemplated having him as a teacher.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, sketches for a music history course that Schumann was poised to teach at the then still to be founded Leipzig Conservatory, reveal that he ranked Hummel among composers as Moscheles and Schubert.<sup>59</sup> Heinrich Dorn, finally, was Schumann's first – and only – tutor in music theory. Schumann started lessons with him in 1830 and continued these until 1832. Dorn

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<sup>54</sup> Schumann: *Heinrich Dorn's Tonblumen*, p. 98.

<sup>55</sup> cf. Nicholas Marston: 'Schumann's Monument to Beethoven'. In: *19th-Century Music* 14/3 (1991), p. 247.

<sup>56</sup> cf. Nicholas Marston: *Schumann: Fantasie, Op. 17*. Cambridge: University Press 1992, p. 14.

<sup>57</sup> e.g. in early works as ABEGG-Variations and Papillons; cf. Daverio: *Robert Schumann*, p. 88.

<sup>58</sup> Eric Frederick Jensen: 'Schumann, Hummel, and "The Clarity of a Well-Planned Composition"'. In: *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 40/1 (1999), p. 63.

<sup>59</sup> Daverio: *Robert Schumann*, p. 270.

and Schumann stayed in contact nonetheless and had the greatest esteem for each other. Daverio argues that the composer, as a tutor, “facilitated the process of *Bildung* that guided Schumann's passage from youth to maturity”.<sup>60</sup> But these are all judgements we draw from Schumann's biographical background, not appraisals we gather from his *Musikkritik*. The ‘Davidsbündler’ bring different points of view to light that often precisely contradict the opinions we would expect, given Schumann's personal preferences. As a consequence, there is always a dissimilarity, or at least an uncertainty when we attempt to infer Schumann's own views from the hectic *Davidsbund* discussions.

Is the reader left to fend for himself, then, in this multitude of verdicts? Not necessarily. The narrative frame offers one great advantage, one could argue: in sympathy with the poetics of narrative framing,<sup>61</sup> there is still a narrator who can guide the different voices to a certain form of critical unity. The presence of such an extradiegetic narrator presiding over the conflicting ‘Davidsbündler’ is a topic that often reoccurs in the study of Schumann's *Musikkritik* (and even his music)<sup>62</sup>. It's not without its pitfalls, however. The step to equalling Schumann as author with Schumann as narrator, for one, is all too easily made. With an inventive play on words, Fricker, for instance, keenly stresses Schumann's personal stake in the texts: “Schumann will persönlich sprechen, und er will persönlich an-sprechen”.<sup>63</sup> He describes the ‘Davidsbündler’ in particular as “äusserlich von ihm unabhängige Träger und Verkünder seines Gedankengutes, seiner Leidenschaften und Anliegen”.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, each different ‘Davidsbündler’ acts as a satellite of Schumann's own opinion: “Der Autor stattet sie [the ‘Davidsbündler’] je mit einem in seinen Grundzügen gleichbleibenden Charakter aus. Entsprechend den Aussagen, die er über ein Werk oder einen Künstler machen will, lässt er sie verschieden agieren, reden, schimpfen, schwärmen, träumen, überlegen. [...] Diese Welt aber, einschliesslich der Figuren, die sie beleben, ist von ihrem Schöpfer, dem Autor der Texte, in denen sie existiert, nicht unabhängig”.<sup>65</sup> But the discrepancies between, on the one hand, Schumann's biographically assumed sympathies for certain musicians and, on the other hand, the opinions conveyed in his *Musikkritik* exactly shows that we must

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<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>61</sup> cf. Andreas Jäggi: *Die Rahmenerzählung im 19. Jahrhundert. Untersuchungen zur Technik und Funktion einer Sonderform der fingierten Wirklichkeitsaussage*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1994; Andreas Beck: *Geselliges Erzählen in Rahmenzyklen: Goethe, Tieck, E.T.A. Hoffmann*. Heidelberg: Winter 2008; Till Dembeck: *Texte Rahmen. Grenzregionen literarischer Werke im 18. Jahrhundert (Gottsched, Wieland, Moritz, Jean Paul)*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2007; Uwe Wirth: *Die Geburt des Autors aus dem Geist der Herausgeberfiktion. Editoriale Rahmung im Roman um 1800: Wieland, Goethe, Brentano, Jean Paul und E.T.A. Hoffmann*. München: Wilhelm Fink 2008.

<sup>62</sup> cf. Walter Bernhart: ‘Narrative Framing in Schumann's Piano Pieces’. In: *Framing Borders in Literature and Other Media*, pp. 449-476.

<sup>63</sup> Fricker: *Die musikkritischen Schriften Robert Schumanns*, p. 112.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*, p. 113-114.

approach such a convergence between author and narrator with care. That does not mean, of course, that we must be blind to the presence of an extradiegetic narrator. I have argued in relation to the *Schwärmbriefe* that the persona of the editor takes over that role. Except for 'Monument für Beethoven', in fact, all of the reviews discussed so far feature a notable 'Herausgeberfiktion' (cf. 2.1.2.3). True enough, the extradiegetic editor reveals his presence only occasionally and always in short footnotes. In the review of Dorn's *Tonblumen*, he gives the full title of the piece and believes to have unmasked Rohr's contribution as that of Florestan (cf. *infra*). And the article on Hummel's etudes features the following comment:

Der vollständige Titel lautet: Hummel Etudes. Oeuv. 125. Pr. 3 th. Wien, Haslinger. - Leider können wir über die Aufschrift 'Davidsbündler' noch keine vollständige Aufklärung geben. Der geehrte Leser kann sie aber bald erwarten, da uns die unbekannte Hand, dieselbe, die schon in den vorigen Blättern die Chiffren Euseb., F- n, Florestan unterzeichnete, dazu mehr als Hoffnung macht. D. Red..<sup>66</sup>

Despite their conciseness, these interventions are in keeping with the properties that characterise the editor of the *Schwärmbriefe* (cf. *supra*). First of all, the extradiegetic narrator is not omniscient. He presumes that Rohr's account is in reality that of Florestan. In the Hummel-review, moreover, he cannot provide the reader with more information on the 'Davidsbund'. Instead, he depends on the diegetic narrators to procure it for him. Secondly, the *Redakteur* acts as a mediator between the reader and the 'Davidsbund': he gives the full titles of compositions (even up to the price of the scores) and admits to being in close contact with the 'Davidsbündler'. Finally, we perceive clear formal interventions of the editor throughout the articles. The Hummel- and Dorn- reviews are labelled as follow-ups to each other: 'Die Davidsbündler. I. Hummel's Pianofortestudien' and 'Die Davidsbündler. II. Heinrich Dorn's Tonblumen'. Furthermore, numerical indicators mark off the accounts of the separate 'Davidsbündler' in each text. These traces of a minimal, formal intervention might also indicate the presence of an extradiegetic narrator in 'Monument für Beethoven'. Although we have no footnote to go on, the speeches of each interlocutor are likewise demarcated by numbers. Moreover, the caption 'Vier Stimmen darüber' implies that an unknown hand brought together four different opinions about the need for a Beethoven-monument.

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<sup>66</sup> Schumann: *Hummel's Pianofortestudien*, p. 73.

#### 4.1.4 The 'Davidsbündler' as Conductors of Opinion

When Lawrence Kramer wonders “who makes the affirmation”<sup>67</sup> amidst the plethora of masks in Schumann’s *Carnaval*, that same question applies just as well to Schumann’s ‘Davidsbund’. “Where there is other voicedness”, Kramer continues, “ [...] the critical uncertainty of ideal subject matter becomes, or provokes, a productive agency: productive of meaning, and productive of openness of meaning.”<sup>68</sup> This ‘productive agency’ - still left unspecified by Kramer - arises in Schumann’s ‘Davidsbund’ when the narrative structure promotes the reader to a crucial evaluative constituent: as neither the narrator nor the characters in the frame narrative are able to reach a consensus, the absence of a critical authority invites the reader to rule on the subject at hand himself. The confusing quarrels of the ‘Davidsbündler’ result in a greater autonomy for the reader. The narrative model does not only remind of Romantic epic prose, but it also mirrors the innate heterogeneous character of musical reception. The narrative void that the conflicting voices of the ‘Davidsbündler’ create, enables readers to formulate their own stance on a subject and urges them to take part in the formation of critical opinion. The ‘Davidsbund’ itself, as a fictional gathering of seemingly like-minded individuals, satirises the ‘gesellige’ exchange or the cerebral discussion of the ‘Gelehrtenrepublik’; it trades in the art of congenial conversation for bickering and disputes. Indeed, the ‘Davidsbund’ hardly argues about facts, but rather indulges in personal attacks. On the one hand, the group-format contains the sometimes harsh appraisals to a controlled discursive setting. At the same time, the *Kritiker* mediates that rhetoric onto different interlocutors, steering judgement away from himself. The contentious rhetoric of the ‘Davidsbündler’ spins out of control, however, and no narrative instance on any diegetic level is able to take command of the situation. Even the extradiegetic narrator, as we have seen, lacks assertive power. His contribution is usually limited to one intervention and most of the time comprises sheer clarifying statements. Other than that, he does not seem to aspire any sort of critical involvement.

Researchers have so far been keen to stress that the ‘Davidsbündler’ are modelled after people from Schumann’s circle of friends or that they bring different personal traits of Schumann to light. Florestan as the impetuous side, Eusebius the dreamer, etc. While Schumann himself might have contributed to that interpretation,<sup>69</sup> we must not lose the text-structural function of the ‘Davidsbündler’ out of sight. The members that revisit the

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<sup>67</sup> Lawrence Kramer: *Music as Cultural Practice. 1800-1900*. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press 1990, p. 211.

<sup>68</sup> Kramer: *Music as Cultural Practice*, p. 213.

<sup>69</sup> In July 1831, Schumann enters the following caveat to his diary: “Ganz neue Personen treten von heute in's Tagebuch – zwey meiner besten Freunde, die ich jedoch noch nie sah - das sind Florestan und Eusebius.” (Robert Schumann: *Tagebücher. Band I: 1827- 1838*. Ed. by Georg Eismann. Basel/Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld/Roter 1971, p. 344).

'Davidsbund'-reviews on a frequent basis each represent template opinions. Florestan, for that matter, is always in for an ironic overthrow of the established order, Eusebius represents a more mild and nuanced judgement and Meister Raro reflects on the art of *Kritik* itself. As such, the 'Davidsbündler' and the different types of opinion they epitomise, have a conductive function. They heighten the recognizability of the texts and act as anchors of opinion to which readers can orient themselves. True enough, second-tier members come and go, providing welcome variety to the model. The protagonists, however, establish the main lines within which a particular 'Davidsbund'-review take place.

Contrary to what one would presume from its contentious, anti-'Philister' rhetoric, the 'Davidsbund' perpetuates the exalted image of the Romantic artist and the *Kritiker* to a lesser extent than has so far been proposed. On the contrary: in the end, it leaves more room for readers to step in and - based on the information they receive in the separate 'Davidsbündler'-accounts - to activate their own sense of judgement. Within the scope of Schumann's *Musikkritik*, as we have seen, this interpretation makes for quite an exceptional feat (cf. 2.2). Most reviews feature a clear, self-conscious opinion, much in line with what Schumann stipulated as the one hallmark that distinguishes his journal from that of the competition (cf. 1.3.1). The 'Davidsbündler', then, are a novelty, not because they supposedly testify to Schumann's Romantic disposition (whether in his music or his texts), but exactly because they foster the reader's own judgement.

## 4.2 The Poetics of Emphasis: Wagner, Emotions and the Polemical Register

Wagner and emotions: the two seem inextricably bound up. Wagner's 'Musikdramen' are infamous for their countless - and seemingly endless - love scenes or for the bombastic orchestral colors that movies all too eagerly make use of. Wagner's music has its way of provoking the most various emotions in the listener. The *Bayreuther Festspiele* are renowned for the obligatory booing that fills the hall every season. The upheaval Wagner causes is of all times. In the margins of a long conversation between Wagner and Rossini that he witnessed in 1860, the Belgian Edmond Michotte specifically recalls the tense reactions of the Parisian public on a concert of Wagner: "On accourut en foule pour voir l'homme, pour entendre ses œuvres. Vous vous rappelez l'effervescence de ce public troublé ; cette physionomie si curieuse de la salle, où nombre d'énergumènes de parti pris,

ne se gênèrent nullement pour manifester carrément leurs sentiments d'hostilité".<sup>70</sup> The relationship between Wagner and Paris was what it was, of course, as the previous chapters have all too often shown. Nevertheless, the reason Michotte gives for said 'rush' is remarkable, to say the least: "Ce fut pour le monde musical d'alors un événement de nature à amorcer fiévreusement la curiosité parisienne, en raison des polémiques violentes que provoqua dans la publicité, l'apparition des écrits révolutionnaires de Wagner concernant ses idées si hardiment réformatrices du drame lyrique."<sup>71</sup> Wagner's *Musikkritiken* apparently left such an impression on the Parisian contemporaries that their reputation transcended that of his music and - what's more - for a great part determined Wagner's own renown with the general public. The emotionally charged atmosphere Michotte describes, surely catches the eye: Wagner evokes 'sentiments of hostility', drives a wedge between people and he provokes them in such a manner, that he poaches on polemical territory.

And thus, the key word of this section is out in the open: polemics. The revolutionary bearing of Wagner's writings without a doubt contributed to the public polarisation Michotte describes. We must, however, not underestimate the extent to which polemical discourse and textual aggression pervade Wagner's own music-critical texts. Existing research into Wagner's *Musikkritik* predominantly uses this polemical dimension to underpin arguments about the moral reprehensibility of vexed questions like anti-Semitism: The polemic as a written act of violence, even murder, or as an attempt to join in with prominent figures like Arthur de Gobineau and Bruno Bauer.<sup>72</sup> In this way, the polemic is reduced to a map of historical networks and of Wagner's position in an ideological field. The emphasis on the socio-cultural functions of the polemic has its undeniable relevance. Still, it all too quickly discounts text-generic parameters, for one the fact that Wagner conveys his polemical thoughts through *Musikkritik*. For that reason, too, the interaction between on the one hand, the pragmatic function of the polemic (i.e. its communication vis-à-vis the reader) and on the other hand, its embedment in critical discourse has long remained underexposed: Wagner's writings do not only limit themselves to attacks *ad hominem*; they also manifest themselves in a genre that is explicitly oriented *per hominem*.

We can trace the polemic back to antiquity, where it already carried the name of dispute and debate. It came to full fruition in disciplines as eristic or apologetics. Aristotle

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<sup>70</sup> Edmond Michotte: *La visite de Wagner à Rossini*. Arles: Actes Sud 2011, p. 21-22.

<sup>71</sup> Michotte: *La visite de Wagner à Rossini*, p. 21.

<sup>72</sup> cf. Paul Lawrence Rose: *Wagner: Race and Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press 1992; Leon Poliakov: *The History of Anti-Semitism III: From Voltaire to Wagner*. Transl. by Miriam Kochan. Pennsylvania: University Press 2003, p. 380-457.

famously “[s]olet quaerere pugnam in suis libris”.<sup>73</sup> Nothing rings more true for the polemic than the mark of textual warfare. The adage ‘Argument is War’, Lakoff and Johnson note, is a prototypical cognitive metaphor.<sup>74</sup> In recent years, however, we have witnessed a development in literary studies that nuances an all too bellicose interpretation of polemical texts. Scholars have suggested that the bombardment of rhetoric violence in the polemic is only pomp and circumstances - the main goal is not to verbally destroy the opponent (cf. *infra*). The polemicist’s primary objective, instead, is to win over the reader for his or her opinion: “*Le locuteur (ou proposant) attaque son adversaire (un opposant) pour convaincre un tiers, le public dont il veut emporter l’adhésion – et non pour persuader l’adversaire lui-même*”.<sup>75</sup> To achieve this, the polemicist does less appeal to the ratio of the reader than that he capitalises on pathos. In this regard, the polemic is not argumentative; at the heart of it are exactly the rhetorical strategies of emotionalisation with which the polemicist tries to convince and manipulate his audience.

As an instrument of *Kritik*, the polemical register has often been condemned for the affects it thrives on. Ever since religious wars swept German countries, polemical, apologetic writings discussions had a particularly bad name.<sup>76</sup> Enlightenment thinkers fulminated a ban on them, stressing the need for rational and well-balanced discussion instead. In his ‘Gelehrtenrepublik’, Klopstock explicitly excommunicates those who sought violent quarrels: “Wird ein streitender ertapt, daß er unter seinem Schreibzeuge Knüttel oder Keule versteckt liegen habe, so wird er auf ein Jahr Landes verwiesen”.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, the appeal to literature to only makes use of - to say it with Bach - ‘wohltemperierte Affekte’, i.e. to only employ affects when and where they provide aesthetically added value, transpires in the various *Regelpoetiken* of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Numerous treatises on ‘Affektenlehre’ likewise sought to regulate and control the passions and emotions in music. Having taken the sting out of critical exchange, the act of *Kritik* itself was relocated from the enlightened agora to the intimate privacy of

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<sup>73</sup> Ludwig Rohner: *Die literarische Streitschrift. Themen, Motive, Formen*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz 1987, p. 21.

<sup>74</sup> George Lakoff and Mark Johnson: *Metaphors we live by*. London: The University of Chicago Press 2003, p. 4-6.

<sup>75</sup> Ruth Amossy: ‘Modalités argumentatives et registres discursifs: le cas du polémique’. In: *Les registres. Enjeux stylistiques et visées pragmatiques*, ed. by Lucile Gaudin-Bordes et Geneviève Salvan. Louvain-La-Neuve: Academia Bruylant 2008, p. 96.

<sup>76</sup> cf. Mark Napierala: ‘Unparteilichkeit und Polemik. Kritik am Rezensionswesen und die Ordnung der Gelehrtenrepublik’. In: *Organisation der Kritik. Die Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung in Jena 1785-1803*, ed. by Stefan Matuschek. Heidelberg: Winter 2004, p. 79-80.

<sup>77</sup> Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock: *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik. Band I: Text*, ed. by Rose-Maria Hurlebusch. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1975.



‘Empfindsamkeit’ and ‘Geselligkeit’,<sup>78</sup> controllable discursive models that Schumann’s *Davidsbünd*, for instance, satirises (cf. 4.1.4). Despite all their efforts, however, Enlightenment thinkers were not able to drive the polemical spirit out of *Kritik*. (Pre-)romantic thinkers and writers like Lessing, Schelling or Schleiermacher successfully employed it to invigorate their ideas. Fichte, moreover, integrated “Polemik als indispensable produktives Moment dem Wahrheitsfindungsprozess”<sup>79</sup> and Schlegel conceived of the polemic as the instance *par excellence* to distinguish between good and bad (cf. infra). Whereas the *Kritiker* is only concerned with truth and ideals, Schlegel points out, the *Polemiker* can judge the inherent ethical value of objects and thoughts. In the wake thereof, the polemical register develops more and more into a stylistic-formal parameter, a catalyst to the transcendental force of *Kritik*.<sup>80</sup>

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century is thus, unsurprisingly, a polemic-ridden century, a century of high-flown conflicts and of the clash between emerging ideologies. As journals sprung up everywhere, *Kritiker* increasingly resorted to the polemical style for their reviews. Operating within an epideictic discourse (cf. 4.2.1.2), the embedment of the polemic in critical discourse is quite logical. As a pre-eminently evaluative medium, critical journalism is highly receptive for polemical discourse. In 1828, an anonymous journalist calls the polemical idea “eine scandalöse” and raises the question “was will aber dies zweischneidige Schwert der *Polemik* in unserer humanen Zeit, was bedeutet uns dieser Feuerlärm [...]?”.<sup>81</sup> Twelve years later, Friedrich Engels remarks that “[d]ie jüngere Literatur [...] eine Waffe [hat], durch die sie unbezwinglich geworden ist und alle jungen Talente unter ihre Fahnen versammelt”.<sup>82</sup> Engels praises the ‘modern style’ of authors of *Junges Deutschland*, like Gutzkow, Laube or Heine, but eventually denounces their contentious attitude: “Es gibt aber eine Seite des Stils, die immer ein Schibboleth für sein Wesen ist: die polemische”.<sup>83</sup>

This section will work from this historical and cultural framework to shed further light on the use of the polemical register in Wagner’s *Musikkritik*. First, we will survey literary theories on textual polemics (4.2.1.1) and discuss main features of polemical discourse as

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<sup>78</sup> cf. 2.1.2.3. See also Rolf Lessenich: ‘Kulturelle Veränderungen und unvermeidbare Verletzungen der Grenzen des tolerablen Streits zwischen Klassizismus und Romantik 1660-1830’. In: *Streitkultur. Okzidentale Traditionen des Streitens in Literatur, Geschichte und Kunst*, ed. by Uwe Baumann, Arnold Becker and Astrid Steiner-Weber. Bonn: V&R Unipress 2008, pp. 317-326.

<sup>79</sup> Napierala: *Unparteilichkeit und Polemik*, p. 88.

<sup>80</sup> cf. Kurt Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis: zur Geschichte des Kritikbegriffs von Kant bis Marx*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1975, p. 122-123.

<sup>81</sup> Anonymous: ‘Almanachs-Novellen-Schau. 1829. (Beschluss).’ In: *Berliner Conversations-Blatt für Poesie, Literatur und Kritik* 1828, Nr. 255, p. 1010.

<sup>82</sup> Friedrich Engels: ‘Modernes Literaturleben. II. Moderne Polemik’. In: Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels: *Werke. Ergänzungsband, Zweiter Teil*. Berlin: Dietz 1977, p. 45.

<sup>83</sup> Engels: *Moderne Polemik*, p. 47.

a critical device (4.2.1.2). Afterwards, I will examine how Wagner utilises the polemical register in his *Musikkritik* and how it affects his communication with the reader, in particular. Rather than focussing solely on the confrontation with the ‘polemical object’ (pace Stenzel), my aim is to demonstrate that Wagner uses the verbal, polemical violence to bridge the distance with the reader. As a result, my analyses do not set out to appraise the literary quality of his polemics. I will instead argue that Wagner embeds the polemical register as an emotionalising compass within the broader critical discourse in an attempt (re)activate the attention of his readers.

## 4.2.1 The Polemical Register

### 4.2.1.1 Stenzel, Dieckmann, Martens

Roughly speaking, the term ‘polemic’ covers two general meanings.<sup>84</sup> On the one hand, ‘polemic’ is a stylistic parameter, i.e. a way of examining the shape and form of polemical discourse. Texts, then, are assessed on the merit of their expressive quality. On the other hand, ‘polemic’ designates an argumentative template of texts. In that sense, the concept refers to a genre or, alternatively, a drawn-out discussion between two parties who publicly voice their adverse positions on a particular topic (e.g. “a polemic ensued”, “both sides were entangled in a fierce polemic” etc.) The latter interpretation labels texts as ‘polemical’ based on their contentious content rather than their bellicose rhetoric. It stands without reason that both understandings of ‘polemic’ are nonetheless interrelated: an aggressive style often supports the way polemical arguments are organised.<sup>85</sup> The distinction between form and structure of polemical texts is one we must firmly adhere to, however, for the choice for either of both interpretations determines how we read such texts. The stylistic understanding compels us to question what formal elements make a text ‘polemical’. It determines the qualitative parameters that give words, sentences and texts their violent appearance. A text-structural interpretation, on the other hand, enables us to make abstraction from the pragmatic strategies in polemical texts.<sup>86</sup> A case in point are the affinities between *Polemik* and *Kritik*<sup>87</sup> that I will discuss in

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<sup>84</sup> Ruth Amossy likewise distinguishes between ‘la’ and ‘le polémique’ in Amossy: *Modalités argumentatives et registres discursifs*, p. 93-94.

<sup>85</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>86</sup> Amossy makes a similar proposal: “le polémique désigne la façon dont le discours travaille à l'emporter sur la position adverse et à susciter l'adhésion” (*ibid.*, p. 94).

<sup>87</sup> Jürgen Stenzel clearly distinguishes *Polemik* from *Kritik*. Whereas the former is ‘verbale Aggression’, the latter counts as ‘sachliche Aggression’ (cf. Jürgen Stenzel: ‘Rhetorischer Manichäismus. Vorschläge zu einer Theorie

detail in 4.2.1.2. There, I will argue that both instances rely on an epideictic design of a praise-and-blame rhetoric.

Literary research on the polemical register generally takes its cue from Jürgen Stenzel, the father of modern polemics theory, and his influential “heuristisches Schema [...] für die Analyse polemischer Texte”.<sup>88</sup> Stenzel labels polemical texts as ‘Rhetorischer Manichäismus’, verbal battles between good and bad. He reduces the polemical confrontation to a polarisation between a ‘Subjekt’ and an ‘Objekt’. Although he does reckon in the presence of the public in the capacity of an ‘Instanz’ (which acts as an external observer with little room for participation), a text essentially derives its polemical status from the way the actors position themselves in the discussion: “*Polemik* folgt dem Schema eines säkularisierten Manichäismus, das die Beteiligten in die Extremregionen von Licht und Finsternis auseinandertreibt. Sei es ein Individuum oder eine Gruppe – das polemische Objekt soll geschwächt und zum sozialen Außenseiter oder gar Feind gestempelt werden, dem die geschlossene Front von Polemiker und Publikum gegenübersteht”.<sup>89</sup> Stenzel defines the polemic as “aggressive Rede”,<sup>90</sup> i.e. a way of speaking that is highly partisan, subjective and intentionally offensive, but therefore not necessarily irrational or inconsistent. Polemical discourse remains argumentative and “auf Wirkung hin funktionalisiert”.<sup>91</sup> It is an extremely pragmatic genre<sup>92</sup> (cf. 3) to which emotions and subjectivity are vital, though always in a simulated and well-organised manner: “*Polemik* ist also, im emphatischen Sinne, Rede und fällt damit in den Kompetenz- und Analysebereich der Rhetorik”.<sup>93</sup>

Stenzel understands the polemical process as an interplay between three main constituents. His essay proposes a scheme in which the polemical subject (the *Polemiker*), object (the victim) and instance (the imagined public) interact around a certain ‘polemical theme’. The aim of the polemical subject, finally, is the “Vernichtung des Gegners und seiner Position”.<sup>94</sup> Still, the *Polemiker* adapts his behaviour to the presence of the polemical instance: as eager as the polemical subject is to libel his opponent, his verbal aggression is contingent on his attempts to come across as a *vir bonus* in the eyes of his readers. Arguments make up the “*Res polemischer Rede*”,<sup>95</sup> according to Stenzel. The

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der *Polemik*’. In: *Formen und Formgeschichte des Streitens. Der Literaturstreit*, ed. by Franz Josef Worstbrock & Helmut Koopman. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 1986, p. 4).

<sup>88</sup> Stenzel: *Rhetorischer Manichäismus*, p. 3.

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>92</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 3; Stenzel does not enter into greater detail about the genre-character of the polemic, however.

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*, p. 8.

ultimate objective of any inquiry into polemical texts, then, is “die Analyse zahlreicher Einzelpolemiken”.<sup>96</sup> Only through those specific, individual cases, Stenzel argues, we gain (limited) historical insight into the genesis of a polemical conflict, its significance and its consequences – consequences that, he contends, range “von der individuellen Depression bis hin zu Pogrom und Massenmord”.<sup>97</sup>

In recent years, scholars have widened Stenzel’s rhetorical focus on the polemic in order to bring out the (meta-)communicative and pragmatic effect of polemical discourse. Walther Dieckmann’s *Streiten über das Streiten. Normative Grundlagen polemischer Metakommunikation*, for instance, wonders “ob ein Text *polemisch* genannt werden soll, weil der Autor eine bestimmte Intention verfolgt (Denkweise) oder weil die sprachliche Realisierung des Textes bestimmte Merkmale aufweist (Handlungsmuster)”.<sup>98</sup> Dieckmann is not able to solve that question for us, but he does follow Stenzel’s insistence on the rhetorical characteristics of polemical texts. Dieckmann views the polemical situation as an essentially written and public (‘öffentlich’) event. The extent to which an audience of readers - equivalent to Stenzel’s ‘polemische Instanz’ – is present, determines the public character of the polemic: the *Polemiker* eventually needs to legitimate his use of hostile and belligerent rhetoric in front of his readers. This meta-communicational understanding of polemical interaction informs Dieckmann’s study. He reads a polemic as a “textimmanente Inszenierung”.<sup>99</sup> Whereas Stenzel briefly remarked on the fundamental difference between the real author and the “Selbstdarstellung des Polemikers”,<sup>100</sup> Dieckmann extends that distinction to a methodological crux. He moves for a separation between author and polemicist:

Die Diskrepanzen [zwischen dem Autor in seiner Realexistenz und der von ihm geschaffenen Figur des Textschreibers] beruhen darauf, dass die in einem polemischen Text oder auch in einer ausgedehnteren polemischen Kontroverse sich darstellende Figur immer mehr oder weniger gemäß den Erfordernissen der polemischen Zielrealisation modelliert wird und deshalb keine sicheren Rückschlüsse auf die empirische Person des Schreibers zulässt, wie umgekehrt nicht angenommen werden darf, dass dieser sich unverstellt und ungebrochen im polemischen Text ausdrückte.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> *ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>98</sup> Walther Dieckmann: *Streiten über das Streiten: normative Grundlagen polemischer Metakommunikation*. Tübingen: Niemeyer 2005, p. 36; cf. *supra*: the stylistic vs. structural understanding of the polemic, respectively

<sup>99</sup> Dieckmann: *Streiten über das Streiten*, p. 36.

<sup>100</sup> *ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.*, p. 38.

Stenzel maintained that the polemical subject alone is responsible for initiating and perpetuating a polemical exchange. Dieckmann, conversely, extrapolates the division between a fictive and real polemic subject to all participants in polemical situation. He severs “die (mit Einschränkungen) objektive, von außen betrachtbare *Realsituation* und die inszenierte polemische *Konstellation*, die der Polemiker in und mit seinem Text schafft und die sich einer rekonstruktiven Analyse erschließt”.<sup>102</sup> The polemical text is essentially a distortion and staging of reality in which the polemicist, his adversary and the readership play abstract, emblematic roles. The intrinsic performative dimension of the polemical situation brings out the pragmatic interests that are at stake for the polemicist. If a polemical text is fundamentally a performance, the question indeed arises for whom one performs. Dieckmann deviates from Stenzel’s manicheist model on this point. He refutes that polemical interaction happens along the central axis between polemicist and opponent. On the contrary, Dieckmann regards the reader as the main beneficiary of the polemical conflict: “der primäre Adressat polemischer Texte [ist] das Publikum”.<sup>103</sup> He bases his conclusion on Grice’s conversational maxims. Both the polemicist and his victim are at all times aware of the context of the discussion and of the arguments used in them. Thus, any reiteration of those arguments would violate the maxim of relevance.<sup>104</sup>

Dieckmann’s main argument is that a polemical text is a product of staging and direction. Whether we examine its rhetorical nature, the interaction between the different participants or the way it conveys facts and knowledge: every aspect, each ‘Konstellation’ is liable to the spell of pretence and disguise; it breathes “den inszenatorischen Charakter der Darstellung”.<sup>105</sup>

*Streiten über das Streiten* thus explores the ways in which the discourse organises this fundamental performativity. The bellicose exterior of a polemical text does not interest Dieckmann. Rather, he examines the meta-communicational mechanisms that a polemicist utilises to render his rhetorical vigour acceptable and just in the eyes of his readers:

Der Polemiker unterstellt bei seinem Publikum bestimmte Maßstäbe zur Beurteilung der Akzeptibilität bzw. Nicht-Akzeptibilität des kommunikativen Verhaltens und spricht diese in strategischer Absicht an, indem er dem Gegner etwas vorwirft, von dem er glaubt, daß es diesem in den Augen des Publikums schade, und indem er zur Rechtfertigung oder zur Entschuldigung des eigenen

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<sup>102</sup> *ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>103</sup> *ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>104</sup> One could even go further, I might add, and state that the polemical subject necessarily depends on the graces of his public, as the former’s attempts to destroy the polemical object violates all rhetoric codes of appeasement.

<sup>105</sup> *ibid.*, p. 49. In his study of Heine’s and Krauss’ literary polemics, Andreas Stuhlmann suggests that the literary quality of the polemic exactly resides in its staged nature, cf. *infra*.

Verhaltens Argumente vorbringt, von denen er glaubt, daß sie ihn beim Publikum in gutem Licht erscheinen lassen. Der positive Effekt [...] beruht dann darauf, daß der Polemiker als jemand erscheint, der den gesellschaftlich akzeptierten Normen folgt, sie zumindest metakommunikativ bestätigt und sie gegen einen normverletzenden Gegner verteidigt.<sup>106</sup>

Dieckmann exposes our understanding of polemical texts to key discursive parameters. He goes against Stenzel's claim that the *Polemiker* merely aims to persuade the reader of the opponent's malicious character. Instead, he turns the polemical discourse into an aim *an und für sich*. Dieckmann demonstrates that it is imperative for the polemicist that he legitimise the aggressive rhetoric he employs. Dieckmann therefore analyzes specific norms, i.e. "Erwartungen [...], aufgrund derer die Mitglieder einer Kommunikationsgemeinschaft kommunikatives Verhalten relativ übereinstimmend und mit Aussicht auf Konsens als richtig/angemessen bzw. fehlerhaft/unangemessen beurteilen".<sup>107</sup> Such norms are general rules, derived from the day-to-day interaction between an individual and society. They are inherent to polemical communication. Although the greater part of his inquiry consists of case studies, taken from an impressive corpus of texts, Dieckmann disagrees that the value of a polemical occurrence can only be derived from its specific historic individuality (as Stenzel suggested). He conversely argues that universal, discursive patterns underlie the polemic. In a polemical text, for instance, the *Polemiker* needs to validate his polemical behaviour. Often he does so by asserting that his violent rhetoric merely reacts to a violation of rules and conventions by the polemical object.

Gunther Martens, to conclude, espouses the pragmatic understanding of polemical discourse that Dieckmann (and to a smaller extent Stenzel) draws attention to. He shows, however, that the polemical format is made up out of more than only an argumentative dimension to inveigh against opponents or persuade readers. Polemical language itself already signposts "ihre pragmatische Valenz, z. B. ihre Ausrichtung auf den Adressaten" (289).<sup>108</sup> According to Martens, the turn towards the language of polemical texts counters the historical particularity that Stenzel advocates (cf. supra). As a lot of the individual targets may be "kaum noch relevant oder historisch nennenswert",<sup>109</sup> we must direct our gaze towards the "Form der Argumentation".<sup>110</sup> In contrast to Dieckmann's interest in meta-communication, Martens presses for a stylistic understanding of the polemic, one

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<sup>106</sup> Dieckmann: *Streiten über das Streiten*, p. 81.

<sup>107</sup> *ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>108</sup> Gunther Martens: 'Auktorialität und die Rhetorik der Polemik: neue Kontexte für einen alten Begriff'. In: *Germanistik im Konflikt der Kulturen*, ed. by Jean-Marie Valentin. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 2007, p. 294.

<sup>109</sup> Martens: *Auktorialität und die Rhetorik der Polemik*, p. 294.

<sup>110</sup> *ibid.*, p. 294.

that is sensitive to both rhetorical and narrative features. While Dieckmann claims that *Polemiker* assume a dominant position in texts because they manipulate social codes and norms, Martens proposes that their authority relies on a combination of narrative speaker positions and the rhetorical prefiguration of reader expectations:

Die Narratologie hat aber ein Instrumentarium entwickelt, Texte nicht einfach nach dem (wie auch immer variierten) Modell einer face-to-face Kommunikation zu beschreiben. In ihrer strukturalistischen Form konzentriert sie sich aber sehr stark auf logische und ontologische Parameter, die den Vorgang der Ausrichtung auf einen Adressaten und Rezipienten als Prozess nicht immer angemessen berücksichtigen. Postklassische Narratologien [...] lassen [...] den Prozess der sprachlichen Benennung als kognitives System und weniger als dynamische, von argumentativen und takstischen Verfahren durzogene Interaktion erscheinen. Die Rhetorik nimmt sich dieser Präfiguration von Erwartungen und Wirkungsabsichten an.<sup>111</sup>

In another article on the topic (which offers an impressively detailed close reading of Karl Kraus' articles in *Die Fackel*),<sup>112</sup> Martens once more advocates a turn towards the joint rhetorical and narrative traits of polemical texts. In the case of Kraus, polemical agency can be said to be narrative because the polemical agent invests itself with powers that can normally only be unfolded by fictional texts (these include playful self-attributions of omniscience and omnipotence). In this respect, Martens especially homes in on the role figurative language plays in shaping a speaker's ethos. Martens acknowledges that narratology has developed an extensive toolset in order to chart the strategies with which speakers assume different positions in any given text. However, he stresses, these tools must not be employed at the expense of the "pragmatische Leistung rhetorisch-sprachlicher Strukturen".<sup>113</sup> For, in the end, the *Polemiker* has absolute control over the act of speaking in itself:

Die Literaturwissenschaft scheint unter dem Druck einer Profilierung ihrer Objekte als Kulturträger im Endergebnis auf die Einsicht zu verzichten, dass auch politische Ideologien von einer sprachlichen und narrative Vermittlung abhängig sind. Umgekehrt gerät die umfassende rhetorische Analyse eingestandenermaßen leicht zum formalistisch anmutenden Stilkatalog, der hier jedoch um die pragmatische

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<sup>111</sup> *ibid.*, p. 290.

<sup>112</sup> Gunther Martens: 'Zur Rhetorik und Pragmatik des polemischen Gedächtnisses. Am Beispiel von Karl Kraus' 'Fackel'-Text 'Der Blitz hat sie getroffen, zerschmettert sind sie, nicht gedacht sollen sie werden'. In: *Konflikte in literarischen Texten*, ed. by Francince Maier-Schaeffer, Johannes Schwitalla and Günter Saße. München: Wilhelm Fink 2008, pp. 4-24.

<sup>113</sup> Martens: *Zur Rhetorik und Pragmatik des polemischen Gedächtnisses*, p. 3.

Komponente des Publikumsbezugs und der Selbstimmunisierung ergänzt werden soll. Anschaulichkeit ist jedoch unabdingbar, um die Polemik als ritualisierte Praxis der Kommunikationsverweigerung und des inszenierten Missverständnisses, und weniger im Hinblick auf die Identifizierung der jeweiligen Zielscheibe ins Auge zu fassen.<sup>114</sup>

Martens thus encourages us to take into account the layering of embedded utterances, strategic addresses to the reader, as well as the figurative transcription of speech acts; these are (proto-)narrative techniques with tremendous rhetorical force.

#### 4.2.1.2 'Kritik' and 'Polemik'

In what way does the polemical register add to our understanding of Wagner's *Musikkritik*? Where does it come into our discussion? And what is the connection between *Kritik* and *Polemik* in the first place? At first sight, *Kritik* and polemical texts do not share the same pedigree. While *Polemik*, on account of its etymological roots, wreaks havoc and fosters discord, *Kritik* – going by those same Greek origins – raises itself above disputing parties to separate good from bad. The quality of 'judging something' specifically prevails in Kant's understanding of *Kritik*. Kant accepts that *Kritik* is liable to a dialectic premise. The elemental exchange of ideas found a discursive outlet in e.g. the 'Gelehrtenrepublik'.<sup>115</sup> However, Kant feels that the 'Gelehrtenrepublik' will intrinsically remain discordant because it lacks a third instance that decides over the truth and falsehood of arguments. If, and only if, this third instance is present, then we can talk of true *Kritik*. Kant counters the 'Gelehrtenrepublik' with his own model, namely that of the '(innerer) Gerichtshof'. In the 'Gerichtshof', *Kritik* presides over conflicting thoughts and ideas as if it were a judge; it is a neutralising process that leads to universal truth and eventually peace.<sup>116</sup> *Polemik*, as a result, has no place in the public sphere. As the 'reine Vernunft' already cancels out conflicts internally and establishes knowledge on the basis of universal rules, *Polemik* becomes obsolete.<sup>117</sup> Schlegel, by contrast understands *Polemik* as a precursor to *Kritik*. *Kritik* in itself is normative because it is only concerned with 'good'

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<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*, p. 3-4.

<sup>115</sup> For more on polemics and discussion in the 'Gelehrtenrepublik', I wish to refer to the recent collection of essays in Kai Bremer/Carlos Spoerhase: *Gelehrte Polemik. Intellektuelle Konfliktverschärfungen um 1700*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 2001.

<sup>116</sup> cf. Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 31-39; Kant, however, did not always practice what he preached. Hans Saner provides an excellent analysis of polemical discourse in Kant's thinking and writings *Kants Weg vom Krieg zum Frieden. Widerstreit und Einheit. Wege zu Kants politischem Denken*. München: Piper, p. 87-236, and esp. 126-215.

<sup>117</sup> cf. Dirk Rose: 'Polemische Totalität'. *Philosophische und ästhetische Begründungen der Polemik bei Friedrich Schlegel*. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, ed. by Ulrich Breuer and Ana-Stanca Tabarasi-Hoffmann (= Schlegel-Studien 8). Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh 2015, p. 130-133.



art. *Polemik*, in turn, makes a preliminary judgement and destroys inferior works of art beforehand.<sup>118</sup> Fichte<sup>119</sup> and Schleiermacher<sup>120</sup>, for their part, reunite both parties and conceive of *Kritik* as a battle and a fight. *Kritik* remains “wesentlich negativ und polemisch”<sup>121</sup> - in 1844 Marx famously deployed the “Waffe der Kritik”<sup>122</sup> to press through social changes.

As *Kritik* loses its philological connotation in favour of a more philosophical interpretation, its alliance with *Polemik* grows ever tighter. Günter Oesterle traces this development in more detail. He compares Enlightenment poetics to Romantic poetics and observes that both schools of thought assessed the use of the polemic as a critical device in an entirely opposite manner. The Enlightenment labelled the polemic as a blunt and uncivil practice. It condemned polemical exchanges for their too emotionally charged rhetoric. *Kritiker* were precisely expected to sever the subjective from the objective, and the private from the public.<sup>123</sup> Oesterle regards the ‘Gelehrtenrepublik’ and the ‘Gerichtshof’ as exponents of this rationale: the use of polemical discourse was restricted to specific, controlled discursive settings. *Kritiker* were furthermore supposed to justify the use of polemical rhetoric. However, the expectation to deliver such a pretext exactly gave rise to a central dilemma in the Enlightenment: unethical discourse became a matter of justification - and thus of ethics itself; a paradox with which specifically Lessing grappled, Oesterle argues. The Romantics – taken in tow by Friedrich Schlegel – steer clear from this dilemma by severing polemical texts from the tangle of ethics. They embed polemical discourse into their aesthetic, universalist philosophy: “Die Problematik der Polemik, sich zu fixieren, sei es philologisch auf den Buchstaben des Textes, sei es personal auf die Schwächen des Gegners, soll durch Philosophieren und und Ästhetisieren ausgeglichen werden. Der Ausweg aus dem Dilemma der Aufklärung scheint im ästhetischen und theoretisch kontrollierten Verhältnis von Polemik und Kritik gefunden zu sein”.<sup>124</sup> *Polemik* thus turns into a favourite stylistic tool in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: it supports

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<sup>118</sup> cf. Röttgers: *Kritik und Praxis*, p. 122-124.

<sup>119</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 96-98.

<sup>120</sup> Karol Sauerland: ‘Wann ist Kritik möglich? Ihre intellektuellen, formellen und sozialen Voraussetzungen, aufgezeigt anhand der Überlegungen von Lessing, Friedrich Schlegel und Schleiermacher’. In: *Der Begriff der Kritik in der Romantik*, p. 35.

<sup>121</sup> Peter Uwe Hohendahl: ‘Literaturkritik in der Epoche des Liberalismus’. In: *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik (1730-1980)*, ed. by Peter Uwe Hohendahl. Stuttgart: Carl Ernst Poeschel 1985, p. 145.

<sup>122</sup> Karl Marx: ‘Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung’. In: *Karl Marx- Friedrich Engels Werke. Band 1 (1842-1844)*, ed. by Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der SED. Berlin: Dietz 1981, p. 385.

<sup>123</sup> Kant’s call in *Kritik Urteilskraft* (1790) for disinterest in matters of aesthetic judgement is a late, yet paradigmatic exponent of that sentiment. See also Henry E. Allison: *Kant’s Theory of Taste. A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*. Cambridge: University Press 2001, p. 85-97.

<sup>124</sup> Günter Oesterle: ‘Das "Unmanierliche" der Streitschrift. Zum Verhältnis von Polemik und Kritik in Aufklärung und Romantik’. In: *Formen und Formgeschichte des Streitens. Der Literaturstreit*, p. 116.

the view Romantic philosophers held of *Kritik*, namely that of an aestheticised *modus vivendi*.

When it comes to Wagner's *Musikkritik*, I will not understand *Polemik* as a poetic or philosophical concept, but rather in a rhetorical and discursive sense.<sup>125</sup> Andreas Stuhlmann has recently made an important opening that supports such a discursive reading of polemical texts. In his study of Heine's and Kraus's literary polemics, Stuhlmann examines *Polemik* as "inszeniertes öffentliches Ereignis im Diskurs der Literatur".<sup>126</sup> He proposes a functional model of polemical exchange, similar to Dieckmann's, in which proponents and antagonists are 'Akteure' that conform to 'Rollenzuschreibungen':

Ein zentraler Aspekt der Literarizität der Polemik ist die (Kon)Figuration von polemischem Subjekt und polischem Objekt in der polemischen Rede bzw. im polemischen Prozess. Im narrativen Muster des Konflikts erzeugen die Kontrahenten in ihrer jeweiligen Sicht Entwürfe des Geschehens, in denen ihr Gegen eine bestimmte Rolle einnimmt. In der Personalisierung des Konflikts werden die Gegner so zu Personae, zu literarischen Figuren und textualisierten Mustern. [...] Die Zuweisung und Führung der 'Stimmen, der eigenen und der des Antagonisten, ist ein wesentlicher Teil der Figuration. Das Arrangement der verschiedenen Positionen, der selbst vertretenen wie der attackierten, ist eine im Erfolgsfall subversive intertextuelle Strategie. Das polemische Subjekt erzeugt eine Spannung zwischen verschiedenen sozialen und kulturellen Stimmen, die Facetten des polemischen Konfliktes zugeordnet werden.<sup>127</sup>

Stuhlmann defines polemical texts on the basis of open criteria: the *Polemik* is first of all a "Schreibweise", an "operative Kategorie" that is transposable to "verschiedene Gattungen".<sup>128</sup> He specifically infers that fundamental openness of polemical discourse from the case of *Kritik* and *Polemik*. Similar to Oesterle, Stuhlmann claims that through *Kritik*, the public sphere eventually warmed to *Polemik*. Rules and poetics prescribed most of 18<sup>th</sup>-century literary and critical output, as well as social behaviour. Lessing, however, used polemical discourse to break through those norms. He gave *Polemik* "einen Wert als Kritik und damit als eigenständiges Instrument der Erkenntnis".<sup>129</sup> In result, *Kritik* and *Polemik* only grew closer to each other.<sup>130</sup>

Building on Stuhlmann's impulses, I propose that *Kritik* and *Polemik* have a notable discursive and medial common ground. To begin with, they share an inherent, albeit

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<sup>125</sup> cf. Rose: *Polemische Totalität*, p. 133-142.

<sup>126</sup> Stuhlmann: *Literarische Polemik*, p. 14.

<sup>127</sup> *ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>128</sup> *ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>129</sup> *ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>130</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 33-48.

dynamic use of negative discourse. Negativity is not a mere diachronic addition to an originally affirmative *Kritik*-practice, as Martus proposes (cf. 1.2.2), nor should it be curtailed to a manicheist opposition of positive versus negative rhetoric (pace Stenzel). Rather, I believe that negativity has a persistent topical function. *Kritik* and polemical texts make use of rhetorical mechanisms that are informed by shared epideictic strategies.

Epideictic oratory is a rhetorical *genus* that, in contrast to deliberative and forensic oratory, was originally reserved for formal occasions. It has its roots in the Athenian *polis*. Epideictic orations came into being at funeral and remembrance ceremonies after the Persian Wars, where they were used to lament the dead and honour the heroes of yore. In that regard, their intrinsic reliance on pathos had an outspoken institutionalised and institutionalising function from the very beginning: as part of official state events, they rallied individual grief around a collective sense of loss.<sup>131</sup> In Roman times, epideictic speeches flourished as a general rhetoric of praise and blame which was employed at all sorts of different occasions.

Just as *Kritik* and *Polemik*, epideictic speeches oscillate between affirmation and negation. They are evaluative and thus axiological,<sup>132</sup> and they essentially make truth liable to eristic dispute (hence its appeal to the Sophists).<sup>133</sup> On that account, epideictic oratory is extremely well-suited for aesthetic debate. In contrast to the alethic (true-false) focus of the deliberative and judicial genus, it always takes place in the moment and primarily concerns itself with ethical (beautiful-ugly) matters.<sup>134</sup> On first sight, epideixis does not aim at exhorting the audience to judgement or evaluation: it is a form of showing and self-display (hence: the suffix ‘deixis’ or the Latin term *genus demonstrativum*). The genre is a pragmatic stronghold par excellence: it holds “eine besondere Qualität der rhetorischen Praxis, nämlich die, in der Präsentation eines Gegenstands sich selbst als Redner zu präsentieren”.<sup>135</sup> At the same time, that pragmatic quality does not render epideictic oratory less persuasive. The discourse itself, rather than the specific subject, is the target of persuasion in epideictic speeches. To that effect, epideictic oratory relies on

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<sup>131</sup> cf. Rüdiger Campe: ‘Rhetoric’s Flirtation with Literature, from Gorgias to Aristotle. The Epideictic Genre’. In: *Flirtations: Rhetoric and Aesthetics This Side of Seduction*, ed. by Daniel Hoffman-Schwartz, Barbara Natalie Nagel and Lauren Shizuko Stone. New York: Fordham University Press 2015, p. 40-41; 44.

<sup>132</sup> cf. Marc Bonhomme: ‘De la pragmatique à la stylistique du registre épideictique’. In: *Les registres. Enjeux stylistiques et visées pragmatiques*, p. 81-82.

<sup>133</sup> cf. Laurent Pernot: *Epideictic Rhetoric. Questioning the Stakes of Ancient Praise*. Austin: University of Texas Press 2015, p. 10.

<sup>134</sup> cf. Pernot: *Epideictic Rhetoric*, p. 4; Campe: *Rhetoric’s Flirtation with Literature*, p. 46-49; Bonhomme: *De la pragmatique à la stylistique du registre épideictique*, p. 79.

<sup>135</sup> Stefan Matuschek: ‘Epideiktische Beredsamkeit’. In: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. by Gert Ueding. Vol. 2. Tübingen: Niemeyer 1994, p. 1258.

an elemental aesthetic dimension: in *Art of Rhetoric*, Aristotle states that "[t]he epideictic style is especially suited to written compositions; for its function is reading".<sup>136</sup> Schlegel, moreover, included the concept in his rebranding of irony as an artful game.<sup>137</sup> Speakers have to legitimise their own performance by "bringing about a consensus in the minds of the audience regarding the values that are celebrated in the speech".<sup>138</sup> As such, they aim to "provoke the action wished for or, at least, to awaken a disposition so to act".<sup>139</sup> Pathos is a key part of this process, as Marc Bonhomme shows:

En transformant la notion évaluée en objet de valeur à la présence évidente, cela sur des présupposés axiologiques présumés partagés, l'énonciateur fait tout pour que l'énonciataire apprécie instantanément cet objet de valuer dans le même sens que lui. Si elle réussit, cette appréciation se traduit par une séduction cognitive de l'énonciataire, susceptible de déclencher son adhésion immédiate au discours tenu. On peut alors parler d'une communication *empathique*, libérée des détours du raisonnement, qui passe directement [...] du dire de l'énonciateur au croire de l'énonciataire.<sup>140</sup>

The epideictic perspective brings out the pragmatic highlights of *Kritik* and *Polemik*. First of all, it allows us to read the negative discourse in *Polemik* and – though often in a toned down version – *Kritik* along the same analytic standards. Both instances rely on a form of negative rhetoric that is warranted by social as well as institutional conventions and that springs from concrete persuasive considerations. To that effect, the *Polemik*'s (meta-)communicative recourse to the reader pans out on a much larger scale in *Kritik*. Second of all, the pragmatic foundation of epideixis allows us to factor in the self-fashioning that *Kritiker* and polemicists engage in. The line between author and polemicist that Dieckmann draws, runs parallel with the distinction between author and *Kritiker* we discerned in light of the many personae that Schumann and Wagner assume as *Musikkritiker*. We could even regard the *Polemiker* as one of many roles that *Kritiker* import into their texts. Equating *Kritik* and *Polemik* on the basis of epideictic similarities, finally, advances the stylistic parameter as a way of determining the 'polemicity' of a text. As we noted at the beginning of this chapter, the term '*Polemik*' covers many meanings: from a way of saying things and the manner in which discussions are had, to the controversial nature of a topic itself. Consistent with the inherent pragmatic quality of

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<sup>136</sup> Aristotle: *Art of Rhetoric*. Translated by J. H. Freese (= Loeb Classical Library 193). Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1926, p. 423.

<sup>137</sup> cf. Matuschek: *Epideiktische Beredsamkeit*, p. 1266; Markus Ophälders: *Romantische Ironie: Essay über Solger*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2004, p. 116.

<sup>138</sup> Chaïm Perelman: 'The New Rhetoric: A Theory of Practical Reasoning'. In: *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, ed. by Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg. New York: Bedford 2000, p. 1388.

<sup>139</sup> Perelman: *The New Rhetoric*, p. 1388.

<sup>140</sup> Bonhomme: *De la pragmatique à la stylistique du registre épideictique*, p. 84.

epideictic discourse, I, too, will assess the polemical quality of *Kritik* on account of its stylistic modalities. More specifically, I regard it as a register within the discourse of a text, i.e. a pragmatic tool that lends weight to the *Kritiker's* arguments. As we will see, for instance, Wagner switches polemical episodes on or off as it pleases him. My take on polemical rhetoric as a register in *Kritik* chimes in with recent research from discourse analysis on textual polemics: “la violence verbale constitue un ‘registre’ qui s’ajoute éventuellement, mais pas nécessairement, à la structure de la polémique définie comme une modalité argumentative, c’est-à-dire comme le traitement agonique d’un dissensus” (4).<sup>141</sup> Likewise, Stuhlmann has indicated that, historically, *Polemik* started out a “Modus” and “Schreibweise”<sup>142</sup> before it was pinned down on its rhetorical features. For that reason, he coins the transgression of rhetorical and social conventions as a defining discursive trait of polemical texts.<sup>143</sup> Marking *Kritik* as polemical on account of its openness to and even reliance on the polemical register takes into account that polemical instances come in all shapes and sizes: their bellicose fervour can occupy numerous pages on end, for example, or they alternatively come in small, verbose snippets. By all means, however, the dynamic appearance of the polemical register brings with it that the degree of ‘polemicity’ in *Kritik* is highly dynamic. Just as a critical text is not the same as *Kritik* (cf. Chapter 1), as a consequence, I prefer to talk about ‘polemical texts’ rather than ‘a’ or ‘the’ polemic (a term that, I feel, is more reserved for a succession of polemical texts within the larger scope of a fierce discussion between two or more opponents). The frequency or intensity with which the polemical register is used, in other words, determines the polemical character of *Kritik*.

Along with discursive correspondences, the medial environment is a second aspect that bands *Kritik* and polemical texts together. The literary study of *Kritik* has much to gain from the focus on communication and interaction that research into polemical texts has recently taken on. The idea that polemicists are mediated impresses of the author opens up a pragmatic territory in which issues of ethos and self-representation can be addressed. Dieckmann’s notion of metacommunication, in particular, sheds new light on the discursive dimensions of polemical texts. Nevertheless, the attention for the way in which discourse models the various positions within a discussion tends to neglect the medial context of polemical texts. True enough, one might argue that rivalry or the

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<sup>141</sup> Ruth Amossy/Marcel Burger: ‘Introduction : la polémique médiatisée’. In: *Semen* 31 (2011), retrieved 2 September 2016 from <http://semen.revues.org/9072>.

<sup>142</sup> Stuhlmann: *Literarische Polemik*, p. 25.

<sup>143</sup> cf. cf. “Die Polemik bedient sich nicht nur souverän verschiedener Tonarten, sondern eben auch des blitzschnellen Umschlagens von einem emotionalen Register in ein anderes [...] Die Polemik benutzt die Normüberschreitung, um als ‘Stormmanöver’ im Diskurs zu wirken; der temporäre und reversible Bruch von Normen ist zugleich eine Erprobung von Werten, ein zugleich subversives wie stabilisierendes Unterfangen” (ibid., p. 30).

soci(ologic)al context of polemical texts are the primary breeding ground for polemical situations. As Martens indicated, however, such parameters are always liable to the laws of historical relevance. Moreover, they fixate polemical texts as mere auxiliary tools in the margins of a broader, public conflict and, consequently, leave out the vehicles that project polemical exchanges into the public sphere. Mediality, however, is a crucial nexus in which issues of discourse, argumentativity and the material context of both *Kritik* and *Polemik* converge.

Polemic theory has so far remained silent on the subject of mediality. Stenzel makes no mention of the topic whatsoever and focusses solely on the formal-rhetorical side of polemical texts. Dieckmann, for his part, does define polemics as written objects and draws a lot of his examples from debates in journals and newspapers. Still, any inclination to examine how generic conventions influence and enforce the polemical character of texts lacks in his study. The same question applies to Martens. Martens observes persistent references to the press or the simulation of journalistic language in Krauss' polemics. He fails to examine, nonetheless, how Krauss' incessant lampooning of *Kritiker* or of critical institutions affects the status of the medial context in which Krauss' own texts appear. Krauss, for instance, published extensively in the magazine *Die Fackel*, of which he was the founding editor. One ought to wonder, then, how his meta-*Kritik* makes sure that the polemical register retains its argumentative power while it ridicules the very medium that accommodates and facilitates it.

My focus on mediality affirms the stylistic quality of the polemical register. It eliminates the question of genre<sup>144</sup> in favour of a dynamic understanding of polemical occurrences. Polemical episodes have a considerable effect on the macro- as well as micro-structures of a text. Mediality specifically explains why *Kritik* can also be of pragmatic advantage to the polemical register. *Kritik* enhances the 'normative' permissiveness for negative discourse. *Kritik* – as an institution of the public sphere – is built on rules and conventions that regulate the use of disparaging rhetoric and make it socially acceptable. Embedding the polemical register within that framework, as a result, increases its 'digestibility'. The following inquiry into the use of the polemical register in Wagner's *Musikkritik* will therefore take the medial quality of his writings into account. Wagner employs the polemical register in different kinds of texts, from journalistic articles to pamphlets and treatises. The mutation from one medium to another affects various discursive elements of the texts: the *Kritiker*-persona, the setting, the stylistic quality and also, as we will see, their structure.

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<sup>144</sup> cf. also Dominique Maingueneau: 'Les trois dimensions du polémique'. In: *Les registres. Enjeux stylistiques et visées pragmatiques*, p. 115-117; Amossy: *Modalités argumentatives et registres discursifs*, p. 106.



This is the historical, cultural and methodological context in which we will examine the relation between polemical and critical discourse in Wagner's *Musikkritik*. In 2.3.1, I already suggested that Wagner has a pragmatic approach to style: he primarily regards it as a means of expression, not as an aesthetic earmark. Wagner similarly views polemical discourse as a stylistic-discursive given. He approaches the polemic as a register and not as an established genre. Around 1850, moreover, when he begins to step out of standard journalistic media, Wagner ties in his ethos of sincerity as *Kritiker* with the polemical tone of his writings. In the preface to *Oper und Drama*, he portrays the animosity that the essay breathes as a productive form of *Kritik*: "Viele, die es selbst gut mit mir meinen, werden es nicht begreifen können, wie ich es vor mir selbst vermochte, eine berühmte Persönlichkeit unserer heutigen Opernkomponistenwelt auf das Schonungsloseste anzugreifen, [...] nicht aber der versteckte Groll, sondern eine offen erklärte und bestimmt motivierte Feindschaft ist fruchtbar [...]"<sup>145</sup> *Das Judenthum in der Musik* expresses a similar sentiment<sup>146</sup>, and in his only poetical text about *Musikkritik* (cf. 1.3.2), Wagner reveals a utilitarian approach: „[D]iese klare Einsicht gewinnen wir jetzt nur auf dem Wege der Kritik, d. h. aber eben einer unterscheidungs- wie verbindungs-fähigen, gesunden, gefühlskräftigen, revolutionären Kritik, im Gegensatz zu der modernen sichtung- und vereinigungsunfähigen, daher das reine Herkommen konservirenden, restaurationssüchtigen Kritik“.<sup>147</sup>

Wagner's instrumental view on the polemical register explains the hybrid form with which it appears in his *Musikkritik*. We do not encounter sharp and polished diatribes *an sich*, but rather episodic swipes. These polemical episodes for their part alternate with other discursive modes such as reviews or historical surveys. The polemical register, moreover, contrasts sharply with the narrative mediation of the *Kritiker's* judgement in

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<sup>145</sup> Richard Wagner: *Oper und Drama*. Ed. and commentary by Klaus Kropfingier. Stuttgart: Reclam 2000, p. 7-8.

<sup>146</sup> "Es dünkt mich nun nicht unwichtig, den hier zu Grunde liegenden, von der Kritik immer nur noch versteckt oder im Ausbruche einer gewissen Erregtheit berührten Gegenstand näher zu erörtern. Hierbei wird es nicht darauf ankommen, etwas Neues zu sagen, sondern die unbewußte Empfindung, die sich im Volke als innerlichste Abneigung gegen jüdisches Wesen kundgiebt, zu erklären, somit etwas wirklich Vorhandenes deutlich auszusprechen, keinesweges aber etwas Unwirkliches durch die Kraft irgend welcher Einbildung künstlich beleben zu wollen. **Die Kritik verfährt wider ihre Natur, wenn sie in Angriff oder Abwehr etwas Anderes will**". (Richard Wagner (K. Freigedank): 'Das Judenthum in der Musik'. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1850, Vol. 2., Nr. 19, p. 101; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>147</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Über Musikalische Kritik. Brief an den Herausgeber der Neuen Zeitschrift für Musik'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, ed. by Richard Sternfeld and Hans von Wolzogen. Volksausgabe. Vol. 5. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1916, p. 56.

the 'Davidsbund', for instance. Whereas the 'Davidsbund'-model has an indirect way of activating the reader's critical capacity, Wagner does not shun the direct confrontation. What's more, he exploits the affective compass of the polemical register in order to increase the appellative potential of his *Musikkritik* vis-à-vis the reader. We will pursue this pragmatic use of the polemical register in further detail in the same set of texts that we have analyzed in our search for the *Musikkritiker*: the 'Pariser Berichte' and 'Zürcher Kunstschriften'.

#### 4.2.2 The 'Pariser Berichte'

The polemical register occupies a prominent place in the *Pariser Berichte*. Many aspects of the texts that Wagner uses to enhance his position as correspondent (cf. 2.3.1), also reinforce basic discursive principles of the polemical style: the letter-form instills confidentiality and intimacy, and also sustains the monologic communication structure that typifies the polemic.<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, Wagner portrays himself as a modest *vir bonus*. The opening sentence "Sie wünschten von mir Mitteilungen aus Paris"<sup>149</sup> does not only frame the letters as the response to a request of Winkler. Wagner at one go rids himself from the paradox of the polemic as well: why talk about something that is not worth the attention?

Wagner handily adapts the polemical register to a journalistic framework. In itself, the polemical register was no stranger to *Musikkritik*: Heine, among others, regularly subjected composers and musicians to his sarcastic, damaging rhetoric.<sup>150</sup> Typical of Wagner's polemical style in the *Pariser Berichte* is, however, that he intertwines genres and registers that are typical of *Musikkritik* (like the review or the anecdote) with a culture-critical agenda that inflames his textual violence. Wagner rivets two central sentiments together: the artistic supremacy of the Germans, on the one hand, and their oppressed position in Paris, on the other hand. The constant change between registers and styles enables him to expose each idea to a different rhetorical regime. For that reason, the *Pariser Berichte* leave a fragmentary impression. First of all, it is difficult to draw a strict line between the various themes and topics Wagner broaches. In addition, the texts live from abrupt transitions between different registers and styles.

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<sup>148</sup> cf. Amossy: *Modalités argumentatives et registres discursifs*, p. 101.

<sup>149</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Pariser Berichte für die Dresdener Abendzeitung. (1841). I'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 65.

<sup>150</sup> cf. Dietmar Goltschnigg: 'Heines polemische Rhetorik in seinen musikalischen Feuilletons'. In: *Rhetorik als Skandal. Heinrich Heines Sprache*, ed. by Kálmán Kovács. Bielefeld: Aisthesis 2009, pp. 87-107.



In the following, a detailed analysis of the first *Pariser Bericht* will show how Wagner uses the polemical register as a text-constitutive device. Here, too, we notice that the fluent changes between different styles and registers runs parallel to the broad pallet of themes that the text broaches. Four anecdotes exemplify the rift between Germans and Paris and each episode differs strongly in terms of genre and register: from short concert reviews (cf. *infra*) to an imitation of *Zeitungsdeutsch* (accompanied by elegiac metaphors)<sup>151</sup> or – naturally – cutting polemics about the Paris opera world. The latter are most pronounced with regard to the Opéra Comique and the Italian singers in Paris. I will illustrate the polemical aspect by means of a review Wagner gives of a concert by the German soprano Sophie Löwe.

Let us first bring the central goal of the *Pariser Berichte* to mind: Wagner sketches the dishonest and humiliating treatment of German musicians (to which he belongs) in Paris. He uses a concert the German soprano Sophie Löwe gave in February 1841 to illustrate this injustice.<sup>152</sup> Although the review of that particular concert makes its appearance only halfway through the *Bericht*, Wagner had already made the soprano into the martyr of German artists in Paris several paragraphs earlier. There, he describes how Sophie Löwe was supposed to star as prima donna in Gaetano Donizetti's *La Favorite*. She had to cede that honour to Rosine Stoltz, the mistress of Léon Pillet, however, the director of the *Opéra de Paris*.<sup>153</sup> The editor Maurice Schlesinger thereupon challenged Pillet to a duel. However, the confrontation was thwarted in extremis: after initially having rejected the offer, Pillet agreed to sign an 'Ehrenerklärung', thus averting the crisis. As a result, the situation had already been defused before any actual incident worthy of mention even took place. Still, the anecdote sets the tone: the Germans fall on nothing but deaf ears in Paris. Wagner, moreover, mocks the lack of goodwill on the part of the Parisians. When he cites the reviews of French newspapers, for example, he symbolises their failure to understand German artists on a linguistic level: "Fräulein Löwe, welche (beiläufig gesagt) von den

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<sup>151</sup> e.g. "Zunächst eine Todesnachricht! Die Pariser Große Oper wird nächstens sterben. Sie erwartet ihr Heil vom deutschen Messias – von Meyerbeer; zögert dieser noch lange mit der Rettung, so wird der Todeskampf sehr bald eintreten" (Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 67).

<sup>152</sup> The concert was also mentioned in the NZfM. There, the editor mentions that Löwe will sing and that works of Wagner ("einem Sachsen, wenn wir nicht irren, der seit längerer Zeit verschollen schien und zu unserer Freude sich wieder thätig zeigt") will be performed, cf. *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1841, Vol. 1, Nr. 14, p. 58.

<sup>153</sup> Mary Ann Smart speaks up for Rosine Stoltz and wants to excavate her real 'voice' from the many negative accounts contemporaries gave of her. The stereotypical portrayal as an opportunistic, seductive soprano, Smart argues, exposes Stoltz to a discourse that is typical for the 19th century: "Translated into the language of feminist theory: the soprano's power [...] seems to demand containment, and much of the rhetoric that surrounds her, whether in 'primary' sources, journalistic writings or biographies, attempts to control or limit her potential supremacy." (Mary Ann Smart: 'The Lost Voice of Rosine Stoltz'. In: *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6/1 (1994), p. 33).

hiesigen Journalen bald Loëwe, Looëwe, bald aber auch Leouve genannt wird“ (Wagner 1983: 72).<sup>154</sup>

The review that Wagner gives of Löwe's concert moves between a reviewing and a polemical discourse. The account starts in a descriptive and neutral manner: "Sie sang darin die 'Adelaide' und eine italienische Arie, um gleichsam zwischen der deutschen und italienischen Gesangsmethode durchblicken und erwarten zu lassen, was sie in der französischen leisten würde".<sup>155</sup> At the end of that same paragraph, however, the account makes an abrupt transition to the polemical register. Wagner libels two main antagonists: the *Opéra-Comique* and the Italians. He employs two complementary defamation strategies for each of them. The first one to undergo Wagner's scorn is the *Opéra-Comique*:

[D]ie kleine Privatschule der *Opéra comique*, bestehend aus einer unzähligen Masse von lauter kleinen Thomas, Clapissons, Monpous u.s.w., knirscht gewaltig mit den kleinen Quadrillen-Zähnen; – es wird ihnen aber doch nichts helfen, und wenn sie selbst nicht bald Miene machen werden, aus ihrer Kleinheit hervorzutreten, so wird ihnen wohl nichts übrig bleiben, als mit der Zeit auch von diesem Terrain verjagt zu werden.<sup>156</sup>

The belittlement of the opponent - also in the literal sense of the word - connects multiple parabola ('die kleine Privatschule', 'lauter kleinen Thomas, Clapissons, Monpous u.s.w.', the double diminutive 'mit den kleinen Quadrillen-Zähnen', 'aus ihrer Kleinheit hervorzutreten') to a discourse of generalisation that reduces the composers to a 'Privatschule' or 'einer unzähligen Masse'<sup>157</sup> of imitators. Wagner takes this strategy along in the following paragraph, in which he describes the *Opéra Comique* as "wirklich jämmerlich verwahrlost" and reduces its composers to members "[einer] populären französischen Schule" or of a "populär[es] Institut".<sup>158</sup>

The Italian composers in Paris even have to endure a more strident attack. Wagner constructs a caricature of wealth and luxury around them. Superlatives and exclamation points, moreover, work towards a climax in the emotionalisation of the discourse.

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<sup>154</sup> Wagner: *Pariser Berichte* I, p. 69.

<sup>155</sup> *ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>157</sup> This artistic uniformity is part of a broader cultural critique Wagner launches. Wagner capitalises on the caricature of France as a centralised bureaucracy. Already in the beginning of the article, Wagner describes the Parisian art scene as the plaything of that state. *Kritik*, too, is an institutionalised apparatus, in which *Kritiker* make empty and trite appraisals: "Ich schwankte, ob ich mich in das Quartier der Tuileries versetzen und Sie von da aus über einige brillante Staatsaktionen unterhalten sollte, oder ob ich mich in das Heiligtum des Instituts träumen und aus ihm Ihnen einige glücklich erschnappte Floskeln über schöne und nützliche Künste mitteilen sollte?," (*ibid.*, p. 65).

<sup>158</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

Whereas the parabola dominated in the passage about the *Opéra-Comique*, Wagner now relies on the hyperbola. He dubs the Italians ‘nie alternden Halbgötter’, whose eternal life he prefers above that of the ‘König der Franzosen’:

Habe ich ein Wort über die Opéra comique gesagt, so ist es doch nicht mehr wie billig, daß ich wenigstens ein halbes auch über das Théâtre italien hinzufüge. O, wie lacht mir das Herz, wenn ich an euch denke, ihr glücklichen, dreimal, ja viermal glücklichen Italiener! Wenn ich Louis Philippe wäre, so würde ich sagen: Wenn ich nicht Louis Philippe wäre, so wünschte ich Rubini oder Lablache zu sein! Ich für mein Teil wäre einer von diesen unbedingt lieber noch, als König der Franzosen. Welch eine Wonne, Welch eine Existenz von Behaglichkeit! Lorbeer und Banknoten ist doch das Loos dieser nie alternden Halbgötter! [...] Und bei alledem dieß ewige Leben!.<sup>159</sup>

Apart from such stylistic aspects, the gradual increase in polemical intensity is also marked off by fluctuations in Wagner’s illocutionary presence, i.e. his presence as writing persona. Striking, in this respect, is that Wagner totally effaces himself in the review of Löwe’s concert: He either speaks through others (“Allgemein erkannte man mit Bewunderung an”)<sup>160</sup> or he calls upon newspapers to do so (“Ein Journal ließ sich auch, wengleich äußerst zart, etwas über den *parfum allemand* dieses Konzerts aus“).<sup>161</sup> Wagner’s absence as a *Kritiker* continues the ‘Bescheidenheitstopos’ he relies on to enforce a posture as *vir bonus*. During the concert, for example, the orchestra also performed a work of Wagner. But Wagner mentions that fact only parenthetically as “unter denen auch meine Wenigkeit zu figuriren die Ehre hatte“.<sup>162</sup> As the polemical episodes of the text intensify, however, Wagner increases his presence. The shift especially comes to fore in the polemical episode on Italian composers: The emphatic, quasi hypomaniac style, marked by repetitiveness and apostrophes (vb. ‘O, wie lacht mir das Herz, wenn ich an euch denke, ihr glücklichen, dreimal, ja viermal glücklichen Italiener!’) opposes the polemicist diametrically to his opponent and moves his persona to the foreground.

The polemical fire of Wagner’s first ‘Pariser Bericht’ afterwards wanes again. He gives the readers a scoop and reviews a concert by the violinist Vieuxtemps, during which he briefly defames the assembled virtuosi in Paris.<sup>163</sup> Then, he concludes his letter. These

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<sup>159</sup> *ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>160</sup> *ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>161</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>162</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>163</sup> “So hat es endlich Einer gewagt, aus dem Geleise der unabsehbaren Reihe von gefallsüchtigen **Virtuosen mit ihren abscheulichen, entehrenden airs variés** kühn herauszutreten und seine Kunst wieder zu der angestammten Würde zu erheben, die so schmäählich geschändet und entstellt worden war! So hat es Einer

abrupt stylistic changes are not in the least surprising: they form the core of Wagner's *Musikkritik*, not only of the Parisian period, but just as well in the years that follow.

### 4.2.3 the 'Zürcher Kunstschriften'

The role of the polemical register inevitably changes in the *Zürcher Kunstschriften*. By 1849, Wagner no longer publishes his *Musikkritik* in newspapers. Instead, pamphlets become his preferred medium. The affiliation of the polemical register with the pamphlet is not surprising, as Michal Murat points out: "Le pamphlet est une des modalités historiques, la plus récente, de la coïncidence entre polémique et littérature. [...] Il naît de la convergence entre un support (la feuille volante), avec le mode de diffusion qui lui est propre, et une position énonciative caractéristique, marginale ou paradoxale".<sup>164</sup> Since the Enlightenment, indeed, pamphlets – fittingly called *Streit-, Flug- or Schmähschriften* – had been prominent carriers of polemical exchange. In Wagner's time, Junges Deutschland employed pamphlets to advocate social revolution. It is hardly a coincidence, for instance, that Ludolf Wienbarg first coined the term 'Junges Deutschland' in a work titled *Ästhetische Feldzüge* (1834). Walter Hömberg observes that most publications since 1830 appeared "in Buchform".<sup>165</sup> He immediately adds, however, that such generic labels covered many different overtones at the time: "Eine wichtige Rolle im 'Broschürenkampf' der dreißiger Jahre spielte die Flugschrift. Vom Buch läßt sich dieses publizistische Medium weniger durch äußere Strukturmerkmale abgrenzen – sie ist durchweg kürzer, aber die Übergänge sind hier fließend – als vielmehr durch ihre Intentionen".<sup>166</sup> The main difference between books and pamphlets lies in the fact that the former were longer and could address a virtually unlimited range of topics, whereas pamphlets capitalised more on current and topical themes. On account of that distinction, I choose to read Wagner's *Kunstschriften* as pamphlets. As we shall see, in fact, Wagner explicitly frames the separate *Kunstschriften* as reactions to topical debates (cf. *infra*). That observation warrants my interpretation of the texts as pamphlets rather than books.

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gewagt, sich vor den überreizten Ohren einer Menge hinzustellen mit einem edlen, gediegenen Tonstücke, rein und keusch konzipiert, frisch und lebensvoll ausgeführt, [...] **O, Ihr Virtuosen mit euren Phantasien, Variationen und Polacca guerriera's verbeugt euch tief und eifert diesem Jünglinge nach, sonst, ich sage es euch, seid ihr in weniger als fünf Jahren tot und begraben!**" (ibid., p. 72-73; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>164</sup> Michel Murat: 'Polémique et Littérature'. In: *La parole polémique*, ed. by Gilles Declercq, Michel Murat and Jacqueline Dangel. Paris: Honoré Champion 2003, p. 12.

<sup>165</sup> Walter Hömberg: *Zeitgeist und Ideenschmuggel: die Kommunikationsstrategie des Jungen Deutschland*. Stuttgart: Metzler 1975, p. 76.

<sup>166</sup> Hömberg: *Zeitgeist und Ideenschmuggel*, p. 76.

In contrast to the writers of *Junges Deutschland*,<sup>167</sup> Wagner markets his *Kunstschriften* as theoretical treatises and not so much motors of social overhaul. The pamphlets do set forth revolutionary and innovative views, though always with the intention of auguring the future of music.<sup>168</sup> This theoretical setting also affects the polemical intensity of the pamphlets. First of all, the *Kunstschriften* seemingly have a less clear-cut opponent than the *Pariser Berichte* do. They tend to aesthetic matters rather than individual competition. By now, we know better, of course. I have already pointed out that Wagner veils his personal feuds with competitors through a theoretical discourse (cf. 2.3.2). The polemical register closely aligns with this subjective undercurrent and gives vent to Wagner's personal resentment.

There should certainly be no doubt about it: verbal *polemoi* still permeate the *Kunstschriften*. Given the scope of the texts, however, they span a more diverse field of opponents. It is hard to imagine Wagner drawing out a polemical exchange - as a verbal venting of pent-up anger and aggression - over the extravagant number of pages that his ideas fill. Indeed, his pamphlets can hardly control the plethora of polemical objects as their magnitude increases. In that regard, they, too, fall back on the episodic form under which the polemical register already featured in the *Pariser Berichte*. The polemical episodes appear on a more abrupt and dispersed basis, and they grow more fragmentary in result. Consequently, conflicts are surely ever-present in the texts, though more disparate and short-lived.

Furthermore, the contentious rhetoric that inheres in the polemical register manifests itself on different dimensions of the pamphlets. On the one hand, it shapes the argumentative *telos* of the text. To achieve his objectives, Wagner counters opponents to his aesthetic reforms. On the other hand, the polemical register assumes a text-constitutive function and affects the structure of the respective *Kunstschriften*. *Die Kunst und die Revolution* renews the alliance between art and revolution in an attempt to upturn the friction between artists and modernity. At the same time, it headlines seemingly unrelated feuds. Seven breaks divide the text into different sections, in fact, and each section engages in a proper, subsidiary conflict. Some of these conflicts align with the main historical (cf. 4.2.3.1) or aesthetic ideas that inform the philosophical core of Wagner's Zürich period (e.g. the opposition between Hellenic and non-Hellenic art or the

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<sup>167</sup> For more on the media *Junges Deutschland* used, see also Helga Brandes: *Die Zeitschriften des Jungen Deutschland. Eine Untersuchung zur literarisch-publizistischen Öffentlichkeit im 19. Jahrhundert*. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien 1991.

<sup>168</sup> Martin Schneider points out that Wagner found a source of influence for his *Kunstschriften* in E.T.A. Hoffmann's essay 'Der Dichter und der Komponist' (1813), which had also allied musical with social reform, cf. Martin Schneider: *Wissende des Unbewussten. Romantische Anthropologie und Ästhetik im Werk Richard Wagners*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2013, p. 105.

fragmentation of the drama versus unity of art forms). On the other hand, we encounter incidental diatribes that seem singular to *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, like the adverse effect of Christianity on art or the industrialised nature of the art enterprise in Wagner's day.<sup>169</sup> A similar pattern unfolds in *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*. The text works toward a "Verneinung unseres jetzigen Kunstwesens"<sup>170</sup> and promotes the 'Artwork of the Future' as the sole productive form of that negation. To achieve that goal, the pamphlet resolves several intermediary disputes. More precisely, it needs to disparage the dissolution of the tragedy into 'Tanzkunst', 'Tonkunst' and 'Dichtkunst' before it can advocate a unified artwork of the future (cf. infra). Likewise, *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* denies visual arts any claim to that 'Artwork of the Future'. (cf. infra) *Oper und Drama*, finally, starts from the central opposition between Wagner and a 'berühmte Persönlichkeit' (cf. supra). In addition, the pamphlet boasts numerous polemical outbursts against a most diverse collection of opponents. The work is of course renowned for its bitter attacks on Meyerbeer. Nonetheless, it also inveighs against numerous other composers, like Spontini<sup>171</sup> and Rossini<sup>172</sup>, even against the piano (cf. infra) and – naturally – Paris<sup>173</sup>.

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<sup>169</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 3, p. 123.

<sup>170</sup> Wagner: *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, p. 123.

<sup>171</sup> e.g. "Spontini konnte [...] mit vollstem Rechte fragen: »Habt ihr die wesentliche Form der musikalischen Operbestandteile irgendwie weiter entwickelt, als Ihr sie bei mir vorfindet? Oder habt Ihr etwa gar irgend etwas Verständliches oder Gesundes zu Stande bringen können mit wirklicher Übergehung dieser Form? [...] Wer aber will mir sagen, daß er diese Form mit glühenderem, gefühlvollerem und energischerem Inhalte erfüllt habe, als ich?« –/Es dürfte schwer sein, Spontini auf diese Fragen eine Antwort zu geben, die ihn verwirren müßte; jedenfalls noch schwerer, ihm zu beweisen, daß er wahnsinnig sei, wenn er uns für wahnsinnig hält.“ (Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 31; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>172</sup> e.g. "O wie ärgerte er sich, der sonst so leichtsinnige Meister, wie ward er böß und übelgelaunt, sich, wenn auch nicht an Genialität, doch in der Geschicklichkeit der Ausbeutung der öffentlichen Kunstnichts würdigkeit übertroffen zu sehen! O wie war er der »dissoluto punito«, die ausgestochene Kurtisane, und von welchem ingrimmigen Verdrusse ob dieser Schmach war er erfüllt [...] **Er mußte erkennen, daß, so lange Gottes Weisheit die Welt regiert, alles seine Strafe findet, selbst die Aufrichtigkeit, mit der er den Leuten gesagt hatte, was an der Oper wäre, – und ward, um wohlverdiente Buße zu tragen, Fischhändler und Kirchenkomponist!** –“ (ibid., p. 49-50; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>173</sup> "Nun ging die große Jagd auf Volksmelodien in fremder Herren Ländern los [...] Unsere Franzosen waren flinker auf den Beinen; sie blätterten nur im Reisehandbuche für Touristen, und machten sich dabei selbst auf, ganz in der Nähe zu hören und zu sehen, wo irgend noch ein Stück Volksnaivetät vorhanden wäre, wie es aussähe und wie es klänge. [...] Einer von diesen war ein guter Reiter, und wenn er nach hastigem Ritte vom Pferde stieg, wußte man, daß er eine gute Melodie gefunden hatte, die ihm vieles Geld einbringen würde. **Dieser ritt jetzt wie besessen durch allen Fisch- und Gemüsekrum des Marktes von Neapel hindurch [...] so daß ihm mit Blitzesschnelle der Instinkt von einer prachtvollen Fischer- und Gemüsehändler-Revolution in die Nase fuhr.** Aber hiervon war noch mehr zu profitieren! Hinaus nach Portici jagt der Pariser Reiter, **zu den Barken und Netzen jener naiven Fischer, die da singen und Fische fangen, schlafen und wüthen, mit Weib und Kind spielen und Messer werfen, sich todtschlagen und immer dabei singen.** Meister Auber, gesteh', das war ein guter Ritt [...]"

In addition to this patchwork of conflicts, the *Kunstschriften* capitalise on a second crucial requirement of polemical texts: the topicality of the discussion. Polemical exchanges take place in the public sphere (a property that Wagner's *Kunstschriften* as instances of *Musikkritik* are *de facto* ensured of). On top of that, the debates they enter into need to be current and relevant as well. And Wagner assures his readers of that fact in all three *Kunstschriften*. Just as he alleges to draft the *Pariser Berichte* at the insistence of Winkler (and not on his own accord), Wagner frames the *Kunstschriften* as responses to ongoing debates. In the very first sentence, *Die Kunst und die Revolution* follows up on the general feeling of dissatisfaction that prevailed among artists after the revolution of 1848: "Fast allgemein ist heutigtages die Klage der Künstler über den Schaden, den ihnen die Revolution verursachte. Nicht jener große Straßenkampf, nicht die plötzliche und heftige Erschütterung des Staatsgebäudes, nicht der schnelle Wechsel der Regierung wurde angeklagt [...] aber der besonders nachhaltige Charakter der letzten Erschütterungen ist es, der das bisherige Kunsttreiben so tödlich berührt".<sup>174</sup> *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* - the least contentious of the three *Kunstschriften*, perhaps - installs itself less directly within the context of ongoing debates. The prefatory dedication only mentions the influence of Feuerbach's philosophy on the ideas expressed in the pamphlet.<sup>175</sup> Much like in the *Pariser Berichte*, however, Wagner does cite an external incentive for the pamphlet and declares to write it at the instigation of friends.<sup>176</sup> While he first sought to express his views "nur durch künstlerische Thaten", he eventually decided "Schriftsteller zu werden, wozu einst mich schon einmal die äußere Lebensnoth getrieben hatte".<sup>177</sup> *Oper und Drama* mentions a similar external motivation. Wagner seeks to remedy the many misconceptions about his writings that a friend had told him, lived among the general public. The preface of *Oper und Drama* thereupon paints the pamphlet as a follow-up to *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*:

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Der Reiter ritt heim, stieg vom Roß, [...] nahm Extrapost nach Paris, und was er im Handumdrehen dort fertigte, war nichts Anderes als die 'Stumme von Portici'." (ibid., p. 58-59; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>174</sup> Richard Wagner: 'Die Kunst und die Revolution'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 3, p. 8.

<sup>175</sup> "Niemand als Ihnen, verehrter Herr, kann ich diese Arbeit zueignen, denn mit ihr habe ich Ihr Eigenthum Ihnen wieder zurückgegeben. Nur insoweit es nicht mehr Ihr Eigenthum geblieben, sondern das des Künstlers geworden, mußte ich unsicher darüber sein, wie ich mich zu Ihnen zu verhalten hätte: ob Sie aus der Hand des künstlerischen Menschen das wieder zurück zu empfangen geneigt sein dürften, was Sie als philosophischer Mensch diesem spendeten. Der Drang und die tief empfundene Verpflichtung, jedenfalls Ihnen meinen Dank für die von Ihnen mir gewordene Herzstärkung zu bezeigen, überwog meinen Zweifel." (Richard Wagner: "Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft" Ludwig Feuerbach in dankbarer Verehrung gewidmet'. In: *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*, Vol. 12, p. 284).

<sup>176</sup> "Von Freunden wurde ich oft aufgefordert, meine Gedanken über Kunst und das, was ich in ihr wolle, schriftstellerisch kundzugeben [...]" (Wagner: *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft. Ludwig Feuerbach in dankbarer Verehrung gewidmet*, p. 284).

<sup>177</sup> ibid., p. 285.

Ein Freund teilte mir mit, daß ich mit dem bisherigen Ausspruche meiner Ansichten über die Kunst bei vielen weniger dadurch Ärgernis erregt hätte, daß ich den Grund der Unfruchtbarkeit unseres jetzigen Kunstschaffens aufzudecken mich bemühte, als dadurch, daß ich die Bedingungen künftiger Fruchtbarkeit desselben zu bezeichnen strebte. Nichts kann unsere Zustände treffender charakterisieren als diese gemachte Wahrnehmung. Wir fühlen alle, daß wir nicht das Rechte tun, und stellen dies somit auch nicht in Abrede, wenn es uns deutlich gesagt wird; [...] Auch dies Ärgernis werde ich durch die vorliegende Schrift wieder hervorrufen müssen, und zwar um so mehr, als ich mich bemühe, in ihr nicht nur allgemein hin – wie es in meinem »Kunstwerke der Zukunft« geschah –, sondern mit genauem Eingehen auf das Besondere die Möglichkeit und Notwendigkeit eines gedeihlicheren Kunstschaffens im Gebiete der Dichtkunst und Musik nachzuweisen.<sup>178</sup>

In the introduction to *Oper und Drama*, furthermore, Wagner claims that his essay responds to an article about ‘Moderne Oper’ in Brockhaus *Die Gegenwart. Eine encyclopädische Darstellung der neuesten Zeitgeschichte für alle Stände* (volume 4). He argues that the author of the article all but exposed the central problem facing the opera of his time. However, “statt nun das Notwendige von jedem schon Gewußte, rund und kurz auszusprechen, sucht er plötzlich der *Kritik* ein ewiges Leben zu bewahren, indem er sein Bedauern darüber ausspricht, daß *Mendelssohns* früher Tod die *Lösung* des Rätsels verhindert, d.h. hinausgeschoben hätte!”<sup>179</sup> The fallacy (‘Irrtum’) in modern-day opera is obvious, says Wagner. Everybody knows and acknowledges it, but artists and *Kritiker* alike have neglected to bring it to light. In a meta-discursive, (self-)apologetic move (cf. supra, Dieckmann), Wagner announces that he will uncover the ‘Irrtum’ once and for all:

Fast scheue ich mich, die kurze Formel der Aufdeckung des Irrtumes mit *erhobener* Stimme auszusprechen, weil ich mich schämen möchte, etwas so Klares, Einfaches und in sich selbst Gewisses, daß meinem Bedünken nach alle Welt es längst und bestimmt gewußt haben muß, mit der Bedeutung einer wichtigen Neuigkeit kundzutun. Wenn ich diese Formel nun dennoch mit stärkerer Betonung ausspreche, [...] so geschieht dieß keinesweges in dem eitlen Wahne, etwas Neues gefunden zu haben, sondern in der Absicht, den in dieser Formel aufgedeckten Irrtum handgreiflich deutlich hinzustellen, um so gegen die unselige Halbheit zu Felde zu ziehen, die sich jetzt in Kunst und Kritik bei uns ausgebreitet hat.<sup>180</sup>

The discursive topos of not saying something new but rather excavating a well known insight, has a familiar ring to it. In 2.3.2, I claimed that it is a main trait of the experiential narrative that runs through *Oper und Drama*. Furthermore, the topos has an important

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<sup>178</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 7.

<sup>179</sup> *ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>180</sup> *ibid.*, p. 18-19.



stake in the polemical logic of the pamphlet. Wagner shapes his ethos as *Polemiker* around the ‘obviousness’ of his claims. Considering that both ‘Kunst und Kritik’ fail to acknowledge what is at stake, Wagner has no other option but to crusade against the present-day and to solve the problem in a – for what it’s worth – ‘straightforward’ fashion.

#### 4.2.3.1 Historical discourse as an argumentative foil

The *Kunstschriften* are made up of many different discursive modes. Among them, we find allegories,<sup>181</sup> epic narratives (e.g. *Wieland der Schmied*) and, of course, the polemical register. The predominant mode, however, is the historicising discourse. Wagner’s *Kunstschriften* are filled with historical surveys of close to any art form. His main point of reference is ancient Greek society, against which he measures the misled artistic attainments of his present-day. Wagner opposes the alliance between art and people in Hellenic days to the gradual crumbling down of that unity throughout the ages: from Roman and medieval times to his own days. The polemical register underpins the argumentative function of this teleological account in Wagner’s *Kunstschriften*. *Die Kunst und die Revolution* eschews modernity and the capitalist hold it has over art.<sup>182</sup> When Wagner reverts to the Greek dramatic heritage, he does not necessarily do so to recapture an artistic utopia.<sup>183</sup> He rather utilises it as a motor to move beyond the status quo. To that effect, the first reference to ‘modern art’ in the pamphlet occurs after a long, polemical build-up has taken us through Hermes’ transformation from joyful winged messenger of the Gods into the epitome of the mercantilism that governs contemporary art:

[...] denn krönet sein Haupt [Merkurs] mit dem Heiligenscheine christlicher Heuchelei, schmückt seine Brust mit dem seelenlosen Abzeichen abgestorbener feudalistischer Ritterorden, so habt ihr ihn, den Gott der modernen Welt, den heilig-hochadeligen Gott der fünf Procent, den Gebieter und Festordner unserer heutigen – Kunst. Leibhaftig seht ihr ihn in einem bigotten englischen Banquier [...], vor euch, wenn er sich von den ersten Sängern der italienischen Oper, lieber noch in seinem Salon, als im Theater (jedoch auch hier um keinen Preis am heiligen Sonntage) vorsingen läßt, weil er den Ruhm hat, sie hier noch theurer bezahlen zu müssen, als dort. Das ist Merkur und seine gelehrige Dienerin, die moderne Kunst.

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<sup>181</sup> In *Oper und Drama*, for instance, the story of Kreon and Antigone represents the battle between the egoistic Staat and the free, human love, respectively (cf. *ibid.*, p. 192-202).

<sup>182</sup> Julian Young: *The Philosophies of Richard Wagner*. Lanham: Lexington Books 2014, p. 15-17.

<sup>183</sup> e.g. “Wir können bei einigem Nachdenken in unserer Kunst keinen Schritt tun, ohne auf den Zusammenhang derselben mit der *Kunst der Griechen* zu treffen. In Wahrheit ist unsere moderne Kunst nur ein Glied in der Kette der Kunstentwicklung des gesammten Europa, und diese nimmt ihren Ausgang von den Griechen”. (Wagner: *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, p. 9)

Das ist die Kunst, wie sie jetzt die ganze zivilisierte Welt erfüllt!<sup>184</sup>

Wagner repackages the tone and arguments from his Paris sojourn in an anti-capitalist rhetoric that evokes the Communist writings from Marx or Engels or the anarchist treatises of Bakunin (with whom Wagner fought at the Dresden barricades). The indignation at rich bankers, the money-crazed opportunism of singers or the hypocrisy and nepotism, and so on – Wagner’s polemical stroll through art history, from the Greek tragedy over Christianity to his own Industrial Age, is basically a rebranded form of *Kulturkritik* that he recycles from earlier *Musikkritik*.

*Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* also carries marks of Wagner’s early acquaintance with communist thinking.<sup>185</sup> We mainly encounter it in the form of an egoism-motif that runs through the text.<sup>186</sup> In *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, Wagner rejects the misguided trajectory that modern art finds itself on. *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, subsequently, sketches the aftermath of that revolution. Historical discourse continues to make up a key part of the pamphlet. It serves an outspoken instrumental purpose: from an argumentative point of view, Wagner must repudiate past and present artistic attainments before he can conclusively proclaim his music drama as ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’. The synthesis into the ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’ – to use Hegelian terminology – can only be achieved through a dialectics between affirmation and negation. Wagner gives a diachronic account of no less than six different art forms in the same amount of sections. On the one hand, he confirms inherent positive traits of the diverse art forms that he discusses. But it is exactly in the moments of negation that his argumentative pattern most forcefully deploys the polemical register. Each survey of the individual pillars on which the Artwork of the Future rests (the art of dancing, music and poetry), adheres to a similar pattern: (I) Wagner acknowledges the inherent artistry of each art form;<sup>187</sup> (II) after the disintegration of the Greek tragedy, things came to a bad – the respective art form has reached its lowest point in Wagner’s own time; (III) Wagner declares the ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’ as the sole viable remedy to turn round this process of decline. The polemical register typically emerges around the low point of phase two and reaches its climax by the very end of the third phase. For example: Wagner argues that pantomime entirely debases dance. The art of dancing had already instrumentalised music to achieve a proper

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<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>185</sup> Eckart Kröplin examines the relation of Wagner to communist thinking in *Richard Wagner und der Kommunismus. Studie zu einem verdrängten Thema*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2013.

<sup>186</sup> Wagner repeatedly remarks that in post-Hellenic times, the separation of the different art forms reflect the egoistical nature of man cf. “Die Periode von diesem Zeitpunkte bis auf unsere Tage ist daher die Geschichte des absoluten Egoismus, und das Ende dieser Periode wird seine Erlösung in den Kommunismus sein” (Wagner: *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, p. 134).

<sup>187</sup> e.g. dancing as “realste aller Kunstarten” (*ibid.*, p. 71), music as “das Herz des Menschen” (*ibid.*, p. 81).

form of expression, making it a mere lust object in “die luxusbedürftigen Räume der Welt” .<sup>188</sup> Pantomime carries forward this development because it produces nothing more than “[d]as allerabhängigste, krüppelhaft verstümmelteste Geschöpf”.<sup>189</sup> Wagner gradually raises his disparaging rhetoric. By the end of the survey, he very well realises that the art of dance endangers the realisation of the Artwork of the Future: “Sie, ohne deren höchste, eigentümlichste Mitwirkung das höchste, edelste Kunstwerk nicht zur Erscheinung gelangen kann, muß – aus dem Vereine ihrer Schwestern geschieden – von Prostitution zur Lächerlichkeit, von Lächerlichkeit zur Prostitution sich flüchten! –/O herrliche Tanzkunst! O schmähliche Tanzkunst! –”.<sup>190</sup>

Wagner’s historical overview of music, the second stronghold of the Artwork of the Future, follows a similar *telos* of redemption. Using his notorious nautical similes,<sup>191</sup> Wagner paints Beethoven as a Columbus-like explorer who experimented with the symphony-form that Haydn and Mozart had passed down. In his Ninth Symphony, in fact, Beethoven inadvertently pushed instrumental music to its limits and all but discovered the Artwork of the Future.<sup>192</sup> Beethoven constitutes a supreme moment in the development of music, Wagner contends, yet things quickly went south from there. Composers sought to imitate Beethoven, although they utterly misunderstood him. The result is a crisis of modern (read: current) music. Music lives on as mere intellectual ‘Kunstmusik’ that alienates the public.<sup>193</sup> As Wagner describes this development, he builds up the polemical register little by little. It mounts from terse snippets scattered along

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<sup>188</sup> *ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>189</sup> *ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>190</sup> *ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>191</sup> cf. Thomas Grey: *Wagner’s Musical Prose. Texts and Contexts*. Cambridge: University Press 1995, p. 154-157; Howard Isham: *Image of the Sea: Oceanic Consciousness in the Romantic Century*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 2004, p. 215-218; Arne Stollberg: *Ohr und Auge - Klang und Form: Facetten einer musikästhetischen Dichotomie bei Johann Gottfried Herder, Richard Wagner und Franz Schreker*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner 2006, p. 129-134; David Trippet: *Wagner’s Melodies. Aesthetics and Materialism in German Musical Identity*. Cambridge University Press 2013, p. 387-392.

<sup>192</sup> Beethoven rediscovered the word, not “jenes willkürliche, bedeutungslose, wie es im Munde des Modesängers eben nur als Knorpel des Stimmetones hin- und hergekäut wird; sondern das notwendige, allmächtige, allvereinende [...]” (*ibid.*, p. 96).

<sup>193</sup> “Der uneingeweihte Laie steht nun verdutzt vor dem künstlichen Werke der Kunstmusik, und vermag sehr richtig nichts andres von ihm zu erfassen, als das allgemein Herzanregende; [...] alles übrige läßt ihn kalt oder beunruhigt ihn auf konfuse Weise, weil er es sehr einfach nicht versteht und nicht verstehen kann. **Unser modernes Konzertpublikum**, welches der Kunstsymphonie gegenüber sich warm und befriedigt anstellt, **lügt und heuchelt, und die Probe dieser Lüge und Heuchelei können wir jeden Augenblick erhalten, sobald – wie es denn auch in den berühmtesten Konzertinstituten geschieht – nach einer solchen Symphonie irgend ein modern melodisches Operntonstück vorgetragen wird, wo wir dann den eigentlichen musikalischen Puls des Auditoriums in ungeheuchelter Freude sogleich schlagen hören.**” (*ibid.*, p. 99; bold emphasis mine).

different paragraphs to a full-out polemical blowout at the end of the survey. At the end, Wagner prophesises the ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’:

Beim Überblicke der geschäftigen Einöde unserer musikalischen Kunstwelt; beim Gebaren der unbedingtesten Zeugungsunfähigkeit dieser gleichwohl ewig sich beliebäugelnden Kunstmasse; beim Anblicke dieses gestaltlosen Breies, dessen Bodensatz verstockte, pedantische Unverschämtheit ist, und aus dem, bei allem tiefsinnenden, urmusikalischen Meisterdünkel, endlich doch nur gefühlslüderliche, italienische Opernarien oder freche französische Kankantanzweisen an das volle Tageslicht der modernen Öffentlichkeit als künstlich destillierte Dünste zu steigen vermögen; – kurz, bei Erwägung dieses vollkommenen schöpferischen Unvermögens, sehen wir uns ohne Schreck nach dem großen vernichtenden Schicksalsschlage um, der diesem ganzen, unmäßig ausgebreiteten Musikkrume ein Ende mache, um Raum zu schaffen dem Kunstwerke der Zukunft [...]<sup>194</sup>

In his survey of poetry (‘Dichtkunst’), historical discourse and polemical rhetoric find themselves in a similar, argumentative constellation. Once the ideal form of poetry (the Athenian tragedy) had lost its ‘Volksgeist’,<sup>195</sup> it became a mere object of study.<sup>196</sup> Much like Beethoven,<sup>197</sup> Shakespeare briefly revived the art form. His successors, however, used it as a pretext for virtuosity and particularism.<sup>198</sup> Poetry hit an all-time low in the Goethezeit, as “für die stumme Lektüre geschriebene Dramen”<sup>199</sup> – the usual signal for Wagner to activate the polemical register. Faced with the uninspired work of his contemporaries (whom he scathingly condemns),<sup>200</sup> he predicts the inevitable (des)integration of drama in the ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’:

je redlicher und ungestümer er [der Trieb des Verlangens nach dem Leben] jedoch in ihr lebt, desto wahrhaftiger ist aber auch das Zugeständnis ihrer eigenen

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<sup>194</sup> *ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>195</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>196</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 105-108.

<sup>197</sup> “Die Tat des alleinigen Shakespeare, die ihn zu einem allgemeinen Menschen, zum Gotte machte, ist doch nur die Tat des einsamen Beethoven, die ihn die Sprache der künstlerischen Menschen der Zukunft finden ließ: erst wo diese beiden Prometheus – Shakespeare und Beethoven – sich die Hand reichen [...]” (*ibid.*, p. 110).

<sup>198</sup> *cf. ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>200</sup> “So waren auch unsere Dramatiker mit der Annahme der französischen Form durchaus noch nicht ganz befriedigt: es fehlte zum Gebräu noch dieß und jenes, – etwas Shakespearesche Verwegenheit, etwas spanisches Pathos, und als Zuthat Überreste Schillerscher Idealität oder Ifflandscher Bürgergemütlichkeit; dieß alles nun nach französischem Rezept unerhört pffiffig angemacht, mit journalistischer Bedachtsamkeit auf den neuesten Skandal zugerichtet, dem beliebtesten Schauspieler, [...] **so haben wir das modernste dramatische Kunstwerk, den in Wahrheit sich selbst, d.h. seine handgreifliche Unfähigkeit dichtenden Dichter.**” (*ibid.*, p. 116; bold emphasis mine).

Tröstlosigkeit in ihr ausgesprochen, und als einzig mögliche Befriedigung ihres Verlangens ihre *Selbstvernichtung*, ihr *Aufgehen in das Leben*, in das *lebendige Kunstwerk der Zukunft* von ihr bekannt./Erwägen wir, wie diesem warmen, schönen Verlangen der Literaturpoesie einst entsprochen werden müsse, und überlassen wir während dessen unsere moderne dramatische Dichtkunst den glorreichen Triumphen ihrer stupiden Eitelkeit!<sup>201</sup>

Whereas dance, music and poetry are the indispensable building blocks of the ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’, Wagner disowns a second triad of art forms (architecture, sculpture and painting). This time around, however, he reverses the rationale: the return of each separate art forms to its natural way of expression is exactly contingent on the success of the ‘Kunstwerk der Zukunft’. As a result, each separate survey ends by spelling out those conditions. It reminds the reader of the true objective of the essay.<sup>202</sup> The text traces the development of this second set of art forms and opposes Asian, Egyptian, Spartan and Roman art to the harmony of the Athenian drama. Lexical contrasts support the broad historical lines that Wagner draws between different cultures and civilisations. In short polemical episodes, Wagner opposes lexical units to each other in order to reinforce the prime position of Hellenic art.<sup>203</sup> He particularly defines the key moments that caused the collapse of the tragedian and unsettled dramatic expression ever since.

Historical discourse in *Oper und Drama*, finally, likewise conforms to the text’s argumentative needs. The history of the opera that Part I of the pamphlet to a large extent chronicles is essentially a gratuitous attempt of Wagner to undercut his colleagues. The bellicose charges he brings against Rossini and others all too well evidence that fact (cf. supra). The preface to Part II (which focusses on drama) similarly employs the case study

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<sup>201</sup> *ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>202</sup> cf. architecture: “Nur mit der **Erlösung der egoistisch getrennten reinmenschlichen Kunstarten in das gemeinsame Kunstwerk der Zukunft** [...] wird auch die Baukunst aus den Banden der Knechtschaft, aus dem Fluche der Zeugungsunfähigkeit, zur freiesten, unerschöpflich fruchtbarsten Kunstthätigkeit erlöst werden.” (*ibid.*, p. 129); sculpture: “Erst wenn die **Bildhauerkunst nicht mehr existirt**, oder [...] als Skulptur in die *Architektur* aufgegangen, [...] wenn wir aus dem Steine uns die Bauwerke **zur Einhegung des lebendigen Kunstwerkes** errichten, nicht aber den lebendigen Menschen in ihm uns mehr vorzustellen nöthig haben, dann erst wird **die wahre Plastik auch vorhanden sein**”. (*ibid.*, p. 140; bold emphasis mine); painting: “Was sie bei *redlichem* Bemühen zu erreichen strebt, erreicht sie am vollkommensten, wenn sie ihre Farbe und ihr Verständniß in der Anordnung auf die lebendige Plastik **des wirklichen dramatischen Darstellers** überträgt; wenn von Leinwand und Kalk herab sie auf die *tragische Bühne* steigt, **um den Künstler an sich selbst das ausführen zu lassen**, was sie vergebens sich bemüht, durch Häufung der reichsten Mittel ohne wirkliches Leben zu vollbringen.” (*ibid.*, p. 147; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>203</sup> e.g. “Der *Luxus* ist somit das Wesen der asiatischen Baukunst: seine **monströsen, geistesöden und sinnverwirrenden** Geburten sind die stadähnlichen Paläste der Despoten Asiens./**Wonnige Ruhe und edles Entzücken** faßt uns dagegen beim **heiteren** Anblicke der hellenischen Göttertempel, in denen wir die Natur [...] wieder erkennen” (*ibid.*, p. 126; bold emphasis mine. Other examples can be found on pages 128, 135 and 137).

of the piano to summarise the main argument Wagner makes in the subsequent pages: “Dieses Drama, das unsere Literaten einzig im Sinne haben, ist aber ebensowenig ein wahres Drama, als ein *Klavier* ein Orchester, oder gar ein Sangerpersonale ist. Die Entstehung des Litteraturdramas verdankt sich ganz demselben egoistischen Geiste unserer allgemeinen Kunstentwicklung, wie das Klavier, und an ihm will ich diesen Gang in Kurze recht deutlich machen.”<sup>204</sup> Wagner, a piano player of sub-standard skill when compared to the likes of Schumann, Liszt or Brahms,<sup>205</sup> polishes off the piano once and for all. After he heaps praise on the human voice (a theme he recovers from his earliest writings), he completely disavows the piano. He places the instrument at the lowest end in the hierarchy of instruments, well behind wind instruments, stringed instruments, the orchestra and the organ. The piano brought music “zu immer groerer Ausdruckslosigkeit”<sup>206</sup> and achieves nothing but “Gehorphantasie”.<sup>207</sup> Wagner furthermore taps into familiar anti-virtuosi-rhetoric to make his diatribe more digestible:

Auf dem Klaviere endlich konnte der Virtuos ohne die Beihulfe irgendeines anderen [...] eine Unzahl von klopfenden Hammern zu seiner eigenen Ehre in Bewegung setzen, denn dem Zuhorenden, der an einer tonenden Musik sich nicht mehr zu erfreuen hatte, blieb nur noch die Bewunderung der Fertigkeit des Tastenschlagers als Amusement ubrig. Wahrlich, unsere ganze moderne Kunst gleicht dem Klaviere: in ihr verrichtet jeder einzelne das Werk einer Gemeinsamkeit, aber leider eben nur in abstracto und mit vollster Tonlosigkeit! Hammer - aber keine Menschen! -<sup>208</sup>

These examples illustrate that historical discourse serves less theoretical purposes than one generally would expect. Conjoined with the polemical register, it is a vehicle for requital, retribution or the outright blotting out of personal shortcomings.

#### 4.2.3.2 Activating the Affective Compass

The sudden outbursts of polemical force constitute one of the hallmarks of Wagner’s *Musikkritik*. We encounter them from the Paris writings to the *Zurcher Kunstschriften* and there are little indications that this pattern changes over time. The episodic use of the polemical register occurs within a larger context of stylistic swerves that characterises Wagner’s way of writing. Do we have to conclude, then, that Wagner was simply a more gifted composer than he was a writer? That he had more control over notes than he had over his words? Not necessarily. Within the genre conventions of *Kunst-* and *Musikkritik*, the polemical register has a straightforward function: it generates a greater dynamic and

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<sup>204</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 130.

<sup>205</sup> cf. Ernest Newman: *The Life of Richard Wagner. Volume One: 1813-1848*. New York: Knopf 1933, p. 46-47.

<sup>206</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 130.

<sup>207</sup> *ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>208</sup> *ibid.*, p. 131-132.

shifts the focus from a generic and practical function to a stronger stylistic expressiveness, which increases the appeal to the reader. By (re)activating the polemical register, Wagner creates a consistent (re)emphasis that affects the structure of the text as a whole and that emotionalises the reader on strategic instances in the text.

### The Confrontational Apostrophe

The emphatic and hypomaniac - as I called it - hyperbole in the *Pariser Berichte* demonstrate that the polemical register is not only a flare-up of aggressive energy. In addition, it has an emotionalising function in the discourse. In the *Kunstschriften*, the polemical register likewise constitutes an affect-laden element of rhetorical persuasion (i.e. *movere*). While strongly bound up with the entire argumentative build-up of the texts (cf. supra), it is of particular emotionalising value to Wagner at the conclusion of the pamphlets - a strategical moment when it comes to persuading the reader, indeed. By virtue of the apostrophe, first of all, the final paragraphs of the *Kunstschriften* cast the addressee in a particularly inimical role. As we have perceived on various occasions, Wagner regularly turns to absent entities to make his case. But those addressees are often readers whom he approaches in good confidence. When it comes to maximising the emotional outreach of his texts, by contrast, the closing paragraphs of a given *Kunstschrift* bank on outspoken confrontational apostrophes. Wagner drives the eristic force of the texts to its extremes and directly confronts those who oppose his aesthetic project. The - presumably - sympathising reader is subsumed under a collective 'wir'. The closing section of *Die Kunst und die Revolution* documents such a shift from an indirect to a direct attack on its adversaries. First, Wagner cuts the intellectuals and clericals of his days to shreds in, what we might call, a classic polemical attack. The third person plural creates distance between Wagner and his opponent. The affective quality of the passage, in that regard, mainly revolves around a discrediting rhetoric. Wagner consistently portrays his adversaries as insincere. The brisk one-word opener followed by an exclamation mark sets the affective tension from the very onset. The alliteration in the third paragraph ('leben, leiden, lügen und lästern'), subsequently, constitutes a climax in the emotionalisation of the discourse. Wagner furthermore includes faint reminiscences to this alliteration by means of the triad 'Lüge' - 'Leidenschaft' - 'Leidenden' dispersed throughout the paragraph:

»Utopien! Utopien!« höre ich sie rufen die großen Weisen und Überzuckerer unserer modernen Staats- und Kunstbarbarei, die sogenannten praktischen Menschen, die in der Handhabung ihrer Praktik sich täglich nur durch Lügen und Gewaltstreiche, oder [...] höchstens durch Unwissenheit helfen können.

»Schönes Ideal, das, wie jedes Ideal, uns nur vorschweben, von dem zur Unvollkommenheit verdamnten Menschen leider aber nicht erreicht werden soll.« So seufzt der gutmüthige Schwärmer für das Himmelreich [...]

Sie leben, leiden, lügen und lästern tatsächlich in dem widerlichsten Zustande, dem schmutzigen Bodensatze eines in Wahrheit eingebildeten und deßhalb

unverwirklichten Utopiens, mühen und überbieten sich in jeder Kunst der Heuchelei für die Aufrechthaltung der Lüge dieses Utopiens, aus welchem sie täglich als verstümmelte Krüppel gemeinster und frivolster Leidenschaft auf den platten, nackten Boden der nüchternsten Wahrheit jämmerlich herabfallen, und halten oder verschreien die einzig natürliche Erlösung aus ihrer Verzauberung für Chimäre, für ein Utopien, gerade wie die Leidenden im Narrenhause ihre verrückten Einbildungen für Wahrheit, die Wahrheit aber für Verrücktheit halten.<sup>209</sup>

Still a textbook attack, in the sense that the opponent is put on trial in front of the reader, Wagner directly turns to his adversaries later in the section. He first accuses them of murder,<sup>210</sup> but at the conclusion of the pamphlet does decide to shed the all too damaging rhetoric. Instead, he reaches out to them. Wagner strikes an almost sacral tone and emphatically implores statesmen and his revolutionary compatriots alike to support his aesthetic crusade:

Liegt euch Freunden der Kunst wirklich daran, die Kunst vor den drohenden Stürmen erhalten zu wissen, so begreift, daß sie nicht nur erhalten, sondern wirklich erst zu ihrem eigentümlichen wahren, vollen Leben gelangen soll!

Ist es euch redlichen Staatsmännern wahrhaft darum zu tun, dem von euch geahnten Umsturze der Gesellschaft, [...] – ist es euch, sage ich, darum zu tun, dieser Umwandlung ein lebenskräftiges Unterpfund künftiger schönster Gesittung einzuimpfen, so helft uns nach allen Kräften, die Kunst sich und ihrem edlen Berufe selbst wiederzugeben!

Ihr leidenden Mitbrüder jedes Theiles der menschlichen Gesellschaft, die ihr in heißem Grollen darüber brütet, wie ihr aus Sklaven des Geldes zu freien Menschen werden möchtet, begreift unsere Aufgabe, und helft uns die Kunst zu ihrer Würde zu erheben, [...]

Die ich euch anrief, wäret ihr einverstanden und einig mit uns, wie leicht wäre es eurem Willen, die einfachen Maßregeln in das Werk zu setzen, die das unausbleibliche Gedeihen [...] des Theaters, zur Folge haben müßten.<sup>211</sup> (38-39)

*Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* sharpens the antagonising use of the apostrophe. Technically, the pamphlet ends with the parable ‘Wieland der Schmied’ which allegorises the

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<sup>209</sup> Wagner: *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, p. 35-36.

<sup>210</sup> “Ihr seht nun aber, daß trotz jener allmächtigen Kirche der Mensch in solcher Fülle vorhanden ist, daß eure christlich-ökonomische Staatsweisheit gar nicht einmal weiß, was sie mit dieser Fülle anfangen soll, daß ihr euch **nach sozialen Mordmitteln umsehst zu ihrer Vertilgung, da daß ihr wirklich froh wäret, wenn der Mensch vom Christentume umgebracht worden wäre**, damit der einzige abstrakte Gott eures lieben Ichs allein nur noch auf dieser Welt Raum gewinnen dürfte”. (ibid., p. 36).

<sup>211</sup> ibid., p. 38-39.



proposed reforms in the treatise. In the paragraphs working up to the tale, however, Wagner reinforces the emotionalising function of the apostrophe. Wagner defends ‘das Volk’ from the disdain with which elitist and egotistical artists dismiss it as ‘Pöbel’. He uses a penalising rhetoric. Wagner condemns his opponents and brings his tried and tested argument of luxury against them.<sup>212</sup> Here, too, anaphora (‘nicht aus-nicht aus-nicht aus’, ‘Bedankt aber, daß – daß’) add a sense of metre and cadence to the passage:

Sehr richtig! Nicht aus der schmutzigen Grundlage eurer heutigen Kultur, nicht aus dem widerlichen Bodensatze eurer modernen feinen Bildung, nicht aus den Bedingungen, die eurer modernen Zivilisation die einzig denkbare Basis des Daseins geben, soll das Kunstwerk der Zukunft entstehen. Bedenkt aber, daß dieser Pöbel [...] das künstliche Erzeugnis Eurer unnatürlichen Kultur [ist]; daß alle die Laster und Scheußlichkeiten, die Euch an diesem Pöbel anwidern, nur die verzweiflungsvollen Gebärden des Kampfes sind, den die wirkliche menschliche Natur gegen ihre grausame Unterdrückerin, die moderne Zivilisation, führt, und das Abschreckende in diesen Gebärden keinesweges die wahre Miene der Natur, sondern vielmehr der Widerschein der gleißnerischen Fratze eurer Staats- und Krimalkultur ist. [...] So lange ihr intelligenten Egoisten und egoistischen Feingebildeten in künstlichem Dufte erblüht, muß es notwendig einen Stoff geben, aus dessen Lebenssaft ihr eure süßlichen Parfüms destilliert: und dieser Stoff, dem ihr seinen natürlichen Wohlgeruch entzogen habt, ist nur dieser übelatmige Pöbel, vor dessen Nähe es euch ekelt, und von dem ihr euch im Grunde einzig doch nur durch jenen Parfüm unterscheidet, den ihr seiner natürlichen Anmut entreißt habt.<sup>213</sup>

## Interpunction

In *Oper und Drama*, the apostrophe restores its standard exhortative outreach to the reader. A discursive element that takes over the emotionalising function instead, is interpunction, and particularly exclamation and question marks. Interpunction, as an expressive marker, puts the account on edge and highlights the affective compass of the text.<sup>214</sup> It reflects the emotions of the author in a visual, iconic manner so as to

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<sup>212</sup> cf. “Bedenkt ferner, [...] daß da, wo **Schöngesterei und Mode ein ganzes unnötiges Leben erfüllen**, Rohheit und Plumpheit die Grundzüge eines andern, Euch notwendigen, Lebens ausmachen müssen; daß da, wo der **bedürfnislose Luxus seinen allesverzehrenden Heißhunger gewaltsam zu stillen sucht**, das natürliche Bedürfnis auf der anderen Seite nur durch Plack und Not, unter den entstellendsten Sorgen, sich mit dem Luxus zugleich befriedigen kann”. (Wagner: *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, p. 173; bold emphasis mine).

<sup>213</sup> *ibid.*, p. 172-173.

<sup>214</sup> In *Entartung* (1896), Max Nordau writes off Wagner’s use of interpunction. He regards it as a characteristic tendency of Romantic neurosis: “Nicht bloß der Inhalt seiner Schriften, sondern schon deren äußere Form kennzeichnet Wagner als Graphomanen. Der Leser hat an den Anführungen bemerken können, welchen

unambiguously convey them to the reader. The 'finale' of *Oper und Drama*, for instance, alternates force statements with rhetorical questions. This dynamic gives shape to Wagner's polemical *Kritik* on the 'Afterkunstschaffen':<sup>215</sup>

Und doch! Sollen wir aufhören, Künstler zu sein? Oder sollen wir uns der notwendigen Einsicht in die Natur der Dinge begeben, bloß weil wir keinen Vorteil daraus ziehen können? – Wäre es aber kein Vorteil, nicht nur Künstler, sondern auch *Mann* zu sein, und sollte eine künstliche Unwissenheit, ein weibisches von uns Abweisen der Erkenntnis uns mehr Vorteil bringen, als ein kräftiges Bewußtsein [...]?

Gewiß! Nur die Erkenntnis kann uns schon jetzt beglücken, während die Unkenntnis uns in einem hypochondrischen, freudlosen, gespaltenen, kaum wollenden, nirgends aber könnenden Afterkunstschaffen erhält, durch das wir nach Innen unbefriedigt, nach Außen ohne befriedigende Wirkung bleiben.

Blickt um Euch, und seht, wo Ihr lebt, und für wen Ihr Kunst schafft!<sup>216</sup>

In the other *Kunstschriften*, too, closing paragraphs often feature nothing but exclamation points or question marks. Eighteen of the final twenty-four sentences in *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* end with exclamation marks, for instance. They have a clear appellative purpose, as the closing lines of the text illustrate: "O einziges, herrliches Volk! Das hast du gedichtet, und du selbst bist dieser Wieland! Schmiede deine Flügel, und schwinge dich

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Mißbrauch Wagner mit dem Unterstreichen von Worten treibt. Manchmal läßt er halbe Seiten mit gesperrter Schrift setzen. Diese Erscheinung wird von Lombroso bei Graphomanen ausdrücklich festgestellt. Sie erklärt sich zur Genüge aus der hier oft auseinandergesetzten Eigenthümlichkeit des mystischen Denkens. Keine sprachliche Form, die der mystische Entartete seinen Gedankenschemen geben kann, vermag ihn zu befriedigen, er hat immer das Bewußtsein, daß die Sätze, die er niederschreibt, die wirren Vorgänge in seinem Gehirn nicht ausdrücken, und da er es aufgeben muß, diese in Wort zu fassen, so sucht er durch Ausrufungszeichen, Gedankenstriche, Punkte und Durchschutz-Linien in seine Schrift mehr hineinzugeheimnissen, als deren Worte sagen können". (Max Nordau: *Entartung*. Vol. 1. Berlin: Carl Duncker 1896, p. 325).

<sup>215</sup> Do note, in addition, that the forms of address have reverted to their standard combination of a collective 'wir' with exhortative imperatives.

<sup>216</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 387-388. Apart from drawing out the emotional overtones of the polemical register, Wagner furthermore uses punctuation in *Oper und Drama* to remind the reader of the structure of the treatise. The repeated asking of numerous questions must ultimately lead to an answer, as the closing paragraph of the first part illustrates: "– Doch, halten wir an, und [z]war gerade hier, um uns gründlich zu befragen, wer denn der *Mann* sein müsse, den dieses Weib so unbedingt lieben soll? Erwägen wir wohl, ehe wir die Liebe dieses Weibes preisgeben, ob die Gegenliebe des Mannes etwa eine zu erbettelnde, oder eine auch ihm notwendige und erlösende sein müsse?/Betrachten wir genau *den Dichter!*" (ibid., p. 122).

auf!”<sup>217</sup> *Die Kunst und die Revolution* features a similar prolonged episode of punctuation to wit with question marks<sup>218</sup>

Wagner’s *Musikkritik*, to summarise, employs the polemical register in an outspoken text-constitutive role that manipulates the attention of the reader in a structural way. It relies on an extensive set of emotionalising strategies (e.g. hyperbole, apostrophe, punctuation) to enlist the reader in the rationale of the text. In this regard, the polemical register is conceptually akin to the ‘Gefühlswegweiser’ – the original term for ‘Leitmotive’:

Diese melodischen Momente, an sich dazu geeignet, das Gefühl immer auf gleicher Höhe zu erhalten, werden uns durch das Orchester gewissermaßen zu Gefühlswegweisern durch den ganzen vielgewundenen Bau des Dramas. An ihnen werden wir zu steten Mitwissern des tiefsten Geheimnisses der dichterischen Absicht, zu unmittelbaren Teilnehmern an dessen Verwirklichung.<sup>219</sup>

The regulative function of the polemical register reveals the dramaturgy of polemical texts. The polemical register adapts itself to different topics and to a medial scene that changes from musical feuilletons and newspaper articles to pamphlets and books. As Wagner reinvents his *Kritiker*-identity within shifting medial constellations, his author persona changes and so does the discursive purpose of the polemical register. The reader, as a spectator, finally, is prompted to go along in this dynamics. The polemical register steers readers and by means of its affective compass, activates their presence in the text.

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<sup>217</sup> Wagner: *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, p. 177.

<sup>218</sup> cf. “Wodurch aber litten von je her, und vor Allem in unserem heutigen Zustande, die begeisterten Schöpfer jener edlen Werke [die der Schwesterkünste]? War es nicht durch ihre Berührung mit der [...] Welt, der ihre Werke angehören sollten? Was hat wohl den Architekten empört, wenn er seine Schöpferkraft auf Bestellung an Kasernen und Miethwohnhäusern zersplittern mußte? Was kränkte den Maler, wenn er die widerliche Fratze eines Millionärs porträtiren, was den Musiker, wenn er Tafelmusiken komponiren, was den Dichter, wenn er Leihbibliothekromane schreiben mußte? Was war dann sein Leiden? Daß er seine Schöpferkraft an den Erwerb vergeuden, seine Kunst zum Handwerk machen mußte! – Was aber hat endlich der Dramatiker zu leiden, wenn er alle Künste zum höchsten Kunstwerk, zum Drama vereinigen will? Alle Leiden der übrigen Künstler zusammen!” (Wagner: *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, p. 37: bold emphasis mine).

<sup>219</sup> Wagner: *Oper und Drama*, p. 360.

### 4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has probed to what extent Schumann and Wagner grant the reader room to become involved in their *Musikkritiken*. Chapter 3, to recapitulate, defined the reader as a discursive agent whose identity authors prefigure by means of rhetorical strategies. This chapter has built on that premise. We have examined how authors do not merely heap their judgements on the readership, but conversely encourage readers to reflect on those opinions as well. Schumann and Wagner activate the reader's judgement through text-structural interventions: Schumann creates narrative gaps that readers are invited to fill, whereas Wagner reactualises the reader's presence through polemical emphases in the text's affective register.

Of the two, Schumann certainly engages the reader as the more independent agent. The lack of consensus in the 'Davidsbund'-texts (all in all, a limited selection of his critical output) ensues from the crucial absence of an authoritative voice that might sway the reader's judgement. Instead, the readership receives a unique opportunity to settle the argument for itself. The scenography of the 'Davidsbund' is a straightforward instance of fostering the public sphere's critical capacity. While most researchers have stopped at the elitist 'Philister'-rhetoric that the 'Davidsbündler' indulge in, I have shown that the 'Davidsbund', as a critical format, acknowledges the reader as a full-fledged participant of *Musikkritik*. Despite the temporal distance to Enlightenment poetics, the 'Davidsbund' is more an exponent of 18<sup>th</sup>-century reader emancipation than that it perpetuates a notion of Romantic elitism.

Wagner's use of the polemical register, to that effect, is much more geared to the critical argument itself. The affective emphases in the critical discourse involve the reader, though always on Wagner's own terms. As my analysis demonstrated, Wagner time and again deploys the polemical register to propel the argument and steer it in his favour. As a marker of high-flown rhetoric, the polemical register spikes the critical discourse and draws the reader's attention to the eristic high-points Wagner wishes to highlight. As a result, Wagner rather activates the readership's *presence* than that he necessarily activates its judgement. In contrast to Schumann, the polemical register in Wagner's *Musikkritik* employs the text's affective compass as a compass in the true sense of the word: an author might well open up his *Kritik* to the reader's judgement, but he still steers the direction that judgement goes out to.

This observation, finally, brings the circle between author, *Musikkritiker* and reader to a close. The *Musikkritiker* has a fundamental stake in the outward exposure of *Musikkritik*. He embodies the norms of the institution but also its standing in the public sphere. As this chapters has shown, however, authors must accord the readers – *Kritik*'s main beneficiaries in the public sphere – the space to do so, in the first place. The basic intermedial operations that are necessary to textualise music confirms the reader even

more in that position of dependence. Schumann creates inviting 'Leerstellen' for the reader to step into, but always within a fixed epistemological framework: the reader remains subject to the renditions of the 'Davidsbündler' (which are, for the greater part, non-technical and thus open to a broad segment of readers) and the information they exchange among each other. Wagner, for his part, exploits the polemical register to highlight the arguments he wants the reader to take away. Readers, to summarise, are an unexpendable pillar of *Musikkritik*, but only to the extent that authors allow them to be.



## Conclusion

In his first editorial as editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, Franz Brendel proposes a clean break with the *Musikkritik* of his day. What he finds particularly troubling, is the freedom of opinion the reader had acquired over time: “Die Kritik hat darum ihren Einfluß auf das Publikum verloren, indem dies zwischen jenen Urtheilen und seiner eigenen Empfindung einen nicht auszugleichenden Widerspruch entdeckte. Das Publikum hat sich zurückgezogen, über die Werke der Tonkunst sich ein eigenes Urtheil gebildet, und ließ dahingestellt sein, was die Kenner meinten”.<sup>1</sup> Brendel passes Mattheson, Rochlitz or Rellstab all under separate review. He does not once mention Schumann or Wagner, however. His allegiance to the latter presumably made him turn a blind eye on Wagner’s own consistent wooing of the reader’s graces. Sanctioning the founding father of the NZfM, on the other hand, would only have delegitimised the periodical he had just taken over.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Brendel’s criticism of contemporary *Musikkritik* could not have applied more to any other *Musikkritiker* than to Schumann and Wagner. For if there is one major achievement that binds Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik* together, it is that both authors put in place the necessary discursive strategies to involve the reader in the critical process and foster his critical judgement.

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<sup>1</sup> Franz Brendel: ‘Zur Einleitung’. In: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 1845, Vol. 1, Nr. 1-2, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Jurgen Thym poignantly summarizes Brendel’s predicament in his first years as editor of the NZfM: “The relationship of Brendel to Schumann in the NZfM was inevitably a delicate one. If Brendel wanted to be more than a mere successor to Schumann, he had to acquire a profile of his own as editor. This meant not only avoiding the well-tried avenues explored in Schumann’s music-criticism, but also providing a contrasting model of music criticism that would prove equally successful. But he had to do this with a staff of contributors and correspondents whom Schumann had gathered and who still may have felt an allegiance to the old ‘Davidsbündler’ and his way of running things. Sooner or later Brendel would face a delicate political problem: he had to appear to continue the former tradition while actually changing it drastically in style and substance” (Jurgen Thym: ‘Schumann in Brendel’s *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* from 1845 to 1856’. In: *Mendelssohn and Schumann. Essays on their Music and Its Context*, ed. by Jon W. Finson and R. Larry Todd. Durham: Duke University Press 1984, p. 21. Brendel’s reception of both Schumann and Wagner is discussed from a more aesthetic-ideological viewpoint in Peter Ramroth: *Robert Schumann und Richard Wagner im geschichtsphilosophischen Urteil von Franz Brendel*. Bern/Frankfurt am Main/New York: Peter Lang 1991.

In this dissertation, I have examined the discursive organisation of *Musikkritik* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The case studies of Schumann and Wagner prompted the central research question how both authors were able to appeal to the same institution, while they both render *Musikkritik* in such a stylistically divergent and flexible way. To that effect, I have probed the possibilities for a literary analysis of *Musikkritik*, in general. In secondary literature, *Musikkritik* has so far counted as a subsidiary corpus that supports biographical, music-analytic or music-historical inquiries. I, instead, proposed to read *Musikkritik* as *Musikkritik*: I asked how *Musikkritik* operates as a text and examined how it relates to other critical discourses. To that aim, I put forward three main questions: What understanding of *Musikkritik* informs Schumann's and Wagner's writings and in what manner do they mark out that understanding against other journals or other *Musikkritiker*? How do Schumann and Wagner assert their authority as *Musikkritiker*? What position, finally, do they adopt vis-à-vis the reader and what position do they allow the reader to assume in the *Musikkritiken*?

In Chapter 1, I explored how Schumann and Wagner understand *Musikkritik* and how they distance their critical writings from the *Musikkritik* of competitors. Methodologically, I proposed to examine the *Musikkritiken* as discursive environments. Apart from the specific content of the texts, I argued, we also need to investigate how authors create a *context* for their writings, i.e. how they speak about the act of writing itself. The socio-historic theories of Habermas and Koselleck and recent studies on the discursive organisation in *Kunst-* and *Literaturkritik* enabled me to read *Musikkritik* in its capacity as an institution of the public sphere. *Musikkritiker* (not unlike their colleagues in other critical institutions) enter a public field in which they assume positions, defend opinions and legitimise the very act of criticising. I tested that premise against the concept of *Musikkritik* that informs Schumann's and Wagner's critical writings. Schumann and Wagner, to be sure, both employ different critical text genres. While the former mostly experiments with standard review format, the latter makes use of various text genres (correspondences, novellas, reviews, etc.) and publishes them in a range of different media outlets (newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets, etc.). Despite the genre differences, I discovered striking analogies in the discursive strategies Schumann and Wagner use to vindicate their *Musikkritik*. Indeed, Schumann and Wagner both validate their *Musikkritik* by measuring it against the writings of their colleagues. More specifically (and quite uninventively, perhaps), they advertise it as 'new,' as a break with set traditions. Schumann candidly titles his periodical 'Neue Zeitschrift für Musik' and eliminates his competitors in the 'Journalschau'; Wagner advertises his *Musikkritik* as the motor of an aesthetic revolution, a means to a new form of musical expression. By all means, the genre formats that the authors use, constitute an essential feature of the discursive identity of their *Musikkritiken*. In the 'Journalschau', for instance, Schumann proclaims the supremacy of his critical project by weighing his reviews and his periodical against that of the competition. Likewise, Wagner promotes a progressive *Musikkritik* that



keeps step with the aesthetic reforms he proposes. But while most scholars have readily embraced the rationale of Schumann and Wagner by extolling the authors' ingenuity, my discursive vantage point has uncovered the imagological manoeuvres that lie hidden behind this alleged 'newness'. Before determining the concept that informs Schumann's and Wagner's views on *Musikkritik*, as a result, we must always be aware that we encounter a simulated reality in their writings. First and foremost, my inquiry has granted us insight into the discursive strategies Schumann and Wagner deploy to secure a place for their *Musikkritik* in the public sphere.

In Chapter 2, I subsequently assessed how Schumann and Wagner carve out their role as *Musikkritiker* and how they assert their authority in that capacity. So far, academia has employed their *Musikkritiken* in support of ulterior objectives. I have proposed, by contrast, to scrutinise Schumann's and Wagner's appearance as *Musikkritiker* in greater depth. Schumann and Wagner took their responsibilities as *Musikkritiker* very seriously. For one, their livelihood in part depended on it, as Wagner does not fail to emphasise. During their lives, furthermore, both authors already took measures to ensure that later generations would look favourably upon their writings. The fact that Schumann and Wagner anthologised their *Musikkritik* (a project of self-canonisation that Schumann embarked upon relatively early in his career, as I have shown) shows how important their reputation as *Musikkritiker* was to them. My methodology accommodated these issues of self-fashioning. I advanced that Schumann and Wagner create a discursive identity as *Musikkritiker*. Drawing on the rhetorical notion of ethos and on Wayne Booth's narrative concept of the implied author, I pointed out that the *Kritiker* in the text is a discursive abstract that assumes a double responsibility. On the one hand, he acts as a mouthpiece of opinions, on the other hand, he is a blanket agent through which authors reflect on and validate the critical process itself. Vice versa, opponents deploy the *Kritiker* to discredit *Kritik* itself (e.g. by using the persona of the 'Rezendent'). A favourable appearance as and of the *Kritiker*, in other words, is crucial to making *Kritik* acceptable to the reader. Schumann and Wagner conveniently use the flexibility of the author's discursive identity as *Musikkritiker* to their benefit. Schumann characteristically draws from a colourful palette of different voices and pen names. I mainly analysed the reviews Schumann signs with his own name. I suggested to read those personal signatures, too, as pseudonyms and called attention to the discursive advantages Schumann gains from such a pseudonimic use of his own name. Schumann employs it to self-canonise his opinions as *Musikkritiker* and to enhance the reputation of the NZfM. At the same time, he draws legitimacy from his pre-eminence as a composer. Compared to Schumann's pseudonymic caprices, Wagner sustains a specific ethos for longer periods of time. He uses the mask of the *Musikkritiker* as an outspoken strategy of personal self-aggrandisement in the public sphere. Through the persona of the correspondent, Wagner pushes away competitors that threaten his ambitions as a composer. In *Oper und Drama*, moreover, I discovered a pervasive discourse that projects the *Musikkritiker* as 'Kritiker-Künstler'. Moreover, this

discourse aligns Wagner's compositions up to that point with the aesthetic reforms he proposes in the pamphlet. In Schumann's and Wagner's case alike, we must deny nor overlook that their biography interferes with their function as *Musikkritiker*. In the public sphere, various personae (e.g. composer, musician, scholar, *Musikkritiker*, etc.) inevitably conflate. In that regard, it is not surprising that Schumann and Wagner in part derive their authority as *Musikkritiker* from those other roles in the public sphere. More than anything, however, this confluence once more testifies to the intrinsic discursive nature of Schumann's and Wagner's identity as *Musikkritiker*. As a product of self-fashioning, the *Musikkritiker* has the principal discursive task of legitimising both the speaker and the norms by which he judges.

The second part of this dissertation, finally, addressed the position of the reader in *Musikkritik*. I intentionally did not approach the reader as a historical individual. Instead, I homed in on the rhetorical strategies of persuasion that authors use to substantiate the reader as a discursive agent. The semiotic organisation of *Musikkritik* proved to be central here. In *Musikkritik*, the reader can only ever be a second-hand listener. *Musikkritik* is first and foremost a textual instance that requires the author to translate music into words. The reader, then, depends on this intermedial process and the verbal shape the author decides on. Chapter 3 probed the identity of the reader in *Musikkritik* in greater detail. I examined how Schumann and Wagner prefigure the reader audience in their writings and observed a central disparity: while the argumentative structure of Schumann's *Musikkritik* is clearly designed to preselect distinct reader profiles, Wagner conversely adapts his opinions to the particular readership that he aims to persuade. The contrast between this formative and affective outreach to the reader was confirmed in Chapter 4. There, I analysed to what extent Schumann and Wagner open their *Musikkritiken* to the involvement of the reader. In Schumann's 'Davidsbund'-texts (traditionally seen as the epitome of Romantic elitism), I uncovered narrative 'Leerstellen' that invite the reader to take a stand. Wagner, I furthermore claimed, exploits the affective compass of the polemical register to actualise the presence of the reader. The sudden flares of polemical pathos forcefully direct the reader's attention to the argument Wagner wishes to press home. Despite the otherwise aesthetic-theoretical aspirations of Wagner's mid-19<sup>th</sup> century *Musikkritik*, the polemical register lays bare the more covert, non-argumentative dimensions of his reader management. The reader of *Musikkritik*, in conclusion, is an indispensable and pivotal instance. Without him, *Musikkritik* would be unable to realise its evaluative function (cf. Préambule). As a textual agent, on the other hand, the reader is confined to the space the author concedes to him. As authors, Schumann and Wagner perforce acknowledge the presence of the reader. At the same time, however, they steer who qualifies as a reader and prefigure his discursive identity.

At the beginning of this dissertation, I formulated two hypotheses that sought to account for the moot identity of *Musikkritik* in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. First of all, I suggested that, despite their radically opposed critical styles, Schumann and Wagner

could affiliate to the same institution because *Musikkritik* exhibits an intrinsic openness to other discourses. As an evaluative practice, *Musikkritik* initially gained access to the public sphere through other critical institutions. A proper, music-critical periodical culture only emerged by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Even then, the discursive identity of *Musikkritik* remained unsettled and retained an intrinsically permeable quality. Indeed, we have frequently observed how Schumann and Wagner recycle common, discursive strategies from other critical traditions in their *Musikkritiken*. Uncovering these discursive parallels enabled me to shed new light on Schumann's and Wagner's identity plays, in particular. Going against the grain of academic opinion, I claimed that the multiple auto- and metafictional elements we come across in Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* are not necessarily tokens of literary epigonism. In lieu, I suggested that they are well-contemplated strategies of textual self-fashioning. By means of metafiction, for instance, Wagner aims to protect his reputation in the public sphere against the commentary of other *Kritiker*. And could we not assert a distinct advertising scheme for Schumann's use of epic, narrative modes? Contemporary readers would have been well-attuned to the literary-fictional style that Schumann breathes into the 'Davidsbund'. From that point of view, it is no coincidence that exactly in the 'Davidsbund'-texts, Schumann discusses music in a non-technical fashion: the poetical scenographies make the *Musikkritiken* accessible to a broader audience of laymen readers. The fact that many 'Davidsbund'-texts, in spite of their polemical rhetoric, comprise narrative structures that exactly foster the judgement of the reader, only corroborates that assertion. The open discursive identity of *Musikkritik*, to summarise, invites the use of different styles. As a then recent and still ill-defined institution, the discursive permeability of *Musikkritik* allows Schumann and Wagner to make their writings recognizable for the reader. Behind the endlessly variable stylistic veneer, however, lies the shared discursive ambition to make *Musikkritik* presentable to the public sphere. That Schumann and Wagner can appeal to the same institution despite their radically opposed styles, in other words, is symptomatic of and even drawn out by *Musikkritik*'s open discursive identity.

My second hypothesis maintained that Schumann and Wagner also appeal to an analogous notion of *Musikkritik* in that they pursue the same goal to involve the reader. The reader has a much more singular identity in *Musikkritik* than the *Musikkritiker* does. In comparison to other critical practices, *Musikkritik* is ontologically more authoritative. Music lacks a fixed verbal or visual form and requires the intervention of the author before it can make sense to the reader. For that reason, it is understandable that scholars have arrogated Schumann and Wagner elitist intentions: in *Musikkritik*, the author *de facto* has the edge over the reader. Still, my analyses have shown that Schumann and Wagner aim to encourage the reader's proper opinions. Their harsh, often polemical rhetoric suggests the opposite, but Schumann and Wagner prove themselves more aware of the reader's presence than has been entertained so far. Certainly Wagner, whom academia has persistently depicted as an uncompromising, relentless reformer, does everything he

can to make his opinions *salonfähig* to the reader. He artfully caters his arguments and rhetoric to the reader audience he addresses. Schumann has an even more engaged role in mind for the reader. Behind the veil of ‘Philister’-rhetoric lurks a crafty attempt to stimulate the reader’s own judgement. Schumann and Wagner are hardly the exalted, Romantic *Kritiker* scholars have made them out to be. Even if they were too invested as musicians to qualify as Enlightenment *Kritiker* (Kant notably marked out ‘disinterest’ as the ultimate condition for any successful aesthetic judgement), they do adhere more to (late) 18<sup>th</sup> century critical poetics than has been acknowledged so far. The outreach to the reader is the defining discursive element that binds Schumann’s and Wagner’s *Musikkritik* together. Both authors take different inroads and wield various critical styles that at times, cannot be more disparate from each other. But it is precisely in their loyalty to the evaluative function of *Musikkritik*, i.e. to the postulate that *Musikkritik* must always mean something to someone else, that they exhibit the same aim to foster the reader’s critical mind. And in that shared belief in the critical abilities of the reader, Schumann and Wagner stand out as central exponents of 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Musikkritik*.



Schumann and Wagner consolidated *Musikkritik* as an institution of the public sphere. Under their critical batons, *Musikkritik* could for the first time truly rival with the dominant critical practices of the previous decades. At the same time, their critical oeuvre set discursive standards that *Kritiker*, scholars and writers draw on to this day. As *Musikkritiker*, Schumann and Wagner once and for all broke with the transcendent conceptions of music that had taken hold since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Intermezzo). Their *Musikkritik* disproved the claim that music was inherently inexpressible and it established fundamental strategies to formalise music in an analytic discourse. In an unparalleled manner, Wagner installed a discourse of aesthetic critique that permitted him to talk in a – misleadingly - objective way about (his own) music. Schumann, for his part, gradually increased the amount of technical analyses in his *Musikkritiken*. In his effort to recruit readers from the more theoretically knowledgeable ranks of the public sphere, Schumann even bids farewell to the lively ‘Davidsbündler’ and pursues a more sincere and earnest reputation for the NZfM.

How, then, did *Musikkritik* fare in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century? Not too well. Of course, music criticism has remained a fixed journalistic genre to this day and recreated itself for new media, like radio, television and the internet. Still, the institution quickly surrendered the central status it had obtained in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to new

forms of musical discussion and debate. In 1856, twelve years after he had consigned the NZfM to Franz Brendel, Schumann died, and with him the pre-eminence of the music-critical periodical. The preference for academic treatises on music (a trend that Wagner readily went with) lasted, on the other hand. Until his death in 1883, Wagner remained committed to longer essays that discuss music and aesthetics under the banner of cultural-critical discourse. Hanslick, likewise, stayed with his historiographic accounts of contemporary music, while Heinrich Schenker's formalist analysis relegated any type of non-academic art criticism to the blurred zone of amateur creativity. Under the weight of positivism, *Musikkritik*, too, eventually turned to science and reemerged as musicology.<sup>3</sup>

A more likely successor of *Musikkritik*, then, is the music guide. *Musikführer* first appear around 1870. Their rise has to be seen in the context of the emergence of similar forms in bourgeois culture like the travel guide.<sup>4</sup> These guides act as pointers towards canonising particular artefacts as legitimate works of art rather than others. From their very inception, *Musikführer* document how the then rapid changing face of musical expression (e.g. the music of Wagner, Strauss, Mahler and others)<sup>5</sup> called for new ways of talking about music. Music guides grow from a loss of self-awareness that characterised late 19<sup>th</sup>-century music life: the increasing intellectual complexity of music that listeners were met with, urged the need for a body of explaining literature. The term 'Leitmotiv', for instance, was coined in guides that Hans von Wolzogen (later in life a co-editor for the *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen*) wrote for Wagner's *Musikdramen*. The hermeneutic aspirations of music guides bring out the pragmatic nature of the genre. As the reader concedes interpretative ground to the writer, the latter gains all the more authority to manipulate the information available to said reader. This observation of course goes against the pedagogic expectations we hold of the genre as a reliable and neutral description of musical pieces. Music guides provide utterly personal explanations of music, yet succeed in importing these readings as common-law. In other words, they only thrive when readers accept the opinions they are reading as facts.

Further research should uncover the ties between *Musikkritik* and music guides, to wit between early and late 19<sup>th</sup>-century musical evaluation in greater detail. It is clear that music guides relieve *Musikkritik* as a medium that appeals to a broader reader audience of

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<sup>3</sup> This is a development that Brendel's editorial already foreshadows: "Die Resultaten der modernen Wissenschaft, die großen Fortschritte der Aesthetik, müssen auch der Tonkunst zu Gute kommen, und es ist der Versuch zu machen, über Musik so zu sprechen, daß der Inhalt derselben zum gegenständlichen Bewußtsein erhoben wird." (Brendel: *Zur Einleitung*, p. 11). See also Kevin C. Karnes: *Music, Criticism and the Challenge of History. Shaping modern musical thought in Late Nineteenth-Century Vienna*. Oxford: University Press 2008.

<sup>4</sup> cf. Susanne Müller: *Die Welt des Baedeker. Eine Medienkulturgeschichte des Reiseführers 1830-1945*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Leonard Bernstein wonderfully traces out the changes in musical language from the 18th until the mid-20th century in Leonard Bernstein: *The unanswered question: six talks at Harvard*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1976.

laymen. However, the outreach to the reader - a key discursive trait of *Musikkritik*, as I have shown - disappears in music guides. The music guide relegates the reader's participation to the exterior of the text: as long as readers resign themselves to the rationale of the author and understand the music in the way it is presented to them, they are desirable partners. Music guides form perfect case studies to assess the development of critical discourse after 1850. In particular, we would need to compare the discursive organisation of *Musikkritik* to the key discursive patterns that strike the elemental balance between subjectivity and simulated objectivity in *Musikführer*. In rendering musical data tellable and thus relevant for readers, the authors of music guides make use of latent narrative strategies which couch the inherent bias of their opinions in a discourse of objectivity.

One cannot move on from Schumann and Wagner just like that, however. Promising research projects that are now nearing their final stages will enable us to deepen certain elements of this dissertation in the future. With the rising popularity of Digital Humanities, moreover, unique opportunities to subject Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* to new digital text methodologies, present themselves. My comparative analysis of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik* in this dissertation has been throughout deductive. While my sample of texts was more comprehensive than in any other study before, the limits to the human, processual abilities still kept me from scrutinising, with the same attention to detail, every individual text in the authors' expansive critical output. A digital analysis of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritiken*, then, might complement the inevitable selections I have had to make. First of all, digital text methodologies allow us to extract quantitative data from the texts. On the basis of that data, we could venture more inductive interpretations of the stylistic organisation of the writings and subsequently test those against my findings in this study. Secondly, a digital analysis enables us to further deepen the authorship question that I broached from a discursive angle in Chapter 2. Especially the method of stylometry (which examines the authorship of a given text on the basis of recurrent, stylistic patterns) could excavate new texts from the hand of Schumann and Wagner that their pseudonymity would otherwise potentially veil. Seen from that perspective, finally, digital text methodologies are of crucial added value to critical editions of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. The possibility of mining the texts for characteristic, stylistic traits will permit us to map which periodical publications Schumann and Wagner inducted into the anthologies and what changes they made in the process. A first, crucial prerequisite for the success of this enterprise is a workable corpus, however. Schumann's original NZfM-contributions, in particular, are still in need of fine-tuned, OCR'd text data that reliably converts the 'Frakturschrift' into a Latin font.

Finally, it would be possible to expand the synchronic comparison of Schumann and Wagner into a diachronic investigation of music-critical discourse *tout court*. Schumann and Wagner, I have claimed, constitute a discontinuity in the history of *Musikkritik*. They

brought old and new discursive practices together and secured a place for the reader in *Musikkritik* qua institution. Around Schumann and Wagner, we find a circle of other *Musikkritiker* to which that argument, in hindsight, applies less, perhaps. Nevertheless, these *Musikkritiker*, too, were significant voices in their own day and age. A particular point of interest that caught my eye, are the regional identities of *Musikkritik*. To some extent, I already touched on this topic: Wagner, I demonstrated, caters his rhetoric to the different national reader audiences he addresses. Investigating the phenomenon on a larger scale would have gone beyond the scope of this study. Still, the search for regional features in music-critical discourse could point to deeper-rooted interactions between the different institutions of the musical enterprise (e.g. logistic, commercial, journalistic, ...). While Schumann, for example, surely had a mondaine musical taste and bridged geographical distances by judging music from the score, he nonetheless predominantly writes from Leipzig, a city with the most modern, well-established concert culture of the time. Ludwig Rellstab, conversely, (to pick just one of Schumann's and Wagner's peers) worked in Berlin, a then second-tier musical capital (it is no coincidence, indeed, that Mendelssohn moved from Berlin to Leipzig in 1835). Furthermore, we notice that the closer we draw to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the more the centre of musical debate begins to shift to Vienna – a move that Schumann to some extent already forestalled in 1838. Taking into account the geographical distribution of *Musikkritik* could shed new light on the dialogue of music-critical discourse with other institutions. As such, it would be possible to map in even greater detail the central position *Musikkritik* has attained since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



“Wir wären am Ziel? – wir irren!”, Florestan defiantly remarks. I duly heed his sobering words. But until we arrive, I hope to have given my readers a deeper understanding of the lasting contribution Schumann and Wagner made to the language of music, not only as composers but first and foremost as *Musikkritiker*.





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## Summary

This dissertation is devoted to two pivotal *Musikkritiker* of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century: Robert Schumann (1810-1856) and Richard Wagner (1813-1883). Scholars have so far engaged Schumann's and Wagner's critical writings out of interest for the lives or the aesthetic convictions of the composers. In that manner, the peculiarity of their *Musikkritik* itself has been overlooked, however. This study shows that Schumann and Wagner lifted the institution to new standards: they consolidated *Musikkritik* as a proper institution of the public sphere and conceived new forms of medial and discursive organisation on the way.

This dissertation consists of two parts that each highlight different discursive functions of Schumann's and Wagner's *Musikkritik*. The first part addresses the relation between *Musikkritik* and *Musikkritiker*. In the first chapter, I investigate how Schumann and Wagner justify the presence of their *Musikkritik*. A survey of socio-historic approaches to *Kritik* and recent studies about the function of *Kritik* prefaces a general discussion on *Musikkritik* as an institution of the public sphere. In that context, I particularly explore how *Musikkritik* relates to *Literatur-* and *Kunstkritik* in terms of discursive organisation. Concrete analyses consequently examine how Schumann and Wagner position their critical writings 'in the field'. Both authors advance their *Musikkritik* as new and revolutionary in order to legitimise its necessity. The medial parameter, however, emerges as a central fault line, I argue. Schumann employs the full institutional weight of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* to eliminate competitors, whereas Wagner promotes a more pragmatic understanding of *Musikkritik* that adapts itself easily to any given medium.

Chapter 2 subsequently turns to the persona of the *Musikkritiker*. Drawing on concepts of textual authorship in rhetoric and narrative studies, I propose that Schumann and Wagner, as authors, project an image of themselves into the text. This image materialises as a discursive persona that we generally label as 'the *Musikkritiker*'. The abstract mediation of identity should be seen as a general discursive trait of *Kritik*. As I show by means of concrete case studies, the *Kritiker* is above all a role the author plays and through which he validates his suitability as *Kritiker* and asserts his authority. Thereupon, the second chapter analyses the appearance of Schumann and Wagner as *Musikkritiker*. On the one hand, we will focus on the reviews that Schumann signs with his own name.

Schumann asserts his own consistency by entering into a retrospective competition with his former critical self. As such, he hermeneutises his own judgements and canonises the reputation of the NZfM at the same time. On the other hand, I trace the different identities Wagner assumes between 1840 and 1850. In that decade, his persona in the public sphere goes through significant changes. While in Paris (1839-1842), he assumes an ethos of outsider which he enforces through the journalistic persona of the correspondent. By the end of the decade, by contrast, Wagner fashions himself as a ruminating theoretician. However, I will draw attention to a persistent discursive undercurrent that Wagner uses to vindicate his already available compositions in the context of the visionary, aesthetic reforms he proposes.

In what I call the Intermezzo of this dissertation, I investigate the ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ in Romanticism from the vantage point of *Musikkritik*. Around 1800, philosophers and writers criticised the inadequacy of verbal expression. In its place, they conceived music as the paragon of the absolute and the infinite, a source of pure emotion. This assumption gave rise to the infamous ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’, the belief that music could not be captured through day-to-day verbal expression, but only by an in fiction poeticised language. *Musikkritik* could never rise up to those aesthetic demands, however. Given its inherent referentiality (in that it is always geared towards real, concrete objects), I will argue, *Musikkritik* undermines the main premises of Romantic musical aesthetics and voids the essence of the Romantical itself - it categorically needs to render music sayable. The Intermezzo starts from the case study of E.T.A. Hoffmann’s and Robert Schumann’s *Musikkritik* in order to examine how the aesthetic demand for non-discursivity yields to a pragmatic need for discursivity. Hoffmann and Schumann fervently search for new ways of mediation of music through language, I will show. They experiment with the combination of different semiotic system (e.g. the inclusion of score excerpts and musical notation) and eventually metaphorise music into a text itself. In verbalising music-critical discourse, Hoffmann and Schumann develop a precise and highly analytic, rhetorical apparatus that forebode late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, proto-musicological models of Heinrich Schenker, for example.

The second part of this dissertation concentrates on the interaction between the *Musikkritiker* and the reader in greater detail. To that aim, I address the specific profile of the reader in *Musikkritik*, to wit that of second-hand listener. Chapter three examines how Schumann and Wagner increase the argumentativity of their *Musikkritik* by prefiguring the profile of their readers. They rely on a radically opposed outreach to the reader. Schumann preselects his reader audience by combining an anti-masses rhetoric with a technical discourse. An anti-amateur, Philister-rhetoric provides a negative model of identification for the reader while musical examples and a technical rhetoric reinforce that effect by speaking to a technically well-versed readership. Wagner, for his part, strikes an appeasing attitude towards his readers. Writing for both German and French

periodicals, he carefully crafts his arguments and his appearance as *Musikkritiker* in function of the respective reader audience.

The fourth chapter, finally, assesses to what extent Schumann and Wagner give readers room to become involved in the *Musikkritiken*. Academic consensus has it that Schumann and Wagner are elitist *Kritiker* that impose their views on the reader. I will argue, however, that their *Musikkritiken* host various strategies to foster the reader's judgement. The narrative scenography of the Davidsbund features different characters that contradict each other. As there is no voice that brings the conflicting views together, however, Schumann creates a narrative gap that the reader is invited to fill with his own judgement. The say of the reader is less outspoken in Wagner's *Musikkritik*. Within a theoretical, historicising discourse, he involves the reader through a constant reactivation of the affective compass in the polemical register.

Schumann and Wagner consolidated *Musikkritik* as an institution of the public sphere. Under their critical batons, *Musikkritik* could for the first time truly rival with the dominant critical practices of the previous decades. At the same time, their critical oeuvre set discursive standards that *Kritiker*, scholars and writers draw on to this day. Furthermore, it is precisely in their loyalty to the evaluative function of *Musikkritik*, i.e. to the postulate that *Musikkritik* must always mean something to someone else, that they exhibit the same aim to foster the reader's critical mind. And in that shared belief in the critical abilities of the reader, Schumann and Wagner stand out as central exponents of 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Musikkritik*.





## Samenvatting

Dit doctoraat bestudeert twee centrale *Musikkritiker* van de 19de eeuw: Robert Schumann (1810-1856) en Richard Wagner (1813-1883). Onderzoekers hebben de *Kritiken* van Schumann en Wagner tot dusver onderzocht uit interesse voor de levens of de esthetische opvattingen van de componisten. Op die manier, echter, is de bijzonderheid van hun muziekkritiek onderbelicht gebleven. Deze studie toont aan dat Schumann en Wagner nieuwe maatstaven zetten voor het instituut: ze consolideerden *Musikkritik* als een instituut van de openbaarheid en bedachten nieuwe vormen van mediale en discursieve organisatie.

Dit doctoraat bestaat uit tweede delen die telkens een andere functies van Schumanns en Wagners *Musikkritik* belichten. Het eerste deel onderzoekt de relatie tussen *Musikkritik* en *Musikkritiker*. In het eerste hoofdstuk ga ik na hoe Schumann en Wagner de aanwezigheid van hun *Musikkritik* verantwoorden. Een overzicht van socio-historische benaderingen van *Kritik* en van recente studies over de functie van *Kritik* leidden een algemene bespreking van *Musikkritik* als een instituut van de openbaarheid in. Ik kijk in het bijzonder na hoe *Musikkritik* zich verhoudt tot *Literatur*- en *Kunstkritik* in termen van discursieve organisatie. Concrete analyses gaan na hoe Schumann en Wagner hun geschriften ‘in het veld’ opstellen. Beide auteurs doen hun *Musikkritik* als nieuw en revolutionair voor om de noodzaak van de teksten te legitimeren. De mediale parameter, toon ik echter aan, loopt als een centrale breuklijn tussen de opvattingen van beide auteurs over *Musikkritik*. Schumann gebruikt het volledige institutionele gewicht van zijn *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* om concurrenten te elimineren, terwijl Wagner een meer pragmatisch begrip van *Musikkritik* voorstaat dat zich makkelijk laat aanpassen aan eender welk medium.

Hoofdstuk 2 wendt zich daarop tot de persona van de *Musikkritiker*. Op basis van concepten van tekstueel auteurschap in de retoriek en narratologie, beweer ik dat Schumann en Wagner, als auteurs, een beeld van zichzelf projecteren in de tekst. Dit beeld doet zich voor als een discursief persona dat we doorgaans de ‘*Musikkritiker*’ noemen. De mediatie van identiteit is een algemeen discursief kenmerk van *Kritik*. Concrete case studies tonen aan dat de *Kritiker* vooral een rol is die de auteur speelt en waardoor hij zijn

eigen geschiktheid als *Kritiker* in scène zet. Vervolgens onderzoekt het tweede hoofdstuk het voorkomen van Schumann en Wagner als *Musikkritiker*. Aan de ene kant, focus ik op recensies die Schumann ondertekent met zijn eigen naam. Schumann wedijvert retrospectief met zijn vroegere, kritische ik en bevestigt op die manier zijn eigen standvastigheid. Hij hermeneutiseert zijn eigen oordelen en canoniseert de reputatie van de NZfM. Aan de andere kant, ga ik de verschillende identiteiten na die Wagner aanneemt tussen 1840. Tijdens dat decennium ondergaat zijn persona in de openbaarheid belangrijke veranderingen. Terwijl hij in Parijs is (1839-1842), geeft hij een ethos van buitenstaander gestalte in het journalistieke persona van de correspondent. Op het einde van het decennium, stiliseert Wagner zich dan weer tot piekerende theoreticus. Ik vestig echter de aandacht op een discursieve onderstroom die Wagner gebruikt om zijn reeds beschikbare composities in overeenstemming te brengen met zijn visionaire, esthetische hervormingen.

In wat ik het Intermezzo van dit doctoraat noem, onderzoek ik het ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’ in de romantiek vanuit het perspectief van *Musikkritik*. Rond 1800 bekritiseerden filosofen en schrijvers de ontoereikendheid van de verbale expressie. In plaats daarvan vatten ze muziek op als het toonbeeld van het Absolute en Oneindige, een bron van pure emotie. Deze opvatting gaf aanleiding tot het bekende ‘Unsagbarkeitstopos’, de idee dat muziek niet gevat kan worden door dagdagelijkse verbale expressie, maar enkel door een in fictie gepoëtiseerde taal. *Musikkritik* kon echter nooit voldoen aan die esthetische eisen. Gezien haar inherente referentialiteit (omdat ze constant betrekking heeft tot echte, concrete objecten), ondermijnt *Musikkritik* de hoofdpremisse van de romantische muziekethiek en maakt ze de kern van het romantische zelf nietig: *Musikkritik* moet muziek noodzakelijkerwijze ‘zegbaar’ maken. Dit Intermezzo gebruikt de case study van E.T.A. Hoffmanns en Schumanns *Musikkritik* om na te gaan hoe de esthetische eis voor non-discursiviteit plaats maakt voor de pragmatische noodzaak tot discursiviteit. Ik toon aan dat Hoffmann en Schumann zoeken naar nieuwe wegen om muziek door taal over te brengen. Ze experimenteren met de combinatie van verschillende semiotische systemen (bijvoorbeeld het insluiten van partituurvoorbeelden en muzieknotatie) en metaforiseren uiteindelijk muziek zelf tot een tekst. Doordat ze het muziekkritische discours verbaliseren, ontwikkelen Hoffmann en Schumann een zeer precies en uiterst analytisch, retorisch apparaat dat de laat-19de eeuwse, proto-musicologische modellen van bijvoorbeeld Heinrich Schenker reeds aankondigt.

Het tweede deel van dit doctoraat draait rond de interactie tussen de *Musikkritiker* en de lezer. Daarvoor ga ik nader in op het specifieke profiel van de lezer in *Musikkritik*, i.e. dat van de lezer als ‘tweedehands luisteraar’. Hoofdstuk 3 gaat na hoe Schumann en Wagner de argumentativiteit van hun muziekkritiek vergroten door het profiel van hun lezers te prefigureren. Ze beroepen zich op een radicaal verschillende omgang met de lezer. Schumann selecteert zijn lezerspubliek door een tegen de massa gekante, ‘Philister’-retoriek te combineren met een technisch discours. Wagner, voor zijn part,

neemt een meer tegemoetkomende houding tegenover de lezer aan. Omdat hij schrijft voor zowel Duitse als Franse tijdschriften, past hij zijn argumenten en voorkomen als *Musikkritiker* aan het respectievelijke lezerspubliek aan.

Het vierde hoofdstuk, tot slot, onderzoekt in welke mate Schumann en Wagner de lezer betrekken bij de *Musikkritiken*. De gangbare academische opinie wil dat Schumann en Wagner elitaire *Kritiker* zijn die hun wil opleggen aan de lezer. Ik toon echter aan dat hun *Musikkritiken* verschillende strategieën bevatten die het oordeel van de lezer aanmoedigen. De narratieve scenografie van de ‘Davidsbund’ voert verschillende personages op die mekaar tegenspreken. Maar aangezien er geen stem is die de botsende meningen dichter bij mekaar kan brengen, creëert Schumann een narratieve leegte waarbij de lezer wordt uitgenodigd om die in te vullen met zijn eigen oordeel. De inspraak van de lezer is minder uitgesproken in Wagners *Musikkritik*. In een theoretisch, historiserend discours betreft hij de lezer door middel van een constante reactivatie van het affectieve bereik van het polemische register.

Schumann en Wagner consolideerden *Musikkritik* als een instituut van de openbaarheid. Dankzij hen kon *Musikkritik* voor het eerst echt wedijveren met de belangrijkste kritische praktijken van de vorige decennia. Tegelijkertijd vestigden hun kritisch oeuvre discursieve ijkpunten waar *Kritiker*, academici en schrijvers zich tot op de dag van vandaag op beroepen. Bovendien is het precies in hun loyaleiteit tegenover de evaluatieve functie van *Musikkritik*, i.e. tot de vereiste dat *Musikkritik* altijd iets voor iemand moet betekenen, dat ze hetzelfde doel delen om de kritische geest van de lezer te stimuleren. En net in hun beider geloof in de kritische mogelijkheden van de lezer onderscheiden Schumann en Wagner zich als centrale vertegenwoordigers van de 19de-eeuwse *Musikkritik*.



