

Introduction

¹ Arnold Schönberg: Dedication of *Style and Idea*, c. 1950 (ASSV 5.2.4.6.) (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien, T75.10).

² [Dr. M.]: Neue Wiener Bühne, in: *Der Humorist* 44/9 (May 8, 1924), 2.

³ Gerald Stieg: *Die Fackel*, in: *Karl Kraus-Handbuch. Leben – Werk – Wirkung*. Edited by Katharina Prager and Simon Ganahl. Berlin 2022, 103–122, 103.

In the dedication of *Style and Idea*, his collection of essays that appeared in New York in 1950, Arnold Schönberg counted the composers Anton Webern, Alban Berg, Heinrich Jalowetz, Alexander Zemlinsky and Franz Schreker, the architect Adolf Loos, as well as the writer Karl Kraus among his “*spiritual kindreds*.”¹ As a constituent element of their congeniality he defined a tacit understanding in artistic and social matters and a common ethic program aimed at a claim to truth in all artistic disciplines. In delivering on this claim to truth, Arnold Schönberg and Karl Kraus shared a determination full of privations, incorruptible action, as well as an unerring sense of style and intellectual consistency.

An advocate of progress in music, Schönberg personified the courage to deviate from convention; like no other composer of his age and sphere, he stood for an anticipation of the future in terms of material, technical, and aesthetic developments. Schönberg was a stylist, innovator, and humanist; a loyal group of followers adhered to him as a prophet just as vehemently as his opponents accused him of charlatantry. Inspiring the interdisciplinary orientation of Viennese Modernism, he was also a writer and painter.

An advocate and censor of language, Kraus stood for its evaluation, for the identification and elimination of false speech; like no other writer of his age and sphere, he waged an unrelenting battle against corrupting newspaper lingo, against double moral standards and aesthetic ennui. Kraus was a stylist, satirist and humanist, with a “*Krausian religious community*”² revolving around him, but also the target of his opponents’ sharpest attacks.

The periodical *Die Fackel* [The Torch], which Arnold Schönberg and many of his contemporaries (→ chapters 1 and 3) venerated as if it were a secular restoration of the Holy Scripture, appeared between the beginning of April 1899 and February 1936 in 922 issues on 22,578 pages. Its sole editor and, from 1911 onward, sole author was Karl Kraus.³ An attentive reader, Schönberg confessed to have learned how “*to write, and nearly [how to] think*” from the ingenious word-smith (→ letter 18); he may have “*learned more from [Kraus] than one is allowed to learn from anyone if one wants to remain self-reliant*” (→ 251). The diction of his essays, lectures, and self-interviews, Schönberg’s penchant for polemic and satire, and finally specific themes he addressed permit conclusions as to an educational fundament lastingly informed by his reading of *Die Fackel* (→ chapter 6). Kraus, on the other hand, lacked musical expertise and interest: “*I am far removed from your art*” (→ letter 10). The configuration of their acquaintance, which

⁴ Cf. Julian Johnson: The Reception of Karl Kraus by Schönberg and His School, in: *Karl Kraus und Die Fackel: Aufsätze zur Rezeptionsgeschichte = Reading Karl Kraus*. Edited by Gilbert J. Carr and Edward Timms. München 2001, 99–108, 103.

was established between 1895 and 1899 and would never develop into a friendship, was characterized by mutual appreciation and a respectful distance.⁴ In Schönberg's written statements, this distance manifests itself in all its nuances (→ chapter 9).

Preconditions

The juvenile biographies of the two protagonists of this book bundle continuities and disruptions of a Jewish experience that would receive a lasting impulse from the tensions resulting from the acculturation, assimilation, and anti-Semitism in Vienna before 1900 – and which was influenced by an equally complex and dynamic social and political environment.



¹ Oskar Kokoschka:
Arnold Schönberg, 1924,
oil on canvas (The Savings
Bank Foundation DNB,
Munchmuseet, Oslo)

Finite Romanticism and the Emancipation of Dissonance New Tones in Vienna around 1900¹

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¹ First published in: *Vienna 1900. Birth of Modernism*. Edited by Hans-Peter Wipplinger. Wien 2019, 91–99.

² Wolfgang Kos and Ralph Gleis: Zur Ausstellung, in: *Experiment Metropole. 1873: Wien und die Weltausstellung*. Edited by Wolfgang Kos and Ralph Gleis. Wien 2014, 14–23, 14f.

³ Eduard Hanslick: *Geschichte des Concertwesens in Wien*. Wien 1869, 391.

⁴ Theater- und Kunstinrichten, in: *Die Presse* 26/67 (March 9, 1873), 19.

⁵ Martina Nußbaumer: Der Topos "Musikstadt Wien" um 1900, in: *newsletter MODERNE*. Zeitschrift des Spezialforschungsbereichs Moderne – Wien und Zentraleuropa um 1900 4/1 (March 2001), 20–23.

In 1873 the City of Vienna hosted the World Fair, projecting to an international audience its self-perception as a center of pioneering spirit, innovation and prosperity. The dream life of the metropolis² was presented, with a key role assigned to the arts and especially to music. A "visible palingenesis of Vienna's concert life"³ had already taken place during the 1869/70 season with the opening of the Imperial Royal Court Opera Theater and the new Musikverein building. Any and all "music bodies" were urged by the curators of the World Fair "to show off the splendor of Vienna as the city of music to its fullest advantage"⁴. The power of this renown was illustrated impressively by the success of the "Waltz King" Johann Strauss and other musical export hits during the Paris Exposition universelle in 1867. An awareness of the magnitude of this cultural heritage led to the topos "Vienna, City of Music"⁵ being launched in a synergy of economic, societal and cultural-political strategies. The fact that many composers of historical significance had flocked to the city in search of an influential sphere since the Baroque period was seen as an important testament to its world renown. Preserving the classical heritage and nourishing emerging music were two equal pillars of the public music scene into the 1890s, the operetta boom and the triumph of waltz music encouraging a reappraisal of light entertainment. The dominant role played by Vienna in the area of musical art was emphasized with the Internationale Ausstellung für Musik und Theaterwesen [International Exhibition for Music and Theater] held in 1892 – an exposition frequented by 1.25 million visitors.

The construct "Vienna, City of Music" as the epicenter of the music world can be interpreted as one of many indications of efforts to compensate for Vienna's loss of political supremacy within the Habsburg Monarchy. In his memoirs, Stefan Zweig pointed out the identification and identity-establishing role played by art in fin-de-siècle Vienna:

There was hardly a city in Europe where the drive towards cultural ideals was as passionate as it was in Vienna. Precisely because the monarchy, because Austria itself for centuries had been neither politically ambitious nor particularly successful in its military actions, the native pride had turned more strongly towards a desire for artistic supremacy. [...] And just

⁶ Stefan Zweig: *The World of Yesterday*. London 1943, 21, 26.

⁷ Carl Dahlhaus: Musik und Jugendstil, in: *Art Nouveau, Jugendstil und Musik*. Edited by Jürg Stenzl. Zürich, Freiburg i. Br. 1980, 73–88, 76.

⁸ Ibidem, 73.

⁹ Eduard Hanslick: *Aus neuer und neuester Zeit*. Berlin 1900, 77.

¹⁰ Max Vancsa: Kehraus im Konzertsaal, in: *Die Wage* 10 (April 27, 1907), 398–402, 399.

¹¹ Richard Batka: Wiener Musikbrief, in: *Prager Tagblatt* 33/8 (January 8, 1909), 1ff., 2.

¹² Th[eodor] H[elm]: Wiener 'Ansorge-Verein', in: *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* 28/6 (February 7, 1907), 151.

¹³ R[ichard] Sp[echt]: Konzerte II, in: *Der Merker* 3/3 (February 1912), 112f.

¹⁴ Gesellschaftskonzert, in: *Der Morgen. Wiener Montagblatt* 2/12 (March 20, 1911), 6.

¹⁵ Bildende Kunst, in: *Wiener Abendpost. Beilage zur Wiener Zeitung* 16 (January 21, 1913), 1ff., 2.

¹⁶ A[dalbert] F[rantz] S[eligmann]: Kunstausstellungen, in: *Neue Freie Presse* 17333 (November 23, 1912), 1ff., 3.

as this musicality was expressed by us writers in carefully wrought prose, the sense of rhythm entered into others in their social deportment and their daily life. A Viennese who had no sense of art or who found no enjoyment in form was unthinkable in 'good society'.⁶

The cultural-scientific discourse on "Vienna around 1900" allows us to derive a series of epochal terms, but in the special case of musical art, these terms either only touch upon the subject superficially or characterize it altogether incorrectly. The question critically discussed by Carl Dahlhaus as to whether there could have existed similar constellations in composition as in other art genres – which might, for example, allow for a multi-discipline terminological narrowing of "music and Jugendstil" – can only be answered peripherally in view of the heterogeneous status of composing in Vienna around 1900. Seeing as music, in its aspirations to remain autonomous, did not fulfil any functions which could be "*obliterated by composed-out educational reminiscences*"⁷, the antithesis between Historicism and Jugendstil was not tangible in musical art. The "*hazy atmosphere*"⁸, elicited by the label of Vienna Secessionism as a commonplace for simultaneous but, in their individual materiality and concreteness, entirely different concepts – e.g. poster vs. string quartet, vase vs. orchestral song, frieze vs. opera, etc. –, cannot be ignored when analyzing the sonorous witnesses of this time. Owing to the multifariousness of artistic witnesses to this era, it is, however, possible to arrive not only at a topographical specification but also to identify commonalities in terms of substance.

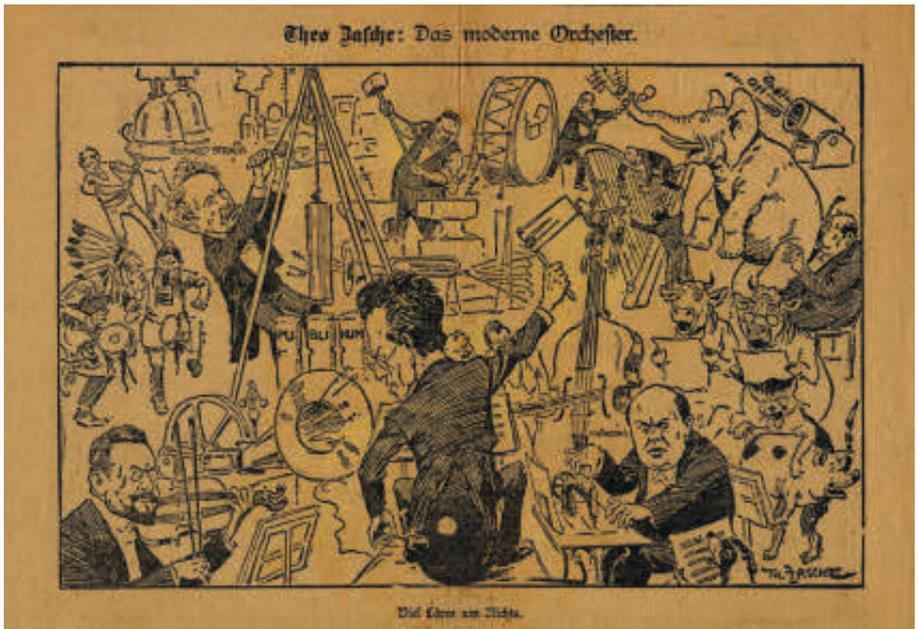
Already at the time, attempts were made – often in an associative manner and without any theoretical basis – to denote similar moods in different métiers in order to reduce phenomena in music to a common denominator with those in the visual arts, architecture and literature. Gustav Mahler, along with Richard Strauss, was considered the exponent of the "*musical Secession*"⁹ and a propagandist of "*the most extreme hyper-Secession*"¹⁰. Their colleague Arnold Schönberg, an orchestrator of wild cacophonies, → ⁶ was seen as an "*ultraviolet music Secessionist*"¹¹ and "*the most provocative among Viennese musical Secessionists*"¹², who in his "*complete dispensation with ornaments*" resembled an "*Adolf Loos in notes*"¹³ or, in a different guise, the "*Kokoschka of music*"¹⁴. Conversely, Kokoschka was compared to a modern composer: "*He stands today approximately where Arnold Schönberg stands in music*"¹⁵. A "*clique*", which had been marching under the banner "*Made in Austria*" since the turn of the century, was assigned a claim to cultural hegemony unparalleled in Europe by the media, as well as the self-conception "*that Klimt was the leading painter of the present – or was it Kokoschka by now? – Schönberg the leading musician, and that all modern architecture was based on Otto Wagner and his school*"¹⁶.

¹⁷ Cf. The Vienna Circles: a diagram of creative interaction in Vienna around 1910, in: Edward Timms: *Karl Kraus – Apocalyptic Satirist. Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna*. New Haven, London 1986, 8.

¹⁸ Horst Weber: *Die Musik der Wiener Moderne*, in: *Mahler-Handbuch*. Edited by Bernd Sponheuer and Wolfram Steinbeck. Stuttgart 2010, 100–113, 103.

This atmospheric assessment of an era, a navel-gazing of cultural supremacy, mentions some of the time's most charismatic protagonists as well as those circles¹⁷ and networks later constructed in research of "Vienna around 1900". With regards music, a permeation of intellectual and creative spheres took place in artists' studios, salons and public spaces, in concerts, at the theater and the opera. It made its way into music publishing, led to reciprocal inspiration, contributed to a specific constitution of music iconography, occasionally had biographical preconditions, and forged friendships, as well as work groups, didactic committees and associations, with similar goals, which may on the whole have been united by "an awareness of the threats to the subject"¹⁸.

Vienna established itself as a diagnostic center for all kinds of corrosive processes and signs of wear, represented an experimental laboratory for new identity constructions and



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Theo Zasche: The Modern Orchestra. Much Ado about Nothing, in: *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt* 36/88 (March 31, 1907) "Performers": Arnold Rosé, Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, Arnold Schönberg (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien | ASCI PH7981)

A Dream Is Viennese Life¹

Karl Kraus

¹ Excerpt from: *Die Fackel* 307–308 (September 22, 1910), 51–56. The title is an allusion to *Der Traum ein Leben* [A Dream Is Life] by Franz Grillparzer (1840) which, in turn, refers back to the play *La vida es sueño* [Life Is A Dream] by Pedro Calderón (1635).

² In the lead, Kraus refers to his first official lecture in Vienna as part of the lecture series “Wiener Vorlesungen”, which he delivered on May 3, 1910, at the hall of the architect’s union, Eschenbachgasse 9, Vienna’s 1st district.

³ De facto 150 meters walking distance.

⁴ Elisabethstraße 20, Vienna’s 1st district.

⁵ Horse and cart, hack chaise.

⁶ In 1909, 300 automobile taximeters (horseless carriages) were given license to transport passengers in Vienna, much to the financial detriment of the coachmen.

⁷ Disinhibited crowd. The term goes back to Korah, mentioned in the 4th Book of Moses. Together with other Israelites, Korah turned against Moses during the wilderness wanderings.

⁸ Starting the motor with a crank handle.

⁹ Heinrich Sikora, a developer involved in concrete construction and homeowner in Vienna’s 18th district. Allusion to the refusal of many Viennese homeowners to grant homeless adolescents asylum in empty buildings. Attempt by the city and the police to tackle juvenile prostitution and moral decline.

I dreamt I had to give a lecture, the audience was assembled, but I had forgotten my manuscript at home. The hall² is only a stone’s throw away³ from my apartment⁴, I thought, but even this short distance I decided not to cover on foot, out of consideration for the situation of our cabs⁵ and so that I wouldn’t have to keep the audience waiting even one minute. I thus spent an hour looking for an automobile taximeter⁶, called a taxi for short in this unhurried city. Though I was already overcome by repulsion, steeling myself for the machine to heap up ten crowns every quarter of a minute, I got on. At once, Korah’s horde⁷ gathered around the vehicle, watching the chauffeur’s attempts at getting it to start up⁸ with the kind of rapt attention that would surely have been better spent on another cause. When we reached the next crossing, the automobile ran over the real estate owner Sikora⁹, who noiselessly sank to his knees and showed the curious crowd a bloody stump. Unable to stand the sight, I asked the chauffeur not to flee, but to turn back and to ask the man for forgiveness. The chauffeur approached him and said: “How about the two of us, then, dear neighbor?” The dying man was reconciled and smiled, and we drove on. After a short interval, the chauffeur declared that he could not go on, as he did not have any matches for the lantern¹⁰. For this reason, and also to make faster progress, I boarded a gig, whose driver had attracted my attention with his incessant cries of “Gig! Let’s go!”. To be fair, I could not have gotten rid of him any other way than by accepting his invitation. Now he started to feed and uncover his horses, which is a pastime of the coachmen when the evenings are getting long. Inside the cab, I found a broken mirror, and in it, saw a gray hair on my temple. The promenaders were startled by the carriage, and since the coachman kept crying “Shoo!”, they were startled even more and did not know whether to move backwards or forwards. They couldn’t do either; I realized that they weren’t able to walk at all. No one was hurt. But after a while, the coachman declared that he could not go on, as there was “hail”, an expression with which he alluded to black ice. When I gave him one hundred and fifty crowns for the fare, he refused to take the money, and said reproachfully: “But Sir, what is this you are giving me?” I invoked the rate of one hundred. He murmured: “On a day like this!”, and demanded two hundred. I gave him the money, without understanding what was so special about that particularly day. Soon, I found another cab; however, the driver did not

¹⁰ Lantern on the automobile powered by lamp oil.

¹¹ Prostitutes. The only witch burning incident in Vienna occurred on September 27, 1583, on Gänseweide (Weißgerberlande, Vienna's 3rd district).

¹² The sleeping (passive) chief of police: Allusion to a massive surge in homelessness and criminality in Vienna in 1910. Wording from Viennese newspapers.

¹³ Karl Freiherr von Brzesowsky, from 1907–14 chief of the Imperial-Royal police headquarters.

¹⁴ Johann Gabriel Seidl, librettist for songs by Franz Schubert, wrote the words to the Austrian Emperor's Hymn, born on June 21, 1804, Krugerstraße 8, Vienna's 1st district. Allusion to 19th-century prostitution hotspots at the nearby bastion.

¹⁵ Johann Nepomuk Vogl, lyricist, writer, publicist and librettist for songs by Franz Schubert, born on February 7, 1802. To Kraus, Schubert represented the "sounding soul of the imperial city"; Karl Kraus: Ziehrer-Jubiläum, in: *Die Fackel* 121 (November 1902), 16–20, 18.

¹⁶ To the Berlin editorial office of *Die Fackel* housed at the offices of Herwarth Walden.

¹⁷ Allusion to the Imperial-Royal Austrian Postal Savings Bank built to plans by Otto Wagner (1904–06); a cash office was added in 1910.

¹⁸ Decompression sickness, diver's paralysis. Pneumatic mail, Vienna's underground postal system.

¹⁹ Ring tramway on Stubenring.

²⁰ In 1908, trumpets replaced whistles for signaling on electric trams.

²¹ Albert Johann Gerngroß, proprietor of the Viennese department store Gerngroß in the second generation.

call me over but stared at me with hostility. When I asked him: "Can we go, your grace?", he jumped up angrily and screamed: "I am taken!" Now I was on foot again, desperately looking for a ride. I walked through winding little streets, where witches used to be burnt, but now they are looking out of the windows.¹¹ They are allowed to behave indecently, without grossly offending public decency, and I instantly decided to wake up¹² the Chief of Police¹³ and ask him why he had robbed the girls of the only joy they still had by banning them from playing the piano. He told me to lodge a formal request, he believed to be in a position to assure me that my wishes would be taken into consideration, as the authorities took an objective stance on prostitution and would, as long as there was no objection ... – I made a sweeping gesture and suffered an epileptic fit. A court psychiatrist, who had rushed on the scene to help, asked me if I knew Johann Gabriel Seidl's¹⁴ date of birth. Since I was able to answer this question coherently, he declared that, while I had been of unsound mind before the crime, and also after, I had been of sound mind during my actions, which meant I could be held fully accountable. I replied that I could not be made to take full responsibility for my crime, as I did not know Johann Nepomuk Vogl's birthday.¹⁵ They then asked me this very question, and, seeing as I was indeed unable to answer it, I was acquitted. I must telegraph this news to Berlin immediately,¹⁶ I thought. I went to a post office,¹⁷ where there was a great crush, for several officials forced to work in this subterranean office had just died from caisson disease.¹⁸ I got there just when the coffins were being loaded. I was asked to queue at the adjacent counter, which was unmanned, but I could hear laughter and saw the telegraphists playing tag. I was glad how smoothly everything was going; but now I really had to make haste! I got on a tram,¹⁹ of which there were forty in a row to choose from, since the first could not move because of a procession. When it had passed, the trailer car conductor relentlessly blew his trumpet in my ear,²⁰ in an attempt to prove to the driver that he, too, was someone important. While we were driving, the lights kept going out, making it impossible to read the tramway card. Actually, it was dark most of the time, and the lights only came on every so often. Aha, I thought to myself, these must be the well-known lucid intervals of urban traffic. There was massive jolting and rocking at every turn, and the people tumbled around and died like flies. A hatpin pierced my left eye, but one gentleman still had the presence of mind to ask me for a light. Someone was getting off now, and the man standing next to me pointed out: "That was young Gerngroß!"²¹ At the next crossing, the tram collided with a carriage occupied by an Argentinian married couple. Trying to avoid the embarrassing spectacle, I fled to a restaurant, where forty young waiters were picking their noses. It was a big establishment. Forty food runners asked me if I had