

expressing aspect of late Schoenberg is the presence of Christ as a model of spiritual leadership—surprising because, having converted to Lutheranism in 1898, he began a process of return to Judaism in about 1926, which was symbolically formalized in 1933. Schoenberg was careful to note the significance of the Christian phase of his life in two biographical sketches. Both in 1932 and 1944 “How I Became a Christian” figured in brief biographical structures for a biography—with “How I Became a Jew Again” added to the 1944 sketch. Particularly unexpectedly, the figure of Christ haunts the end of his 1927 *Londonerstück* [political play] *Der biblische Weg*, which was prompted, it seems, by Schoenberg’s invitation in 1924 to contribute to a Zionist brochure (*Pro Zion!*) and served as preliminary thoughts for the later (incomplete) opera *Moses und Aron*.<sup>2</sup> *Der biblische Weg* imagines an industrialized and militarized totalitarian Jewish state with a dynamic, Max Aruns, leading it. Aruns seems modeled on both Moses (who led his people from slavery) and Christ (who was rejected by his own people). At the end Aruns dies at the hands of the people because he betrayed the spiritually persuasive idea in favor of a destructive mechanical weapon as a way of saving them. In his death scene, with strong echoes of the Passion story, he asks forgiveness of the people: “Lord, only now do I recognize it and implore you: accept my blood as expiation... Lord, my God, save them! Give them a sign that you are castigating only me for my sins against the spirit but that you will not let the Idea die with me.”<sup>3</sup> Even at the end of his life, long after returning to Judaism and after a huge amount of work on behalf of Judaism in the 1930s, Schoenberg produced a set of psalms that bear witness to a continuing idealization of Christ. Drafted between September 1950 and February 1951, the ninth and longest text is titled “Jesus,” whom Schoenberg presents as “the purest, the most innocent, unselfish, and idealist being” but one who was nevertheless unrecognized by Jewish historiography.

JULIE BROWN

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## SCHOENBERG AS CHRIST

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# UNDERSTANDING

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CHAPTER 5

Moshe Lazar wonders whether Schoenberg draws on the Christ model in *Der biblische Weg* unconsciously since in the midtwenties he was more familiar with the Passion of Christ and Easter than with Moses or the Jewish traditions.<sup>4</sup> Although Schoenberg's reflections upon Christ in that play are not especially pointed, his representation of Christ in the psalm seems more so and might even be distressing for those who wish to emphasize the growing importance of Judaism in Schoenberg's thinking. Jesus is presented as "the king of the Jews and the son of God," a second Moses who wanted to lead his people "to the true faith in the One, Everlasting and Omnipotent" God.<sup>5</sup> If the implication of *Der biblische Weg* is that the partly Christlike Aruns was not idealistic enough, this psalm stresses the explanation: Christ was "the purest, the most innocent, unselfish, and idealist being."

How are we to understand Schoenberg's return to Christ in his late work? I would like to approach this question via the construction of Schoenberg's priest-like leader role by his Vienna circle around 1909, at the time he renounced tonality; the cultural contexts for reading this and the perspective Schoenberg might have had on it all from his position as persecuted Jew under the Nazis and exile in postwar North America are both critical. The fact that Schoenberg's students adopted a subservient relationship with him and frequently addressed him in a cultish language has long been known. Yet the precise nature of the language, its written contexts, and its discursive meanings have been subjected to surprisingly little scrutiny, even among recent writings about what Dahlhaus called Schoenberg's "aesthetic theology."<sup>6</sup> The language and mode of interaction within the Schoenberg circle at that time reflected a species of utopian thinking and yearning for salvation by a strong leader that provides us with potential footholds onto Schoenberg's later returns to the figure of Christ—especially given the radical political thinking he articulated in *Der biblische Weg*. Indeed, I suggest that it provides insights into various aspects of Schoenberg's activities from the 1920s on.

Yet this topic presents the historian with challenges. The Schoenberg circle's views predate a historical catastrophe that was itself the outcome of radical utopianism in social and political spheres; misleading though it would be to draw exact parallels, it would be equally wrong entirely to divorce these early constructions of Schoenberg both from his own concepts of strong visionary leadership and from the devastating impact similar ideas had had in social and political spheres in the interim. When we attempt to make sense of Schoenberg's postwar activities and writings, we therefore do well to bear in mind Dominick LaCapra's observations about approaching post-Holocaust discourses. LaCapra argues that the Holocaust was so traumatic for survivor and bystander alike that it resulted in a shattering of meaning that inevitably affects accounts of it both by the historical actors themselves and by historians. The Holocaust is not just the zero point of artistic representation, as Adorno has argued<sup>8</sup>; it is an opaque, fragmented, and, for the historian, ethically fraught moment in terms of historical representation. Schoenberg's case may serve as an exemplification of some of these issues for the cultural history of twentieth-century music. It is clear that in 1933 Schoenberg suffered a severe shock when, as a Jew, he was effectively forced out of his position at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin and went into exile.

The Schoenberg correspondence from around 1909 to 1912 involves a language that is strongly inflected with Christian mysticism, in which "discipleship" seems to have had a genuinely Christian dimension for at least some of Schoenberg's students. Some communications construct Schoenberg as a poet-priest performing a redemptive role. Of course, an extremely deferential tone toward Schoenberg on the part of his students would certainly have been expected in Vienna at this time even though Schoenberg was not much older than either Berg (eleven years) or Webern (nine years): The Berg-Adorno correspondence reveals that Adorno (eighteen years younger than Berg) adopted a highly deferential tone when writing to his teacher, for instance.<sup>12</sup> However, even in this context the fervor of the devotion that Webern and Berg showed toward Schoenberg is quite extraordinary.

Reading these letters alongside Schoenberg's creative activities and other beliefs is the challenge. For Adorno, for instance, Berg's reference to Schoenberg as a "holy person" is "a sign of the ultimate authenticity of the Circle's music: the relentless purification of their compositional language results in a music into which 'no social function falls—indeed, which even severs the last communication with the listener.'<sup>13</sup> Dahlhaus has long read Schoenberg's religious language as self-consciously legitimizing; the tone of these letters, Dahlhaus argues, lent his radical act of 1908 particular authority and served to legitimize a musical moment whose "substance consisted in an act of decisionism and not in a systematic web of argument or

## STUDENTS' DISCOURSE

Let from 1921 on, when he was rudely awakened to the increasing prevalence of anti-Semitism, but above all beginning around 1933, it is also possible to detect with a reorientation in his writings and an amazing prescience about how political events might unfold. It is therefore possible to see Schoenberg's reaction to Hitler's rise to power and to the fate of his beloved Germany as including both profound awe and trauma and quite an amazing ability to predict. The idea that Schoenberg had the power of prophecy<sup>11</sup> implies superhuman abilities to see into the future. In this chapter I suggest, however, that Schoenberg's early prescience was as human as we are need to and reprocess the symbols of his earliest developments in composition.

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historical derivation.<sup>14</sup> Yet to read the students' markedly Christian-mystical language in this way underplays its cultural significance, I would argue.

The published Berg-Schoenberg correspondence, between whom correspondence proper began only in spring 1911, has provided us with most of our examples of this language.<sup>15</sup> Berg's epistolary styling is self-conscious, circumlocutionary, and literary—so much so that his occasional use of religiously inflected language scarcely seems out of the ordinary. Earlier letters survive from Webern to Schoenberg, as do letters between Berg and Webern.<sup>16</sup> Frustratingly, little of the Webern-Schoenberg correspondence is published,<sup>17</sup> but more frustrating still, virtually no letters from Schoenberg to Webern survive from before 1926.<sup>18</sup> The context and tone of the letters within the circle start to become a little clearer once we can read a series of letters together. My analysis is based on a selection of published and unpublished items dating from 1909 to 1912 (see appendix to this chapter): excerpts from certain letters to Schoenberg from his students (particularly from Berg and Webern), excerpts from a few letters between Webern and Berg themselves, plus a couple of other contextual excerpts from various essays contemporaneously produced within the circle.<sup>19</sup> It is important to stress that these excerpts are taken from longer letters, the bulk of which tend to be devoted to more mundane matters and of course tell us nothing about what they said to each other face to face; they also represent only a fraction of the total correspondence from that period and therefore concentrate the rhetoric and considerably heighten its impact. Nevertheless, they may help to illuminate the dynamic that operated then within the Schoenberg circle.

Quite striking is the extent to which both Berg and Webern exert an influence on Schoenberg while their tone remains extremely deferential. Webern brought books and ideas to Schoenberg's attention—everything from philosophy to poetry—while periodically articulating ways in which he conceived of Schoenberg in relation to contemporaries or immediate precursors: Wagner, Mahler, Weininger, Kraus, Kokoschka, and so on.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, there are suggestions that Berg and Webern introduced Schoenberg to certain key works of literature and sets of ideas. For instance, Balzac's mystical novels *Seraphita* and *Louis Lambert*, key ingredients of his "aesthetic theology," were introduced to him by Webern on March 9, 1911.<sup>21</sup> *Seraphita* provided Schoenberg with a poetic context within which to conceive the twelve-note method, having inspired a massive symphony by the same name, which eventually mutated into *Die Jakobsleiter*.<sup>22</sup>

Schoenberg's letters to Berg were typically short and factual and involved one letter to two or three from Berg. Although Webern's letters suggest that there was more exchange of ideas between him and Schoenberg, it is difficult to judge how much and of what sort. It is also apparent that Mahler's death on May 18, 1911, triggered a special desire on Webern's and Berg's parts to reassure Schoenberg of their spiritual devotion and marked a heightening of quasi-religious language. Up to that point Webern referred to Mahler in these Christian-mystical terms as much as, if not more than, to Schoenberg (see excerpts from mid-1910). On May 24 Webern even used the capitalized "Sein" and "Ihn" when referring to Mahler, either as a telling typo (of which there are many in Webern's letters) or in order to sacralize Mahler, as in English ("the impression that His work was fully completed" and "we grieve for Him"). It also

... agree that other students used variations of this sort, with the two fram-  
... in the 1912 Festschrift repeating this language in a public document.  
... we can see that Webern and Berg employed such language about Schoenberg.  
... communication between themselves, not just in deference to Schoenberg.  
... understanding Schoenberg's roots in and later return to Judaism, the rhetoric  
... is messianic in a markedly Christian sense. Webern's expressed aim of  
... and creating the "non-material aspect to a work of art," a "more spiri-  
... as he puts it in his letter of July 6, 1910, is manifest  
... and in Schoenberg's.<sup>23</sup> The language via which he and Berg and  
... Schoenberg negotiate this move toward the spiritual is Christian in ori-  
... a range of almost exclusively Christian parallels for both  
... and leader and their roles as followers. Reacting to  
... death, Berg and Webern both strongly rely upon Christian, often Roman  
... imagery. Berg (August 3, 1911) described Schoenberg's newly completed  
... "written in the service of the deity," as having become, with its  
... foreword and dedication, a type of Christian holy book: The foreword and  
... "to cross one-  
... A week later (August 11, 1911) Webern was equally explicit: "I believe  
... for their Lord than  
... A week later (August 16, 1911) Webern wished for a supernatural, even  
... he then imagined  
... God, suggesting that the act of gathering money to  
... Schoenberg's  
... making an offering. Numerous references to Schoenberg's  
... also allude to this particular construction of Schoenberg as Christ figure.  
... several constructions of Schoenberg and his  
... program. This discussion goes beyond the broad question  
... by bringing Schoenberg's musical project into connection with vivid  
... (September 26-27, 1911) about the "great  
... for which Schoenberg was fighting in the outside world; Webern wrote  
... (November 23, 1911) that composition, Christian redemption, and Mahler's and  
... lives of "repentance and yearning" were all connected: "To reach into the  
... Webern mentions *Treck* in several further letters. On July 16,  
... the rift of society seem to be the filth that needs to be destroyed, an image that  
... Webern suggests that such an idea might  
... on a religious hue when, somewhat oddly, Webern connects this with the ideas of Otto Weininger,  
... by God overturning. He also connects this with the ideas of Otto Weininger,  
... Viennese theorist of ethical subjectivity: Man should cast off the animal part  
... himself and dissolve his material substance, a set of choices that would lead to the  
... and ultimately to God.<sup>24</sup> On January 11, 1912, "filth" is the  
... both Schoenberg and his *Harmonielehre* stand. The  
... who initiated and how Schoenberg reacted  
... it is possible that for whatever reason it might have emerged  
... Schoenberg. Schoenberg's couple of doc-  
... from the students, unprompted by Schoenberg, Schoenberg's couple of doc-  
... also leave open the possibility that he was not entirely  
... (August 18, 1911, Berlin Diary excerpt) it.

## WAGNER'S POET-PRIEST

To try to understand this language we need to consider the cultural meanings that attached to it in turn-of-the-century Vienna. The Christian-mystical aspect appears to rule out reading the priestly posture as an early manifestation of a prophetic bearing that links to Schoenberg's overtly Jewish ethical self-projections from the late twenties, of the sort proposed by Alexander Ringer. The specifically Roman Catholic element of Berg's and Webern's Christian constructions have a local Viennese import inasmuch as they were in line not only with their own confessions (broadly defined, as neither was devout) but also with Vienna's religious establishment of the time. Not only was Catholicism the religion of the Habsburgs; from 1897 to 1910 Karl Lueger was mayor of Vienna, and the efforts of his Christian Socialist Party to reestablish Catholic values within Viennese society were both inspired by and helped to reinforce the Catholic revival at the end of Josephist rule and the Congress of Vienna as well. It also ran in notorious parallel with increased intolerance of Jews.<sup>25</sup>

Schoenberg's and his students' own spiritual outlooks between 1908 and 1912 are difficult to reconstruct in detail. We know that Schoenberg was not religiously devout either as a Christian after converting from Judaism to the Lutheran confession as a young man or as a Jew after reconverting in 1933. In 1934, as a new exile from Hitler's Germany, he even wrote to Peter Gradenwitz as follows: "I have never been convinced by Protestantism; but I had, like most of the artists in my time, a Catholic period; but, please, this is strictly confidential!!!"<sup>26</sup> Given that 1911 ended for Schoenberg in personal and artistic crisis, genuine self-doubt, it may also be wrong to assume that this phase coincided with the spirituality he described to Richard Dehmel two years later. On December 13, 1912, he famously wrote that he wanted to compose an oratorio about an individual struggling to know God: "[M]odern man, having passed through materialism, socialism, and anarchy and, despite having been an atheist, still having in him some residue of ancient faith (in the form of superstition), wrestles with God (see also Strindberg's *Jacob Wrestling*) and finally succeeds in finding God and becoming religious. Learning to pray!"<sup>27</sup> Webern had already given expression to this central notion of "wrestling with God" in a letter to Schoenberg on August 10, 1910 (see appendix). That Schoenberg was interested in some form of mystical belief is also well-enough documented, especially in connection with artistic creation. He had recourse to the ancient discourse of artist-as-divine-vessel in a published aphorism of 1909: "So utterly full of meaning is God's greatest creation: the work of art brought forth by man."<sup>28</sup> His painting titled "Christus-Vision (Kopf)" is officially undated; it is said to date from "before October 1910," but this remains inconclusive evidence as to whether Schoenberg painted it before or after his students started using his and Christ's names in the same sentence—though equally it may have nothing to do with the messianist and sacerdotal discourses within the circle.<sup>29</sup> We find him describing composers via descriptions of strong faith, images of sainthood, and parallels with Christ in his commemorative essays on Liszt (published October 20, 1911) and Mahler (published

...and Mahler as saints.<sup>30</sup> The text for the String Quartet op. 10, *Herzgewächse*, and the projected manuscript also reflect these mystical interests, the *Séraphita* text drawing heavily on Swedenberg following his engagement with Balzac,<sup>31</sup> which we know was also prompted by Webern (see appendix, March 9, 1911).

...and points out that by the end of the nineteenth century Schoenberg's aesthetic theology, Dahlhaus samples writings over the very evolution of art and religion had a complex genealogy. For him Schoenberg's ideas elided significantly with his psychoanalytic part of Schoenberg's "instinctive life," and he concludes that Schoenberg essentially via Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the "instinctive psychology of the instincts" via Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the emotional devotion.<sup>32</sup> John Covach and others have also pointed to the additional theosophical elements that flowed from his encounter with Swedenberg's novels.<sup>33</sup> Julian Johnson continues this line with a turn to the musical and literary, Johnson is only partly right when he claims that to talk of concrete and intellectual influences "is always superficial." For him, "simultaneity of the metaphysical and occult testifies to the manifestation of a cultural, personal idea."<sup>34</sup> It is hard to disagree. However, for Johnson that "the working out of tensions in the modern European mind. ... it represents a critical development of German Idealism in the context of the modern world." What Johnson ignores is that, at this time, metaphysical inquiry was often deeply entwined with ideologies of cultural renewal. Moreover, Schoenberg's decision ultimately to explain Schoenberg's aesthetic and technical "experiment" with an opportunistic and highly recognizable rhetoric of authority, seems inadequate to explain the strongly Christian claims of salvation (from filthy humanity, etc.) that we find in Webern's letters, as well as the extent to which others around Schoenberg also used this language.

The idea of artistic creation as *imitatio dei* is an old one, of course, but to couple it with genuinely religious overtones, both a concept of the creator as priest and a redemptive agenda were more recent moves. At least three potential bodies of thought about poet-priests suggest themselves as possible sources: those of Richard Wagner, Stefan George, and Otto Weininger. Chief among these was the late Wagner's late writings on art religion ("Religion and Art" and its supplements: "What Use Is This Knowledge?" "Know Thyself," "Heroism and Christianity," "On the Feminine in the Human," and "Metaphysics. Art and Religion. Morality. Christianity"), combining Schopenhauerian philosophy, ethical aesthetics, and Christian mysticism, are intimately entwined with his theories of cultural regeneration. In "Religion and Art," which recapitulated ideas that he had already articulated elsewhere and first appeared in the *Bayreuther Blätter* in 1880, Wagner argues that artistic allegories should replace the worn-out allegories of religion, claiming that true Christianity is reborn in art, a work of redemption that achieves perfection in music, the "only art that corresponds fully to Christian faith." The poet-priest is

the “artistic teller of the great World-tragedy,” “the only one who never lied, [who] was ever sent to humankind at epochs of its direst error, as mediating friend.”<sup>35</sup> It is the poet-priest who might effect regeneration. In these writings and particularly in the supplements (all of which belong to what Wagner calls the field of “ethical aesthetics”),<sup>36</sup> Wagner also expands the anti-Semitic attacks he first made in “Judaism in Music” (1850) and restated in his “Explanations” of 1869.<sup>37</sup>

His theory of cultural regeneration in these late writings, which included a program of temperance, vegetarianism, and female emancipation,<sup>38</sup> becomes a form of Christian mysticism. Wagner permits a gap to emerge between his view of the supposed natural superiority of white races compared to others, particularly Jews, and his commitment to Christianity as a transracial idea characterized by the capacity for suffering. He supposed white races to have the greatest capacity and made them the prime movers in a historical process that would lead humankind to a state of redemption when the inequality of races is removed. Yet, he also claimed that up to now white races have founded only a thoroughly immoral world. For these reasons, he portrayed “true Christianity” in ideal terms: as something that transcends racial differences. (“The blood of the Saviour, the issue from his head, his wounds upon the cross,—who impiously would ask its race, if white or other? Divine we call it, and its source might dimly be approached in what we termed the human species’ bond of union, its aptitude for Conscious Suffering.”)<sup>39</sup> Christ’s greatest gift was his awareness of the essential unity of being and his having turned the individual will on itself by denying the will to live (pace Schopenhauer).

The Bayreuth circle, which emerged in the mid-1870s, resembled a religious sect and consolidated itself even more once the *Bayreuther Blätter* was established under Hans von Wolzogen’s editorship in 1878. After Wagner’s death the group became increasingly sectlike, with a core of devotees (Cosima, Wolzogen, Stein, Glasenapp, and others). “The worship of [Wagner’s] person and his works increased to the level of a cult,” as one observer described it: “[H]is books appeared to be confessional writings, symbolic books of the aesthetics of a new belief.”<sup>40</sup> The circle separated itself from the rest of society in the sure belief of its status as an elite group in possession of the doctrine of regeneration. In addition, although the master-disciple model was purely secular, its use of the biblical idea of discipleship took on devotional ambiguity by virtue of its coexistence with the circle’s stress on the regeneration writings and their relationship with Christianity. In other words, while Wagnerian art religion was supposed to supplant outmoded beliefs, the Bayreuth circle also used *Parsifal* virtually to reinstate a form of Christianity and a doctrine of salvation.<sup>41</sup>

There is plenty of evidence that Schoenberg was aware of the ideological side of Wagner’s legacy and followed some of it. In 1935, just exiled from Germany, he spoke to the Jewish musical group Mailamm about the extent to which nobody could be a true Wagnerian “if you did not believe in his philosophy.”<sup>42</sup> In that speech he characterized that philosophy with reference to “Erlösung durch Liebe” (salvation through love), *Deutschtum* (Germanness), and Wagner’s anti-Semitic beliefs about Judaism in music. As if to distinguish Wagner’s notion that Jewishness was a characteristic to overcome rather than a fixed racial characteristic (as under National



and therefore that true Christianity was an essential part of his life which he had just fled) and Schoenberg's racial differences, Schoenberg claimed in his *Maliamm* lecture that Wagner gave Jewry a chance: "out of the ghetto!"<sup>46</sup> Schoenberg seems never to have made the pilgrimage to Bayreuth. Schoenberg's many young turn-of-the-century Viennese artists and intellectuals. The reason of his precarious financial position or because he considered acts of piety to be the lot of disciples, when he was a new leader? Webern and Berg were Webern in 1902, immediately after completing his Gymnasium studies and before attending the university, and Berg in 1909. Their accounts manifest a sort of quasi-religious devotion described earlier. Webern's diary of his "first pilgrimage" displays the "Liebesmahlspruch" from *Parsifal* as its heading and includes an ecstatic account of the *Parsifal* he heard: "To find words for such an expression is an impossibility! In the face of such magnificence, one can only sink into prayer and pray in silent devotion."<sup>43</sup> He compares the religiosity and gravity of the opera with some other people's apparent pleasure in laughter, idle chatter, and the inspection of one another's "eccentric" Berg in 1909 wrote to Helene Nahowski ecstatically, though less overtly religiously of the "stirring, uplifting experience" and how "magnificent [and] overwhelming" it was. "Words cannot give you anywhere near the tremendous impression, stirring yet life-enhancing, which this work made on me. Futile trying to describe music like that, and all I can say is that I miss you now more than ever."<sup>45</sup> We know that Wagner's life and sufferings and indeed letter writing were brought to Schoenberg's attention during the period when his students were addressing him as a poet-priest. At Christmas of 1909 Berg and Jalowetz gave Schoenberg his own copy of Wagner's complete writings and received a letter of thanks suggesting that they were a particularly timely gift. ("I was very pleased. Particularly because you guessed what I would have asked for.")<sup>46</sup> In several letters Schoenberg in 1911 Berg draws comparisons between Schoenberg's and Wagner's lives. These letters are important because Berg's constant comparisons between Wagner's and Schoenberg's suffering and his portrayal of the inevitability of it all were given to be part and parcel of the "holy cause" they were fighting.<sup>47</sup> More interesting are several letters written in December 1911, by which time Schoenberg was becoming depressed about the indifferent, if not negative, reception of his latest works. The comparisons Berg draws between Wagner and Schoenberg seem expressly designed to keep Schoenberg's spirits up and the "cause" on track. On December 4 Schoenberg wrote to Berg expressing his regret that "writing—evidently his preparation of the *Harmonielehre* for publication—was taking him away from composing. Berg responded on December 7, saying that Wagner had similar complaints during the period after *Lohengrin*. He continued: "To take this analogy further, what cause for our rejoicing when you create your *King, your Tristan, Meistersinger, your Parsifal*?"<sup>48</sup> Webern's letter to Berg dated December 8 about the newly published *Harmonielehre* indicates that Webern also considered some sort of spiritual affinity between Wagner's and Schoenberg's projects. He claimed that nothing like the *Harmonielehre* had been written in German

since Wagner (see earlier). Schoenberg wrote to Berg on December 21, saying that he was "unusually depressed" because of the reception from Vienna, so much so that he had lost all interest in his works.<sup>49</sup> His letter crossed in the mail with Berg's Christmas gift of Wagner's *Mein Leben*, which Berg said had given him solace and enlightenment; "[G]reatness is inseparable from suffering... We who are fortunate enough to take part in your life need such comfort and enlightenment. But to you this book and its inner meaning will be nothing new."<sup>50</sup> Berg wrote again after receiving Schoenberg's depressed letter and amplified the comparison:

What you say about your divine works is dreadful! Oh, believe me, Herr Schoenberg, you can no longer judge what they signify, they are already too far removed from you; something magnificent is growing within you, your gaze is so fixed on the future that you can no longer see the past, indeed, perhaps no longer the present... I am actually glad I was able to give you Wagner's Life... [T]he solace and enlightenment that we receive through our reverential understanding will do your anxious heart and your doubts good by way of comparison. Even if only for the moment; for I know only too well that your depression is just a matter of time and must soon give way to a more sublime, a most sublime confidence.

However, if the descriptions of Wagner's struggles and myriad sufferings, and his never pure, always clouded joys raises [*sic*] even a momentary spark of confidence in you, if our unswerving worship of you is able to contribute to that, then that would be the greatest happiness this Christmas could bring me.<sup>51</sup>

Berg's comparisons between Schoenberg and Wagner taper off in 1912, along with their very obvious religious inflections. Whether this was under the pressure of preparing for the first performance of Schoenberg's most Wagnerian work, *Gurrelieder*, is uncertain. Meanwhile, however, Schoenberg thanked him for his intention in presenting him with Wagner's autobiography. However, he added that "This is an inner matter I have to deal with—or not—by myself... It's a kind of persecution complex; an insight can persecute one too."<sup>52</sup> I return to this response later. When Schoenberg wrote to Berg in mid-January about his reading of *Mein Leben*, it is evident that he was hoping to find such "insights" into Wagner's source of creativity but hadn't. He is nonetheless understanding as to Wagner's "obvious" reasons for mentioning only "external events."<sup>53</sup> Schoenberg clearly assumed that "inner experiences" that *could* have been told in an autobiography would somehow have found their way into Wagner's works.

## STEFAN GEORGE AS POET-PRIEST

The Munich-based circle of Stefan George, whose poetry Schoenberg turned to around 1906, provides another model for the quasi-religious sect around Schoenberg at this time.<sup>54</sup> For Albrecht Dümmling, Berg's and Webern's language and construction

As a poet-priest are intimately linked with Schoenberg's turn to sacred music, especially for those works that mark his renunciation of tonality. "Ich darf nicht dankend" from *Zwei Lieder*, op. 14, *Das Buch der Propheten*, op. 15, and the Second String Quartet, op. 10, whose third and fourth movements set "Litaney" and "Entrückung" from George's *Der siebente Ring*. Indeed, both Berg and Webern also drew on George at this time: Berg for the poem, George's translation of Baudelaire's poem, Webern for *Fünf Lieder aus dem ersten Ring*, op. 3, *Fünf Lieder*, op. 4, four further George songs without titles, and *Empfiehet auf leichten Kähnen* for the chorus. George was certainly known in Vienna, having spent some time there and cultivated a close relationship with Hugo von Hofmannsthal (until it crumbled in 1906), but Schoenberg's contact with Vienna's Ansonge Verein (an early culture society run by Conrad Ansonge), whose purpose was the promotion of the connection between modern music and modern poetry. Songs from Ansonge's op. 2 and op. 3 collections were played at the society as early as 1904.

According to Dümmling, Schoenberg turned to George's poetry at the time he abandoned tonality because of the usefulness of his lyric poetry for fashioning a new posture of the isolated artist, a posture that marked a step away from naturalism and thus deeply modernist. By 1907 Schoenberg had reached a crisis, a deep crisis, and George's poetry served as "a model of the isolated artist creating the new and no longer caring for a contemporary audience."<sup>55</sup> In the shorter version of his account, published in English in *Schoenberg and Kandinsky: An Historic Encounter*, Dümmling focuses on Mathilde Schoenberg's infidelity and suggests that a parallel exists between this and George's and Richard Dehmel's encounter with Ida Ullrich. Schoenberg turned from Dehmel's free, more sensuous poetry toward the more prosody and aloof mastery of George, which for Dümmling stood in parallel to George's discovery that Coblenz had rejected him in favor of Dehmel. Through George's lyrical voice Schoenberg developed a belief in himself, which was then transferred to his students. At this time of personal crisis, the search for great men, for worthy authorities, for a patriarchal *Über-Ich* replaced love for Schoenberg. He worked himself up to a religious fervor because greatness and loneliness were identical to him in this situation.<sup>56</sup>

In the longer, book-length version, Dümmling carves out more of a position for George's poetry and cultish circle. Here lyric poetry is key. Social isolation and loneliness were also consequences of shifts in the poet's position in culture, he suggests.<sup>57</sup> The fact that turn-of-the-century artists were so taken with lyric forms stemmed in part from their anti-bourgeois positions. George's turn toward the lyric was connected with his struggle against a culture that he experienced as reflecting broader social problems. Echoing both Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* and Wagner's *Opera and Drama*, George considered drama and tragedy unavailable to artists of his generation owing to the cultural disunity caused by contemporary "spiritual" issues. Arguing not from the perspective of his personal creative position but from that of the recipient, George suggested that lyric poetry and the novel were the only possible

art forms.<sup>58</sup> The artist experiences in an extreme form what was also true for the public: a crisis of value and worldview, of meaning and perception.

According to a 1910 essay by Margarete Susman, a writer in the outer George circle, the creation of an artistic "I" in poetry and consequently in music is to be understood as a resistance to the real situation of the person in society. It is a transcendental "I." Indeed, the lyric poetry could also be a substitute for religion: "The form in which modern humanity saved the contents of religion for itself and in the most perfect way is art... But of all the arts, none has courted religion so intensely and lived in it as did lyrical poetry: it is only by bearing in mind these roots that it can be conceived in its importance for life in our new era."<sup>59</sup> With its proximity to religion, the lyric achieved the greatest possible distance from naturalism. George's "I" became a type of law. Shortly before his break with Hofmannsthal, George had written to him: "I was firmly convinced that by means of our writings, we, you and I, might have been able to exercise a very salutary dictatorship lasting for years."<sup>60</sup>

Beginning in the 1890s but above all from around 1904 on, the George circle strongly reflected these ideas. The circle had a hierarchical nature, with George as the "master" and members of the circle as "disciples,"<sup>61</sup> although Michael Winkler has argued that it is perhaps more correct to refer to multiple George circles inasmuch as there was "a shifting constellation of small groups of friends... [that] constituted the core of the artistic-intellectual circles whose charismatic focus was George."<sup>62</sup> The always formal and detached George might have adopted this self-styling after visiting Paris and experiencing Mallarmé's circle (*le maître et le cénacle*), which had struck him as the ideal community of poets.<sup>63</sup> Yet various other potential sources fed into it. Although George hated Wagner's music, he would have been aware of the structures of the Bayreuth circle and Wagnerian art religion.<sup>64</sup> However, he also found historical vindication in Dante, who positioned Virgil, representative of antiquity, as his forerunner.<sup>65</sup> George's idea of the artist as an *Übermensch* was also influenced by Nietzsche: The latter's ideal became a reality in George, according to Susman.<sup>66</sup>

If Schoenberg and his circle's priest-disciple styling was influenced by that of the George circle, it could have come about via anecdote (from the Ansorge Verein or the Vienna coffeehouses) or via a book or an article. The image of George as a kind of *Urgeist*, a "poet priest presiding over the dawning of a new era, as a spiritual mediator standing between the sordid reality of nineteenth-century bourgeois culture and the higher reaches of a transcendent order yet to be revealed," had been presented by disciple Ludwig Klages in a 1902 book.<sup>67</sup> Again in 1909, shortly before the Schoenberg circle adopted a similar styling, another George disciple, Friedrich Wolters, published a short book titled *Herrschaft und Dienst* [Sovereignty and Service or Lordship and Servitude].<sup>68</sup> This bizarre metaphysical tract, almost a manifesto, proceeds in always highly cryptic sentences, most of which are half a page in length, and was printed with highly decorative opening pages using black and white designs that illuminate the first letters of each section in a medieval style. Its three sections are "Das Reich," which refers to the utopian "geistige Reich" [spiritual kingdom] toward which they were striving;<sup>69</sup> "Der Herrscher," which

...the power or dominance or lordship capable of fulfilling the "geistige Tat" (spiritual deed) of bringing this new Reich into being; and "Der Dienst" (service of the new kingdom). Excerpts from the first two chapters also appeared in a ... publication by the George circle (see figures 5.1 and 5.2).<sup>70</sup>

# DA S-REICH

ie über den familien des blutes und der blutvermischung die familien des geistes und der geistvermischung stehen, deren geschichte noch so lange ungeschrieben bleibt, als die menschen in den grob sichtbaren erscheinungen selbst das wesen des weltgeschehens zu erkennen gläuben und statt mit innerem auge und innerem finger den formen folgend zu den aussströmenden kernen zu gelangen, an den zufälligkeiten des stoffes und des ortes die zugehörigkeit der werke und der taten mit lüpe und zirkel abzumessen wähen, so steht auch über den reichen der rassen- und der wirtschaftsgrenzen, unbedengt von berg und zoll, im freien raum der selbstigeschaffenen atmosphäre das geistige Reich. Da der körper dieses Reiches nirgends sichtbar wird als an den spiegeln der natürlichen dinge und ihrer seelischen bewegung, so nennen wir die Natur, mit welchem worte wir den begriff des ganzen sinnlich erkennbaren alls umfassen, und die Seele, mit welchem worte wir die



Figure 5.1. Friedrich Wolters, Herrschaft und Dienst.



Figure 5.2. Friedrich Wolters, *Herrschaft und Dienst*.

It is conceivable that some of this literature had come to the attention of Schoenberg or a member of his circle by 1910. Interestingly, the vestments of the quasi-medieval figure that decorates the opening "D" of "Der Herrscher" are trimmed with a line from George's poem "Entrückung" [Transport] from *Der siebenbente Ring* (which begins with "I feel the air of another planet"), which Schoenberg

of his pivotal Second String Quartet, op. 10—"Ich bin  
dröhend mit dem heiligen Feuer / Ich bin ein dröhnen"—which continues in the  
"I am only a spark of the holy fire / I am only a

number of the George circle and the George circle nevertheless manifested a number  
of the later Bayreuth version of art religion, is less  
of the younger men in Munich tended to look up to  
inspired prophet, but slightly odd rituals would sometimes  
George appeared in black attire like a priest and conducted  
ceremonies that involved the reading aloud of his poetry.<sup>71</sup> In the  
Christ is mentioned as a model of  
God, but he stands alongside Krishna, Buddha, and  
the same (labyrinthine and all-but-untranslatable) sentence.<sup>72</sup> While  
George himself was search-  
in the form of a young male acolyte—and for a  
Munich youth, Maximilian Kronberger,  
the cult figure Maximilian until the youth's tragic death at six-  
In 1943 Max Scheler lauded the circle as an "erotic-religious  
Gnostic sect" that was born "out of the spirit of the sharpest  
individuality in life."<sup>74</sup>

### OTTO WEININGER'S CHARACTEROLOGY OF "PRIESTS"

The third potential model of priestly discourse comes via Otto Weininger, who,  
with Austrian writer and poet Siegfried Lipiner and his Pernerstorfer circle, was  
an important Viennese mediator of Wagner's art religious ideas and notions of  
the post-priest. From around 1878 on, the Pernerstorfer circle functioned as a  
leading society of Viennese artists and intellectuals, including Mahler, who  
grouped around Lipiner and embraced a brand of art religion that drew, some-  
what paradoxically, on both Wagner and Nietzsche.<sup>75</sup> By 1881, however, the circle  
had split between those who still held to a belief in political activism and those  
who chose to pursue more closely Wagner's plan for cultural regeneration  
through the aesthetic-religious path. The latter, which included Mahler, became  
the Saga Society. Schoenberg is not known to have been involved in the  
Pernerstorfer circle or the Saga Society, but he became a dedicated Mahler fol-  
lower around 1904, when Mahler started taking an interest in him and he in turn  
changed his previously poor opinion of Mahler.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps a more direct source  
was Weininger, another theorist of aesthetic and cultural utopias linked with  
"priestly" ideas.

Weininger described "priest" in the chapter "On Characterology" of his posthumously published collection of essays, *Über die letzten Dinge* [On Last Things], a section also published as a free-standing essay titled "Sucher und Priester" [Seekers and Priests] in *Die Fackel*, a satirical journal edited by Karl Kraus and read by Schoenberg and his circle.<sup>77</sup> Weininger set up a paradigmatic dualism similar to the type M (man)/type W (woman), which underpins his theory of ethical subjectivity in *Geschlecht und Charakter* [*Sex and Character*]:

The seeker searches, the priest informs. The seeker searches above all himself, the priest reveals himself above all to others. The seeker searches his whole life long for himself, for his own soul; the priest's ego is given from the outset as a presupposition of everything else. The seeker is always accompanied by a feeling of imperfection; the priest is convinced of the existence of perfection... Of course, seeker and priest are extremes; the greatest people are both, most often seekers at first, so that they then can transform themselves into priests when they have found the source, have lived to see their self.<sup>78</sup>

Weininger continues that the priest is not simply a type disconnected from real priestly attributes, for "the priest has revelation behind him... The priest already stands in league with the deity; only he knows mystical experiences." His lot is not easy: "For the priest must not be a peaceful, idyllic man; he has meaning only as a fighter for victory, not for the effort of the struggle, not for fear before defeat." Classic seekers were, for Weininger, Rousseau, Calderon, Sophocles, Mozart, and the Beethoven of *Fidelio* (although he becomes a priest in the *Waldstein* Sonata, whose final movement is the highest summit of Apollonian art). Schiller is a failed priest, incapable of tragedy or of recognizing the struggle between human grandeur and pettiness: "Schiller hardly seems to have known the enemy in one's own breast, loneliness and its terrors, human fate."<sup>79</sup> He is really just a journalist—a characterization that Kraus may have found especially interesting, given his ongoing campaign against Viennese journalism. By contrast, Richard Wagner started out as a seeker with *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser* ("the Pilgrims' Chorus gives a wonderful representation of seeking"), and *Tristan* but ended as a great priest with *Siegfried* and *Parsifal*.

Weininger does not elaborate on "priest" in much detail, but his conceptualization might be linked to the theory in *Geschlecht und Charakter*.<sup>80</sup> Despite the fact that much recent scholarship, especially musical scholarship, has tended to reduce Weininger to a source of misogynist turn-of-the-century formulations about woman's endemic sexual, immoral, and uncreative nature, *Geschlecht und Charakter* was in fact a lengthy tract about ethical subjectivity that made use of man and woman as opposing ideal types, with the Jew as a mediating third type. It is undeniably misogynistic and anti-Semitic, but it is more than that. All ethical, creative, and intellectual values are attributed to type M, the only intelligible, autonomous subject, while a collection of misogynist stereotypes constitute type W, the amoral, all-sexual, all-irrational, feminine principle, the antithesis of the values associated with type M. Though Weininger's Jew is in many ways identical to type W, it stands as the principle of the consciously unethical. Woman and Jew were not autonomous subjects but mere bundles of sensations; however, unlike W, Weininger's Jew is



He has simply not chosen it. While every real person is characterized by characteristics, Weininger's ideal types betray his fundamental bias. Human subjectivity belongs to the Aryan male. According to the general principle, man must cease to have sex with woman and overcome his individuality. The extreme asceticism underpinning this ideal is to be truly ethical. The autonomous ethical self would logically mean the end of the individual's life, sealing the beginnings of man's immortality.

Weininger, Christ was the paradigmatic ethical human being: According to the general principle, Christ's defining act, his "world-historical role," was his redemption of his own racial origin. Richard Wagner was only a small step behind Christ: Weininger felt that Wagner shared the same feat for German culture.<sup>81</sup> For this reason, Weininger was to attribute a little of type Jew to Wagner, arguing that Wagner's special status was due to his accretion of Jewishness to "ethical" use—his own creating its opposite, *Deutschtum*, at the highest peak of artistic expression. We have discussed in some detail elsewhere, Weininger's writings are imbued with a particular Wagnerian significance<sup>82</sup> not only by virtue of his recourse to Wagner's source material in order to illustrate many points but also because his real theory amounts, at least at some level, to what Nike Wagner has described as a "transposition of Parsifal into the language of speculative metaphysics."<sup>83</sup>

Although today Weininger's ideas seem binaristic in the extreme and his views on women and Jew are obviously as offensive as they are absurd, he was widely read and discussed in intellectual circles at the time. He was a *cause célèbre* in Vienna of the 1890s not only because of the notoriety of *Gesellschaft und Charakter* but also because of the author's own performative death by suicide (in a room in the house at Schwarzenbergstrasse in which Beethoven had died), undertaken, it would appear, partly as a logical extension of the ideas in the book. Karl Kraus immediately lampooned Weininger's posthumous cause, although many judged his suicide to have been the act of a madman. Indeed, on October 29, 1903, immediately after his death, it was the essay "Seekers and Priests" that Kraus published in *Die Fackel* months before its publication in *Über die letzten Dinge*. Some of the most famous writers and thinkers of the time were serious Weininger readers.<sup>84</sup> Among musicians, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Alexander Zemlinsky, Franz Schreker, and Hans Reiter at the very least were also enthusiastic Weininger readers.

Berg closely engaged with Weininger from the year *Gesellschaft und Charakter* first appeared. He kept scrapbooks of ideas and quotations and devoted one to Weininger. He cut out two Weininger quotations from "Sucher und Priester" when it was printed in *Die Fackel*, plus a collection of ideas from *Gesellschaft und Charakter* involving, according to Susanne Rode, around his gendered typologies of the two best categories, "individual" and "genius," but also intellect, morality, and sexuality) published in *Die Fackel* in October 1904 under the title "Psychologisches Volksstrubium. Aktuelle Gedanken aus Otto Weiningers 'Gesellschaft und Charakter.'"<sup>85</sup> He then received a copy of what was already the sixth edition of *Gesellschaft und Charakter* from his brother Charly in summer 1905.<sup>86</sup>

Webern specifically brought Weininger back to Schoenberg's attention while the latter was preparing his *Harmonielehre*—and just before he and Berg started addressing Schoenberg in priestly terms. In one letter Webern admires Weininger's "intellectual rigour" and says that he is thinking of Schoenberg alongside Weininger because both of them had "superb intellects" with "the red glow of emotion" (June 23, 1910; see appendix). In another he notes Weininger's point that woman is "essentially different from man" (August 4, 1910). In another (July 16, 1910) Webern goes to the heart of *Geschlecht und Charakter*: He says that in order to reach the peak of morality, one has to cast off the qualities of "animal" man and strive for a metaphysical ideal. Interestingly, Webern even tackles head-on the logical objections to Weininger's utopian ideas, namely that to do as Weininger theorized meant "there won't be any human beings left." For Webern, this is probably "exactly what is meant, away with them": "[T]his path leads directly to God." Of course, with only Webern's side of the correspondence we don't know how Schoenberg responded to this. However, we know that in 1910 Webern was bringing Weininger *back* into Schoenberg's mind ("I have *re-read* Weininger"), which suggests that they were both already familiar with him—highly likely given his notoriety. The slippage in Webern's and Berg's letters between priest and deity as designations for Schoenberg is certainly consistent with Weininger's typology of the priest. ("The priest already stands in league with the deity; only he knows mystical experiences.")

Schoenberg's own view of Weininger is more difficult to pin down. Although he owned copies of both volumes, the 1908 edition of *Geschlecht und Charakter* and the 1907 edition of *Über die letzten Dinge*, as well as Weininger's *Taschenbuch und Briefe an einen Freund* (1919),<sup>87</sup> all are clean of marginalia, and Schoenberg's only overt mention of Weininger comes in the preface to the *Harmonielehre*. At the end of a paragraph in which he points out the absurdity of subscribing to a philosophy or *Weltanschauung* that addresses moral issues if one contemplates only what is pleasant and comfortable and takes no heed of the rest, he considers Weininger to be among those who "have thought earnestly" on the topic. It is worth applying some interpretative pressure to this thought.

## PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION

How do these three potential contexts for understanding Schoenberg's early construction as poet-priest with messianic powers contribute to our understanding of Schoenberg's late activities? It is hard to avoid the fact that all three not only carry strong implications of cultural redemption, or *Kulturkritik*, as discussed in connection with Karl Kraus's approach to language and Adolf Loos's attitude about architecture (both of which were also models for Schoenberg), but all three are also wedded to concepts of German cultural purity, *Deutschtum*, and, in the case of both Wagner and Weininger, a form of Christian mysticism linked with notions of Jewish self-overcoming.

once loosened from the main system, can have a higher, transfigured incarnation  
ending future with metaphysical implications. The erotic chromatic element,  
end of functional harmony, the way Schoenberg figures it promises a new and fas-  
tidious and vagrancy. Although for a progressive composer this will mean the  
ing free—"emancipation" as he later described it—of these bearers of tonality's  
the theorizes a type of redemption of tonality as a system by allowing for the cut-  
erotic chromatic elements are set adrift and sublated (*aufgehobene*). It is as  
become floating (*schwebende*) tonality, a gender-free, asexual harmony, if the oth-  
describes dissonances in mystical terms as higher/remote overtones that might  
was a type of degenerate [Jewish?] element within music.<sup>90</sup> Crucially, he  
I have suggested elsewhere that Schoenberg wished to signal that rampant chro-  
tonalmonic tones; literally, "tones alien to harmony") and a matter of "vagrancy"  
He also describes chromatic harmonies as *Harmoniefremde* "to damage."  
it generates (to borrow Susan McClary's characterization) cause  
and "desire" Schoenberg to be protectively wrapped so that the "excite-  
is thought by Schoenberg to be protectively wrapped so that the "excite-  
He describes them in *Harmonielehre* in terms of erotics;  
the total system apart. He describes the dissonances as ultimately pulling  
in the way Schoenberg describes the dissonances as ultimately pulling  
parallel between *Harmonielehre* and *Geschlecht und*  
erotic works through to the emergence of the twelve-note method. There is,  
a theoretical parallel between *Harmonielehre* and *Geschlecht und*  
and also the gendering evident in his move from his very first,  
Consider his broad construction of the state of tonality  
for Schoenberg as a musical equivalent of Weininger's  
and professional setbacks. Nevertheless, perhaps the  
in mid-1911, when he would have been writing.<sup>88</sup> This followed  
more like a seeker than a priest, as is consistent with what we  
the introduction at the end of the writing process,  
and throughout the preface Schoenberg stresses the importance  
The context is a series of gestures toward the "new laws  
Schoenberg's mention of Weininger in his introduc-  
It is to bear on Schoenberg's renunciation of tonality. It is  
of *Parsifal* into speculative metaphysics," certainly proves a  
Wagner's metaphysical theory of ethical subjectivity, what Nike Wagner has

Wagner's autobiography, referring to the persecution that "an insight" can  
about when, in 1911, he thanked Berg for presenting  
Wagner. Perhaps Schoenberg was recognizing that inevitably he was  
in assuming that Berg and Webern did as well, given their  
and we  
We have already seen that in his 1935 Mallarmé lecture he  
seen by Berg, Webern, and Linke at least, but not by his  
in his immediate circle as a self-redeeming Jew  
then a Jew converted to Protestant Christianity, saw him-  
this last element is to consider the idea that between

first as *schwebende Tonalität* and then as a new harmony of the future that even in the *Harmonielehre* Schoenberg likens to that of the angels: asexual. This construction shares obvious similarities with *Geschlecht und Charakter*, where ethical subjectivity is achieved by man's resisting woman and possibly also by overcoming his Jewishness. Although Weininger's construct leads to the end of the human race, it is at the same time the beginning of a new metaphysical future, as Webern noted (letter to Schoenberg, July 16, 1910). Likewise, although Schoenberg's theory imagines a new metaphysical future for music, it leaves tonality in one piece: The erotic and vagrant elements are separated and sublated to something higher. As we know, Schoenberg came to his twelve-note method through his work on the angelic *Seraphita* symphony and was quite overt in his descriptions of the new tonal space opened up by the twelve-note method as being like Swedenborg's heaven (which he encountered via Balzac). It is even possible to understand the distinctly unmythical *Erwartung* as a work of symbolic Parsifalian wandering. Both woman and newly freed dissonance go through a period of wandering before being reimagined in a big metaphysical work.

If we take Schoenberg at his later word—that he was among those Austrian Jews who believed both in *Deutschtum* and in Wagner's anti-Semitic beliefs about "Judaism in Music"<sup>91</sup>—we need to ask what implications this might have had in practice. Schoenberg had a famously robust ego; on the surface he appeared not to have been damaged by such critical claims about what he, a Jew, might have been "responsible for" according to Wagner's theory and some contemporary reception. While his dominance may have masked a great deal of insecurity, one way to understand his sense of rightness and strength is to contemplate the idea that he considered himself to be the one who acted, the exception. To take the sort of musical "action" I have suggested in my reading above of the *Harmonielehre* would have been entirely consistent with the relationship between theory and self in the case of Otto Weininger himself, who famously committed suicide shortly after theorizing his own Jewishness as the unethical element in human subjectivity. That, at least, is how his performative suicide—itsself strongly inscribed with musical significance—was widely read at the time.<sup>92</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, the connections Weininger forged between his theories and Wagner's thought, coupled with his own performative suicide in the specially rented room in the Schwarzpanierhaus, in which Beethoven died, forced his own "case" into broader musical discourse.

However, even if we choose to feel that Schoenberg was immune to the negative projections about Jewish German composers inherent in Wagner's theories, and even if one does not accept the terms of my interpretation and parallels with the sensational case of Otto Weininger, it should not be surprising that later events would lead to some fundamental reorientations on Schoenberg's part. It is hardly surprising, for instance, that Schoenberg was especially shocked on experiencing exclusionary anti-Semitism for the first time in 1921 and to have felt infinitely more under threat as a Jewish German on Hitler's coming to power in 1933.

The sort of disorientation that Schoenberg experienced and the extent to which his worldview as integrated, if not also "self-redeeming" German Jew shattered,

The idea that a psychoanalytic concept such as trauma might be useful in elucidating the relationship between the present and the past is not only a matter of self-construction but also as one of historical construction. For Lacapra, certain issues associated with Holocaust studies—the trauma of the unspeakable, levels of historical repression, and what he identifies as the trauma of the repressed—might have broader historiographical import. While Lacapra suggests that a qualitative correspondence exists between trauma and the features in Schoenbergian discourse and the traumas of survivors of the death camps, I would suggest that Lacapra's thinking might provide some useful lessons for approaching Schoenberg. For Lacapra the central trauma is the Holocaust, the trauma of Jewish under the Nazis. For Schoenberg, the central trauma is the moment he was forced to confront his Jewishness—to realize that many fellow Austro-Germans considered his conversion to Christianity an insufficient way to assimilate into German society and *Kultur*. This was the immediate prehistory of the Holocaust and from the postwar perspective of a survivor, indelibly linked to it; for someone committed to *Deutschtum*, it must have been deeply traumatic. As Reinhold Schickel points out, "for Jewish citizens the dis-integration of life began in many cases very early, with the exile before the exiling."<sup>94</sup> However Schoenberg must surely also have been subject to a second trauma in the wake of post-War revelations of the Holocaust itself, of the atrocities committed in political and human terms in the name of a German ideology of racial purification.

If trauma can often lead to withdrawal and total silence, in Schoenberg's case the first trauma led to amazing insight: an attempt to take political action on the one hand and a reconfiguring and reinscribing of the shards of his previous world-view on the other. It is possible to read Schoenberg's efforts in the 1920s and 30s in light of earlier events, that is, as working through aspects, in some cases troubling aspects, of his own identity, ideas, and earlier activities. This starts with his gradual return to Judaism in the 1920s, about which much has been written.<sup>95</sup> It is also traceable in *Der biblische Weg*. He also sketched a large number of essays that reflected on his earlier activities and acquaintances: These include writings about a range of Jewish topics, including those on his own identity ("We Young Austrian Jews"), a small number of spleen-filled essays (*Denkmäler*) about various individuals, including Webern (essays he invariably returned to and expressed regret over), sketches or marginalia about Wagner's anti-Semitic writings and possible Jewish identity, and notably a conceptualization of music via the idea of the *Musikalische Gedanke*. After the end of the war we find him writing essays titled "Human Rights," "My Attitude Toward Politics," and pieces on numerous other topics (many fragmentary jottings) in musical biography, history, and psychology.

I cannot examine all of these here, but it is worth briefly considering some of Schoenberg's anxious unpublished writings about Wagner dating from around 1931–1933, several of which suggest that he recognized common ground between Wagner's anti-Semitism and theories of cultural regeneration (though he does not refer to the latter directly) and increasingly anti-Semitic, National-Socialist Germany.

Anxiety about Wagner's attitude toward Jews bubbles up in a couple of occasionally incoherent unpublished essays dated December 2, 1931.<sup>96</sup> In "Geyers-Sohn, Geyers-Enkel, Geyers-Enkels-Witwe" [Geyer's Son, Geyer's Grandson, Geyer's Grandson's Widow], Schoenberg takes up the question of Wagner's paternity, expressing annoyance with the way in which Wagner flirts with the idea that the Jewish Geyer might be his father but ultimately leaves it up to the reader. Like Nietzsche, Schoenberg feels quite sure here that Wagner was, in the end, completely convinced of his Jewish lineage but was simply embarrassed because it did not fit in with "all that German rubbish." He also has the idea that Wagner included the equivocal passage at the beginning of *Mein Leben* partly as a sop to Cosima, whom Schoenberg thinks had a Jewish mother: He "offers her encouragement with a wink of the eye." Schoenberg wants to read this positively: The thought about Cosima "speaks in favor of his having had Jewish blood." Indeed, he wants to read it as a confessional document: Since Wagner intended that his autobiography should not appear until thirty years after his death—"by which time he had perhaps 'anticipated' cultural conditions superior to those he himself had furthered"—it was a question of "fear that it could be found out too early; yet the desire that one day it would be known". In the end, what we find is a mixture of fascination with the question of Wagner's possible Jewish parentage, recognition of the potential significance of Siegfried and Winifred's alignments with "the pogromist Hitler" (this being only 1931), and a desire to keep Bayreuth spiritually "clean": untainted by commercialism in order that the "sacred" intentions of the works themselves would become evident. Schoenberg's decision to write about Brahms in 1933, an important anniversary year for both Brahms and Wagner, may likewise be connected with this manifest anxiety about the connection between Wagner's theories and rising National Socialism.

Schoenberg also seems to return to and in some cases to rewrite elements of his earlier Messiah- and Christlike construction within his Vienna circle. For instance, coinciding with the beginning of his return to Judaism, the reference to Christ at the end of *Der biblische Weg* may be more conscious than Moshe Lazar would have it. The end of the play seems a forgiving critique of false Messiahs. Aruns dies with the words "Lord, my God, I have been vanquished, smitten, castigated. I am dying, but I feel that you will allow the Idea to survive. And I shall die in peace, for I know that you will always provide our nation with men ready to offer their lives for this concept of the one and only, eternal, invisible and unimaginable God." In earlier drafts Aruns is called a "false Messiah," although Schoenberg removed this statement from the final version. "Forgive Collaborators," an essay in which Schoenberg says to forgive silly artists who express political views because they don't know what they are doing is in a similar vein. In the late psalm mentioned at the start of this chapter, Schoenberg's construction of Christ as "the purest, the most innocent, unselfish, and idealist being" is uncannily like that of Otto Weininger. Is the psalm a kind of confessional? Schoenberg's "cause" in 1910 was described by his students in sacrificial and redemptive terms, with Schoenberg the Christlike figure. In the psalm, Schoenberg's text says that Jesus's martyrdom was not represented truthfully; he did not want to divide the Jewish nation but rather "to restore the religion in its purest

type of racial anti-Semitism he experienced in the early 1920s. why he was able so presciently to predict real potential for acts of violence in the supremacist and cultural purity but also real aspirations to racial purity is perhaps reality. Recognizing not simply a dictator-like mentality and ideologies of German the rivers of blood that Trotsky and Lenin had spilled in order to turn theory into this is speculation, it is consistent with Schoenberg's comment to Kandinsky about between Hitler's and his and others' earlier, more "purely artistic" aims. Although beloved country but perhaps also the trauma of recognizing certain similarities behalf of this project reflect not only the shock of finding himself an exile from his to recognize Hitler's potential to make ideas political reality. His frantic efforts on to serve as a necessary counterweight to Hitler. It was as if he were able immediately rescuing Jews from Europe and then leading them in their new Zionist land seemed from oppression, would choose such a model. His self-image as a potential *Führer* first dictator of Europe!)."99 It seems counterintuitive that Schoenberg, a Jew fleeing dictator, in full consciousness of the value of such a symbol (I called myself then the Rabbi Wise, "I could point out that... I founded an artistic group of which I was a Jewish nation. He even referred to his earlier experience in such a role: He wrote to of totalitarian leaders and proposed himself as the future leader of the fledgling that he imagined these efforts in militant terms that resemble the modus operandi prominent Jews capable of solving the Jewish question."98 His letters and plans reveal when he started a letter-writing campaign to form an international network of abolition of the Jews" soon after he arrived in Paris at the beginning of his exile, an attempt at political action began with Schoenberg's efforts to work "for the these two fundamental insights were for their time astonishing. Nevertheless his disturbing vision of the new Jewish state, by anyone's reckoning at the country and started his campaign to save all other European Jews. and other Jews found themselves hounded out of their jobs, he almost immediately years before he came to power. When that time came and Schoenberg that it not to acts of violence?"97 All of this was six months before Hitler's 1923 attempt—false it goes without saying...—into reality... [W]hat is anti-Semitism to Jews with Trotsky's and Lenin's willingness to spill "rivers of blood in order to turn consider him and others to be completely German; he also connects these observa- approach to Jews altogether different from that of those who would aimed to Jews. In that long letter Schoenberg names Hitler and recognizes him as was after he had been expelled from Matsee, a holiday area that had declared itself receive due. The first is his famous letter to Kandinsky of May 23, 1923, written two describe the seriousness of the situation for European Jewry long before almost again. Two particular moments bear witness to Schoenberg's remarkable ability to functioning in parallel with this, however, are the insights and attempted political we would expect Christlike messianism?

...contrast to his earlier claims to be performing an ethical, creative act. By "the 'ethics' above all Weininger's 'ethics,' might have looked very different Schoenberg anxiously reflecting upon and trying to rewrite his

...returning to "a pure musical idea" after 1933 stood

One of the interesting things about reading Schoenberg in this way is that he becomes the historical actor whose case seems to raise the question, why didn't others see the same thing? As Michael André Bernstein has pointed out, there is a tendency in the writing of history to indulge in "backshadowing, a kind of retroactive foreshadowing in which the shared knowledge of the outcome of a series of events by narrator and listener is used to judge the participants in those events as though they too should have known what was to come."<sup>100</sup> In this case, our knowledge of the Holocaust is sometimes used, he suggests, to expose the "blindness" and "self-deception" of Austro-German Jewry, their imagined unwillingness to save themselves from a doom that supposedly was clear to see—namely, that Hitler's social (and racist) utopianism might lead to unimaginable horrors. This is entirely unreasonable, as Bernstein also points out: How could we expect anyone at the time to have foreseen acts that even now many find incomprehensible. Yet Schoenberg did have moments of astonishing insight: He was at least willing to see the worst, perhaps because he recognized the underlying racially inflected utopianism. Having engaged with such theories in the artistic sphere, Schoenberg had good grounds for predicting a catastrophic outcome of political developments in his beloved Germany.

The epistolary style of Berg and Webern raises fascinating questions about the moment when Schoenberg renounced tonality and its immediate aftermath. The parallels between cultural milieu and music now seem so well rehearsed (affinities with Kraus, Loos, Altenberg, Wittgenstein, etc.) that ten years ago a volume on the music of the Second Viennese School declared the need only to provide an outline of the prevailing cultural set of conditions: "[A]nalogies with the musical modernism of the Second Viennese School...will be obvious."<sup>101</sup> These letters make it clear just how unfamiliar the thinking of the period is to us now and in doing so raise awkward questions. Writing about ideological contexts of the turn of the century that, with the hindsight of subsequent events, may link with subsequent events is not easy when the subject of discussion is the very stuff of musical modernism, and the events are the atrocities of the Holocaust. In the first two decades of the century utopianism, posing as a solution to cultural decline, often drove modernist approaches to art; in the 1930s a utopian political ideology posing as a solution to cultural decline brutally attempted to control music and society as a whole. Although the urge to interpret the latter as the culmination of the former is tempting, the interpretative stakes are very high: The latter was also closely associated with an ideology that led to the extermination of millions—Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, political dissidents, and those who were elderly, physically, and mentally vulnerable. How can we approach music that we believe to be connected to events in such ways? Need it necessarily affect our relation to the music? Art at either end of the aesthetic spectrum was deemed by different people at different times to manifest cultural decline or, conversely, cultural renewal. Moreover, although music is a product of culture and history, it can also be reappropriated for other times. We learned that lesson long ago with Wagner. I have no easy answers about how to negotiate this ethically fraught terrain as cul-



Excerpts from Letters

December 8, 1908: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>104,105</sup>  
With humble greetings and full of gratitude for you—but you are against  
thanks, how should I say it? Can it be said? Who has ever received as many acts of  
charity as I have from you?

August 30, 1909: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>106</sup>  
[The letter is quite defensive about Schoenberg's apparently having believed that  
Webern failed with a job at Koblenz.]  
Believe me, Herr Schoenberg, I always strive for one thing only: to keep a dis-  
tance, respect, nothing is taken for granted. Respect—  
For me it is a blessing to know you, and everything—just the way you treat me—

December 24, 1909: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>107</sup>  
Dear Herr Schoenberg,  
Permit me to give you Plato's "Phaidon" for Christmas this time. It is so remark-  
able that all the important men that ever lived have sacrificed their lives, either  
directly or indirectly, for the idea of the immortality of the soul. Socrates, Jesus  
Christ; and Beethoven, Strindberg;

APPENDIX

It is acceptable for historians to ignore an important chapter in  
Jewish history as a point of reference because to so use it is fraught with inter-  
pretive and ethical difficulties? Is it acceptable to admit of interpretive play-  
fulness in readings that resist any claims to truth? Dominick  
Lacour points out that the creation of certain distinctions can be immensely  
important. The ethical and ideological positions we might imply by the words  
we choose, even unwittingly or unconsciously, are also brought into especially  
sharp focus when we talk, even by association, about a historical catastrophe with  
such profound emotional, cultural, and ethical investments as the Holocaust.  
The legacies of German Jews such as Schoenberg whose  
personal histories encompassed much of the troubled modern history of European  
Jews—from emancipation to destruction and beyond to diaspora existence and  
return—are more complex than most.<sup>103</sup> Schoenberg's beginning and end-of-  
the-world identifications with Christ offer windows to understanding, but windows that  
are covered with the traces of ideologies embraced and later reconsidered. The  
modern aspirations of both modernism and the Schoenberg circle resist easy

Should that be the meaning of this life?

It's always the same story:

There is more than you can perceive with your physical senses.

But what is the outcome of this?

All this is a riddle to me.

And that the words of Socrates or Plato are today as true as they were 2000 years ago, that just proves again that there is something that persists over time and that works through selected men.

Selected by whom?

If the spiritual, mysterious stands above the material, how does it come in this particular potency into this person?

Can the spiritual even be bred? By whom?

Which power is exerting its force here and—why?

**June 23, 1910: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>108</sup>**

At the moment I'm re-reading Weininger (*Über die letzten Dinge*). I find it quite wonderful. He also sees things from the other side and in context. And above all that intellectual rigor.

Tell me, can one really describe thinking and feeling as totally different matters?

I cannot imagine any superb intellect without the red glow of emotion.

With Weininger this is certainly the case, and [surely also] with Strindberg, Plato, Kant, Kraus?

It just flows out of the human being, directly.

That's what is so superb with Weininger. It is also the reason it is written in such a wonderful manner.

At the moment I am always thinking of the following men: you, Kokoschka, Mahler, Kraus, Weininger.

**July 6, 1910: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>109</sup>**

Mahler really is something magnificent; it is not at all art—aestheticism; perhaps if one did [not?] know his life, one could reconstruct it from his symphonies. They really must be most closely connected with his inner experiences.

I also see a development: from the most intense worship of nature to an ever more spiritual, more enraptured content. This is, again and again, my compelling impression. I couldn't care less whether it is right....

It is so wonderful—radiating from the most high.

**July 16, 1910: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>110</sup>**

[Refers to Herr Stefan's having written about Strauss being "one of our highest hopes."]

I do know one thing—you have to be as hard as possible against the rabble—they still believe you depend on their mercy.

A kick up their backsides.—

knowledge or perhaps only in the premonition of a torrent, a gigantic flood.  
You know, when I read the letter I felt as if I were in a surging sea or in the  
What you have told me about your book is tremendous.<sup>115</sup>

August 10, 1910: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>114</sup>

...I'll give you the book as a present, for I really want you to read it.  
out relationships. But it can be put more beautifully than Rilke does?  
is, so to speak, nature itself, something essentially different from man, totally with-

That is the essence of the point of view of Strindberg, of Weininger: that woman  
surrender.<sup>113</sup>  
The woman who loves always surpasses the man she loves because life is greater  
than fate. Her self-surrender wants to be infinite: This is her happiness. But the  
The woman who loves always surpasses the man she loves because life is greater  
and endless, like an eternal being, she stands beside the one who transforms himself.  
is to man—this is what causes the doomed quality of all love relationships: resolute  
fact that woman, in accordance with her nature, must make the same choice in rela-  
The saint refuses destiny and chooses life "opposite God." Then it is said: "But the  
the man with the former and the woman with the latter."<sup>112</sup>

August 4, 1910: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>111</sup>

The [Rilke] makes, for instance, the distinction between fate and life, connecting  
The man with the former and the woman with the latter.<sup>112</sup>  
The saint refuses destiny and chooses life "opposite God." Then it is said: "But the  
fact that woman, in accordance with her nature, must make the same choice in rela-  
is to man—this is what causes the doomed quality of all love relationships: resolute  
and endless, like an eternal being, she stands beside the one who transforms himself.  
The woman who loves always surpasses the man she loves because life is greater  
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The woman who loves always surpasses the man she loves because life is greater  
surrender.<sup>113</sup>  
That is the essence of the point of view of Strindberg, of Weininger: that woman  
out relationships. But it can be put more beautifully than Rilke does?  
...I'll give you the book as a present, for I really want you to read it.  
August 10, 1910: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>114</sup>  
What you have told me about your book is tremendous.<sup>115</sup>  
You know, when I read the letter I felt as if I were in a surging sea or in the  
knowledge or perhaps only in the premonition of a torrent, a gigantic flood.

Oh, it is immense.

How can you think that I am somehow holding back from you....

I am going to climb the Triglav... Maybe you will find it ridiculous that I do things like that, but:

The strange thing I find when on the mountain peaks, this delicacy and purity: that attracts me time and again....

The solitude and the wrestling with God.

Wiping off all filth.

When I thought of my works, I started feeling better.

I have come to realize that they are good.

**November 9, 1910: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>116</sup>**

I remain completely under the impression of your wonderful work. Apart from Beethoven and Mahler, I don't know anything that moves me so much as your music.

Probably also Wagner; but that is something else. Just in these last few days, while we were rehearsing and performing the *Meistersinger* here, I've had quite a number of ideas...

In Berlin I saw the van Gogh exhibition....

For me there are only three painters: they are you, van Gogh and Kokoschka.

**March 9, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>117</sup>**

I am reading a book at the moment that is not written out of the spirit of man: *Seraphita* by Balzac. Seraphita is a being beyond gender, an angel.

**March 21, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>118</sup>**

I'm still reading *Seraphita*.

Every sentence in it is a miracle....

Every word in the book does nothing but serve the truth that belief is the highest [good]. Did you read about Claudel in the latest "Fackel"? It is probably true: All really outstanding men reached a total belief in God. In any case, Balzac is certainly one of the greatest and most amazing human beings.

\* May 18, 1911: Mahler dies

**May 24, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>119</sup>**

Mahler's death makes me sadder every day. It is becoming increasingly inconceivable to me that it has happened. Mahler is dead....

After all, you too said yourself that you had the impression that His [sic] work was fully completed....

I have the feeling that Mahler knows how much we grieve for Him [sic]....

Rest assured, Herr Schoenberg, that each of us clings to you with his whole heart. The planned book [i.e., the 1912 Festschrift] will grant you an insight that will confirm to you the truth of these words.

The past days in Vienna are of immense significance to me: Mahler's death and the certainty that I possess your friendship forever. Gustav Mahler and you. There I see my course quite distinctly. I will not deviate. God's blessing on you.

End of July 1911: Berg to Webern<sup>120</sup>

Berg has just explained why he failed to visit Schoenberg when he arrived in Vienna, something that had annoyed Schoenberg.]

and I can only implore you, too, my dear friend, by the sacredness of our art, that, despite my curious action, there was not a spark of loveliness, lack of interest, let alone indifference in me for Schoenberg; rather that through the sorrow, weakness, I could make him embittered through my apparent neglect, and not be able to avoid his rage,—that I—as already said—through this suffering in advance, that a before Schoenberg told me directly that he was angry,—already felt,—that there is no greater way to confirm so holy and *unchanging* a love as this one which we feel for him, than with this suffering.

August 3, 1911: Berg to Schoenberg<sup>121</sup>

I have now received the conclusion of the *Harmonielehre*, as well as the beginning the divine [gottvolle] foreword—and the dedication. This wonderful book has now received its final consecration [Weihe]: Before entering the sanctuary [Tempelraum] one kneels devoutly [andachtsvoll] and crosses oneself in profoundest humility. The appropriate words of composition, a heartfelt sigh from a believer's breast before commencement of the holy service [Gottesdienstes]. And that this work was written in the service of the deity [im Dienste der Gottheit] becomes ever clearer and more certain to me, the more I read it, the deeper I delve into it. And that we poor mortals may partake of it—that is our highest joy.

August 11, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>122</sup>

[Webern is referring here to an unpleasant series of interactions between Schoenberg and his neighbor.<sup>123</sup>]

Be assured, we will help you....

Dear Herr Schönberg, just trust in us. May what I say now not appear ridiculous to you: I believe that the disciples of Christ cannot have felt more deeply for their Lord than we for you. God protect you, my dear Herr Schönberg.

August 13, 1911: Berg to Schoenberg<sup>124</sup>

...I've just heard from Webern of your sudden departure... Last night I received the dreadful news. But is it really news? When you, esteemed Herr Schönberg, had anticipated and feared it for months? Is it not rather the fulfillment of the fate of genius? Regardless whether manifested negatively, in the incomprehension of a thousand "sensible" people, or positively, in the hatred of a

madman! I only know that this hatred, this diabolical madness, which ordinarily lies concealed, was revealed on this occasion in a crime against your holy person [*an Ihrer heiligen Person*—of course the details are unknown to me—but I do know (—with the sublime conviction born of unerring hope and expectation—) that the world, which heretofore passed by your deeds with a “shrug of the shoulders”—must pause before the misdeed of a fiend—if only to come to its senses. At this moment of reflection—which beneficently intervenes in the lives of all great men—has surely interceded now in your distress—or in any event cannot be long in coming, for it is high time.—

But!! What meaning can time or things temporal have for you, dearest Herr Schönberg— even sublime moments of suffering—since you have been granted the “deep deep eternity of all joy”?!<sup>125</sup>

We mortals can only bow before your destiny, must realize that even our most fervent hopes are insignificant: Somewhere there must be a sublime Judgment, a divine Will. And surely that is infallible—even if it appears all too enigmatic to us.—

**August 16, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg**<sup>126</sup>

*[The letter begins with Webern saying that he is collecting money from the other students to assist Schoenberg.]*

I don't know whether you see what I was trying to hint at here?

I would like to be an invisible power that can give you everything you would wish for. Or to put it another way:

One makes an offering to God; not an offering in the sense of a gift which is difficult to give for one reason or other; the priest who reads the mass; a prayer.

I really can't express it.

To me it was such a holy act, doing this.

You will surely understand me.

As for Berg and all the others: I know that they love you without bounds.

**August 18, 1911: Schoenberg to Berg**<sup>127</sup>

*[Thanks him for his warmth. Reassures him that what had come between them is now forgotten. After the following excerpt, he reveals that Webern has sent him one thousand Kronen and that he suspects Berg was one of the contributors.]*

One thing, though: I fear being overrated! Try not to do it. It weighs upon me a little. And perhaps it is partly the fear of being overrated that makes me so suspicious. Perhaps because I fear: the impending backlash, the moment I am no longer overrated, perhaps because I continually fear the inevitable moment when people will actually begin to underrate me, perhaps that's why I detect a hint of defection in the slightest negligence...

**August 19, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg**<sup>128</sup>

Here at Berg's place I have read your wonderful introduction to the *Harmonielehre*. It is so overwhelming and so indescribably touching.

Dear Herr Schoenberg, you thank us?!

What is everything, everything is through you; I only began to live through you. That you could use us to confirm yourself was our boundless luck, a boundless blessing for us. If only I could possess this wonderful book already.

September 23, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>129</sup>

I would like to set aside the factor that you are our teacher in order to make this as clear as possible: The effect of your words, considered in the context of morals, and your ethical and already I sense that I should not have made this distinction: it flows into me, and the most factual instruction in musical things is rooted in your heart. That the very thing that moves me so much about your book: this purity, holiness, and you discuss these things.

Your knowledge blossoms precisely out of this moral force. Even if it is only at this very moment of your confession that your self-illumination shines in the most marvelous radiance, for me it had already been a most for a very long time. That is my aspiration: to approach, like you, to illuminate oneself to the innermost, watching over one's most secret thoughts every second.

And behind this terrible constraint I sense something really delicate and quiet. Your knowledge blossoms precisely out of this moral force. Even if it is only at this very moment of your confession that your self-illumination shines in the most marvelous radiance, for me it had already been a most for a very long time. That is my aspiration: to approach, like you, to illuminate oneself to the innermost, watching over one's most secret thoughts every second.

August 21, 1911: Berg to Schoenberg<sup>130</sup>

Berg refers here to Schoenberg's forgiveness of his failure to visit him, as mentioned earlier.] And with your forgiveness I feel reborn, purified, and today, 2 days after receiving your letter, your anger seems to lie far, far away... The fact that you yourself, Herr Schönberg, believe you won't ever need to withhold that goodwill from me again, that is the crowning glory of your letter.

August 23, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>131</sup>

I'm really happy that you're reading *Seraphita* and *Louis Lambert*.

September 8, 1911: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>132</sup>

But I have less and less to do with all these people [Strauss, Pfitzner, Debussy, and Reger, whom he had just mentioned]. I know only two things: your works and Mahler's.

September 8, 1911: Webern to Berg<sup>133</sup>

I saw the death mask of the saint [i.e., Mahler] in a volume of *Die Musik*. My dear friend, there is only one thing [to do]: to strive with all one's might for a life here that is completely dedicated to ideals and that is already touched by a breath from this distant, other life. [He seems to mean Schoenberg.]

**September 25, 1911: Berg to Schoenberg**<sup>134</sup>

[*Asked by Schoenberg to be his substitute teacher, Berg says how deeply honored he is by the idea.*]

For there is something so wonderful in being the chosen one [*der Berufene*], the champion and comrade-in-arms for your ideas, your ideals, your artistic intentions—even if it is only in this God-forsaken city. May my joy over this priestly function [*Priester-Amt*] (for so I should like to call it) be your guarantee, dear esteemed Herr Schönberg, that I will administer it to the best of my ability. Perhaps I shall even succeed in accomplishing something in this very restricted sphere of activity for the great and holy cause [*heilige Sache*] for which you, surrounded by an ever-growing body of followers, will be fighting in the world outside.

**October 6, 1911: Josef Polnauer to Schoenberg**<sup>135</sup>

[*This letter is dominated by details about Polnauer's packing Schoenberg's personal possessions to move to Berlin. He goes on to say his good-byes, acknowledging that he doesn't feel he was part of the inner circle.*]

I don't know whom I owe the more: the teacher or the man Schoenberg. But in the end it doesn't matter because with you the one cannot be separated from the other... You didn't remain merely a teacher to any of your students; you always became the "model."... [T]here is now one more man [i.e., Polnauer] who loves you with all his heart, who wants to hold on to the memory of the encounter with you as a holy good and who will always want to remain thankful to you in small and very small ways—I don't think I can do otherwise—if you would only provide the opportunity.

**October 20, 1911: Schoenberg, "Franz Liszt's Werk und Wesen"**<sup>136</sup>

Liszt's importance lies in the one place where great men's importance can lie: in faith. Fanatical faith, of the kind that creates a radical distinction between normal men and those it impels...

He believed in himself, he believed in One Who was greater than himself, he believed in progress, in culture, in beauty, in morality, in humanity. And he believed in God!...

Altogether his effect has perhaps been greater, through the many stimuli he left behind for his successors, than Wagner's has been—Wagner, who provided a work too perfect for anyone coming later to be able to add anything to it. But there is certainly no need to think of him only this way. One need think merely of his *Christus* to know a work whose effect has still to dawn. Perhaps the day has almost come when contact will be re-established with its tone, its intentions, for our time is again seeking its God; this search characterizes it better than do the most outstanding technical achievements...

Great men's effect, if any, on life is infinitely slight. If one observes what Plato, Christ, Kant, Swedenborg, Schopenhauer, Balzac and others thought and compares it with what people now believe and the way people now conduct their lives;... then one doubts whether progress exists.



November 23, 1911: **Webern to Berg**<sup>137</sup>

*[Talking about playing Das Lied von der Erde to Schoenberg.]*  
 But this is possible: to strive toward deserving it. To reach into the heart, fith out!

*[Toward "Musum corda" [Lift up your hearts] says the Christian religion.*

*Thus Mahler lived, thus Schoenberg.*

December 8, 1911: **Webern to Berg**<sup>138</sup>

The *Harmonielehre* has appeared!!!...

At last the work is there. I believe it will be sold in masses. Hertzka need only arrange for it to appear in all the shop windows. Now the work has taken its place in the world. I am eager to know what will happen. I have a feeling that everyone who reads it will put his hand to his head; "Ah, it must be so!"

The whole world must put its hand to its head; a sign of the astonishment of the whole of nature must become apparent. Since Wagner nothing like it has been written in the German language.

Perhaps even since Schopenhauer. I can hardly wait to read the book as a whole at last. You know the whole thing already, yes?

December 26, 1911: **Erwin Stein to Schoenberg**<sup>139</sup>

I must thank you for your *Harmonielehre*. Even though I already knew much of it, everything is a new revelation to me now that I read it as a coherent book. That a theory of harmony can be such a humane book. And that wonderful foreword. I nearly feel ashamed that my name also appears in such a context. I have a guilty conscience about you: that I could not be involved in things that should have made life easier for you. I could not do that and therefore, for a long while did not dare write to you.

January 11, 1912: **Webern to Berg**<sup>140</sup>

Have you heard anything about the *Harmonielehre*? Please, [tell] Schoenberg only half-way favorable judgments. It is all so dreadful. That is why our book must turn out to be really special...

After all, people used to abuse Beethoven and still do abuse Mahler, but it is dreadful, appalling to have to go through this at such proximity. I hope that the words of our book will have great power.

It must be effective. I want to perish for rage and fury. Do write something more for the book, something really beautiful.

Lets all write something more. ~~Lets raise this man up.~~ (ah no), let's tear the clouds and fog asunder with our ardor so that this light will finally be made visible to this miserable earth.

How beautiful this *Harmonielehre* is.

All events in nature and art, they are God's wonders, are secrets for us; they are here, are eternal.

Measured against that, our book is nothing, but with regard to the filth of this world it can be something.

Schoenberg doesn't need us.

But we can worship; we must do so.

We need him.

**March 1, 1912: Schoenberg, "Gustav Mahler"<sup>141</sup>**

"Gustav Mahler was a saint...

To Gustav Mahler's work!

Into its pure air!

Here is the faith that raises us on high. Here is someone believing, in his immortal works, in an eternal soul..."

**June 9, 1912: Webern to Schoenberg<sup>142</sup>**

This, our relationship to you as our guide, our leader, is something deeply blissful for me.

You are the bond, the insoluble bond that unites us. We all live for you. Believe me.

### Excerpt from Schoenberg's Berlin Diary

**February 25, 1912 (written March 11)<sup>143</sup>**

Evening, large party at the Zemlinsky's... Alex [Zemlinsky] is not quite as nice. Above all he denies me any word of praise almost out of principle. He seems to think that I am too highly praised within my circle and obviously wants to prevent me from behaving like a megalomaniac... I feel I am being talked about in really much too effusive a way. I am too young for this kind of praise, have accomplished too little, and too little that is perfect. My present accomplishment, I can still only regard as a hope for the future, as a promise that I may keep; but not as anything more. And I have to say, were I not spoiling the joy of my students by doing so, I might possibly have rejected the book. On the other hand, however, I was so overwhelmed by the great love which shows in all this, that I really had been happy, insofar as something like this can provide happiness. And I was proud as well: I find everything, almost everything, written so well and with such beautiful words, that I really should have a high opinion of a group of human beings like these. Above all, of course, Webern! He is a wonderful human being. How moved he was when he handed the book to me. Solemn and yet so unpretentious. Almost like a school boy, but like one who only prepared something so as not to be overwhelmed. I have resolved to drink brotherhood<sup>144</sup> with him at the first opportunity. Then Berg, then Linke and Jalowetz. Yes, even Horwitz. And: Kandinsky. A magnificent essay!

But I was embarrassed in front of Alex. He is somewhat skeptical. I know he does not like to believe. And though he thinks much of me—I almost feel he would like it best if he alone thought highly of me! Strangely enough, he does not trust or believe in the enthusiasm of others. Despite the fact that he himself is capable of so much genuine enthusiasm! Why?

1. The question of whether to use the word "Holocaust" or "Shoah" has been subject to discussion among historians, with some such as Michael André Bernstein (*Forgone*) favoring the Hebrew word "Shoah" because it does not carry the unwelcome theological implications of a divinely sanctioned sacrifice of "Holocaust." For further discussion of the question see, for instance, Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 85.
2. See Theodor Adorno, "Commitment," in *Notes to Literature*, vol. 2, trans. Sherry Weber Nicholson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 76-94.
3. For an account of these efforts see Möriz, *Jewish Identities*, 201-21.
4. As Möriz notes in *Jewish Identities*, 204.
5. Principal among these is Alexander L. Ringer, *Arnold Schoenberg: The Composer as Jew* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), esp. 23-34. In some respects I reverse the chronological direction of the gaze that Möriz casts upon Schoenberg's strivings toward a leadership role around 1933.
6. Henri Lontz, ed., and Wieland Hoban, trans., *Theodor W. Adorno and Alban Berg: Correspondence 1925-1935* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005).
7. Joseph Auner seems to agree with this in "The Second Viennese School as a Historical Concept," in Bryan R. Simms, ed., *Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern: A Companion to the Second Viennese School*, 26 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1999).
8. Dahlhaus, "Schoenberg's Aesthetic Theology," 90.
9. Whether there was significant communication before then is uncertain, as the editors note in Juliane Brand, Christopher Hailey, and Donald Harris, eds., *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Selected Letters*, 1 (London: Macmillan, 1987). This correspondence has now been published in full in German: Juliane Brand, Christopher Hailey, and Andreas Meyer, eds., *Briefwechsel Arnold Schönberg-Alban Berg*, 2 vols. (Briefwechsel der Wiener Schule, hrsg. von Thomas Ertelt, Bd. 3) (Mainz: Schott, 2007).
10. The Berg-Webern series is being prepared for publication as I write (early 2009).
11. The only published run of letters between the two consists of the eighteen from 1926 to 1939. See Arnold Schönberg, "Arnold Schönberg an Anton Webern: Eine Auswahl unbekannter Briefe," in Ernst Hilmar, ed., *Arnold Schönberg Gedenkausstellung*, 44-67 (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1974). For references of published letters to Roberto Gerhard,

## NOTES

Hildegard Jone, Josef Humplik, Hanns Eisler, Willi Reich, Erwin Schulhoff, and others see Zoltan Roman, *Anton von Webern: An Annotated Bibliography* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1983). Excerpts from some of the earlier letters are nevertheless found in Hans Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work* (London: Gollancz, 1978), 49–52. Regina Busch has begun work on an edition of this correspondence.

18. A rough typescript of much of the Berg-Webern and Webern-Schoenberg correspondence has long been available for inspection at the Wiener Stadt- und Landesbibliothek; however, many of the originals are now digitally reproduced on the website of the Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna. For the best available account of the extant Schoenberg correspondence see “Preliminary Inventory of Schoenberg Correspondence,” *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 17(1–2) (June and November 1995) and 19(1–2) (June and November 1996).

19. The first and last entries in the 1912 Festschrift presented to Schoenberg by his students are also relevant but are not reproduced here. See *Arnold Schönberg: In höchster Verehrung* (Munich: Piper, 1912); trans. Barbara Z. Schoenberg in *Schoenberg and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch, 198–261 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

20. In another letter to Berg (Dec. 12, 1911) not quoted here, he gives Berg a collection of Kant’s letters for Christmas, drawing parallels between Kant and Beethoven and between Schopenhauer and Wagner. He then says, “And Strindberg and Mahler? Maeterlinck and Schönberg? Also Strindberg and Schönberg! Rays of God.” Full letter quoted in *Die Reihe*, vol. 2 (Bryn Mawr, Penn.: Presser, 1958), 16.

21. This was well before Schoenberg mentions Balzac and Swedenborg in his published Liszt essay of Oct. 20, 1911, “Franz Liszt’s Werk und Wesen,” translated as “Franz Liszt’s Work and Being” in Leonard Stein, ed., and Leo Black, trans., *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 446.

22. For full details on the genesis of this work see Jennifer Robin Shaw, “Schoenberg’s Choral Symphony, Die Jakobsleiter, and Other Wartime Fragments,” PhD diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook (December 2002). Shaw nevertheless does not identify Webern as the source of Schoenberg’s knowledge of Balzac and hence *Séraphita*.

23. See, for instance, Susanne Rode-Breymann (trans. Mary Whittall), “... Gathering the Divine from the Earthly . . .”: Ferdinand Avenarius and His Significance for Anton Webern’s Early Settings of Lyric Poetry,” in *Webern Studies*, ed. Kathryn Bailey, 1–31 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

24. I return to Weininger later.

25. On Lüger’s Vienna see, for instance, Richard S. Geehr, *Karl Lueger: Mayor of Fin de Siècle Vienna* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990).

26. Quoted in Lazar, “Arnold Schoenberg and His Doubles,” 110.

27. *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, ed. Erwin Stein (London: Faber, 1987), 35. Dehmel did not write this text for him.

28. *Die Musik* 9/4 (21) (1909): 160.

29. Arnold Schönberg, *Catalogue raisonné*, 2 vols., ed. Christian Meyer and Theres Muxeneder, item 78, 160 (Vienna: Arnold Schönberg Center, 2005).

30. Schoenberg, “Franz Liszt’s Work and Being” and “Gustav Mahler: In Memoriam,” in Stein, *Style and Idea*, 442–47, 447–48. He also wrote a lecture about Mahler (dated Oct. 13, 1912) that was revised in 1948 for Dika Newlin’s *Style and Idea*, in Stein, *Style and Idea*, 449–71. Peter Franklin suggests that the later essay is conceived to some extent “as an example of how he would best have liked his own adherents and acolytes to write about himself”; of course they already had in their letters and in *Arnold Schönberg: In höchster Verehrung*. See Franklin, *The Idea of Music: Schoenberg and Others* (London: Macmillan, 1985), 77–90 (82).



directors and actors, and various other “artists” continue undisturbed in their destructive work and the true artists must suffer and suffer until they can suffer no more. Oh, dear Herr Schönberg, while reading this I have to think repeatedly and often of you and of—Mahler. (*Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 3–4)

48. *Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 53.

49. *Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 60.

50. *Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 60.

51. *Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 61.

52. *Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 62.

53. Jan. 13, 1912, *Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 65.

54. Albrecht Dümling, *Die fremden Klänge der hängenden Gärten: Die öffentliche Einsamkeit der neuen Musik am Beispiel von Arnold Schönberg und Stefan George* (Munich: Kindler, 1981), 177. For a shorter version of the key argument of this book in connection with Schoenberg’s *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, see Albrecht Dümling, “Public Loneliness: Atonality and the Crisis of Subjectivity in Schönberg’s Opus 15,” in *Schönberg and Kandinsky: An Historic Encounter*, ed. Konrad Boehmer, 101–38 (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1997).

55. Dümling, “Public Loneliness,” 111–12.

56. Dümling, *Die fremden Klänge*, 177.

57. Dümling, *Die fremden Klänge*, 25.

58. Dümling, *Die fremden Klänge*, 29.

59. Quoted in Dümling, *Die fremden Klänge*, 25.

60. Quoted in Dümling, *Die fremden Klänge*, 48.

61. According to Stefan Breuer, cited in Paul Bishop, “Stefan George and the Munich Cosmologists,” in Jens Rieckmann, ed., *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005), 172.

62. Michael Winkler, “Master and Disciples: The George Circle,” in Rieckmann, *Companion to the Works of Stefan George*, 149. The other key grouping was the Munich-based “cosmic circle,” which formed around Ludwig Klages and Alfred Schuler, out of which the George circle grew, though it did not operate on the same master-disciple basis. See Paul Bishop, “Stefan George and the Munich Cosmologists,” in Rieckmann, *Companion to the Works of Stefan George*, 161–187.

63. See Jens Rieckmann, “Introduction,” in *Companion to the Works of Stefan George*.  
8. Also Bishop, “Stefan George and the Munich Cosmologists.”

64. In the first volume of *Blätter für die Kunst*, founded by George, Carl August Klein contributed an essay about Stefan George that stated that his new art did not look abroad for influences; its mainstays were Richard Wagner the composer, Friedrich Nietzsche the orator, Arnold Böcklin the painter, and Max Klinger the drawer (*Zeichner*).

65. Winkler, “Master and Disciples,” 146.

66. Quoted in Dümling, *Die fremden Klänge*, 41. Friedrich Wolters, an even more intimate member of the circle, said the same thing a bit later: Wolters, *Stefan George und die Blätter für die Kunst: Deutsche Geistesgeschichten seit 1890* (Berlin: Bondi, 1930), 543.

67. Robert E. Norton, *Secret Germany: Stefan George and His Circle* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 326. See Ludwig Klages, *Stefan George* (Berlin: Bondi, 1902).

68. Friedrich Wolters, *Herrschaft und Dienst* (Berlin: Einhorn-Press im Vorlag Otto von Holtz, 1909). Wolters may have sought to draw a connection with Hegel’s “Herrschaft und Knechtschaft” in his title. On Hegel’s master-slave dialectic see Frederick Neuhouser, “Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord,” in Kenneth R. Westphal, ed., *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, 37–54 (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

4. "The young Reich" can be translated as "spiritual empire," "realm," or "state," and "spiritual connections of 'intellectual,' as well as 'spiritual.'" "Das geistige Reich" [beautiful life], which George had written over "The Reich" in *Samtliche Werke*, vol. 5, *Der Teppich des Lebens und die Lieder von Wagner*, with a prologue) (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag, 1984), 10.
5. *Über die Kunst: Eine Auslese aus den Jahren 1904–1909* (Berlin: Bondi, 1909). The *Jewish Question* in *German Literature, 1749–1939*: (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 370.
6. *Die Welt, Herrschaft und Dienst*, 64.
7. In the *Wagner* cult see, for instance, Rieckmann, "Introduction," 13, and Norton, "Introduction," 34–44. George's homoerotic interests are well documented and were generally well known. As early as 1914 an article by Peter Hamecher titled "Der männliche Geist" appeared in *sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld's Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* 14(1) (1914): 10–23, edited since 1899 on behalf of the *Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee*, the first organization of the gay emancipation movement, founded in 1897. I take this information from Marita Keilson-Lauritz, "Stefan George: Concept of Love and the Gay Emancipation Movement," in Rieckmann, *Stefan George: A Study in the Works of Stefan George*, 207.
8. Quoted in Max Rychner, "Stefan George" in *Zur europäischen Literatur* (Zurich: Artemis, 1961), 73.
9. William McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1974), esp. 85–164.
10. Julie Hubbert, "Mahler and Schoenberg: Levels of Influence," PhD diss., Yale University, 1996, 61. As Hubbert points out, it is unclear whether Schoenberg reversed his interest in Mahler because of his personal contact with this powerful Viennese music figure or "because of the Third Symphony."
11. See Susanne Rode, *Alban Berg und Karl Kraus: Zur geistigen Biographie des Komponisten der 'Lulu'* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1988), and Julian Johnson, "Karl Kraus and the Schönberg School," *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center (Arnold Schönberg Center Circle, Report of the Symposium 12–15 September 1999)* 2 (Vienna, 2000): 179–89.
12. A translation of Weininger's "Über die letzten Dinge" (1904/1907) (*On Last Things*, trans. and with an introduction by Steven Burns (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 2001), 68–69.
13. As Steven Burns points out, quoting *On Last Things* (71), in "Sex and Solipsism: Weininger's *On Last Things*," in David G. Stern and Bela Szabados, eds., *Wittgenstein Reads Weininger* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 95.
14. A new translation has recently appeared from the first edition: *Sex and Character: An Investigation of Fundamental Principles*, trans. Ladislaus Löb, ed. Daniel Steuer with Laura Marcus, intro. by Daniel Steuer (Indiana University Press, 2005).
15. Of Wagner he writes, "one still greater than Wagner first had to overcome the Jewishness within him before he found his special mission," in Steuer, *Sex and Character*, 276.
16. See Julie Brown, "Otto Weininger and Musical Discourse in Turn-of-the-century Vienna," in *Western Music and Race*, ed. Julie Brown, 84–101 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
17. Nike Wagner, "Parität et l'antisémitisme juif à Vienne, dans les années 1900," *Diogenes* 3 (Summer 1983): 22–32. See also Nike Wagner, *The Dramas of a Musical Dynasty*, trans. Ewald Osers and Michael Downes (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2000), 118–30.
84. See Nancy A. Harrowitz and Barbara Hyams, eds., *Jews and Gender: Responses to Otto Weininger* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995).

85. Rode, *Alban Berg und Karl Kraus*, esp. 106–13.

86. Wolfgang Gratzer also suggests that the mystical ideas articulated by Weininger in *Über die letzten Dinge* probably contributed to Berg's broader mystical and superstitious outlook: *Zur "wunderlichen Mystik" Alban Bergs: Eine Studie* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1993), esp. 93–101. Within the broader Schoenberg circle Georg C. Klaren identified Schreker as a likely Weininger reader as early as 1924: See Klaren, *Otto Weininger: Der Mensch, sein Werk, und sein Leben* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1924), 229 ("Schreker, der gewaltigste lebende Komponist, hat sogar die Weiningerschen Geschlechtsprobleme vertont, auf seine Bücher wenigstens haben sie stark abgefärbt"). It is also tempting to read Schreker's sketch of July 20, 1909, *Der neue Parsifal*, in Weininger's wake. Schreker presents Parsifal not only as a figure of redemption but also as a metaphor for the creative artist, glossing aspects of Parsifal with the myth of the Blaue Blume, while hinting at the pantomime plot for which he had already composed music, Oscar Wilde's "The Birthday of the Infanta," and an opera libretto he was yet to write, *Die Gezeichneten*. Lyrical and operatic constructions of women and of the relations between the sexes by several other composers, notably Strauss and Pfitzner, have been made with reference to Weininger's characterology of woman. See Gabriele Busch-Salmen, "Menschenliebe im allerhöchsten Sinne": Zu den Frauenrollen in Hans Pfitzners Bühnenwerken" ["Brotherly Love in Its Highest Sense": The Female Roles in Hans Pfitzner's Stage Works], in *Frauengestalten in der Oper des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Carmen Ottner (Vienna: Doblinger, 2003), 116–34.

87. Vienna: Tal, 1919.

88. This paragraph could even be read as alluding to Weininger's suicide: Weininger formulated new "laws of morality" but could not, according to contemporary accounts of his suicide, "live with guilt."

89. Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, trans. Roy E. Carter (London: Faber, 1978), 96. This aspect of Schoenberg's construction of harmony is discussed by Susan McClary in *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 107.

90. Julie Brown, "Schoenberg's Early Wagnerisms: Atonality and the Redemption of Ahasuerus," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6(1) (1994): 51–80.

91. As he put it in his Mailamm speech in Los Angeles on Mar. 29, 1934: Stein, *Style and Idea*, 502–503.

92. On this see Julie Brown, "Otto Weininger and Musical Discourse in Turn-of-the-century Vienna."

93. LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust*.

94. Brinkmann, "Reading a Letter," in Reinhold Brinkmann and Christoph Wolff, eds., *Driven into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*, 3–20 (8) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

95. On this topic see, for instance, Michael Mäckelmann, *Arnold Schönberg und das Judentum: Der Komponist und sein religiöses, nationales, und politisches Selbstverständnis nach 1921* (Hamburg: Wagner, 1984), and Móricz, *Jewish Identities*; Hartmut Zelinsky, "Arnold Schönberg—der Wagner Gottes: Anmerkung zum Lebensweg eines deutschen Juden aus Wien," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 4 (1986): 7–19. Zelinsky examines the relationship between Schoenberg's earlier and later dictator-like postures and his Wagnerism but comes to rather different conclusions than I do.

96. Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna, T5–28.TRL: "Was man nicht vergessen sollte" [What Should Never Be Forgotten] (Denk 203a) and "Geyers-Sohn, Geyers-Enkel, Geyers-Enkels-Witwe" (Denk 203b). In the former, Schoenberg remarks ironically that, "following the principle that what is bad is Jewish, and what is Jewish is bad," Wagner referred to Brahms as a "Jewish balladeer," an accusation subsequently repeated by Wagner's followers, along with the naming of Brahms's triplets as "Jewish triplets."



Wassily Kandinsky: *Letters, Pictures, and Documents*, ed. John C. Crawford, 78–82 (London: Faber, 1984).

Wassily Kandinsky, *Jewish Identities*, 208–12) shows that allusions to his far-reaching plans in

Wassily Kandinsky, *Jewish Identities*, 1933.

Wassily Kandinsky, *Jewish Identities*, 210.

Wassily Kandinsky, *Foregone Conclusions*, 16.

Wassily Kandinsky, *Wassily Kandinsky's "Wiener Moderne and the*

*Wiener Moderne*, in Simms, *Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern*, 73–127. "So important is

the phenomenon that I turn in this chapter away from music per se in

order to analyze the phenomenon in its own right and to describe the highly complex set

of conditions under which it thrived. Analogies with the musical modernism of the Second

Vienna School, described in other chapters of this book, will be obvious."

Wassily Kandinsky, *Representing the Holocaust*, see, for instance, 9–11.

Wassily Kandinsky, *On the German Jewish trajectory*: "On the

Representation of Jewish Identity and Historical Consciousness in Schoenberg's Religious

*Thought*, *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center (Arnold Schönberg and His God, Bericht*

*über die Ausstellung 26–29 June 2002)* 5 (Vienna, 2003): 93–107.

Wassily Kandinsky, *SUGGEST MORGING* fn 104 and 105. See below.]

Wassily Kandinsky, *But ergebenem Grub und voll Dank für Sie—aber Sie sind gegen den Dank,*

*werd ich es sagen? Kann man es sagen? Wer aber hat jemals so viel Wohlthaten erhalten,*

*werd ich es ihnen? This and all other letters from Webern to Schoenberg quoted here are*

*digitally reproduced on the website of the Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna; [http://www.arnold-schoenberg.at/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=365&Itemid=696&lang=en](http://www.arnold-schoenberg.at/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=365&Itemid=696&lang=en)*

*transcriptions from the Webern-Schoenberg correspondence and to Dr. Simone*

*Gruber for confirming transcriptions from the Berg-Webern correspondence. I have*

*revised Webern's spelling except where changes were necessary for clarity's sake. I am*

*grateful to Eric Graebner and especially Irene Auerbach for their assistance with the*

*English translations. Excerpts from Webern letters by kind permission of Peter Halbach.*

*See "Glauben Sie mir Herr Schönberg, dies eine bemüht' ich mich immer: Distanz*

*halten, Achtung, nichts ist selbstverständlich. Ehrerbietung—*

*Wirst es ein Glück, Sie zu kennen und alles—so wie Sie halt zu mir sind—"*

*See "Lieber Herr Schönberg,*

*Erhaben Sie, dass ich Ihnen diesmal zu Weihnachten Platons "Phaidon" schenke.*

*Es ist so merkwürdig, dass alle bedeutenden Männer, die je gelebt haben, ihr Leben*

*entweder direkt oder indirekt für die Idee der Unsterblichkeit der Seele geopfert haben.*

*Socrates, Jesus Christus; und Beethoven, Strindberg;*

*Sollte das der Sinn dieses Lebens sein?*

*Immer wieder dieselbe Geschichte:*

*es gibt noch was anderes als man mit den leiblichen Sinnen aufnimmt.*

*Aber was kommt dabei heraus?*

*Mir ist das alles ein Rätsel.*

*Und dass die Worte Sokrates oder Platons heute so wahr sind wie vor 2000 Jahren, das*

*beweist nur wieder dass es etwas gibt was über der Zeit steht und das in ausserlesenem*

*Männern wirkt.*

*Von wem auserlesen?*

*Wenn das geistige, rätselvolle über dem materiellen steht, wieso kommt es gerade in*

*dieser Potenz in diese Person? Kann denn das geistige [sic] auch gezüchtet werden? Von*

*wem?*

*Welche Macht wirkt hier und—warum?"*