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Department of Music

The British Reception of the Works of Arnold Schoenberg and His Associates in the First Half of the Twentieth-Century

by

Gintare Stankeviciute

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Musicology

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Abstract

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Doctor of Philosophy

The British Reception of the Works of Arnold Schoenberg and His Associates in the First Half of the Twentieth-Century

Gintare Stankeviciute

In this thesis, I explore the British road to musical modernism. I consider four aspects of the British reception of the works of Schoenberg and his associates: critical reception; audience reception; performance; and compositional influence. In each respect, the reception was distinctive, and I aim to articulate the respects in which it was distinctive. Much of the critical perspective from which the works were described and evaluated in the press and in correspondence drew on specifically British modes of thinking, in particular, aspects of the sentimentalist tradition. Something else that was distinctive was that the audience for these works was spread out in Britain. It was surprisingly sympathetic, or at least open-minded, in part, to the new works, and it was not somehow just an echo of the policies of centralised organizations in London, such as the BBC. The audience had some degree of autonomy and in many cases was in advance of more conservative critics. Performances were also spread out in Britain, and the role of *émigrés* from Austria and also Germany, usually Jewish *émigrés*, was central in both the organization and performance of these works. Lastly, the influence of Schoenberg's works on native composition was brought about mostly by Schoenberg's students, especially Wellesz and Webern. While these composers were still in Vienna, they were a magnet for British aspiring young composers, and these composers, who in their turn, transmitted the Second Viennese School musical ideas to the next generation. Thus, the tradition spread quite early in Britain in the 1930s. I focus on one important but unrecognised link in this chain, the composer Dorothy Gow.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Gintare Stankeviciute

Title of thesis: The Reception of the Music of Arnold Schoenberg and his Associates in Britain in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. None of this work has been published before submission.

Signature: Date: 12/06/2023

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Abbreviations

ASC – Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna.

BBC – British Broadcasting Company (1922-1926) or British Broadcasting Corporation (from 1927).

BBC WAC – BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham, Reading.

BL – Bitish Library, London.

RCM – Royal College of Music.

ÖNB – Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Wien (Austrian National Library, Vienna).

Figure 1. A caricature of Arnold Schoenberg, drawn by Edmund Kapp in 1914.[1]

[1] *The Guardian*, 17 January 1914, p. 7. Copyright © 2020 Newspapers.com. All rights reserved.

Introduction

This thesis reconceives the reception of the music of Arnold Schoenberg (1974-1951) and his associates in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century. Overall, it aims to tell, or retell, the story of how Schoenberg and his circle, overcoming some suspicion of foreigners and the new, came profoundly to affect musical life in Britain. This happened as a result of a number of factors working together in a way that was different from the situation in Vienna. British musical culture came to be more open to innovation, particularly of the recent works of the Second Viennese School. How exactly this happened is explored here.

The focus will be on four aspects of Second Viennese School reception: critical reviews, audience reactions and attitudes, performance, and influence on composers; these structure the chapters of this thesis. The main rationale of this research is that the story of the reception of Second Viennese School in Britain has been incompletely told: there is more to say about critical reviews, audience reaction and attitudes, performance, and influence on composers; and the more that we will encounter justifies a revision of some of the common narratives concerning that influence in Britain.

In each of the four areas, there is received wisdom about the British reception of the Second Viennese School reception that is incomplete. A caricature would be this: first, the critics were hostile and lacked any distinctive framework for thinking about Second Viennese School new music; secondly, the Second Viennese School made its entry via the BBC and its luminaries, such as Edward Clark and Edward Dent; thirdly, *émigrés* were not a significant part of the story; and fourthly, the main heroes of British modernism and those responsible for its influence on later British experimental *Avant Garde* composition were Humphrey Searle and Elisabeth Lutyens. In each respect, the standard story needs modifying or correcting. In particular, press reception was not entirely negative, but was mixed; and there is an underlying theoretical current for dealing with novelty that surfaces or is debated in reviews, opinion pieces and letters. Audience reception was also not entirely negative but was mixed and often the audiences diverged from the critics. Furthermore, the concerts that were reviewed were

spread out in Britain, away from the metropolitan centre in the south-east, which is usually all that figures in the conventional story. The received wisdom is that the BBC had a dominant role in changing the public taste. But in fact, the audience had its own views—views that were largely independent of institutions like the BBC. The conventional history of *émigré* musicians and composers details their relation to London-based British musical institutions, whereas in fact the informal provincial networks were far more important. Fourthly, the received wisdom about compositional influence is that it waited until the *émigré* musicians and composers reached Britain in the late 1930s, and after that Elisabeth Lutyens and Humphrey Searle were in the forefront of the development of British serialism. However, the Second Viennese School's influence on British composers predated the *émigrés'* arrival in Britain, and there was another composer – Dorothy Gow – who pioneered British serialism before Lutyens and Searle.

In all, a more nuanced picture of what happened when Second Viennese School modernism arrived in Britain will be pursued. It is not that there is no truth to the received views, it is just that there is more to be said and that the received wisdom of the standard story should be a part of a fuller account. What we will find is that in each dimension of reception, there was a plurality of phenomena that constituted it. We will encounter diverse strands of press reception, diverse audience reactions, diverse kinds of performance and propagation, and diverse compositional influences. Given the many forms that the influence takes, we will find enough to see not only that the standard description of the Second Viennese School modernist influences in Britain falls short, or is incorrect, in some respects, but we will also find aspects of the reception that were distinctive of its reception in Britain.

A series of research questions structures the chapters of this thesis. In the first two chapters on press and critical reception, the key questions are: how did the reviews and critics tackle the issue of novelty in music? And: what were the theoretical assumptions that tended to underlie the writings that appeared in the press and that were discussed in letters following such publications? The third chapter concerns the distribution of the concerts in Britain. The fourth chapter poses these questions: what was the audience reaction to concerts of the Second Viennese School works? And: who and where, exactly, was the audience for these works? The question raised in the fifth chapter is:

how did *émigré* musicians and composers have their impact on British musical life? In the sixth and seventh chapters, the question is: how exactly did Second Viennese School composer's influence composition in Britain?

Throughout this thesis hybrid methodological approaches are used: the scientific historical method, the analytical method, and the comparative method. Historical methods are applied to process archival sources as historical evidence. Analytical methods are mostly employed to analyse in detail Dorothy Gow's manuscripts and compositional sketches in order to indicate serialist methods in her musical output. Comparative methods are used to explain similarities and differences between Britain and German-speaking countries (Austria and Germany) as well as some European countries (Ireland and France) and the United States.

Scholarly work on Schoenberg is broad and extensive, from Egon Wellesz's early monograph on Schoenberg[2], Theodor W. Adorno's *Philosophie der Neuen Musik* (Tübingen, 1949)[3] to very recent monographs.[4] However, Schoenberg's reception in Britain and its impact on British musical culture has only been incompletely studied. I aim to pull all the four strings together: critical reception, audience reception, performances, and compositional influence. Jennifer Doctor did outstand work that revealed the BBC's efforts in bringing the Second Viennese School to Britain.[5] In the light of Doctor's achievement, this thesis focuses on other significant factors of Schoenberg's reception and looks beyond London and the BBC. Besides Doctor's volume, there has more recently been a collection of essays edited by Matthew Riley entitled *British Music and Modernism, 1895–1960*,[6] which contains some relevant essays.

[2] Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg,* Vienna: E. P. Tal & Co., 1921.
[3] English translations: *Philosophy of modern music*, New York: Seabury Press, 1973; new translation: *Philosophy of new music*, Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2006, translated, edited, and with an introduction by Robert Hullot-Kentor; another translation: *Philosophy of modern music*, London: Continuum, 2007, translated by Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster, reprinted: London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.
[4] See Mark Berry *Arnold Schoenberg*, London: Reaktion Books, 2019, Elisabeth Kappel *Arnold Schönbergs Schülerinnen: biographisch-musikalische Studien*, Berlin: J. B. Metzler, 2019, Jack Forrest Boss, *Schoenberg's Atonal Music: Musical Idea, Basic Image and Specters of Tonal Function*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
[5] Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
[6] Matthew Riley (ed.), *British Music and Modernism, 1895–1960,* London: Routledge, 2016.

And Florian Scheding's, *Musical Journeys*,[7] has a relevant chapter, "Airwaves in London".

This thesis draws mainly on primary sources, not previously discussed, which puts this research in position to be able to give a more comprehensive account of Schoenberg and his circle in Britain in the first half of the twentieth-century than has hitherto been offered. I examine press reviews from British newspapers from all over the country. Most of them are now digitised, though some of them are still print copies. Growing technological progress in archival maintenance, such as digitisation of newspapers, meant that I could find out about the Schoenberg concerts in provincial towns across the United Kingdom. Perhaps this is the reason why Jennifer Doctor, writing her pioneering book *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936* in the 1990's, was not aware of provincial concerts and mainly focused on Second Viennese School performances in London.

This thesis also uses archival material found at the Department of Music at the Austrian National Library (*Österreichische Nationalbibliothek – Musiksammlung*), which revealed some of British musical life of the period. In order to pursue Austrian-British musical relations, I first investigated the correspondence between Egon Wellesz (1885-1974) and his British students who studied with him in Vienna in the early 1930's – in particular, Martin Cooper (1910-1986), Doroyhy Gow (1892-1983) and Grace Williams (1906-1977). Then I discovered the correspondence between Wellesz and the prominent British music critic Ernest Newman (1868-1959). This correspondence is particularly revealing, but it has never been drawn on in monographs in English, for example, Ernest Newman by Paul Watt (*Ernest Newman: A Critical Biography*, Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2017) and Wellesz and Schoenberg by Bojan Bujić (*Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship*, London: Plumbago Books, 2020). Lastly, the archival work in Vienna, especially at the *Arnold Schönberg Center*, allowed me to re-create Schoenberg's network in Vienna and to see how this network was transferred to Britain. This network was in large extent responsible in propagating Schoenberg's works in British musical circles.

[7] Florian Scheding, *Musical Journeys: Performing Musical Migration in the Twentieth Century,* Boydell & Brewer, Press, 2019.

Other archival work was done locally at the British Library in London, consulting the collections of British composers (Dorothy Gow, Elisabeth Lutyens, Humphrey Searle, among others) as well as composers of Second Viennese School. Some work was also done at the provincial institutions, such as the BBC Written Archive in Caversham, and the archives of provincial centres, tracing the performances of Second Viennese School and visits of the Kolisch Quartet outside the capital of London, to Aberdeen, Bradford, Bristol, Derby, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Huddersfield, Leeds, and Manchester. The Hallé Orchestra archive yielded information about subscribers to their concert series.

However, the most significant discovery was made in Highgate, London, where the private archive of Dorothy Gow (1893-1982) is based. Ian Henghes, the great-nephew of Gow, provided me with several boxes of Gow's personal belongings, including her manuscripts, compositional sketches, correspondence, scores, photographs, books, and music magazines, but perhaps most importantly her diary, which gives us her voice and lets the composer speak for herself and reveal her character, musical opinions, and taste.

The chapters in this thesis may be summarised as follows. The first chapter, "Anxiety, Sentimentalism, and the Test of Time" examines the early press reception of Arnold Schoenberg's works in Britain. I consider some short reviews and letter exchanges in the press in the 1920s and 1930s. These reviews and letters address questions of how to theorize and appreciate novelty, which Schoenberg's works provoked in Britain. What they reveal is something interesting about the distinctively British reception of Schoenberg, which is that it takes place in the light of traditions of critical thinking that draw on the eighteenth-century British 'sentimentalist' tradition. Those traditions emphasize reflective awareness of an evolving and changing critical response that is fallible, and which, therefore, invites considerable caution in advancing to fixed judgements. This framework differs from the more German-speaking traditions of critical discussion in which Schoenberg's works are often understood and discussed. Many of the critical ideas in play in the material we will survey appear to conform to this distinctively British intellectual tradition, which can be detected as a theme, or perhaps an undercurrent, in the press reviews and letters to newspapers.

In chapter two, “Schoenberg’s Musical Novelty and The Test of Time: The Correspondence Between Ernest Newman and Egon Wellesz”, two opinion pieces by British music critic Ernest Newman and then the ensuing unpublished correspondence concerning the value of Schoenberg’s musical output between him and Austrian-born composer Egon Wellesz, which took place at the end of the Second World War. These reviews, articles and letter exchanges all reveal critical approaches that were in play in the British reception of Schoenberg. In particular, questions of how to theorise and appreciate novelty are raised and debated. Newman worries that there is a problem about making critical judgments about the present after a big change. He says that one must wait fifty to a hundred years. Wellesz does not share this concern. The debate between Newman and Wellesz brings out their very different critical approaches to Schoenberg and to musical novelty, and it illustrates how fraught critical moments prompt general reflections that have implications for our conception of human nature.

The following chapter three, “Beyond London and the BBC: Reconsidering the British Reception of the Second Viennese School from 1912 to 1949”, examines the reception of Second Viennese School music in Britain in much of the first half of the twentieth century. The aim is to show that some factors driving the British reception have not thus far been sufficiently emphasized. In particular, the role of the BBC has been over-emphasized while the British provinces have not been given their due. The role of provincial institutions, such as music clubs, societies, guilds, etc., in bringing Second Viennese School music to provincial audiences is described. The argument is that the Second Viennese School was propagated in Britain in a non-centralized way, much of it independent of London-based institutions, such as the BBC. There was considerable interest in Second Viennese School music among the provincial public. There were numerous concerts in all parts of Britain. Repertoire selection at these concerts is considered.

In chapter four, “Audience Reception of Second Viennese School Concerts From 1912 to 1949”, the audience reception at these concerts is then described, and the evidence points to much openness if not acceptance among these audiences. Evidence for the constitution of these audiences is considered. Lastly, comparisons are drawn between the British audience reception of Second Viennese School music and the

audience reception of this music in the United States, Germany, Austria, and France, as well as the British audience reception of other modernist music.

A central aim in chapter five, "*Émigré* Musicians and the Second Viennese School in Britain" is to achieve a better understanding of the specifically Austrian (and German to some extent) Jewish contribution to British musical performance in these years. *Émigré* Musicians played a significant role in bringing about performances of works of the Second Viennese School in Britain between the world wars. I seek to understand how this happened, focusing on the fate of the so-called Second Viennese School traditions surrounding Schoenberg as they landed in a new country. Overall, I aim to tell the story of how Austrian-Jewish *émigrés* overcame considerable suspicion of foreigners and the new and came profoundly to affect musical culture in Britain. As a result, British musical culture came to be more open to innovation, particularly to the recent works of the Second Viennese School.

The last two chapters, six and seven focus on the British composer Dorothy Gow. Chapter six, "Dorothy Gow: Britain's Pioneer Serialist Composer", investigates the influence of Second Viennese School on British composers. Schoenberg and his associates left their mark on British composers, in particular on Dorothy Gow, Elisabeth Lutyens and Humphrey Searle, and later on, many others. I narrow the focus, and I give special emphasis to British female composer Dorothy Gow, who in 1932 went to Vienna to study Schoenbergian techniques with Viennese modernist composer Egon Wellesz. I focus on Gow, firstly, because she is less well-known than Lutyens and Searle; secondly, because her work is unappreciated; and thirdly, and not least, because her serialist compositions predate those of Lutyens and Searle, something that has been overlooked. Close analysis of her Oboe Quintet, written in 1936 reveals her to be the first British composer to use serialism in a comprehensive way. I then devote my attention to her post-war composition – Piece for Violin and Horn. I show that Gow uses two eight-note rows. She presents both themes one after another and then uses their inversions, retrogrades, and retrograde inversions. In order to illustrate these serialist procedures, I compiled two eight-tone charts. It transpires that Gow's compositions are formally rigorous, challenging, musically ambitious and innovative. Yet she does not blindly follow Schoenberg. She has her own voice.

In chapter seven, "The Diary of Dorothy Gow's Sojourn in Vienna: The Critical Attitudes of a Modernist Composer in the Making", the focus is on Gow's critical outlook, as revealed in her recently discovered decaying diary. The diary covers her three month long stay in Vienna studying with Egon Wellesz. Gow ripped off and destroyed all the pages of her diary until the very exact day when she leaves for Vienna. We do not know much about her life before and after Vienna, but she documented in detail her stay in the capital of Austria and her meetings with Wellesz. It shows the great importance this trip has had for her. Gow's diary spans from 22 October until 22 December 1932, when she returns to London. Her diary records Gow's reflections on her musical experiences and musical education, together with her thoughts about composition. It reveals her critical outlook, which in turn casts light on her compositions, and it is part of a full picture of the woman as composer.

Two comments before we proceed. First, in what follows, I do no seek to understand the interwar reception of Schoenberg in Britain, whether in terms of critics, audiences, performances, or composers, in the light of later developments in British modernist music in the postwar period, especially in the late 1950s and 1960s. That in my view would generate an unhelpful distortion, reading the future back into the past. Furthermore, the future developments were highly contingent. So, 'contextualizing' the 1920s and 1930s reception with an eye, for example on the Manchester school, would be a mistake, as if we could generalize about the reception of some monolithic British Musical Modernism in quite different eras. Hindsight is not 20/20. Second, and relatedly, since the reception I am concerned with is that of critics, audiences, performers, and composition in the 1920s and 1930s in Britain, what academic writers in the 1990s and beyond, such as Susan McClary or Richard Taruskin, have to say about the modernist music of Second Viennese School composers falls outside the reception that is the focus of this thesis.

Chapter 1

Anxiety, Sentimentalism, and the Test of Time: Early British Critical Responses to Schoenberg

---

"The King wanted the composition to be hummable

and stand the test of time" says Lloyd Weber.

Daily Telegraph, front page, 5 May 2023

Novel artworks, whether of music or any other art form, provoke questions about how to appreciate and theorise these works, since they depart from previous models for appreciation and understanding. This paper examines the press reception of Arnold Schoenberg's works in Britain from 1912 until 1929. What we will find is an attitude to novelty that is a theme, or perhaps an undercurrent, in the various press reviews, letters to newspapers and a broadcast. These all-address questions of how to theorise and appreciate novelty, which Schoenberg's works provoked in Britain. My claim will be that the materials reveal a distinctively British reception of Schoenberg: namely, that it took place in the light of debates concerning taste and judgment that drew on aspects of traditions of critical debate of the eighteenth-century British 'sentimentalism'. This framework differs from the German-speaking traditions of critical discussion in which Schoenberg's works are usually understood and discussed.[8] Many of the critical ideas

[8] See for example Jack Boss, *Schoenberg's Twelve-Tone Music: Symmetry and the Musical Idea*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, especially chapter 1, where the whole weight of the German idealist tradition is brought to bear in understanding Schoenberg's idea of a musical idea. Both Kant and Eduard Hanslick are unproblematically described as "idealist philosophers", which is surprising to say the least in Kant's case and preposterous in Hanslick's.

in the material we will survey appear to conform in different ways to this distinctively British intellectual tradition.

What exactly is the problem with novelty? The experience of novelty inevitably raises questions because it may be unclear how to react to them given our personal histories of proclivities and subjectivities. Our cultural experience is dynamic; it is in flux, and we inevitably approach the future with the baggage of the past. What, then, should be our attitude to novel works—works that depart from previous models and perhaps are not easily understood in terms of them. Some novel artworks are exhilarating, others disturbing. What should we make of that? What should be our attitude to our initial reactions to them? Furthermore, theoretically speaking, there is a question about how we should understand or at least approach what initially seems hard to understand: it is not clear how to think of something that is difficult to categorize. How we think of novelty and how we react to it are hardly isolated aspects of our critical outlook. And British sentimentalism gave a distinctive and systematic way of doing this. Our approach to novelty in our experience of artworks, and the way we theorise it critically and philosophically, are bound to be integrated in a fundamental way with our entire critical outlook. In the material to be examined, we will see just this integration of critical responses with an underlying British sentimentalist aesthetic outlook that is widely (but not universally) shared and remarkably persistent. And that outlook provides a model, with at least some virtues, that answers the question of how to think about the musical novelty that Schoenberg's twelve tone works presented.

§1. British Sentimentalism, Novelty and the Test of Time

Before turning to the review, let us begin with British sentimentalism in the theory of criticism and aesthetics, and also in the general 'moral science' of human nature. This movement flourished in the first half of the eighteenth-century. Many of its most prominent proponents were leading figures in the Scottish Enlightenment: Francis Hutchinson (1694–1746), David Hume (1711-1776) and Adam Smith (1723-1790) were three leading Scottish figures, but there were many English writers too. The idea of the Test of Time was a central part of this tradition (though not always in the same way for all the authors). For our purposes, two things are notable about British sentimentalism. First, it was impressively novel, even revolutionary. It makes a sharp

break from over two millennia of thought about criticism and the arts. Secondly, its influence was sustained in the British intellectual tradition after its inception, as well as being a significant influence on other traditions. It is a fundamental impetus behind Kant's aesthetics, for example. And it maintains its strength in the Twentieth and Twenty-first centuries.

A central commitment of sentimentalism was to the role of the sentiments, in particular of pleasures and their opposites, in responding to artworks. However, the sentiments are not simply given but may be schooled and disciplined and are not unconnected with those sentiments on which our moral and political life depends. Thus, sentiments may be more or less appropriate along a number of different dimensions. They can be more or less attuned to the qualities of things, and thus critics need self-awareness of their own responses and judgement. (This emphasis on sentiment is foreign, for example, to platonic and Neoplatonic traditions that conceive of our apprehension of beauty in highly cognitive terms.)

The particular aspect of sentimentalism that we will pursue here is what is known as the 'Test of Time'. The idea, roughly, is that longstanding and widespread appreciation is a guide to quality, while the absence of settled judgement means that there is a doubt about quality. Often what underlies this is the idea that the value of a work is more likely to be properly appreciated after a certain lapse of time, because the contingencies and idiosyncrasies of taste are cancelled out over time, which allow the work to appeal to our faculty of taste in a way that is not subject to irrelevant and distorting factors, that have nothing to do with the work.[9] This idea has maintained its force in British thinking until the present. For example, two examples of its relatively recent currency outside the fine arts are these.

> … the re-awakened interest in old-fashioned roses is not just a passing fad. … their rise in popularity over these past twenty years could not have been sustained

[9] Discussion of the notion of the test of time can be found in: Anthony Savile, "On Passing the Test of Time", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 17, 1977: pp. 195-209, see also his *The Test of Time*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982; Matthew Kieran, "Why Ideal Critics are Not Ideal: Aesthetic Character, Motivation and Value", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 48, 2008, pp. 278–294; and Anita Silvers, "The Story of Art is the Test of Time", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 49, 1991: pp. 211-224.

> had it not arisen from an appreciation of their more subtle and refined attributes by a very discerning public, who are not always willing to believe that something new is necessarily something better, at least until such superiority has been proved. (Peter Beales, *Classic Roses*, London: Collins Harvell, 1985, 51.)

and

> The future holds good prospects for the connoisseur. Many rugs being made today will undoubtedly stand the test of time but they must be chosen with care, and must be looked after properly. (Stanley Reed, *Oriental Rugs and Carpets*, London: Octopus Books, 1967, 96.)

These we may add to the very recent example of the King Charles' statement cited in the epigraph of this chapter.

The idea of the Test of Time itself predates the British Sentimentalists, but it is put to a particular use in their thinking. The idea is prominent in Joseph Addison's early sentimentalist essays, as well as the works of Alexander Gerrard (1728-1745), Edmund Burke (1729-1797) and others. Joseph Addison (1672-1719) is often said to be its first exponent of aesthetics as we know it today in his three-essay series, "The Pleasures of Imagination" published in 1712. But even before Addison, John Dennis (1657-1734) wrote in 1702 (in "A Large Account of the Taste in Poetry and the Causes of the Degeneracy of It"): "He who writes for the many at present writes only to them, and his works are sure never to survive their admirers, but he who writes to the knowing few at present, writes to the race of mankind in all succeeding ages."[10] Dennis addresses writers' aims in the context of dynamically evolving public taste. He signals a Test of Time idea plus confidence that once something earns its place in the canon, it is there forever. He has confidence that despite the dynamic evolution of creation and reception, the canon itself, once formed, is relatively static. The only difficulty is to succeed in getting into it.

Addison wrote a little later in 1712: "If a man would know whether he possessed this faculty [a fine taste in writing], I would have him read over the celebrated works of

[10] John Dennis, "A Large Account of the Taste in Poetry, and the Causes of the Degeneracy of It" (1702), reprinted in *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*, ed. by Dabney Townsend, Amityville, New York: Baywood Publishing Company, pp. 63-64.

antiquity which have stood the test of so many ages and countries; or those works among the moderns, which have the sanction of the politer parts of our contemporaries."[11] This distinctive version of the Test of Time has two parts—one is very long (of over two thousand years), while the other appeals to contemporary consensus. Addison also addresses minority tastes, and he encourages writers not to worry about pleasing the contemporaneous crowd, so long as the discerning few (that is, the more 'polite' among one's contemporaries) are approving. This is the way to secure the verdict of the long-term future. We will find this theme in the critical reception of performances of Schoenberg's works.

The Test of Time almost always has a positive and a negative aspect.[12] The positive one tells us that the weight of opinion over time justifies us in advancing to judgement. The negative face, which will most concern us in thinking about Schoenberg's British reception, tells us that when the Test of Time has *not* been passed, we should not be confident in judgement. We should withhold judgement, or at least hesitate. David Hume expresses the two aspects of the Test of Time in perhaps canonical form, when he writes in 1757:

> The same HOMER, who pleased at ATHENS and ROME two thousand years ago, is still admired at PARIS and at LONDON. All the changes of climate, government, religion, or language, have not been able to obscure his glory. A real genius, the longer his works endure, and the more wide they are spread, the more sincere is the admiration which he meets with.[13]

This is the Test of Time working positively: where something has passed the Test of Time, we may then have confidence in the value of the works in question. Like Addison, Hume's Test of Time is millennia long. But things may not work out in this way. Instead:

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[11] Joseph Addison, "The Pleasures of the Imagination", reprinted in Dabney Townsend, *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*, *op. cit.* pp. 107-136.

[12] See Jerrold Levinson, "Hume's Standard of Taste: The Real Problem", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 60*,* 2002, pp. 227-238.

[13] David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste", reprinted in *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*, ed. by Dabney Townsend, *op. cit*. p. 233.

> When objects of any kind are first presented to the eye or imagination, the sentiment, which attends them, is obscure and confused; and the mind is, in a great measure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. … a person, so unpracticed, will be apt to deliver with great hesitation and reserve. … There is a flutter or hurry of thought which attends the first perusal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine sentiment of beauty.[14]

Thus, where something does *not* pass the Test of Time, perhaps because the work is novel, we should withhold judgement. This is the negative aspect of the Test of Time.

Many eighteenth-century writers worry about the experience of novelty. But the eighteenth-century problem of novelty was rather different from the twentieth-century problem. The eighteenth-century problem was that the new is assumed to be pleasurable in itself, which leads to a different problem of fair judgement: is it merely *superficial* novelty that pleases? Addison writes:

> Anything that is new or uncommon raises a pleasure in the imagination, because it fills the soul with an agreeable surprise, gratifies its curiosity, and give it an idea of which it was not before possessed.[15]

Edmund Burke finds a similar problem here. He writes in 1757:

> But as those things which engage us merely by their novelty, cannot attach us for any length of time, curiosity is the most superficial of all the affections; it changes its object perpetually; it has an appetite which is very sharp, but very easily satisfied; and it has always an appearance of giddiness, restlessness, and anxiety.[16]

The worry is that novelty wears out quickly and thus is unlikely to pass the Test of Time. The pleasures are superficial. As we shall see, there are a somewhat similar worries about Schoenberg in the twentieth-century: is it *mere* novelty, which appeals to superficial curiosity, or is it more than that, a deeper beauty albeit of an unconventional form? Some

[14] David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste", *op. cit.* pp. 236.

[15] Joseph Addison, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

[16] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful,* reprinted in Dabney Townsend, *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

critics lean one way, others the other way. Despite the similarity in connecting novelty with the Test of Time, the assumption of eighteenth-century writers was that novelty is pleasurable, although perhaps superficially so, whereas the assumption of twentieth-century critics is that novelty is displeasing, although, again, it may be superficially so. Nevertheless, critics in both the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries seem to assume that time will tell whether what is novel will be of more enduring value. In this paper we will see both positive and negative aspects of the Test of Time at work in the British reception of Schoenberg, and we will explore differences in the way that those two aspects of the Test of Time are put to use.[17]

§2. The Lesson of Wagner Reception: Inductively Based Caution

Let us now turn to look at what British critics said about the Schoenberg's music, beginning with early critical reception from 1912-1914, when Schoenberg's music was a real novelty to its audience. In all this, issues about the ability to judge this music given its novelty are raised. The reviews cited are representative of the few reviews that there were of Schoenberg's early works. There are reviews that do not invoke anything like the Test of Time, and they are typically very negative. The reviews cited below are either positive or unsure, and they are representative of a major strand of reviews in the British press in the period. It is hard to specify with exactness the degree to which the Test of Time was embedded in British criticism. It certainly crops up a lot. But not always. We can certainly say that it was a persistent theme in much critical writing about Schoenberg, alongside other modes of engagement, as the reviews adduced below attest. Here I cite local papers with music reviews, national specialist music publications (such as *Musical Times, Music and Letters,* and *the Musical Standard*) as well as national newspapers. The Test of Time figures in all three types of publications.

The British *premiere* of Schoenberg's Three Piano Pieces, op. 11, was given by Richard Buhlig at Steinway Hall, and the first British performance of Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 16, conducted by Sir Henry Wood, took place in London in 1912, at Queen's Hall. The critic of the *Daily Mail* described Schoenberg variously as a

[17] The epigraph to this chapter is indicative of how deeply embedded and longstanding this idea is in British culture.

"lunatic", a "charlatan", a "mountebank", an "extremist" and a "freak".[18] Thus, some of the initial British critical press reaction was uncomprehending and negative.[19] However, there was also a notable substantial appreciation and defence of Schoenberg by the British composer and music critic Philip Arnold Heseltine (1894-1930), who wrote under the pseudonym Peter Warlock. He published what is probably the very first positive article about Schoenberg: 'Arnold Schoenberg' in *The Musical Standard* (21 September 1912), a specialist music weekly journal published in London from 1862 to 1933[20]:

> A new star has risen on the musical horizon. … his pianoforte pieces evoked a storm of adverse criticism… Such treatment, one must reluctantly admit, has been duly meted out to the works of Schoenberg in this country, as, indeed, it has been to all music (let alone anything else) ahead of its time. … Let us never forget that "Tristan und Isolde" was hailed as "*the climax of cacophony* – a phrase which virtually sums up all that the majority of present-day critics have to say about the works of Arnold Schoenberg.

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[18] These descriptions all come from "Mystery Music. The Plain Man and the Critics. What Did They Mean?", *Daily Mail*, Tuesday, 20 January 1914, p. 3.

[19] Schoenberg's music was often described as "futurist", rather than a "modernist", the latter designation only became standard in the early 1930's. One example is "Holiday Profiteering. Why Tourists Avoid Austria", *The Observer*, Sunday, 31 July 1921, p. 11. See also Deborah Heckert, "Schoenberg, Roger Fry and the Emergence of a Critical Language for the Reception of Musical Modernism in Britain, 1912-1914", in *British Music and Modernism 1895-1960*, edited by Matthew Riley, London: Routledge, 2017. According to Heckert the term "futurist" was taken over from the Italian futurists like Marinetti, who had given quite a few talks in London. Why would people use a term associating very different art forms? Heckert thinks that the common factor in people's minds was the lack of beauty and pleasure (*ibid*., p. 53). But that was not what Schoenberg was aiming at. The early use of "futurism" for modernist music was quite confusing which is probably why it fell out of favour.

[20] In "Occasional Notes", *The Musical Times*, 1 March 1912, Vol. 53, No. 829, p. 164, the editor , J. H. G. Baughan, wrote, referring to Richard Buhlig's recital at Aeolian Hall on 23 January 1912, where he performed Schoenberg's *Drei Klavierstücke*, op. 11 (1909): "We remind our readers that to our commonplace intelligences these manifestations of the newest Viennese spirit seem to be constructed, with fiendish ingenuity, out of the very antithesis and negation of music. It was not our privilege to be present at this fascinating exhibition. It must have been a memorable moment when the habitual and often soporific decorum of the pianoforte recital was so far forgotten…". Reading between the line, the editor reveals a least a very cautious open-mindedness about the new music, which is likely to have played a part in his publishing Heseltine's piece.

Let us be just above all things: however sour these fruits of genius may seem to the average musical taste of to-day, they are at least worthy of a fair inspection, if only to prevent our seeming, to the next generation of music-lovers, like those who thought "Die Meistersinger" a monstrous caterwauling.[21]

Looming large here is a fear of looking foolish in the future, perhaps as a prompt to be fair and therefore cautious in judgement. It should be noted that Heseltine was only seventeen years old when he wrote this review.[22] His main musical love at the time was Frederick Delius (1862-1957), whom he felt was underappreciated by mainstream critics. Heseltine developed his taste for Delius while still at school (Eton). In a letter to one of his school-teachers, Heseltine says that he was aiming the Schoenberg article at intolerant critics, such as Frederick Corder, who had written a particularly unpleasant review of Schoenberg's music in 1911 in the *Musical Times*, which was cast in jingoistic terms. Corder wrote:

> He whom I speak of – wild horses shall not tear from me his name – has produced three pieces of an originality beyond all bounds, a novelty of aim which disconcerts all attempts at criticism … Said I not again and again that we English are fifty years behind every other nation in music? … Hardly are my words dead and cold when up comes a small German, who sends us all staggering and makes Richard Strauss a mere back number. Our Cyril Scotts and Holbrookes have made a gallant fight, but it is time we owned to defeat and in this, as in most other things, allowed the invincible Fatherland to walk over us.[23]

Here the issue over modern music is cast in terms of British *versus* German music. Schoenberg is then cast in the same role as Richard Strauss, as an arrogant foreign invader. Indeed, for Corder, Schoenberg is like Strauss except worse. Note that this was before any British performance of Schoenberg's work. Moreover, Corder thinks that "novelty of aim disturbs all attempts at criticism": the worry might seem to be that the novelty of works made criticism impossible. But this does not deter Corder from his firm negative judgement.

[21] P. A. Heseltine, "Arnold Schönberg", *The Musical Standard*, 21 September 1912, p. 176.
[22] Barry Smith, *Peter Warlock: The Life of Philip Heseltine,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp. 33-34.
[23] Frederick Corder's unsympathetic article on Arnold Schoenberg was "An Epoch-Making Composer" in the *Musical Times*, 1 December 1911, pp. 781-82. He cites Schoenberg's 'Drei Klavierstücke' op. 11 (1909).

At any rate, Corder's review clearly annoyed Heseltine. But the way that Heseltine reacts in the *Musical Standard* piece by appealing to the Test of Time. After having heard the first performance in Britain of Schoenberg's Five orchestral pieces on 3 September 1912 at Queen's Hall, conducted by Sir Henry Wood,[24] Heseltine writes in a letter to Delius that "I do not think he [Schoenberg] will be appreciated for many years to come…".[25] But the thought seems to be that eventually his time will come. There may be an influence from Nietzsche mixed in with Heseltine's review (Delius having recommended Nietzsche to Heseltine[26]), since one theme in Nietzsche was that of the artist or thinker who is ahead of his time, who is misunderstood and undervalued by those less in advance of their era.[27] This kind of Nietzscheanism is fully compatible with one aspect of the British Test of Time, although Nietzsche typically adds an elitism usually foreign to British thinking.

An attitude similar to Heseltine's can be seen in this anonymous opinion of Schoenberg's 1914 visit to London to conduct his Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 16 at Queens Hall:

> Time alone will decide whether his cacophony is too subtle for our ears or whether our ears are too subtle for his cacophony. … even Beethoven was regarded by many as a charlatan. Within living memory we have the similar case of Wagner. He is a foolhardy critic, therefore, who labels Schonberg with derogatory adjectives. He would be wiser if he applied those adjectives to himself.[28]

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[24] The *Five Orchestral Pieces* were performed for second time at the Queen's Hall on 17 January 1914, conducted by Schoenberg himself.

[25] A letter from Philip Heseltine to Frederick Delius, 6 September 1912, *Frederick Delius and Peter Warlock: A Friendship Revealed*, ed. by Barry Smith, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 49.

[26] See *Frederick Delius and Peter Warlock: A Friendship Revealed*, (ed.) Barry Smith, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

[27] Heseltine was significantly influenced by Nietzsche. For example, he quotes Nietzsche in his subsequent article of 1913: "… a significant phrase, which, if supplemented by a motto from Nietzsche, 'No good, no bad, but my taste, for which I have neither shame nor concealment', forms the foundation of a complete philosophy of musical criticism." P. A. Heseltine, "Some Reflections on Modern Musical Criticism", *The Musical Times*, 1 October 1913, p. 652. Also, Nietzsche comes up frequently in correspondence between Heseltine and Delius.

[28] "Futurist Music", *The Daily Citizen*, 19 January 1914, p. 4.

Here is a nearly explicit reference to the Test of Time and the caution that it implies where it has not been passed in the case of judging new works. Again, it is Wagner's previous reception that is seen as a warning sign.

In this debate, we can see those who seek to defend Schoenberg drawing on the traditions of critical debate in the British sentimentalist tradition. In particular, this is what we see in Heseltine when he says he wants to be just in judgement. He describes Schoenberg as "far in advance of the general public taste." In the past, there were unjust, hasty judgements about Richard Wagner, when he was a novelty. Being aware of previous error, Heseltine thinks we should proceed with caution. This is the Test of Time working negatively, encouraging principled hesitation in judgement. Often, when the 'Test of Time' is discussed, the emphasis is on how *passing* the Test of Time validates judgement.[29] However, as noted, the idea also has its equally important *negative* face when something *fails* to pass it. Then it seems that modesty, or agnosticism in judgement, is prescribed. Thus, what we see in the second quotation from Hume's essay above is also there in critical discussion.

Another consideration is that even though in the above quotation Heseltine says that "…these fruits of genius may seem [sour] to the average taste of to-day", he also thinks it "important" that Schoenberg "has a large following of admirers, including Busoni, many of whom not only consider his music beautiful but even compose works of a similar mind themselves". This is the Test of Time working positively. (Compare the second part of the disjunction in the quotation from Addison.) Heseltine admits that "each individual's taste is influenced in a greater or lesser degree by conventional ideals and standards". Nevertheless, he thinks, people can follow their "own subtle, indefinable instincts of appreciation. In a case where this has been accomplished by a large number of people … in the course of time, the new art may …overthrow these very standards of beauty themselves".[30] Heseltine's Test of Time has a somewhat democratic aspect, and he sees people's changing standards and taste as evolving together. It is because of this awareness of collective changes in tastes and standards that he maintains a principled caution in judgement in the case of Schoenberg's novel music.

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[29] This is particularly prominent in Joseph Addison's essays, reprinted in Dabney Townsend, *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*.

[30] P. A. Heseltine, "Arnold Schönberg", *op. cit.* p. 177.

§3. Other Reasons for Caution

A number of other critics urge caution in judgement, but for a variety of other reasons. They are not looking over their shoulders worried about mistakes over Wagner. One critic appeals to caution in the light of Schoenberg's earlier works. In the following review. Charles Frederick Kenyon, the British author and composer, known by the pseudonym Gerald Cumberland, writing in *The Manchester Courier*, claimed that Schoenberg's music has been judged unfairly by other critics:

> … there are always plenty of men ready to condemn an artist before they have given him a hearing. … A man [Schoenberg] who can write those bold, energetic phrases, imbued with determination and grit, is not the type of man who turns tail when he is attacked, or who is frightened by a handful of silly people who hiss because they cannot understand. … I used to doubt this music, but now, having heard so much of his earlier work, I doubt myself. And that, I submit, is what the critic should always do when he finds himself unable to understand or appreciate the creative artist.[31]

This is as much meta-criticism as criticism. One typically sentimentalist idea here is that serious criticism means having an awareness of one's own history of feeling and judgement. This reflectiveness, or potential reflectiveness, is seen as central to the critic's enterprise (see Hume and Burke's writings, for example).[32]

There is another idea here, though, which is that an artist's earlier work casts light on his or her later work. The writer is presumably thinking of at least *Pelleas und Melisande* and *Verklärte Nacht*, of which he thought well. If so, Kenyon reasons that this means that he needs to re-evaluate what he thinks of the later works by the same composer, since what he found in the earlier works might point to something of interest in the later works that might otherwise be overlooked. This is not quite the Test of Time at work, but it is the idea that our responses to works can be educated and at least informed by knowledge of other works from other times. But there will be competing explanations of why this is so. For the

[31] Gerald Cumberland, "Arnold Schönberg. Personal Impressions of a Futurist Composer", *The Manchester Courier*, Saturday 17 January 1914, p. 8.
[32] In particular, in those writings anthologised in Dabney Townsend, *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*: Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful,* and Hume's "Of the Standard of Taste", *op. cit.*

British critics, it is a matter of the informed listener's understanding of the music and the self-reflectiveness necessary for delivering fair verdicts.

In the case of Kenyon, it seems that the consequences of reflectiveness are self-doubt; but this is not a generally sceptical view. The attitude at the second level is held with confidence. It is not that all judgement is suspended. Quite the opposite. The second level judgement that we do not know is held quite dogmatically, in the light of previous history of experience and judgement and in the light of our awareness of past errors. Furthermore, Schoenberg's unflinching pursuit of his type of music is invoked to add weight to the idea that we should not rush to judge it negatively. Schoenberg himself is not worried by negative criticism; and so, likewise, the critic should be cautious and not overly influenced by other critic's negative judgements.

A different reason for caution is a worry about not having sufficient knowledge to judge. In this regard, the test of time is also deployed by Robin H. Legge, writing in the national newspaper the *Daily Telegraph* in 1914:

> And so it goes on. … at the first sign of "newness" there is the outcry of "revolution". No regard whatever is paid to the fact that "new" compositions are the expression of a human who is not the ordinary human, who at least believes he has something inevitable to say. If he did not express himself in the manner he would obviously be insincere; and Heaven knows we suffer much from insincerity in art matters to-day! There are certain standards of art expression among civilised peoples, no doubt, which have more or less to be respected. But I ask again – By which standard are you judging Schoenberg who hurl the epithets of anarchist, revolutionary, &c., at him? He, to some extent like Strauss, has apparently set up two standards in his comparatively small output of music. Is the time ready yet for a complete judgment? I urge that it is not, for not only are we almost too close to the subject to judge at present, but also we have had no opportunity for obtaining a knowledge of some of Schoenberg's music, save only on paper: and they are precious few who, however clever as score-readers, can

> yet get at the spirit of a man through the means of paper who expresses his art emotion in such terms as those employed by Arnold Schoenberg.[33]

Again, there is the pressing question: is the time right to judge? The point that similar considerations apply to both Strauss and Schoenberg show how deep the idea of principled hesitation in judgement—the negative Test of Time—runs. The Test of Time needs to be passed, and time must elapse, in order to look back with a certain detachment. Without that it is too soon to judge. For Legge, the difficulty in judging is compounded by the lack of opportunities to hear Schoenberg live, especially given that Schoenberg's music is difficult to appreciate by reading a score. Like Heseltine, Legge thinks that Schoenberg's sincerity counts in favour of not rushing to judge negatively.

Strauss fell from favour for a while after the 1912 premiere of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, which the critics hated, along with lack of interest from the public. Legge is worried, presumably, about a similar fate befalling Schoenberg given his recent more radical phase. Legge's Test of Time means that we need properly to experience a work. We also need time to consider and reconsider it. And the relationship between different works of the composer ("the two standards") needs to be taken into account.

Part of the problem, Legge suggests, is the perceived lack of standards, that is to say, rules from which to judge. He does not merely raise the possibility that the time might not be right to judge, but boldly asserts that it is not. Hesitating on principle, like Kenyon/Cumberland he is not beset with *meta*-hesitation but has a confident dogmatic scepticism, asserting that, from that point in time, listeners *cannot* know. They were, Legge says, too close to the objects of evaluation (compare Hume's claim that we need 'comparison in judgement' to make fair judgements of taste). He thinks that faced with novelty we are like viewers in an art gallery viewing a painting from two inches away from the canvas. We need to step back in order fairly to appreciate and judge the work.

Ironically, Legge's contribution is notable for its confidence. It is a principled and dogmatic scepticism: like Socrates, he knows for sure that he does not know; and he also knows that others do not know. In a sense this is dogmatism of its own sort. And the reason for the lack of first-order knowledge is the lack of distance from novel

[33] Robin H. Legge, "Schönberg, Modern Art Expression", *The Daily Telegraph*, Saturday, 17 January 1914, p. 5. Legge (1862-1933) was the chief music critic for *The Daily Telegraph* from 1906 to 1931.

works, which only time can provide. On this way of thinking, once there are established standards, *then* we *can* judge with confidence. We have the interestingly combination of meta-dogmatism with first-order hesitation. It does raise the question of whether this is a coherent and stable combination, and it also raises a question about the source of the second-order view, which need not detain us (because it does not seem to worry these critics).

In fact, there is a *kind* of conservatism about taste at work here: that consensus over time means there are standards that we may depend on to guide judgement. As the contemporary aesthetician Jerrold Levinson says, these standards are not so much abstract principles, but are constituted by an existing canon, which can be relied on when we are unsure in judgement.[34] Rules, such as there are, derive from masterworks in the canon. Thus, while the Test of Time does allow some openness to the new, that openness is predicated on a kind of conservatism in judgement. The defenders of the Test of Time might say that it is a nuanced combination that allows space for novelty against the background of a stable set of responses and judgements. At least, it could be argued that there is a dual emphasis on the way judgements both hang together, and also evolve over time, which has realism on its side. Detractors will worry about the conservatism built into this mode of criticism, as a matter of principle.

Another source of caution is the changes in a particular critic's mind. We can see this in a writer who deploys a Test of Time framework applied to Richard Strauss. Schoenberg was far from being the only composer that critics approached with a concern about how the appreciate their novelty in the light of the Test of Time. Hamilton Harty writes in 1924 in the *Musical Times*:

> It is possible to point to certain flaws in many of the great works of Richard Strauss, but at the same time no one can deny the greatness of his conceptions, the fire and warmth of his expression, and the wonderful vital quality of most of his music. Deep thought, a vast command of means, and also defiant mastery can all be felt; and, above all, a free and luxuriant melodic line which seldom fails. Grandeur and dignity are within his scope… What then prevents our claiming him as one of the really great? I acknowledge, for my part, that I

[34] Jerrold Levinson, "Hume's Standard of Taste: The Real Problem", *op. cit.*

> cannot presume to think that he may not eventually be looked upon as a worthy companion of the greatest, but it is still too soon to say how his music will stand the test of time. Some of it seems, with familiarity, to have worn thin and a little empty and pretentious, but, on the other hand, there is much of it which seems to grow better only as we become more accustomed to it. I do not think there is a single flaw in the gaiety and charm of a work like, for instance, *Till Eulenspiegel*, nor, with the exception of one short episode, in the nobility of *Don Quixote*, and we notice that certain works like *Heldenleben* and *Zarathustra* only grow more and more understandable with repeated hearings. But I do not intend to deal with his works in any exhaustive spirit – the occasional ugliness have become smoothed to a great extent, and seem to take up a smaller amount of space, and it is principally because certain themes, certain progressions we once thought beautiful now seem to be growing a little sentimental and commonplace, that we are warned not to be over-hasty in final judgment.[35]

This last worry about haste, of course, is a standard sentimentalist theme. The Test of Time here and elsewhere is operating as a kind of background assumption. The problem is what to think about novelty, when something is of a radically different kind from what has gone before, and that is therefore estranged from items in the canon. Rules have been broken or ignored. In that situation we must hesitate, given our awareness of changing responses. ("Certain themes, certain progressions we once thought beautiful"). Without constancy of judgement and response, one can only expect further future variation, which make settled judgement impossible in the present. Compare this quotation with the second Hume quotation above. There is a principled attitude of detachment in judgement.

Something else that is notable is the way Harty describes the developing *process* of appreciation in the reception of Strauss. Some works seem to improve in our estimation over time while others get worse. That is part of the reason "it is still too soon to say how his music will stand the Test of Time" and "we should not be over-

[35] Hamilton Harty, "Modern Composers and Modern Compositions", *The Musical Times*, 1 April 1924, Vol. 65, No. 974, p. 330. Sir Hamilton Harty (1879-1941) was an Irish composer, conductor, and pianist.

hasty in our judgment". The idea is not so much that we switch and change in our responses but that our responses evolve and develop to the advantage of appreciators further down-stream. This is very much a sentimentalist approach, emphasizing the dynamic aspect of appreciation and judgement, by contrast with a nineteenth-century German tradition that connected art with the 'absolute', or 'transcendental reality', or whatever. However, it was second nature to the Irish Anglican Harty, who later moved to conducting the Hallé orchestra.

Another writer who urges caution upon himself in the light of his own changing experiences is the avid concert-goer Lionel Bradley, who was a librarian, and who for many years wrote a detailed diary about his concert experiences.[36] Like many professional critics, Bradley was also guarded about his initial reactions, allowing that they might be mistaken. For example, commenting in 1927 on Ernst Bloch's Quintet for piano and strings, he writes that "The opening movement was too close-wrought to be properly comprehended on a first hearing…"[37] And in 1938 he writes of a Webern concert: "Webern's choral setting of Das Augenlicht was certainly the most ultra modern work of the evening. There were some moments of exquisite beauty but I felt that the whole work was completely perverse – a judgment which further acquaintance might make me modify."[38] Here again we see the typical sentimentalist awareness of the fallibility of initial reactions to something novel, and the attitude was not restricted to professional critics.

§4. The Test of Time Functioning Dogmatically

Although the Test of Time is pervasive, modest caution is not. A case that illustrates how deep the notion of the Test of Time runs is a 1929 BBC talk by Ernest Newman, which deploys the Test of Time, but this time to make a definite negative judgement. Newman rejects the worry about seeming 'reactionary'. Of Bela Bartók's Third Quartet, he says: "I hope you were able to make more of this than I was, and to find more pleasure in it than I was able to do. . . I must leave it to the future to decide whether I was more stupid than

[36] Lionel Bradley Collection, Royal College of Music, MS 10114 - MS 10332.

[37] 22 June1927, Memorial Hall, Manchester, Contemporary Music Centre.

[38] 17 June 1938, Queen's Hall, International Society for Contemporary Music.

usual that evening, or whether this is a work in which the composer has failed to make his purpose, and his meaning clear to the ordinary intelligence and certainly not unsympathetic listener." And of Schoenberg's Third Quartet, he says: "The other evening I found it disappointing, and unquestionably boring. I am conscious of the technical ingenuity of the writing, but it seemed to me poor stuff. I have no use for technical ingenuity when it is expended on ideas that are mostly ugly or commonplace." Moreover: "I am content to wait now for the verdict of time as to the value of Schönberg. I have only one life to live, and I feel there is a vast amount of music on which I can spend my time more profitably and preferably than on music of this kind. If this means I am going to be a reactionary, then I am going to be a reactionary." [39] Newman is sometimes thought of as an early defender of Schoenberg, but here he is harsh: "Poor stuff" is a very negative opinion. Newman does invoke the Test of Time as way of signalling an *in-principle* open-mindedness that his negative verdict *can* be over-turned and shown to be short-sighted and misguided. Meanwhile, however, he was *not* withholding judgement; instead, he expresses confidence in his policy of not paying attention to Schoenberg's works giving the lack of pleasure he takes in them. In 1929 he seems to feel more confident than in 1913 when he said that he was "baffled by unfamiliar music".[40] Even though he does not withhold judgement, the concern with the test of time slightly reduces his confidence in his judgement. Nonetheless, he feels that the Test of Time gives him sufficient warrant for a quite confident negative judgement. We might also notice that Newman's 1929 Test of Time has a social dimension; it is not individualistic. The "verdict of time" is a matter of a future community of informed music listeners, rather than just his own future judgements.

As I have emphasized, although British Sentimentalism and the Test of Time were a background assumption lying behind much criticism, if it did not always operate in the same way all the time. There were some critics who fault Schoenberg for falling foul of various *rules* of music evaluation, which they think the Test of Time has established. For example, Philip Greeley Clapp, writing in 1916 of the German tradition of "Haydn, Mozart, Bach and Beethoven", makes the claim: "Drama, emotion and lyric design are all suitable material for musical expression, and unless there is some of all three in a

[39] BBCWAC, Scrips, Reel 363: Ernest Newman, "Music criticism, no.3, 15 February 1929.

[40] Newman, "Arnold Schoenberg's Gurre Lieder", *Musical Times* 55, 1914, p. 11.

composer's ideas they are likely not to stand the test of time".[41] There is no caution here. The Test of Time functions dogmatically, to reinforce a view by way of rules that are apparently mandated by it.

This kind of view was opened by Heseltine, who appears to be against rules, at least those he deems "arbitrary ones", writing:

> The time has long passed when freedom of thought in music was suppressed by a kind of superstitious adherence to certain arbitrary rules and regulations, in spite of the belated bleatings – now becoming pathetically weak-voiced and unsupported – of the musically dead who deplore the 'licentiousness' of modern music, and sigh for the good old days when Haydn reigned supreme, or even make bold to deny the name of music to the works of those 20th century composers whose musical genealogies they happen to be unable to trace back to Jubal.[42]

In this conception, rules are viewed more negatively as inhibiting progress. They are not viewed as an inevitable part of what constitutes an evolving canon, but something standing in the way of its evolution. And, of course, it is no accident that Heseltine was a defender of Schoenberg, who he sees as a rule-breaker.

Dogmatic negative views about Schoenberg were not always underlined by the Test of Time apparatus. For example, Florence Gamon writes in 1928: "A good piece of music expresses something worth saying – or worth feeling, rather – with a skill that carries conviction to the listener".[43] The example shows that sentimentalism was not a universal critical background theme, and even when it was salient, it did not operate in a universal way. There were a variety of critical approaches in play. However, in general, the appeal to hard and fast rules, like Clapp and Gamon, does not fit the thinking of those of a more sentimentalist persuasion, even though for sentimentalists, there *can* be loose rules-of-thumb that figure as principles of virtuous sentimental responses, rather than norms to which the object of sentiment must conform. These

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[41] Philip Greeley Clapp, "Sebastian Bach, Modernist", *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 2, April 1916, p. 312.

[42] P. A. Heseltine, "Some Reflections on Modern Musical Criticism", *The Musical Times*, 1 October 1913, p. 652.

[43] Florence Gamon, *The Clarion*, March 1928, p. 5.

sentimentalist rules derive from works that are in the canon. Once works are in the canon, certain rules can be extracted from them. The rules function like those in cookery (a comparison that both Hume and Kant make), which do not function as abstract principles but only as extrapolations from what has worked in the past. In Levinson's reconstruction of Hume, although there are no rules directly bearing on works of art, a canon of masterworks serves to pin down ways of identifying ideal judges.[44] According to this view, rules serve, along with the canon, to indicate healthy and virtuous sensibilities. And when something like that is not in the background, then it makes good sense of the anxiety, felt by both Legge and Harty, when something has not yet attained its place in the canon; for that means that, in the meantime, sentimental rules for good music are up in the air, and, in the absence of such rules, judgement is hazardous.

§5. Varieties of Test of Time and a Complaint

These reviews illustrate not only that in the first third of the twentieth-century, many British listeners, whether professional critics or composers, were uncertain how to understand and evaluate Schoenberg's music, but also that some critics exhibited a degree of self-consciousness about this very uncertainty in the light of some version of the Test of Time. The prevailing attitude seems to be principled open-mindedness to something very novel and different; so, critics do not rush to judge. Deborah Heckert accurately notes: "Many of the articles published in this period refuse to take an absolute stand on the long-term value on the various trends in modern music, but defer judgement."[45] The critical attitude is thus a second-order one, that critics who are initially repelled by some novel music should give more time to let it sink in, especially given the critical history over Wagner and others. And even if critics find the music interesting, they should not be sure whether or not it will be of enduring significance.

[44] Jerrold Levinson, "Hume's Standard of Taste: The Real Problem", *op.cit.*
[45] Deborah Heckert, "Schoenberg, Roger Fry and the Emergence of a Critical Language for the Reception of Musical Modernism in Britain, 1912-1914", in *British Music and Modernism 1895-1960*, edited by Matthew Riley, London: Routledge, 2017, p. 57.

Even if critics like a novel piece of music, they should not rush to endorse it (the more typical eighteenth-century worry). The hesitation, in both directions, was principled.

In almost all the critical interventions we have considered, we see the Test of Time employed as a critical tool. It is this British sentimentalist tradition, unlike the more German-speaking traditions of critical discussion in which Schoenberg's works are often understood and discussed, that is relevant to his British reception. We do not encounter British critics discussing metaphysical revelations extracted from musical works, or the *Geist* at works in composition generating emotional richness in music. It is the British tradition's appeal to schooled sentiments that is the intellectual context of the British critics of his work and of the British audience. For example, this was evident in the debate in the *Musical Standard*, and in the various reviews already examined.

Of course, the Test of Time is not monolithic: sometimes it implies repeated listening by the same people; at others, it implies future generations of critics. Sometimes it implies rules; sometimes not. Some critics are interested in whether individual critics will sustain their judgements in their lives; whereas others see the Test of Time in less individualistic and in more interpersonal terms. Thus, there are different Tests of Time and the critics we examined manifest it in different ways. Nevertheless, the persistent presence of these ideas of the Test of Time over a long period of time, especially a keen concern with what the future will judge, is so common that it cannot plausibly be thought to be accidental, or merely some rhetorical way of speaking. Instead, it reveals a deep tendency in the way people think critically, thinking of themselves as part of an imagined continuing community of critics stretching into the future.[46] The need for self-aware 'practice in judgement', which is well-expressed in Hume, is fundamental to the way critics operating with a Test of Time deal with the problem of novelty. Hume's essay begins from an observation about the divergence of taste, as a real problem for criticism, not merely an abstract speculation. In the light of the problem, as an antidote, he proposes that we need awareness of the need for practice, and breadth of experience; and this is part of what should hold us back from over-hasty judgement, especially when faced with something unfamiliar, like Schoenberg's later works. This is the path that Hume and other sentimentalists recommend to critics when faced with divergence in sentiment and

[46] In this respect there are echoes of Edmund Burke's conservatism as expressed in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Harmonsworth: Penguin 2003.

judgement, and when faced with uncertainty in sentiment and judgement.[47] Anxiety is principled.

Indeed, these attitudes extend even wider. Many of Jane Austen's novels, for example, make full use of them. *Pride and Prejudice* has as its theme the unreliability of Elizabeth Bennett's hasty judgements and feelings, and her path to distinguishing superficial from real value that was not initially apparent. Her rash sentiments are schooled, and she comes to be more just in feeling.[48] These ideas run long and deep in British cultural thinking both about the arts and about much else.

They are not unchallenged, however. Following the publication of Heseltine's early 1912 review in the *Musical Standard*, an interesting debate ensued. A letter was subsequently published from a reader using a pseudonym 'S. O. G.' ("Silly Old Goat", presumably) who challenged Heseltine's article on many points, but in particular criticising him for failing to commit himself one way or the other on what he thinks of Schoenberg's music (28 September 1912). Then S.O.G. makes his own forthright judgement: "I know a little of the writing of Schoenberg, and I hate it because I am convinced that it is essentially ugly, brutally ugly."[49] S.O.G. is impatient with Heseltine's 'wait and see' approach.

S.O.G. will have none of Heseltine's modest caution due to the possibility of taste changing because of new art forms. He rejects this caution as ungenuine and overly self-conscious, and he urges Heseltine to commit himself. S.O.G. complains: "Is it so fatal to utter a wrong opinion?"[50] He believes a more unreflective and frank honest reaction and judgement is the way forward rather than cultivated over-precious hesitation. (We might speculate that S.O.G. would be equally damning of Corder with his ponderous nationalism pervading his judgement.) S.O.G. then says: "Anyone can observe a careful silence, but it requires a certain abandon to utter a conviction that may turn out to be wrong. Nevertheless, it is by such statements of opinion that we ultimately arrive at the truth".[51]

[47] See, for example, Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste", *op.cit*., pp. 231-232, pp. 236-238.
[48] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*. Harmonsworth: Penguin, 2006. *Sense and Sensibility* contains in effect a mini essay on the sentiments (*Sense and Sensibility,* Harmonsworth: Penguin, 1995).
[49] S.O.G., "What is Cacophony?", *The Musical Standard*, 28 September 1912, p. 40. Unfortunately, there are no clues as to the identity of S.O.G.
[50] S.O.G., "What is Cacophony?", *The Musical Standard*, 28 September 1912, p. 40.
[51] *Ibid.*

Here S.O.G. draws on another idea, more of a nineteenth-century one, which is the typically liberal idea that truth is best accessed by means of dissenting opinions being aired in public debate.[52] Despite his somewhat dogmatic negativity about Schoenberg, S.O.G. emphasises frank commitment to judgement, but also sees the advance of taste in a more interpersonal dialectical way than Heseltine. For S.O.G., the advance of taste is a matter of *negotiation* between people, rather than a collection of lonely individual refining their own taste to their own satisfaction, and hopefully agreeing with others, as it is for Heseltine. Despite this difference, it is distinctively British traditions that are the intellectual background of this debate over Schoenberg's reception, but different British traditions. This is true both for Heseltine as well as S.O.G., who believes in "truth" in convictions about taste. The difference is that one has a more collectivist and the other a more dialectical way of thinking about the path to critical truth by public debate between opposing views. The former emphasises how individual critics should be aware of changing fashions and evolving taste and should reflect on their own exposure to the new art form, in the light of how the opinion of others is changing, while the latter emphasises, not so much the changes in individuals but instead the cut and thrust of public debate among peers, from which truth will emerge. We will return to this opposition at the end of this chapter.

§6. A Rival Hypothesis

A rival hypothesis has been advanced by Deborah Heckert, who claims that changes in *audiences'* responses to new music were owed to *music critics*, who borrowed a theoretical framework from *visual art critics*, who had managed to change audience's tastes in visual art such that they came to accept post-impressionist modernist works by Cezanne and others.[53] Let us put aside her claims about the effects of critical writings on audiences. Here I want to question her claim about music criticism—that it imported ideas from Roger Fry's visual formalism in order to give a theoretical basis for

[52] J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Harmondsworth: Penguin. 2010.

[53] Deborah Heckert, "Schoenberg, Roger Fry and the Emergence of a Critical Language for the Reception of Musical Modernism in Britain, 1912-1914", in *British Music and Modernism1895-1960*, edited by Matthew Riley, London: Routledge, 2017.

appreciating the new music. In her article, Heckert spends some time describing the critical activities of Fry as the new visual art became popular. She then claims:

> [Music] Critics echoed Fry's themes and adapted them to explain the new music, attempting to justify them to the London public in terms that were increasingly familiar across the spectrum of emerging modernist styles in the visual arts, literature and music.[54]

Those themes, she says, were: first, "the importance of form and the structural characteristics of the artwork in creating and emotional and expressive impact"; secondly, "the personal integrity of the artist determining the merit of the artwork"; and thirdly "the evolutionary progression of art history towards the modernist agenda".[55] Now, the second theme she attributes to Fry would be somewhat odd, since while weight is often placed on artistic integrity as the path to merit in art, no critic, certainly not Fry or Bell, could think it sufficient to *fix* merit. Artists who strongly believe in themselves and in their art can produce inferior work. So, we might take the second theme in a weaker way just to be an emphasis on artistic integrity as an important factor leading to the production of good work. The third theme allegedly characteristic of Fry is in fact more characteristic of Clement Greenberg's later modernist writings[56], but not those of Fry and Bell; and anyway, music critics did not see Schoenberg's work as an inevitable consequence of a tendency implicit in previous music, as some visual modernists did see the evolution of the visual arts towards abstraction. So, we might modify what Heckert says is Fry's third theme so that it is just the simple idea that modernist works developed from previous artistic phases. But the second and third themes, thus modified, are hardly distinctive of either art or music of the modernist period. Much great art of all times and places is produced by artists who believe in themselves, and their work is a development of previous art phases. Wagner, for example, certainly did not lack in self-belief and integrity, and his music is plausibly seen as a development of previous music (he certainly saw it that way). By contrast, what Heckert describes as the first theme in Fry, or something like it, probably *is* distinctive of the Fry and Bell's approach to visual art, as stated in their writings,

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[54] *Ibid*., p. 62.
[55] *Ibid*., p. 62.
[56] Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture*, London: Beacon Press, 1961.

although for them "form" was typically contrasted with "content". Both Fry and Bell inveighed against the 'merely literary' aspect of visual artworks. So, by "emotional and expressive impact" nothing literary or a matter of content can be implied. They often wrote of 'aesthetic emotion' as being produced by good works. But, roughly speaking, in *this* respect, Heckert description of the leading visual formalists is a fair one.

Heckert claims that the three features she identifies in Fry's critical writings found their way into early reviews of modernist music by 1914. Of course, the reviews mention the integrity of Schoenberg and his belief in what he is doing, and they trace Schoenberg's connections to previous music. But these two claims, corresponding to (2) and (3), are so bland and commonplace that they do not establish any distinctive relation to the writings of Fry and Bell.

The first of Heckert's distinctive features of visual formalism, was the emphasis on form, structure and emotional and expressive impact. While that does plausibly characterise Fry, Heckert's claim that this idea finds its way into music criticism is not born out by the examples that she gives. She points to four reviews, one in each of the *Standard*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*. The first review refers only to Schoenberg's integrity; the second review praises Schoenberg's orchestration (a compliment one might pay to Tchaikovsky), and it also mention Schoenberg's integrity.[57] It is true that the review in the *Times* does actually uses the word "form". The reviewer praises Schoenberg's "consistency of form" in the piece. This sentence is Heckert's best, and really her only, piece of evidence for her thesis. But it is not clear that this notion of 'form' is Fry and Bell's notion of 'significant form', which is opposed to content, and which produces a distinctive aesthetic emotion. The reviewer seems to use "form" in a far more prosaic sense as pointing to repeated "simple figures of rhythm", which is just a comment on the elements of music that any critic might make about any music in any era or culture. There is no reason to think that this is the specific notion of form lifted from discourse about contemporary modernist visual art—of form in abstraction from content, causing aesthetic emotions. The word "form" is often used in a fluid and general way. That being so, it is far from clear that its use signals the very specific notion of visual form, as an abstraction from content, that was the notion invoked by Fry and Bell in the visual arts. Lastly, the *Daily*

[57] *Op. cit*., pp. 62-63.

Telegraph review talks of "beauty" and "pleasure", hardly ideas that are the preserve of Fry and Bell.[58]

In sum, Heckert is right that first theme does imply a connection with modernist visual formalism, but wrong that music critics make such claims about modernist music in their reviews. Of course, she would be right if she claimed that music critics mention the modified second and third themes in their reviews, but, in that case, she would be wrong that this implies any connection with modernist visual formalism.

There are also questions that we can raise about Heckert's view that between 1912 and 1914, critical attitudes changed greatly; indeed, she thinks that they more or less reversed in a very short time. Contrary to what Heckert claims, critics were not particularly enthusiastic about Schoenberg's music after 1914. But what British critics like Heseltine think is that we should be cautious and *withhold* judgement, an idea that draws on the sentimentalist tradition; they were not suddenly and dramatically converted by reading Fry and Bell's writings defending visual formalism.

§7. Britain Vs. Germany

For the most part, the German-speaking critical tradition is different from the British critical tradition. Although Kant's aesthetics was very strongly influenced by British sentimentalism (for example, Lord Shaftesbury's idea of 'disinterest' and many aspects of Hume), this connection was not maintained by German aestheticians and art theorists who followed Kant in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Bojan Bujić gestured at some typical features of nineteenth-century German critical thinking when he describes what he says is the *cliché* of "descriptions of nineteenth-century music, emphasizing its emotionalism, reliance on fantasy, the cult of the virtuoso and a certain transcendental tendency."[59] What is wrong with the *cliché*, for Bujić, is not that it does not describe the German approach, but that it is incomplete because there was also some appeal to the

[58] Heckert also cites as evidence Rosa Newmarch's somewhat poetic Proms program notes at *ibid*., p. 64. However, it is very hard to make out what Newmarch is saying, and, even so, there seems to be little there to remind one of Fry and Bell.

[59] Bojan Bujić, "General Introduction" in *Music* in *European thought, 1851-1912*, edited by Bojan Bujić, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 7.

sciences.[60] Also common in German criticism is the appeal to "*Geist*" in the sense of an extraordinary faculty of mind, or to ideas of historical destiny, and of the individual artists as embodying their age. There is also the idea of individual necessity, where the artist's character or essence is seen as necessarily giving birth to works, and where contingencies, the accidental and the haphazard, are rarely recognised. These features of German critical reception are nicely described in Charles Dowell Youmans' book, *Richard Strauss's Orchestral Music and the German Intellectual Tradition: The Philosophical Routes of Musical Modernism,* where Strauss is portrayed as turning his back on these modes of critical thinking.[61] Perhaps not all these aspects are universally present in all German music criticism, but they do generally characterise the outlook in a way that contrasts with the main currents of British criticism. In the German tradition, music is typically conceived in emotional, or extra-musical, metaphysical or social terms, which means that the critical understanding of novelty in music can only turn out to be an intellectual grasp of what music is supposed to stand in relation to.[62] Again, this is very far from the British Sentimentalist view of critical engagement with novelty.

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[60] See Felix Gatz, *Musik-aesthetik in irhen Hauptrichtungen: Ein Quellenbuch der deutchen Musik-* Ä*esthetik von Kant und der Fruhromantik bis zur Gegenwart mit Einfuhrung und Erlauterangen*, Stuttgart: Ferdinad Enke, 1929, on extra-musical metaphysical content in nineteenth-century German musical thinking.

[61] Charles Dowell Youmans, *Richard Strauss's Orchestral Music and the German Intellectual Tradition: The Philosophical Routes of Musical Modernism,* Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2005.

[62] Theodor Adorno's writings on Schoenberg in the 1920s and 1930s fit the German template. See for example the essays from this period in Theodor Adorno, *Essays on Music,* edited by Richard Leppert, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. Schoenberg's main significance is characterized by Adorno in relational terms with respect to social and political contexts. No wonder Schoenberg himself was no keen on Adorno's analysis! Adorno's later *Philosophy of Modern Music* (London: Continuum, 2007), and Carl Dalhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1987) were written much later after the second world war, and so are not directly relevant to the reception of Schoenberg in his lifetime. Nevertheless, both authors are broadly of the standard German type as characterised above, seeing music as being historically constituted and having extra-musical metaphysical or political content.

A prominent example of German-speaking criticism that engages with matters of time but in a dramatically different way from the British way highlighted here is Paul Bekker, who writes, of Schoenberg in 1923:

> …it is wrong to grant unlimited credit to a problematic art solely on the basis of its future potential. If we reject the authority of our grandfathers, we must not bow to that of our grandchildren, and what the future will perhaps feel and think is just as indifferent as what the past has felt and thought. It depends on ourselves, on the courage to be true to our own confession.[63]

Here future judgement is invoked in a way that makes for a stark contrast with the British critics discussed here. Bekker's attitude is not merely different from the way the British critics tend to think but actually is in contradiction with the deployment of the Test of Time. He thinks that it is actually wrong to worry about our grandchildren will think; what the future will think and feel is irrelevant; it is what is now felt that is all that matters. We need to have courage, *not* hesitation, which the British make into a virtue when faced with novelty. Bekker also writes in the same article in more characteristically German terms about Schoenberg:

> Art itself, however, is unlimited, and when the time has come, new, hitherto unknown areas open up again and again. Those who lead the way there initially walk alone, and what they find may not always be the final result. The undoubted value of their work rests in the ethos of searching, which is creative intuition, in the constantly driving realization of the necessity for inner renewal. One such seeker, driven by the deepest compulsion of necessity, is Schoenberg. In him is the demon of prophetic nature.[64]

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[63] Paul Bekker, *Kritische Zeitbilder* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1921), pp. 163-164. "... *ist es falsch, einer problematischen Kunst lediglich auf künftige Wirkungsmöglichkeiten hin unbeschränkten Kredit zu gewähren. Wenn wir schon die Autorität der Großväter ablehnen, so dürfen wir uns doch nicht unter die der Enkel beugen, und was die Zukunft vielleicht einmal fühlen, denken wird, ist ebenso gleichgültig wie das, was die Vergangenheit gefühlt, gedacht hat. Auf uns selbst kommt es anm auf den Mut zum eigenen Bekenntnis."*

[64] *Ibid.* p. 173. "*Die Kunst selbst aber ist ein Unbegrenztes, und wenn die Zeit gekommen ist, öffnen sich immer wieder neue, seither unbekannte Gebiete. Die dorthin vorangehen, schreiten zunächst einsam, und was sie finden, mag nicht immer das Endgültige sein. Der zweifelsfreie Wert ihres Schaffens ruht in dem Ethos des Suchens, das schöpferisches Ahnen*

Here we see tropes of German critical thinking: the composer described as searching, inner renewal, compulsion of necessity, demonic inspiration. (Compare Egon Wellesz's views in chapter 2 below). This is not the place to substantiate broad comparisons in quantitative terms. But one cannot help but notice general patterns of thought. Here, however, I intend only some anecdotal comparisons, which are nonetheless revealing. The music was imported, but its reception was determined by native critical traditions, not those operative in the lands of its creation.

§8. Objecting to Test of Time Criticism

Let us end this chapter by bringing S.O.G. back into the conversation, as a 1912 listener to Schoenberg. S.O.G.'s dislike of Schoenberg's music is not particularly remarkable, but his criticism of 'wait-and-see' reflective caution is interesting. Thinking about his criticism may allow us to see limitations of Test of Time criticism as an approach to novelty.

Critics like Heseltine and Newman think that any 'Shock of the New' is something eventually to be processed and overcome. But that is not necessarily right. Consider an analogy from pop music: there was a 'Shock of the New' of those who first listened to Elvis Presley in 1956 or the Sex Pistols in 1976. Some felt disgust and rejection while other felt exhilaration and adulation. Would there not have been a danger in a mature cautious wait-and-see approach? Perhaps knowing, cautious listeners would be unable to hear the fresh vibrant novelty, which disgusted some and delighted others. We now cannot hear that, so familiarised are we with that music and their genres. Unfortunately, that means that we suffer a loss for our knowingness. Furthermore, it is difficult or impossible to reoccupy the position of the *naïve* listener. Much better, in a way, to be the person who smashes their television set out of disgust. They feel the shock in a way that the contemporary person who switches seamlessly from one part of the pop canon to another does not. Recall Baxandall, who cannot escape looking at paintings in the light of what happened later in art (Cézanne leading

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ist, in der unablässig treibenden Erkenntnis der Notwendigkeit innerer Erneuerung. Ein solcher Sucher aus dem Zwange tiefsten Müssens ist Schönberg. In ihm ist der Dämon der Prophetennatur."

to Cubism, and so on). He seems to be imprisoned by his knowledge of what happened later, incapable of a fresh *naïve* response. Is there no more direct response that we can have? Must we always listen with a historical situated mindset? S.O.G. praises a fresh *naïve* way of listening, rather than a more knowing, more retrospective, genre-aware, historically knowledgeable way to listen.[65] A moderate compromise would be that both are good ways of listening to Schoenberg. Indeed, each way seems only partial, and both are better, if it is possible to combine them. However, this might actually not be possible, which puts the listener in a dilemma. It is not obvious. But it would be no bad dilemma to be in.

S.O.G. would complain against critics who affect a principled attitude of detachment in judgement that this just invites an alienation between feeling and judgement. Much better to judge and be damned—to judge and lose rather than never to have judged at all. Principled hesitation appears over-intellectual, detached, and cold, according to S.O.G. Much better to express ones feeling in forthright judgements, which can then be discussed in a public forum, rather than nursed and worried about in private. A sentimentalist critic might counter that this alienation is just the price of being a critic who cannot just respond unthinkingly in an animal way, but must be self-aware in judgement and response. The question is this: is holding one's feelings in check the best way to listen? Can one be *too* reflective in critical thinking? Compare romantic love. One may feel love, and then one may intellectualise and wonder whether that feeling of love is a good one to have and act on. But if one thinks too much, one's feelings may atrophy or becomes inauthentic. Reflection may destroy feeling and the knowledge that springs from feeling. Likewise with critical appreciation. The reflective critical life is good. But too much reflection can perhaps destroy more intuitive critical knowledge.[66]

S.O.G. denies that we always need to judge works in retrospect. In this he agrees with Bekker. The future can go in many different directions, S.O.G. might

[65] See Clement Greenberg *Homemade Esth*etics, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, for an emphasis on frank, fresh responses to visual art.

[66] Clement Greenberg often emphasises immediate response to novel artworks, for example in his *Homemade Esthetics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. The idea that reflection can destroy knowledge is prominent in Bernard Williams' *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, London: Fontana, 1985.

complain. Would they really all impact directly and differently on what should we say about the present? Suppose that Schoenberg had stayed with atonality until the end: would that really make a large difference to what we should say about his early and middle period works? The knowing listener seems imprisoned by their knowledge. By contrast, the more *naïve* listener (someone like S.O.G., at least as he represents himself) might argue that since the future may go in many different directions, we cannot now worry about that now: we should just experience and react in a more direct and frank way. The past itself does not change depending on how the future unfolds, and while the significance or importance of past event or the influence of the past may depend on how the future unfolds, the past itself has its own integrity. It is because of that it can easily become a foreign country from the perspective of the present. A sense of the otherness of the past is often a healthy thing in a critic. There is no secure and stable point in the future from which to view the past, from which to have a firm and certain grip on the cultural achievements of the past, just as the past cannot be relied on to be a secure basis on which to judge the present and near future. Canons of taste cannot sit there becoming state and mouldy; they need to be reworked every generation, and without *naïve* fresh listening, we cannot do that.

S.O.G. did not like Schoenberg's music, but somehow Schoenberg and S.O.G. might have got along had they found themselves in a room together. They both say that they value candid frank response. It is not that Schoenberg was not concerned with the judgement of posterity. It was that, first and foremost, he wanted his works to appeal on an immediate level.[67] Contrast those like Heseltine and Newman, who emphasised Schoenberg's intellectual mind as the source of the 'difficulty' of his music—a difficulty that justified hesitation in judgement, given the many other works of the past that were found difficult before they triumphed in the long term, passing the Test of Time and entering the canon. But in order to do that, at some point the works must please, in a direct unself-conscious way. The sentimentalist tradition does recommend a certain self-awareness of our sentiments and of the circumstances surrounding our

[67] There is an oft-repeated infamous Schoenberg quip to the effect that mail boys would whistle his tunes. (Cited, for example, in Nicholas Cook: *Music: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 54.) Presumably, if the boys whistled the tunes, it would be because they liked them in an immediate way, rather than grasping some theory.

responses, especially to novelty. It is true that novel works are difficult to evaluate when they are freshly minted. They need time to sink in. But as S.O.G. insists, there are limits to this and before long a forthright judgement or immediate response of liking or disliking is called for, even if it is one that is schooled by previous experience and regulated by knowledge of the works in question. Without such a judgement or liking, S.O.G. has a point that critics appear to be hiding something, even being a little dishonest. Schoenberg did not view himself or his music in the highly intellectual terms of many of his supporters as well as his critics; he wanted to be judged on the musical appeal of the music that he made, which was often, but not always, in novel atonal frameworks. Of course, Schoenberg was also highly intellectual in his approach, but unlike many critics he took musical beauty to be important to his art and he valued fresh and honest immediate experience and judgement. That is why, as far as criticism is concerned, Schoenberg himself may have had more in common with S.O.G. than with most British critics.

The test of time was a characteristically British critical methodology. One good thing about it is that it gives us a way of navigating novel works that defy previous critical standards. But a possible drawback is that our responses are checked and policed; there is possible loss of authenticity in feeling.

Chapter 2

Schoenberg's Musical Novelty and The Test of Time: The Correspondence Between Ernest Newman and Egon Wellesz

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> … the re-awakened interest in old-fashioned roses is not just a passing fad. … their rise in popularity over these past twenty years could not have been sustained had it not arisen from an appreciation of their more subtle and refined attributes by a very discerning public, who are not always willing to believe that something new is necessarily something better, at least until such superiority has been proved. (Peter Beales, *Classic Roses*, London: Collins Harvell, 1985, 51.)

The experience of novelty inevitably raises questions. Some novel artworks are exhilarating or disturbing. And it may be unclear how we react to them given our personal proclivities and subjectivities. Our cultural experience is dynamic; it is in flux, and we approach the future with the baggage of the past. What, then, should be our attitude to novel works—works that depart from previous models and perhaps are not easily understood in terms of them. Furthermore, theoretically speaking, there is a question about how we should understand or at least approach what initially seems hard to understand. It is not clear how to think of something that is difficult to categorize. How we think of novelty and how we react to it are hardly isolated aspects of our critical outlook. Our approach to novelty in our experience of artworks, and the way we theorise it critically and philosophically, will be integrated in a fundamental way with our entire critical outlook. Because these outlooks are situated in a person's personal and cultural characteristics, considering different people's attitudes to these questions is likely tell us much about their different views on the question of novelty as well as their more general outlooks.

In this chapter, I examine an intellectual exchange where novelty of Arnold Schoenberg's music is discussed and debated. It is fascinating because each of the

participants was a major player in British musical life at the time, and each had a strong personality and definite if varying opinions. And it is fascinating because of the nature of the encounter between these two personalities and what the encounter reveals about each of the participants, what they reveal about the musical life at the time, and because the probing of the difficult issue of dealing with novelty in a particularly controversial case. The two correspondents were Ernest Newman (1868-1959) and Egon Wellesz (1885-1974), who were both prominent figures in British musical life. Newman was an English music critic, biographer and Wagnerian while Wellesz was an Austrian born composer, musicologist, and teacher, who emigrated to the United Kingdom in 1938 and settled in Oxford. Each of the parties comes at the issue from a very different point of view, which is both owed to their different personal temperaments as well as to their different intellectual and cultural backgrounds. Both, in different ways, did much reflecting on the radical novelty of the works of Arnold Schoenberg and other composers of the Second Viennese School.

Newman had strongly criticized Schoenberg previously,[68] but his views on Schoenberg varied quite a lot over his lifetime, and this reflection seems to have been prompted by reading Wellesz's volume on Schoenberg published some years before.[69] The interesting thing, on this occasion was not his view of the music, but the kinds of considerations he adduces. Wellesz, as we shall see, was more of a consistent supporter

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[68] In 1931 Newman wrote: "On Wednesday, in addition to some synthetic Locatelli-Marinuzzi and the D minor concerto of Bach, with the solo part played very neatly by Mr Gieseking, Mr Boult and B.B.C. Orchestra gave us the Five Orchestra Pieces of Schönberg. Speaking for myself, I can only say that while the work once more interested me as a cerebral exercise, it gave me practically no musical pleasure. I was rather astonished to find, however, that even on the intellectual side I could not work up the interest I felt in it twenty years ago. I suppose the explanation is that at that time all this sort of thing was delightfully fresh to us, an adventure thrilling in itself and promising in the vistas it opened out for music, while the years between have shown that the promise has not been fulfilled, the vistas not realised. Moreover, Schönberg himself, as his latest work – the Variations we heard last week – show, has receded from earlier standpoint of his.", 22 Nov 1931 "The week's music", review in the *Sunday Times*. Note "the years … have shown", which will be addressed later. For other negative reviews, see Newman, "Arnold Schoenberg's Gurre Lieder", *Musical Times* 55, 1914, p. 11; and BBCWAC, Scrips, Reel 363: Ernest Newman, "Music criticism, no.3", 15 February 1929.

[69] Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg* (Vienna: E. P. Tal & Co., 1921), English translation: *Arnold Schönberg*, trans. W. H. Kerridge, London: Dent, 1925. Later reissued as Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg* (Oxford: Counterpoint Publications, 1945).

of Schoenberg in many respects, even though he also had some ambivalent attitudes to him.

In 1945, the two men had a revealing exchange of letters, prompted by Newman's substantial articles in the *Sunday Times,* the first of which was published on 28 October 1945. After reading the article, Wellesz wrote to Newman, which generated a lengthy reply by Newman. These unpublished letters between Newman and Wellesz are preserved in the Austrian National Library.[70] The newspaper articles, together with the correspondence, have much gold in them, and in this chapter, differences in their critical approaches to Schoenberg's novelty are probed. These, in turn, reveal even more basic differences that are manifest in matters of taste in dynamic contexts. The correspondence is particularly illuminating because it is an honest exchange of views, which sometimes involves frank disagreement. Such private letters are more 'real', as it were, than a polite exchange between like minds in a public forum. Here, what comes out of the exchange goes to the core of the critical considerations in play in thinking about Schoenberg's novel music. From the exchange, we gain insight into the musical life of the time, since, despite the two participants being eminent, they embody outlooks held by many others. We also gain insight into Schoenberg's music because they are thinking through different ways of thinking about it and about the way this music was taken to have changed over time. Indeed, quite general themes concerning judgements about music as they vary over time are raised in this exchange. For example, one thing we will see in Newman's letter is a concern with what is sometimes called 'The Test of Time' as a critical trope, whereby judgement if it is secure accords with the consensus of appropriate judgers over time. In this respect we will see a contrast with Wellesz's approach.

I will examine the exchange in detail before drawing out the main themes and consequences in a discussion section. By close reading the articles and letters, it is not that we can somehow read between the lines, but that we can extract more or less explicit commitments to controversial and interesting views about understanding music,

[70] Austrian National Library/ *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek:*
Brief. Wellesz, Egon, 1885-1974 [*VerfasserIn*]; Newman, Ernest, 1868-1959 [*AdressatIn*]. *ÖNB Musiksammlung* F.13Wellesz.2793 MUS MAG.
Korrespondenz. Newman, Ernest, 1868-1959 [*VerfasserIn*]; Wellesz, Egon, 1885-1974 [*AdressatIn*]. *ÖNB Musiksammlung* F.13Wellesz.1457 MUS MAG.

and Schoenberg's music in particular, also about culture, reception, aesthetics and much else. Close reading the articles and letters is like slicing a piece of fruit to reveal what lies within, which was only a matter of speculation beforehand.

§1. Newman's first *Sunday Times* article

Newman's article of 28 October 1945 in the *Sunday Times*, reproduced in Appendix A, deserves commentary paragraph by paragraph.

> If anyone is entitled to a respectful hearing on the subject of Schönberg it is Dr. Egon Wellesz, a pupil of the master in the early Vienna days, the author of a book on him published in 1921, a great musical scholar whom it is Oxford's good fortune to possess now, and a composer of distinction. It is with pleasure, therefore, that I commend to the notice of my readers a brochure by him – "Arnold Schönberg, An Appreciative Monograph" – which has just been issued by Counterpoint Modern Art Publications, 9/10, Broad Street, Oxford, at eighteenpence. I myself feel in my bones that this is not, and should not be, Dr. Wellesz's last word on the subject. Schönberg is now in his seventy-second year. His music has undergone some notable changes in content and manner and theoretic orientation since the first songs and the "Verklärte Nacht" of about 1898-1900; and though his present phase may possibly not be his final one, he has already done enough during the last few years to necessitate a reconsideration of some of the earlier views of the Schönbergian inner circle on his work.

Newman begins his article by bringing to the public's attention to the new brochure by Wellesz, which follows up on Wellesz's 1921 book on Schoenberg.[71] Newman thinks that because Schoenberg's work had evolved since that time, the new brochure is timely and not only includes an appreciation of the newer work of Schoenberg's later phases, but also casts new light on his earlier work. Newman talks of a "reconsideration of some of the earlier views of the Schönbergian inner circle on his work". This reveals a certain critical approach, whereby an understanding of a work of art of music may depend on what develops from it. It is as if our view of the meaning of a work may change depending on what happens in the future, rather than being frozen at the

[71] Egon Wellesz, *op. cit.*

moment of creation. Either the work really does change, depending on what happens later, or, more likely, our understanding of the work is altered or enhanced by seeing it in the context of future developments. This general outlook in critical thinking is not uncommon, and it can be confined within an artist's *oeuvre,* or it can be broader than that. For example, many art historians' descriptions of Cézanne's work were informed by their knowledge of cubism, which came later.[72] However, here Newman is thinking only that we can understand Schoenberg's early better if we know how his work developed later in his career. And the idea would be particularly pertinent for radically novel works. The idea is that Schoenberg's early work was too anomalous to understand by itself, but given Schoenberg's development, it is easier to make sense of it, in that broader context. Newman thinks that Wellesz is in an ideal position to re-examine the early works in the light of later developments. Let us for now pass over Newman's reference to the views of Schoenberg's earlier 'inner circle' in the previous quotation. Newman continues:

> Two facts stand out as beyond dispute, that Schönberg, an incomparable teacher, has made a great impression on the musical practise of our epoch, and that his is one of the three or four most remarkable musical faculties in the whole history of the art. In this last clause I am referring to the nature and scope of the faculty itself, apart from the debatable question of the aesthetic value of this or that of its products: I mean simply that purely as a brain built to function in terms of the material and the forms of sound, Schönberg's is as unique in its own way as that of a great mathematician or geometrician constructed to function in terms of the relations of lines and spaces and numbers. To the vexatious problem of the aesthetic values of much of Schönberg's music I shall come in a later article. For the moment I wish merely to epitomise Dr. Wellesz's pamphlet and to draw one or two conclusions from it.

In the second paragraph, Newman begins by drawing attention to Schoenberg's role as a teacher, including both face-to-face teaching as well as his writings on music theory. He claims that Schoenberg has "remarkable musical faculties". It is not quite clear what they are supposed to be, but it seems as if Newman suggests that Schoenberg firmly

[72] Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures,* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1985), p. 61.

distinguished those faculties from the ability to produce music of aesthetic value. Musical faculties, for Newman, seem to operate on "the material and forms of sound". Schoenberg's ability here is likened to that of a mathematician or geometer. This is one kind of highly 'formalistic' conception of musical understanding; however, it is one that pushes aesthetic value to one side. Newman thinks that he can make great claims for Schoenberg's musical faculty, while altogether side-lining aesthetic value for consideration in the second article also in the *Sunday Times* (reproduced in Appendix B). However, Newman's comparison with mathematics and geometry, and his subtraction of the aesthetic dimension, suggests a highly intellectualised conception of Schoenberg's musical enterprise. It is not clear that Schoenberg would have shared this way of thinking of himself. Schoenberg himself writes quite a lot about beauty in many of the essays collected in *Style and Idea,* which cover many difference phases of Schoenberg's life.[73] And it seems unlikely that Schoenberg would have been agreed to siphoning-off aesthetic value as Newman suggests. Be that as it may, that seems to be how Newman is viewing Schoenberg, as a rather intimidating, but impressive, intellectual figure, who understood the formal machinery of music in a way that demands our attention and in a sense our appreciation, but not enjoyment or love. In fact, however, quite a few British reviewers of the performances of Schoenberg's music find beauty in them[74]; and, as just noted, Schoenberg himself takes musical beauty seriously and often says so. Newman's separation of the formal mechanisms of music from its aesthetic value is not obvious and would probably be resisted by Schoenberg himself. He was not the only critic to make this distinction.[75] Nonetheless that seems to

[73] Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, Berkeley, California University Press (1984, paperback edition with revisions). One example is at p. 214 and p.217, both from 1941; another on p. 401 is from 1947. There are many others.

[74] See, for example, P. A. Heseltine, "Arnold Schönberg", *The Musical Standard*, 21 September 1912, p. 176.

[75] Another British critic who makes this distinction is the Scottish critic G. R. Harvey [George Rowntree Harvey] in a review for the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* of a performance of Berg's *Lyric Suite* played by the Pro Arte String Quartet in 1934. He wrote: "The composer of the Lyrische Suite goes to great trouble, and with abundant evidence of gifts, to make every sound we have previously thought ugly and unmusical and to imitate the sounds of objects we shut our windows to escape. The Allegro Misterioso – diabolically clever – was like tin cans swinging in a deserted castle hall or the Timmer Market heard through a sealed window. … The audience applauded, but that was, possibly, for the Quartet's clever work, above and below the bridge."

be how Newman is proceeding, with a kind of dualism between the intellectual and hedonic aspects of this music.

Newman's praise is limited. As was mentioned earlier, there seems to have been a change for Newman, who had been very critical of Schoenberg's later atonal and twelve-tone works in previous writings. Newman seems to have shifted his position. He seems to find something at least interesting in Schoenberg's later works. Otherwise, why would he have had several of Schoenberg's scores in his library.[76] He might find the works interesting even if he did not find them aesthetically beautiful. Furthermore, Newman is reading Wellesz's book on Schoenberg sympathetically. The explanation for the change is not clear. He may have read Wellesz' book sympathetically because of his shift in attitude to the later Schoenberg. Or perhaps reading Wellesz's book was partly responsible for Newman's shift. Another possibility is that he originally thought that interest in atonal works would quickly fade away; but it did not, which caused him to reassess his earlier negative judgement about them as not being the whole truth. There are a number of possible explanations for Newman's softening towards the later Schoenberg. Nevertheless, shift they did.

Newman next proceeds to the different phases of Schoenberg's work.

> As [Wellesz] points out, Schönberg's music exhibits four main phases, (a) that of an expansion and subtilisation of the older idiom, as in the "Verklärte Nacht" and the "Gurrelieder", (b) the consciously atonal phase, beginning with the Three Piano Pieces (op. 11), (c) a period, commencing with the Suite for Piano (op. 25), during which he developed the system of twelve-tone composition to its logical limits, and (d) the latest phase, which includes certain works in what Dr. Wellesz

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G. R. Harvey, "Mozart to Alban Berg. Aberdeen Chamber Music Club's Mixed Evening", *Aberdeen Press and Journal* (Friday, 23 November 1934).

[76] "A Catalogue of the Music Library formed by Ernest Newman (Removed from Tadworth, Surrey)", *Hodgson's Catalogue of Auction No. 3* 1959-60, London: Messrs. Hodgson & Co, 1960. The catalogue lists: (1) Schönberg A., *Harmonielehre* (Leipzig-Wien, 1911); (2) Schoenberg A., Gurre Lieder, Full Score, folio with vocal score by A. Berg, Universal Edition, 1912; (3) *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, Full score, Peters [1912], and 3 others; (4) Pierrot Lunaire, vocal score, 1923; and (5) others (which are not listed in the catalogue). More information about Newman's library can be found in Paul Watt, "The Catalogue of Ernest Newman's Library: Revelations About His Intellectual Life in the 1890s", *Script and Print* Vol 31, Issue 2 (Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand, 2007), pp. 81–103.

> calls "a simpler style, in which tonality is once again more marked." Now changes in the substance and the complexion of so rich and powerful a musical mind in the course of nearly half a century are only what might be expected; they indicate not a "recantation" on his part at any time but an imperative inner development. All the same, these changes seem to me a trifle disconcerting for some of the out-and-out Schönbergians in the light of what they wrote about him twenty-five or forty years ago.

In this third paragraph, Newman endorses Wellesz's division of Schoenberg's work into four phases: early, atonal, twelve-tone, and what we might call 're-tonal'. Wellesz does not see the last phase as a rejection of anything earlier; but Newman does think it poses a serious challenge for what many of Schoenberg's followers wrote about his earlier works. Who were these early followers of whom Newman is thinking? There were two volumes of essays by Schoenberg's admirers published in 1912 and 1924. The 1912 publication was entitled *Arnold Schönberg. Mit Beiträgen von Alban Berg, Paris von Gütersloh, K. Horwitz, Heinrich Jalowetz, W. Kandinsky, Paul Königer, Karl Linke, Robert Neumann, Erwin Stein, Ant. V. Webern, Egon Wellesz*.[77] This was a collection of essays by students and friends of Schoenberg, those mentioned in the title. The 1924 publication was *Arnold Schönberg zum fünfzigsten Geburtstage 13 September 1924. Sonderheft der Musikblätter des Anbruch*.[78] This was a collection of thirty essays by leading composers and musicians including Anton Webern, Alban Berg, Alfredo Casella, Franz Schreker, and Hans Eisler. It is surely these people who Newman was thinking of who proclaimed Schoenberg as an apocalyptic revolutionary. However, argues Newman, the return to tonality challenges the more revolutionary or apocalyptic interpretations of what Schoenberg was trying to do earlier on. If he had such destructive aims, what on earth was Schoenberg doing revisiting tonality? This certainly seems a fair point and it is consonant with Schoenberg's own persistent denial that he was a destructive revolutionary, and he locates his work as a continuation and

[77] *Arnold Schönberg. Mit Beiträgen von Alban Berg, Paris von Gütersloh, K. Horwitz, Heinrich Jalowetz, W. Kandinsky, Paul Königer, Karl Linke, Robert Neumann, Erwin Stein, Ant. V. Webern, Egon Wellesz* (München: R. Piper, 1912).
[78] *Arnold Schönberg zum fünfzigsten Geburtstage 13 September 1924. Sonderheft der Musikblätter des Anbruch* (Wien: Universal Edition, 1924).

elaboration of previous musical innovations, such as those in Wagner.[79] Newman continues:

> For if the master himself has come to feel, in riper years, that atonality, for instance, is not everything, does it not justify the caution of those among us who ventured to doubt at the time that it was everything, in face of the vehement claims made for it by the younger members of the inner circle from about 1910 onwards? We thought at the time that some of these composers who paddled in Schönberg's wake were a rather absurd crew, and their atonal music devoid of real ideas; and now we learn that Schönberg himself was acidly contemptuous of "some of the young men who came to him recently in Hollywood to learn from him in easy lessons 'all about twelve-tone composition.'" He told them in effect, that they had better go back and begin at the beginning, and offered to "teach them the elements of music which they thought they knew so well, but which they had to learn first before they could think of surpassing them."[80] Precisely, in fact, what many musicians told these would-be "revolutionaries" long ago.

In paragraph four, Newman asks a rhetorical question, the content of which is the claim that the modest scepticism of some critics in Schoenberg's earlier years, about the supreme importance of atonality, was in retrospect justified; and the wild enthusiasm of Schoenberg's earlier *naïve* followers was misplaced. Those followers made exaggerated claims for atonality, which did not pass the Test of Time even from Schoenberg's own point of view. Moreover, those hotheads, according to Newman, rushed to judge positively when they should have been more circumspect. Thus, the wait-and-see cautious attitude of critics like Newman turns out to be vindicated by Schoenberg own change of direction. It is not that the value of Schoenberg's early atonal and serial works should be reconsidered, but rather that what critics saw in those early works did not exhaust its value. It was not just about being radically atonal, but about the specific musical ideas that Schoenberg cast in that very general musical 'language'. It is this that Schoenberg's later return to tonality makes obvious. Schoenberg made his music in atonal and tonal idioms, and he was interested in those

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[79] See for example, Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, *op. cit.*,49, 80, 130, and countless other places. These examples are, respectively, from 1937, 1949 and 1946.

[80] Quotation is from Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg* (Oxford: Counterpoint, 1945), p. 10.

very specific musical constructions rather than pursuing atonality for its own sake, perhaps with revolutionary zeal. For Schoenberg's early supporters, the novelty of atonality seemed to predominate over the specific musical ideas expressed in the atonal idiom. Whereas for Schoenberg, it seems, it was the other way round. He was interested in the musical ideas that could be expressed in the atonal idiom rather than just the idiom itself. And it is that which the re-tonal phase makes obvious. Superficial revolutionaries would never resurrect what they have overthrown. A musical genius, experimenting with the possibilities of different idioms, may well do so.

In fact, this is controversial, and there are those favouring naïve listening who would disagree. Nevertheless, Newman's point is that the later tonal phase of Schoenberg's works casts light on the interpretation on the earlier atonal phases has a plausibility that goes beyond the idea that all the works of a composer must await an hour of cool judgement. It seems to Newman that Schoenberg's later phase shows that atonality for its own sake was never Schoenberg's main concern, contrary to many of those who followed him.

Newman rounds off what he has to say about Schoenberg, quoting Wellesz:

> Or take Schönberg's present attitude towards tonality. Dr. Wellesz reports him as saying angrily one day, after seeing the score of a composer who
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> > … illogically heaped dissonance on dissonance. 'You'll see! I shall let these boys down some day and write a piece in C major.'[81] Indeed, continues Dr. Wellesz, "Schönberg has let down the critics and some fanatics among his pupils and adherents during these last years in America by the Suite for String Orchestra and other works in simpler style, in which tonality is once again more marked. But is it not natural that the ripest works of a composer should show more clarity and be more accessible to the general public than those of the years of his struggles? Such an evolution does not herald a 'capitulation' on Schönberg's part, as some people seem to believe. It only shows that Schönberg, the septuagenarian, is once again ahead of his followers.

[81] Quotation is from Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg*, *op.cit.,* p. 11.

Newman then comments on this quotation from Wellesz:

> I find this more illuminative than perhaps Dr. Wellesz thought it would be. For it admits (a) that some of the "followers" and "fanatics" have been rather foolish and needed a sharp pulling up, (b) that there is a good deal in the master's earlier and middle period works that is lacking in clarity and general accessibility, and (c) that the possibilities of tonality are by no means exhausted as yet: which is precisely what many musical people have been saying all along, and have been called "reactionaries" for their pains.

When Wellesz claims that Schoenberg's later works are clearer and more accessible than his earlier works, Newman takes Wellesz to be admitting that some of the earlier and middle works fell short in clarity and accessibility. Here Newman infers a negative judgment, whereas Wellesz just said that the later works were clearer and more accessible than the earlier ones. Newman infers that Wellesz means that the earlier and middle period works were "lacking in clarity and general accessibility". Strictly speaking, that does indeed imply that the earlier ones were *less* clear than the later works, but it does not imply Newman's evaluation that they were *lacking* in clarity and general accessibility. It is precisely this evaluative inference that Wellesz objects to in the letter he wrote to Newman the very next day after the second *Sunday Times* piece was published.

§2. Wellesz's Letter in Response to Newman's *Sunday Times* Article

Let us now turn to the unpublished correspondence between Newman and Wellesz about Schoenberg, which is instigated by Newman's *Sunday Times* article. The discussion concerns the nature and value of Schoenberg's musical output and the critic's attitude to it. It takes place just at the end of the Second World War, after Wellesz had settled in Oxford. This is a dialogue across critical traditions despite a degree of convergence in musical sympathies. Moreover, the privacy of the correspondence may make for a more candid exchange, or one with more subtleties since what was written was not for public consumption in the same way as something published in a newspaper or journal.

Wellesz confesses to Newman about his friendship with Schoenberg, whom he compares to Dürer and Bach: “I have seen him at work and was always struck by his incredible gift of putting a musical idea in the setting which belongs to it by right”.[82] Even though Wellesz stayed in Schoenberg’s orbit for life, their relationship developed into something more complex and sourer on both sides. Bojan Bujić examines this strained relationship between Schoenberg and Wellesz in his recent book *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship*.[83] Wellesz’s correspondence with Newman, throws some additional light on their relationship. There Wellesz provides a disparaging critique of Schoenberg the man. In April 1951, Wellesz writes to Newman: “I read Schönberg’s “Style and Idea” to which you drew my attention. I brought back to my mind many memories of those days, pleasant ones and unpleasant. If Schönberg had been less witty and more generous he would have become the composer I wanted him to be when I wrote my little book about his work[84], but he is a man ‘*plein de ressentiment’*.”[85] Nevertheless, he retained a detachment that enabled serious and frank engagement in the correspondence with Newman.

Wellesz’s letter to Newman in response to this article is worth quoting in full.[86]

Dear Mr Newman

I wanted to write to you since I came to England in March 1938 but one is rather shy to do so in these days. Your article in yesterday’s ‘Sunday Times’ however gives me the welcome opportunity of telling you how often I have found views exposed in your articles which harmonised completely with my own on the same subject.

Your article on the Schoenberg Question is very wise and I can fully see your point. You are perfectly right: the last word on the subject cannot be said at

[82] See Egon Wellesz’s letter to Ernest Newman on 29 October 1945.
[83] Bojan Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship* (London: Plumbago Books, 2020).
[84] Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg*, *op. cit.*
[85] See Egon Wellesz letter to Ernest Newman on 21 April 1951.
[86] Letter from Wellesz to Newman, 29 October 1945; *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*, Vienna, Verfügbar in ÖNB Musiksammlung, F13.Wellesz.2793. The date of the letter is 29 October 1945. See Appendix C for the first page of the autograph letter.

present. From my own experience – I think of Hoffmannsthal the greatest Austrian poet – I know that we can only see an artist's work as a whole when he has been taken from us.

But I should like to say a few words about the last paragraph of your article in which you speak of Schoenberg's lack of clarity in his middle period. May I remind you Melanchthon's letter in which he speaks about Dürer's confession 'postea se senem coepisse intueri naturam et illius nativam faciem imitari conatum esse eamque simplicitatem tunc intellexisse summum artis decus esse'.[87] It is true, some artists are blessed by fate with the rare gift of 'clarté latine', but you know best how seldom this is the case with the artists of Central Europe who are more often 'Faustische Naturen'. Such an artist cannot achieve real simplicity without having gone through a stage in which he was attracted by 'monstrosae et inusitatal figurae',[88] as Dürer was when he was young.

I fully agree with you that the approach to Schoenberg's works of the middle period is difficult. But I am convinced that he could never written a single bar without having been forced by his daimon to write it. I have seen him at work and always struck by his incredible gift of putting a musical idea in the setting which belongs to it by right.

Since we are agreed on Schoenberg's high status as a Composer, should we not also agree that the complexity of the work of his middle period reflects the complexity of the artist's mind, just as 'The Art of Fugue', which was for so long considered as mere 'Papiermusik', reflects the complexity of Bach's mind?

But whether we are agreed or not on this point, your treatment of the Schoenberg Question on such a high level calls for my sincere gratitude.

Yours sincerely

Egon Wellesz

[87] In English: "[Dürer confessed that] afterwards as an old man he began to contemplate nature and to try to imitate it's innate form/appearance, and at that point he understood that simplicity is art's utmost ornament/glory [*decus*]". (Translated from Latin by Andrew Laird.)

[88] In English: 'freakish and uncommon figures'. (Translated from Latin by Andrew Laird.)

Wellesz picks up on the last point of Newman's article. He does not like the implied criticism of Schoenberg's middle period works.[89] Complexity, he says, is not a short-coming in those works any more than complexity was a short-coming in Bach's fugues. Some inner force ('*daimon'*) compelled Schoenberg to write that music. And Wellesz thinks that he expressed it well despite its complexity. The 'lesser clarity and accessibility' of earlier phases was no flaw, thinks Wellesz, but a consequence of the demonic struggles that Schoenberg had to engage in, which dictated that the works were comparatively difficult; but that was no flaw, just a consequence of what Schoenberg was trying to do at that time. Having gone through these struggles, and only having gone through them, could Schoenberg create less difficult work. Thus, despite the personal difficulties between Schoenberg and Wellesz, which are noted by Bujić, Wellesz defends his master from even a minor criticism from an admirer. This may have been because Wellesz himself was tacitly criticised by Newman, since Wellesz was one of the early enthusiasts who made overblown claims for Schoenberg. Wellesz is not only defending Schoenberg but also himself.

However, he does so with notions that are more typically Germanic than those with which Newman usually traffics. Wellesz invokes the idea of a '*daimon'*, which, even if a colourful mode of expression gestures towards something beyond normal nature, that possesses a human mind with a '*daimon'*, which is described as almost as an alien force within it. Moreover, despite their difference in mode of thinking about musical creation and experience, there is a real difference between them in their evaluation of complexity, because of what they think about the accessibility of music. That has an importance for Newman that it does not for Wellesz.

There is another point of comparison with Newman that can be drawn out of Wellesz's letter, which is a difference or perhaps misunderstanding of what Newman is saying about the difficulty of judgment and the need for time to elapse to judge justly. Wellesz wrote "the last word on the subject cannot be said at present" and "we can only see an artist's work as a whole when he has been taken from us." The first sentence broadly agrees with Newman, but the second is not really what Newman has in mind.

[89] This criticism is quite mild, and implied. By contrast, much earlier Newman passed a very negative judgement on Schoenberg's later work in the *Sunday Times,* 23 November 1923. He seems to have become more generous since then.

The way Newman is making use of a concept like the idea of the Test of Time means that the death of the artist may be way too soon to gain a just view of his output. Of course, Newman *does* think that Schoenberg's later works cast light on his earlier works. For Newman this is not because there is some '*daimonic'* unity in an artist's work, which is a consequence of the artist's nature, but because we need to gain some distance in time from what we are appreciating. Moreover, we might suspect that Newman would have thought that an artist's development is very far from necessary: an artist's works might easily have developed in many different ways from the original early output, just as the art form in question may have developed in many different ways after the artist's death. There is no mysterious *Geist* at work either in the artist's mind or in society, keeping the art works produced on some predetermined path. For someone like Newman, there is no such artistic 'necessity', whereas Wellesz seems to believe something like this when he talks about Schoenberg's '*daimon',* who forced Schoenberg to write the music he wrote. While Newman is highly impressed by the force and depth of Schoenberg's musical intelligence, that is a long way from Wellesz's '*daimonic'* conception of Schoenberg. There is certainly more than a whiff of Germanic theorising in how Wellesz conceives of Schoenberg as a unitary musical character, possessed by a *daimon*, driven by necessity, and somehow completed in death! This is very far from a typically phlegmatic British way of thinking about artistic matters. For the English critic Newman, the kind of careful informed and circumspect judgment that we may form when we are at a distance in time from an artist and his works is compatible with conceding quite a lot of contingencies in the evolution of particular artist's work and indeed the evolution of the entire artistic form. The typically British idea of the Test of Time and of principled hesitation in judgment when there is no convergence does not fit well with more Germanic ideas of *Geist* and necessity. Newman brings up these points in his letter in reply to Wellesz.[90]

[90] Newman studied English literature, philosophy, and art at Liverpool University where he could hardly have avoided the British sentimentalist tradition. For details of his studies see Paul Watt, *Ernest Newman: A Critical Biography*, Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2017, especially pp. 19-20. He went to lectures on Spinoza, Kant and Herbert Spenser, and lectures by the influential critic A. C. Bradley.

§3. Newman's Second *Sunday Times* article

Newman's second *Sunday Times* article on Schoenberg, published on 4 November 1945 (reproduced in Appendix B), came out after Wellesz's letter was sent and received, but before Newman's long letter in reply, reproduced below. Newman notes in the article that the appeal of Schoenberg has somewhat worn off in the last generation. He picks up again on the separation of aesthetic from musical qualities, which he thinks aligns with distinction between Schoenberg's distinctive methods of composition and the aesthetic achievement of his music. Newman revisits the idea that many of the early 1912 critics over-sold Schoenberg, his genius being supposedly recognized only by a "few rare spirits" who expected lesser, ordinary listeners, to follow up with "universal recognition" in due course. The trouble is that the years since 1912 did not vindicate these predictions. We see that Newman's Test of Time is not an elitist one, where those who recognize genius may be few and far between, because he appeals to ordinary educated listeners, the "ordinary concert goer".[91] The taste and judgement in question is not that of professional critics and musicians, or others occupying positions of influence in the musical artworld, but ordinary audiences around the country. This respect for ordinary concertgoers is not at all the perspective of Schoenberg's early enthusiasts. Newman's critical approach has a broader democratic aspect to it in comparison with the more Germanic approach of Schoenberg's early enthusiasts. Indeed, Newman mocks the cult-like idea of an elite of those in the know. Surely, he thinks, thirty years is time enough for acceptance to spread from a knowing circle. There seems, again, to be something British or at least un-German about this suspicion of a group who claim special privileged knowledge in virtue of some inner mental superiority. Friedrich Nietzsche, for example, would hardly have been worried by the idea that many things of value are impenetrable to ordinary educated consumers, and will not become popular with them in due course.[92] At any rate, there is not much

[91] Perhaps this coincides with what Addison called "the politer parts of our contemporaries". See, Joseph Addison, "The Pleasures of the Imagination", reprinted in Dabney Townsend, *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*, *op. cit.* pp. 107-136.
[92] See for example Frederich Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator", in *Untimely Meditations*, translated by Hollingdale, R. J., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; *Human, All Too Human*, translated by R. J., Hollingdale, Cambridge: Cambridge

in this second article to add to what we have extracted from the previous article, and so we need dwell on it for our concerns.

§4. Newman's Reply to Wellesz

The following was Newman's letter in reply to Wellesz's letter:[93]

9 11 45

> Dear Dr Wellesz,
>
> I must apologise for not having replied to your letter before now. I've been overworked and very unwell for a long time, and correspondence has been difficult. At the moment I feel just about at the end of my physical reserves and I am taking a few weeks off from the paper after next Monday.
>
> I feel honoured that you should agree with at any rate part of my view of the Schoenberg case. That case is only one of many, all of them difficult. We have to admit that music, like the world in general, has passed into a phase that baffles us: the people who do the most thinking about either music or the world are the people who are most conscious that they are witnessing one of major changes of history – perhaps something that will be seen a century hence as the equivalent of one of the great geological "epochs" of the past. No-one can foresee what will be the ultimate outcome of it all: the past has almost ceased to have any validity either as a reading of the present or as a guide to the future. In the circumstances, what can we do, but sit quietly in our corner and wait and see?

In the second paragraph, which begins with a concern with how the present will be seen by the future, Newman sees himself as living through an exceptionally tumultuous period of history, both politically and musically: first, in that people are "baffled", and secondly, in that the future is unpredictable, and the past is no longer a guide to the

University Press, 1996; and *Beyond Good and Evil*, translated by R.J Hollingdale, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

[93] *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*, Vienna, Verfügbar in ÖNB Musiksammlung F13.Wellesz.1457. See Appendix D for the first page of the autograph letter.

present, nor does it give us guidance for the future. Thus, one must passively "wait-and-see". There is implied a tacit contentment with less-turbulent times, when things were simpler and we were *not* baffled by new works of art or world events, and where the past *was* a guide to understanding the present and to shaping the future. In those comfortable circumstances, thinks Newman, we *could* judge and experience with confidence. There is much about this statement that is odd. For both Newman and Wellesz agree on "the high status of Schoenberg as a composer". So, it seems that they agree that there are some constants in the middle of turmoil. How does this fit with the 'wait-and-see' attitude? There seems to be a tension here, if not a contradiction. Furthermore, there is the sanguine view of the past, which we will return in a moment. Newman continues:

> I agree with you entirely as to the progress to clarity in certain artists and thinkers in their old age. But the general proposition, I am afraid, is no guide to the nature of the particular case. Some old minds achieve clarity and simplicity by seeing more clearly into fundamentals: they intuitively shake themselves free of inessentials and pierce to the heart of a matter. But with others the final simplicity and clarity is a matter not of the conquest of problems, but a retreat from their difficulties. Wordsworth is a case in point: in his old age everything, including the practice of his art, seemed simple enough to him, but posterity has decided that he was deluding himself – that he has lost his early genius & had nothing to replace it. And I feel that with regard to the general art and thought of today & their ultimate value there is nothing we can do but to decide to live another fifty or a hundred years & see what the new values are, and how the present days strivings look in the light of them.

This third paragraph of Newman's letter addresses the disagreement between the two authors over Schoenberg's 'progress' towards clarity. Unfortunately, Newman does not really engage with Wellesz's point. Old artists, Newman says, may or may not achieve this 'clarity'. He gives the example of the English poet William Wordsworth (1770-1850) who did not, although he thought he did. Note that for Newman the phrase "posterity has decided that" figures as a simple assertion, perhaps with emphasis. The Test of Time runs that deep. It is as though, for Newman, the past has some authority,

but the future has complete authority. We must wait one hundred years to see how things look then. However, against Newman, the question arises: given endless change, perhaps the view from fifty or one hundred years will be over-turned by the view from one hundred and fifty or two hundred years. What then? Why has only the immediate future authority? Or does he have confidence in much more long-term convergence (as Hume does)? This confidence in future progress, echoes Newman's confidence in the *past* canons of excellence, which are not subject to fundamental critical reappraisal, and that can be taken as a reliable guide to the future. His view of the historical moment in which he finds himself was that it was a temporally an exceptional chaotic aberration in an otherwise orderly history. However, we might observe: surely it was ever thus! The latter half of the nineteenth-century was perceived by artists and writers as extraordinarily chaotic and revolutionary and a destabilizing time. One thinks of writers like Ibsen and Strindberg, and painters such as Munch, or scientists such as Darwin. These were extraordinary times too. We can see Newman's conservative underbelly, despite his guarded embrace of the new. If Newman is conservative in some ways, it is partly because of his great interest in nineteenth-century romantic music, and Wagner in particular. But it is also partly because his confidence in the past grounds a faith in future good judgement that is a continuation of present trends. He thinks we may look to future judges to judge the present just as present critics have reliably judged the past. An imagined secure past and future consoles Newman for felt insecurities in the present. Newman goes on to say:

> I am with you also in your remark about the "faustisch" natures; but here again the problem widens out infinitely as soon as we begin to work at it. Is it not significant that the main support for certain new tendencies in music has come from central European musicians, who, as you imply, have a mental constitution & a cultural background peculiarly their own? May it not be true that the days of universal music are over, and that the regional, or racial, or national – call it what you will – is going to assert itself more & more vigorously in the future? Was not the "universality" of German music in the great epoch just a passing phase – a momentary state of general mental equilibrium in Europe? For the last hundred years the tendency has been for regional cultures or racial heredities to break up that equilibrium. It began with Berlioz, who represents the up-surge of a Mediterranean mentality that had found no outlet in music before him. Then

> came the "national" music of the Russians, Grieg, Sibelius, Bartók and others, all of them bringing back into the art certain ways of conceiving music that had been too long suppressed under the hegemony of German and Italian art. It always seems to me that what we may call the central European musical mentality is another aspect of this general break-off form the "universal" one.

The fourth paragraph raises ethnic and national issues. He seems to interpret Schoenberg and his school as arising from the rejection of a more "universal" German music that twentieth-century British critics thought had dominated in the eighteen and nineteenth centuries. Since then, particular musical cultures ("regional, racial or national") have been breaking it up, Newman says. He seems to see Second Viennese School Central European music as a continuation of a trend of "the Russians, Grieg, Sibelius, Bartók and others". Newman worries that the lack of universality of these national and ethnic composers makes critical judgment about them difficult, and he also thinks this of "Central Europeans", like Schoenberg. This is rather puzzling, since he seems to be categorizing Schoenberg and his school as *not* included in the German universal tradition. Surely Vienna is in Central Europe. And the Second Viennese School music is surely part of the mainstream current of German musical culture. What is this conception of the German tradition that Newman invokes? He is surely not harking back to the Austro-Hungarian empire thirty years after its demise. Newman talks about "regional cultures or racial heredities" that "break … up the equilibrium". Since the Russians, Grieg, Sibelius, Bartók are all of regional cultures, perhaps it is Schoenberg's "racial heredity" that is un-German and un-universal. It is not clear; but it seems possible and not unlikely that Newman had Jews in mind. That seems to be the only thing that could account for the exclusion of Schoenberg and his school from the German cultural tradition. At any rate, for whatever reason, Schoenberg and his school are theorized by Newman in terms of a break with the German hegemony in the face of ethnic voices (Russians, Grieg, Sibelius, Bartók).

One possible interpretation would arise from his commitment to what we might call "progressive Darwinism", of writers like Herbart Spencer[94] (which is of course

[94] See, for example, Herbart Spencer, *Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical*, London: Williams & Norgate, 1891. Bennett Zon describes the impact on nineteenth century music

completely foreign to scientific Darwinism, which deploys no idea of 'progress'). Given this viewpoint, the mainstream must be better than side-paths leading away from it. Since Newman values the German composers, especially Wagner, more than Schoenberg and his school, this meant that even if Newman had more recently come to have more respect for Schoenberg's atonal works, they could not be in the same tradition of Wagner, who was seen as universal, not particularly German, and not at all ethnically specific.

We might wonder what Newman thinks Germanness is if Schoenberg is excluded from it. Here there is even some alignment between Newman and British voices who have nationalistic objections to a German cultural steamroller.[95] Newman also thinks that the German cultural mainstream has "too long suppressed" more national music. Those worried about the side-lining of English music, would agree.[96] Vaughan Williams would be an instance, when he wrote: "It is better to be vitally parochial than to be an emasculated cosmopolitan."[97] This phrase was deleted in the second edition of 1963. Presumably the sentiments they express were less acceptable in 1963 than before the war in 1934.

This outlook could not be more different from Schoenberg's own self-conceptions. Consider his famous or infamous quip: "I have discovered something that will secure the supremacy of *German* music for the next hundred years" (my emphasis).[98] Schoenberg saw himself solidly in the German tradition, with a particular

criticism of these kind of evolutionary writings in his *Evolution and Victorian Musical Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, chapter 6.

[95] See, for example, William Gillies Whittaker, "The Foreign Artist Problem", *A Music Journal: The Official Journal of the Incorporated Society of Musicians*, November 1934.
[96] See further Deborah Heckert, "Schoenberg, Roger Fry and the Emergence of a Critical Language for the Reception of Musical Modernism in Britain, 1912-1914", in *British Music and Modernism, 1895-1960*, edited by Matthew Riley (London: Routledge, 2016).
[97] Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays*, first edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1934), p. 11.
[98] Cited in *Schoenberg: His Life and Works*, transl. Humphrey Searle (New York: Schirmer Books, 1977), p. 277. In July 1921, during a walk with his friend and student Josef Rufer, Schoenberg famously told: *"Ich habe eine Entdeckung gemacht, die die Vormachtstellung der deutschen Musik für die nächsten hundert Jahre sichern wird."* That discovery was a method of composition with twelve-tones. See Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg, Leben, Umwelt, Werk,* Zürich und Mainz: Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag Zurich, 1974.

hostility to Stravinsky.[99] By contrast, Newman thinks that Schoenberg's atonality cannot be seen as continuing something found in some of Wagner's musical innovations. If it were, it would place Schoenberg more in the centre of an evolving German tradition, rather than something outside it, breaking it up. Schoenberg saw himself as continuing in the German tradition.[100] Bach, Mozart and Wagner were incredibly important to Schoenberg. It would have been especially interesting to have seen Wellesz's response to that point. Did he agree that Schoenberg's modernism was something un-German, or was it an extension of that tradition? It is not unlikely that Wellesz would have disagreed with Newman and sided with Schoenberg himself on this issue.

Newman rounds off the letter reflecting on the implications of this for making reliable critical judgements:

> But that being so, what becomes of our older aesthetic standards of value? It is evident already that they have gone by the board. Art is good or bad in virtue only of the way it does what it set out to do. But the more intensively a regional art applies itself to its own subject matter & its own methods the less accessible it is, in the nature of the case, to minds shaped & coloured by other heredities, other associations. "Criticism" is now a farce that will soon perish under the derisive laughter it deserves. Criticism is only possible, as in the eighteenth-century & again, in changed conditions, in the nineteenth, when people can have some confidence that they know, can feel that art & literature have shown their whole hand & so made it possible for criticism to decide on the winning or losing values of the cards. But those happy self-confident days are over. We should have been

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[99] Richard Taruskin, *Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol 4.

[100] On the tradition of German critical thinking, see Bojan Bujić, "General Introduction" in Music *in European thought, 1851-1912*, edited by Bojan Bujić (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 7; Felix Gatz, *Musik-aesthetik in irhen Hauptrichtungen: Ein Quellenbuch der deutchen Musik-* Äe*sthetik von Kant und der Fruhromantik bis zur Gegenwart mit Einfuhrung und Erlauterangen* (Stuttgart: Ferdinad Enke, 1929), on extra-musical metaphysical content in nineteenth century German musical thinking; and Charles Dowell Youmans, *Richard Strauss's Orchestral Music and the German Intellectual Tradition: The Philosophical Routes of Musical Modernism* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2005).

born either fifty years earlier when the forces of art had attained a certain equilibrium that promised stability, or fifty years later, when perhaps a new equilibrium will have been established and “standards” have begun to define themselves once more. But at the moment we critics are like organisms who have developed organs fitting them to live in a certain environment and now realise that the constituents of the atmosphere and the foods provided by the earth are all changing, & that we can no longer breathe and eat comfortably.

Well, forgive me for having inflicted all this perhaps not very intelligible stuff on you. My only excuse is the feeling that even if we can’t solve a problem, it’s just as well for us to recognise that it exists, and to knock our heads against it even if the result is to raise a painful lump on our heads.

Yours sincerely, Ernest Newman.

In these last two paragraphs, Newman continues with the somewhat surprising classification of Viennese modernism as “regional, or racial, or national”, and he claims that this generates a critical problem, which is the lack of shared certainties in music. The rise of these ‘local’ forms of music make criticism difficult. There is now a lack of a universal shared German canon. It seems that Newman sees criticism like stock market gambling, in which a critic bets on artists: an artistic futures market. Critics are guessing how well things will be received after a new equilibrium has been established in fifty years. Newman longs for settled standards and finds that there is a problem for criticism in their absence. There is a respect in which Newman takes the opposite perspective from twenty-first-century criticism, especially in literature, the visual arts and music. Much criticism has been about problematising settled standards on the grounds that they embody oppressive narratives and stultifying cultural norms, which reflect power relations. The endless change, and relativity to “region, race or nation” that Newman bemoans is exactly what is celebrated in much of today’s criticism, for which divergence from settled agreement in norms is seen as something positive. Although ‘diversity’ is the watchword of our contemporary critical age, for Newman, it was a sign that criticism had lost its bearings. Newman yearns for more agreement and less diversity, for a time of settled equilibrium.

In the face of both Newman's and the twenty-first-century approaches to criticism, one might bear in mind that there are those, like S.O.G., who celebrate fresh, frank, uncluttered judgement, and response, positive or negative, for better or worse. Why not start there, they think, rather than with knowingness, either with the weight of the past, or with knowledge of diverse perspectives? This seems like an alternative approach both to the twenty-first-century critics of the canon as well as to those like Newman, who fear an unsettled plurality of judgements. There is something, at least initially, anarchic about such a mode of response: savage, uncultivated, instinctive, and intensely personal,[101] and perhaps, in a public forum, a clash of such attitudes is for the good. However, this was a kind of criticism that Newman despised, since his whole career was about seeking 'objectivity' in the individual critic's judgement, as opposed to robust clashes of subjectivities out of which the truth might emerge.[102]

Newman's letter should surely have elicited a response from Wellesz. Unfortunately, history seems not to have vouchsafed one for the archives. The two did meet for tea in the Randolph hotel in Oxford—which was probably the nearest thing in Oxford to a Viennese cafe. They met on 3 December 1945, at 10.45 a.m. "for a good talk".[103] So, they may have deferred discussion on these topics for that meeting in person. Nevertheless, even without knowledge of Wellesz's reply, some themes from this exchange, and some points for discussion can be recovered.

§5. Newman's Critical Influences

Let us first focus on the intellectual background of the critical apparatus in play in Newman. The way of thinking, according to which we get a better view of a composer's early work given our knowledge of what comes later, either in his or her *oeuvre* or in later works by other composers, is one manifestation of the idea of the Test of Time, according to which works can only properly be evaluated in retrospect, after a suitable period of time that allows for comparison reflection and proper attention.

[101] This kind of response was valorised by Frederich Nietzsche in *The Gay Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), book 3 section 3 and elsewhere.
[102] See further Paul Watt, *The Regulation and Reform of Music Criticism in Nineteenth-Century England*, London: Routledge, 2019.

[103] See Wellesz letter to Newman, *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*, F13 Wellesz 2793.

David Hume expresses the Test of Time in perhaps canonical form, when he writes in 1757:

> The same HOMER, who pleased at ATHENS and ROME two thousand years ago, is still admired at PARIS and at LONDON. All the changes of climate, government, religion, or language, have not been able to obscure his glory. A real genius, the longer his works endure, and the more wide they are spread, the more sincere is the admiration which he meets with.[104]

Note that this implies, more or less, the negative principle, that in the absence of convergence, critics should be cautious, on principle. Ever since the Test of Time idea was made central in many of the eighteenth-century British 'sentimentalists'[105], the idea has remained strong in Britain. It was deployed quite often by British critics reacting to Schoenberg when his music was first encountered in Britain near the beginning of the twentieth century.[106] And the idea of the Test of Time was even invoked by King Charles III of the United Kingdom concerning the coronation music he wanted.[107] The idea of understanding an artwork given knowledge of the artist's other later works, or given knowledge of later artistic developments, thus enabling a cool critical review from a distance, are surely closely related. The perspective of other later works of the composer or of other later composers works, enable us to cope with the "...flutter or hurry of thought which attends the first perusal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine sentiment of beauty."[108] Both perspectives oppose a *naïve* experience view

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[104] David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste", reprinted in *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*, ed. by Dabney Townsend (Amityville, New York: Baywood Publishing Company, 1999), p. 233. Contemporary discussion of the notion of the test of time can be found in: Anthony Savile, "On Passing the Test of Time", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 17 (1977), pp. 195-209, see also his *The Test of Time*, Oxford: University Press, 1982; Matthew Kieran, "Why Ideal Critics are Not Ideal: Aesthetic Character, Motivation and Value", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 48 (2008), pp. 278–294; and Anita Silvers, "The Story of Art is the Test of Time", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 49 (1991), pp. 211-224.

[105] *Eighteenth Century British Aesthetics*, *passim*.

[106] See, for example, P. A. Heseltine, "Arnold Schönberg", *The Musical Standard* (21 September 1912), 176, and Robin H. Legge, "Schönberg, Modern Art Expression", *The Daily Telegraph* (17 January 1914), p. 5.

[107] "The King wanted the composition to be hummable and stand the test of time", says Lloyd Webber. *Daily Telegraph*, 5 May 2023, front page.

[108] *Op. cit.*, p. 238.

according to which music washes over us, and we respond irrespective of past experience and knowledge.

Newman clearly employs such a notion.[109] But how did he come by it? Paul Watt's book *Ernest Newman*: *A Critical Biography* surveys the intellectual influences on Newman; and Watt emphasizes the influence on Newman of what he calls the 'freethinking' and 'rationalist' traditions.[110] The eighteenth-century sentimentalist tradition and the idea of the Test of Time do not make an explicit appearance in Watt's account. 'Rationalism', as these writers thought of it, seems not to be commitment not non-empirical knowledge, but an acceptance of "the supremacy of reason" and "independ[ence] of arbitrary assumptions or authority"[111]. It might be argued that it is these writers and not the older sentimentalists who are the important influences on Newman. However, while we should not deny the influence of these more recent writers, it is nevertheless plausible that the sentimentalist Test of Time are tacitly present in these other later traditions. Watt writes, for example:

> Newman belonged to that coterie of writers who had formed an obsession for objectivity, impartiality and distance from the object of criticism in all genres of their writing.[112]

But this critical approach depends on being able and willing to step back from one's contingent reactions and abstract from our own particularities and understand our reactions as evolving through time, and seeing which are sustained and which are abandoned. So, while Watt does not explicitly mention a Test of Time theme in Newman, Watt does note:

> Time and time again Newman wrote that the best vantage point for assessing musical works was twenty years after their creation.[113]

Watt sees the central importance of this idea in Newman's critical thinking and seems to see it as a consequence of an underlying 'rationalist' perspective, whereas I would

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[109] In 1947 Newman wrote: "Schoenberg's music was more for the future than the present." (*The Sunday Times*, 10 August 1947, p. 2.)

[110] Paul Watt, *Ernest* Newman*: A Critical Biography*, *op. cit.*

[111] Watt, *ibid*. p. 24.

[112] Watt, *ibid*. p. 36.

[113] Watt, *ibid*. p. 143.

see both as having a much older provenance. Here the role of early British sentimentalist Lord Shaftesbury's idea of impartiality (and hence disinterest) in taste must be important.[114] A similar point holds of the influence on Newman of Matthew Arnold's famous essay "The Function of Criticism" [115] Watt shows that this essay had a very strong influence on Newman, especially a central idea of Arnold's that "once must discern the vital currents, among the many currents of one's time". Such discernment is not so easy to practice given the critical clutter and confusion of the present. Thinking about the future, and about the judgement of the future about the present is, then, a way of decluttering the present, to arrive at a more objective view. This quest for objectivity is a central part of what Watt identifies as Newman's 'rationalism'. However, Arnold's concept of objectivity implicates the idea of 'disinterest', of putting aside one's own particularities in judgement in favour of a more impartial universal view, which was an idea first clearly elaborated in Shaftesbury and taken up and given a central place in Adam Smith's, Hume's and Kant's aesthetics.[116] The Test of Time works to weed out idiosyncratic peculiarities precisely in the pursuit of a disinterested 'objective' judgement. It is a straight line from the sentimentalists like Shaftesbury and Hume to Arnold to Newman.

A writer who has raised related issues about criticism in the early twentieth-century period is Sarah Collins in her book*, Lateness and Modernism: Untimely Ideas about Music, Literature and Politics in Interwar Britain.*[117] She describes a certain era of early-to mid-twentieth-century criticism as "late modernism" or simply "lateness". Unfortunately, this notion is described with much openness and indeterminacy such that it is hard to get a fix on the idea (see for example, p. 8 and p. 32). Nevertheless, a theme can perhaps be discerned in her book, which comes into focus right at the end, when about the critic and composer Cecil Gray, she writes: "… the awareness of the

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[114] See the extract in Townsend, *op. cit.*

[115] Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", originally published in 1864, reprinted in *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

[116] *See* James Shelley, "The Concept of the Aesthetic", *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aesthetic-concept/ (Accessed: 29 February 2024).

[117] Sarah Collins*, Lateness and Modernism: Untimely Ideas about Music, Literature and Politics in Interwar Britain,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

past and interest in the future shaped a deep self-consciousness with (sic.) how the future would view the present."[118] This does identify a concern that Newman and other share. And it surely leads to critical hesitation as critics look back over their shoulders at the past and then again forward over other imagined shoulders to the future, and then one wonders what, looking back over future shoulders, others would make of present critical activity. This might not paralyse critical judgement, but it would certainly make one step with care. At any rate, it is clear that these kinds of themes are in the air and are especially operative in Newman's thinking.[119]

§6. Reflections on the Exchange: Schoenberg and the Canon

To return to the exchange of letters: Newman's letter in reply to Wellesz's letter, as a whole, contains general reflections on the problem of making sound critical judgments in a radically new era, and Newman deploys a version of the Test of Time, which, as we have seen, was a central idea of British criticism, rather than the German or Austrian intellectual traditions within which Second Viennese School music was created. This is manifested when Newman picks up on the question of the significance of Schoenberg's later tonal phase, about which there is a difference of opinion between Newman and Wellesz. It is this difference that generates the more general reflections on the problem of judgment in turbulent times. (The Second World War had just ended.) Newman makes an analogy between musical developments and activity in the 'world' at large. In both, Newman says, there is a sense of huge change that obscures critical understanding. It is not the change, in itself, that is hard to understand, but the new phase *after* the change. He worries that the past is no longer a reference point for making sense of the present and for predicting the future. One can only passively 'wait-and-see' what happens. He thinks that there is a problem about making critical judgments about the present after a big change. He says that one must wait fifty to a hundred years. This mirrors the claim about the different phases of Schoenberg's

118 Sarah Collins, *Lateness and Modernism: Untimely Ideas about Music, Literature and Politics in Interwar Britain,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 158.

119 See also Sarah Collins, "Practices and Aesthetic Self-cultivation: British Composer-Critics of the Doomed Generation", *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, Vol. 138, No. 1 (2013), pp. 85-128.

works, made in his first article: that what happens later casts light on what happens earlier. Just as the earlier works are to be understood in the light of later works, so the entire body of work is to be understood in the light of later cultural and musical developments.

Newman—a British-born critic but with European intellectual influences—worries that there is a problem about making critical judgments about the present after a big change. He claims that one must wait fifty to a hundred years, which reveals the idea of the Test of Time at work. By contrast, Wellesz—a non-British-born composer, now resident in Britain—does not share this concern; he thinks that the works of a composer have a kind of internal coherence out of a kind of necessity imposed by the personality of the composer.[120] So, works need to be understood through the personality of the composer, certainly in the case of a great composer. Newman thinks that only in an age of 'equilibrium', a word he uses frequently, can there be critical certainty, and knowledge.[121] Whereas, at that point, in 1945, there was a loss of equilibrium and so a loss of certainty. So, we must wait for a new equilibrium in order properly to judge Schoenberg's works. Wellesz feels no such misgivings, but he does regret what he thinks are Schoenberg's character flaws, which Wellesz thinks inhibited Schoenberg's work. (See the quotation cited above about Schoenberg's *'ressentiment'*.)

We might wonder: was there ever the certainty that Newman imagines there was during the eighteen and nineteenth centuries? Eduard Hanslick and Richard

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[120] Newman's attitude to German styles of thinking seem to vary quite a lot, perhaps not in a way uninfluenced by world events. Watt describes him in 1936 as thinking that "The grass was greener in Germany (Paul Watt, "Ernest Newman and the Promise of Method in Biography, Criticism and History", in *British Musical Criticism and Intellectual Thought, 1850-1950*, edited by Jeremy Dibble and Julian Horton (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2018), p. 98). By contrast in 1947, Newman exhibits his distrust of German-style critical thinking when he writes: "We have to keep a close eye on the German thinkers …when they start philosophizing". ("The German's and the 'Beggar's Opera'", *Sunday Times*, 3 May 1936.)

[121] 1944 was the year in which Nelson Goodman introduced the idea of 'reflective equilibrium.'. Nelson Goodman, *Fact, Fiction and Forecast* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1944). Goodman was influenced by American pragmatism and holism. His idea of 'reflective equilibrium' was that intuitions about particular cases and principles should be adjusted in the light of the other, with neither having priority. The idea became very influential in political theory due to John Rawls, *Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1971).

Wagner hardly shared a cosy consensus, for example. Did people really *know* back then? Were those really the 'good old days' for musical criticism?[122]

Three-quarters of a century have passed since Newman worried about the possibility of sound critical judgment given the recent changes at the beginning of the twentieth century. He would expect us, now, to have an easier time than him. In a way, perhaps it *is* easier to make some critical judgments in about Schoenberg in the 2020s than in 1945. Few in the world of classical art music seriously question Schoenberg's achievements. He may not make the Classic FM top 300[123], but the London Promenade concerts series in 2024 saw fit to celebrate 150 years since his birth with three evenings showcasing his works, two of which were early, *Verklärte Nacht* and *Pelleas und Melisande,* while one is his later 1936 Violin Concerto. Even those listeners who don't like Schoenberg music would surely be unlikely declare him a "lunatic", a "charlatan", a "mountebank", an "extremist" or a "freak", in the language of readers of the *Daily Mail*, in 1914.[124] So, perhaps, there is something in Newman's wait-and-see caution. Schoenberg now fits comfortably into the Western canon.[125] *If* we are comfortable drawing on the canon as a source of stable judgements, then we would no longer feel insecure and confused about what to think about Schoenberg's works. We can imagine Newman being encouraged by that.

When concert goers today listen to performances of Schoenberg's works, from any of his phases, very few think of, or experience, the works, as radical or revolutionary. The very opposite; they seem to be from a distant past, almost from an

[122] Leanne Langley details some of the diversity of nineteenth century music criticism, including the way that obviously irrelevant matters coloured their judgements about composers. See her "Gatekeeping, Advocacy, Reflections: Overlapping Voices in Nineteenth-Century British Music Criticism", in *The Cambridge History of Music Criticism*, (ed.) Christopher Dingle, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019

[123] 'The Classic FM Hall of Fame'. Available at: www.halloffame@classicfm.com (Accessed: 19 June 2023).

[124] These descriptions all come from "Mystery Music. The Plain Man and the Critics. What Did They Mean?", *Daily Mail* (Tuesday 20 January 1914), p. 3.

[125] A number of prominent academic musicologists in the 1990s criticized Schoenberg, and modernism more generally. But their criticisms hardly cast doubt in their actually place in the performance canon, indeed they assume it. For a vigorous dismantling of the assumptions of these critics, see Björn Heile, "Darmstadt as Other: British and American Responses to Musical Modernism", *Twentieth-Century Music* 1, 2004, pp. 161-178.

antique culture. Other examples would be revolutionary modernists films, shot in black and white, or classic modernist architecture (such as Le Corbusier). Modernist ventures in many different media now seem somewhat quaint and dated rather than earth-shaking. Those operating with the Test of Time will say that the fact that modernism hails from a distant past era actually puts us in a better position to appreciate these works for what they are, rather than in the light of some commotion they generated when they first appeared. We need to get over the 'Shock of the New'—to step back and take the measure of modernist works, however they may have been received on their first exposure. It is much easier for us today to take this less partisan and less engaged perspective. We can take a more detached and objective point of view. So, at least, thinks someone of Newman's critical persuasion.

The yearning for a stable canon is often viewed with suspicion today. Many want to contest canons for a variety of reasons. If we do that, we may once again be cast into the waters of critical uncertainty, particularly if a plenitude of competing canons competes for domination in the wake of the demise of the old canons. However, it depends how radical the critique is. If new canons merely *add* to old canons, and do not subtract from them, then Schoenberg's standing is secure. Perhaps, for example, women composers are *added* without subtracting Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven. To date, Schoenberg has not been subtracted. His place in most of the multiple evolving contemporary canons seems entrenched and secure. For this reason, criticism of Schoenberg seems easier now than in Newman's day, which is just what Newman, with his Test of Time, would predict. Those deploying the Test of Time, and the associated ideas of disinterested objectivity, could say that the appreciation of Schoenberg's work has persisted through changes in fashion, culture, and outlook, and has thus been vindicated. The Test of Time takes us across cultures and eras because it appeals to something in human beings generally, rather than as constituted by local and passing cultures. So, our idiosyncratic particularities have been filtered out. It is this commitment to universality or impartiality that underpins the use of the Test of Time by those like Newman.

Those who critique even stable canons usually do so in the cause of greater inclusivity.[126] Must they also be hostile to the Test of Time? Not necessarily if the Test of Time is underpinned by an idea of human nature as a source of responses to artworks that may be cleansed of prejudice and bias by filtering out particular viewpoints and arriving at responses from a sensibility that is cleansed of particularities. Thus, some critics of the canon could in principle be sympathetic to the universalist aspirations of those who pursue the Test of Time, even if its previous implementations were less than fully inclusive. The idea of the Test of Time might yet be something important for securing disinterested judgement that abstracts from various variables of culture, class, race, gender and so on.

A relatively modest ('liberal') critique of the canon allows Schoenberg to remain in place in the canon. The radicalness of a critique of the canon is presumably depends on the reasons for it. Sometimes such a critique is accompanied by a rejection of any idea of human nature as imposing a uniformity or a norm. The worry with this is that if the motivations for the attitude include a desire for inclusivity and an urge to redress exclusion, then an idea of human nature will be needed. Otherwise, what is it that some human beings are unjustly excluded from? The thought that some portions of human beings have been unjustly denied their just share in full humanity can hardly dispense with the very idea of humanity! Instead of being a critique of the entire enlightenment appeal to human nature, the radical critique of the canon seems to *depend* on the enlightenment idea of a shared human nature, although it might have been applied in a flawed way, and even though there may be a variety of views of what constitutes that shared human nature.

There may or may not be ways out of this difficulty for the radical critique of the canon. What is clearer is that Newman's critical outlook is consistent with more moderate critiques of the canon. The thought is that a shared human sensibility, when

[126] Refences here could run into hundreds, but as a standard source we might cite Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); reprinted with new introduction (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000). More recently issues of race have come to the fore. An example is Alex Ross, "Black Scholars Confront White Supremacy in Classical Music", *The New Yorker* (14 Sept. 2020). A critical discussion of this kind of critique of the canon is F. K. Knights, "Identity, Representation and the Canon in Classical Music", *Journal of Controversial Ideas* (2023).

cleared of distortions, when functioning ‘objectively’, free of biases, enables convergence in judgement in a way that can function as a norm for criticism. If so, the Test of Time could, in principle, function to secure the standing of someone like Schoenberg, insofar as he possesses a sustained and stable reputation across different ages and cultures.

In the case of Schoenberg reception, Newman’s worries whether the appreciation of Schoenberg can be perpetuated across major cultural and political changes, such as the Second World War. From our current perspective in the twenty-first century, much has changed in the years since 1945. Our period lies nearly in the middle of Newman’s “another fifty or a hundred years”. And the appreciation of Schoenberg has indeed lasted the course through many changes in fashion and political upheavals. Perhaps it is now time to throw off Newman’s caution.

A certain modest optimism about convergence underpins or perhaps accompanies the deployment of the Test of Time in criticism—an optimism that radical canon-critics will reject. It is this modest optimism that Newman (in common with some other British critics) brings to bear on Schoenberg’s works and in particular on its novelty. Wellesz, by contrast, comes from a very different intellectual tradition, and his ways of thinking about Schoenberg’s novelty are different, emphasizing individual personality and Schoenberg’s *daimon*. To grasp Schoenberg’s music and its evolution that *daimon* must be understood. Once critics have grasped that, they need not bother about what other critics at later times might think. It is these kinds of differences that the exchange of letters between Newman and Wellesz highlights. Of course, neither of the two personalities is reducible to his intellectual background tradition, and there is great interest in their specific ways of wrestling with the question of novelty in the case of Schoenberg. Despite the politeness of the exchange, there is in fact little common ground between them, apart from an admiration of Schoenberg. Their perspectives on his novelty are fundamentally different: one appeals to shared human nature and the appreciation of works as something that unfolds over time, in an individual or in a group, and as we modify our views, we should be cautious about taking our initially reactions too fixedly; the other appeals to the distinctive personality of the composer and the intense individuality of judgement. Newman’s faith in deploying the Test of Time in criticism in turbulent times depends on there being a common standard in in

listeners that persists, and that can in principle be a source on stability, such that when times are easier an equilibrium may be re-established. Others, in a different tradition, would say that judgement is, in the end, intensely personal and does not draw on anything potentially shared in that way.[127] At any rate, all should agree that these issues are central to how we address novelty that initially appears to confound judgement. How one deals with novelty is no small matter.

[127] For example, Frederich Nietzsche in *The Gay Science*, *op. cit*.

Chapter 3

Beyond London and the BBC:

Mapping British Performances of Second Viennese School Works from 1912 to 1949

The reception of the Second Viennese School in Britain had a particular profile that has not yet been satisfactorily articulated. In this chapter, several aspects of this profile will be highlighted. The aim is to correct an over-emphasis on some factors and an inattention to others that is found in the existing literature. In particular, the role of the BBC has been over-emphasized, while the role of the provinces has been underemphasized. The phrase "The Second Viennese School" in what follows, will be used to mean Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Egon Wellesz and others, who were closely associated with the Schoenberg's circle in Vienna near the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus the "Second Viennese School" picks out a social grouping rather than a kind of music, although, of course, these are not unrelated. Thus specified, the term includes earlier more tonal compositions as well as later more experimental atonal works.

§1. The BBC and the Provinces

It is often thought that the BBC was the main agent introducing British audiences to the works of the Second Viennese School. Jennifer Doctor argues this in her pioneering 1999 book *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936*: *Shaping a Nation's Tastes.*[128] Her book brought much of interest to light and the field of music history owes her a debt for directing our attention to the topic of British reception of the Second Viennese School. There is no denying that the BBC was a factor. However, one can theorize the connection

[128] Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936 Shaping a Nation's Tastes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999. Doctor also writes: "[The BBC's"] cultural-expansionist approach to broadcasting played a *vital* role in shaping the British public's musical taste" (my emphasis), *ibid.*, p. 334.

between the BBC, and the reception of what she calls "Ultra-Modern Music" in Britain, in stronger and weaker ways. Sometimes Doctor states the connection in a quite strong way. She writes, for example:

> …the BBC's sphere of influence was new and growing [in the interwar years], and the impact of the Second Viennese School works in Britain *were* [sic] *almost entirely dependent* on this fledgling medium.[129]

Cast in this way, the view is not uncontroversial. We can ask the question: *how much* influence did the BBC have in "Shaping a Nation's Tastes", in the words of Doctor's subtitle? In particular, did the BBC have a *dominant* role in bringing the Second Viennese School music to Britain? In short, was it the main factor? This is surely what Doctor has in mind when she writes the impact of Second Viennese School works was "almost entirely dependent" on the BBC. However, the evidence leads in a rather different direction. Although the BBC played its part, there were also other factors. Since Doctor's book, the standard accepted narrative concerning the impact of the Second Viennese School in Britain gives pride of place to the BBC and musical life in London. One example is Rhianon Mathias writes:

> …largely thanks to the efforts of the BBC's pioneering music department, audiences were gradually being introduced to the advanced musical idioms of continental composers, such as Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartók and Berg.[130]

We may assume, surely, that "largely" implies "mostly". However, even if Doctor is right that the BBC had a significant role, and her achievement in bringing this to light should be celebrated, that does not mean that there are not also other factors that should be recognized. Consider how these three authors take on what they learned from Doctor's book. Alaine Frogley says that Doctor's book "include[s] a list of *all* major British performances of works by the Second Viennese School from January 1912 … to May

[129] Jennifer Doctor, *op.cit.*, p. 13 (my emphasis).

[130] Rhiannon Mathias, *Lutyens, Maconchy, Williams and Twentieth-century British music: A Blest Trio of Sirens*, London: Taylor and Francis 2012. See also the reviews of Doctor's book cited below in section 4. Sophie Fuller describes the reputation of the BBC as a forceful promoter of 'ultra-modern' music in "'Putting the BBC and T. Beecham to Shame': The Macnaghten—Lemare Concerts, 1931-7", *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 2013, Vol. 138, No. 2 (2013), see especially pp. 382-92 and p. 396.

1936…"[131] Given the word "major", this is either false because the list is radically incomplete, or somehow nothing in the mere provinces can count as "major". Lewis Foreman writes: "...the BBC played a key role in establishing the accepted modern canon."[132] Here the word "key" means a very strong claim is being made. Caroline Rae writes "Doctor's book reveals not only how the music and ideas of the Second Viennese School were known in Britain between the wars, but how they were widely publicized."[133] This also assigns a central role to the BBC. All these writers assign a dominant role to the BBC in propagating the Second Viennese School and all overlook or ignore an existing vibrant and forward-looking musical scene all over Britain.

It is true that some critics at the time endorsed the idea that the BBC had a central role. Frank Toothill,[134] wrote in *The Leeds Mercury* in 1935:

> Were it not for the BBC we should know next to nothing of such pioneers as Alban Berg and Anton Webern, and it may be that much as we may sometimes be inclined to sniff, we shall do well to give some heed to what they have to say.[135]

And Richard Capell[136] wrote in *The Daily Telegraph* in 1934:

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[131] Alain Frogley, Review of Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music 1922-1936, Shaping a Nation's Tastes,* in *Music Library Association Notes* 58, 2001, p. 360 my emphasis.

[132] Lewis Foreman, Review of Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music 1922-1936, Shaping a Nation's Tastes*, in *Music and Letters*, 82, 2001, p. 138.

[133] Caroline Rae, Review of Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music 1922-1936, Shaping a Nation's Tastes,* in *Tempo*, 2001, p. 32

[134] Frank Toothill did not come from a privileged background: his father was a bookkeeper; he was based in Leeds all his life; he was baptized; he was a scholar and then a reporter on a local newspaper. He also happened to be a notable chess player, taking part in competitions. He was in general rather favourable to the Second Viennese School.

[135] Frank Toothill, "Miscellany and Music. Cup Final Captains "In Town", *The Leeds Mercury*, Tuesday, 30 April 1935, p. 4.

[136] Richard Capell (1885-1954) was an English music critic, journalist, and writer, who was born in Northampton and educated at Bedford Modern School. He then studied the cello with Edmund S.J. van der Straeten in London, and later at Lille Conservatory. He was the music critic of the *Daily Mail* (1911-1933) and thereafter of the *Daily Telegraph* (which he had joined in 1933). He has also worked as an editor for the *Monthly Musical Record* (1928-33) and *Music and Letters* (1950-54). See Maurice J.E. Brown, "Capell, Richard", *Grove Music Online*, 2001. https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.04820 accessed 29th February 2024.

> The British Broadcasting Corporation has for long made no secret of its belief in the music of the Schönbergian school. The master himself has been repeatedly represented in its programmes in all his phases, and the public has not been left in ignorance of the works of his principal disciples, Anton von Webern and Alban Berg.[137]

These critics seem to endorse the idea that the BBC was the primary agent generating awareness of Second Viennese School music in the mid-1930s. This outlook has two main difficulties. So, Doctor, and those who follow her, have a critical precedent.

The main propagator of the Second Viennese School within the BBC was Edward Clark (1888-1962), who was a program planner from 1927 to 1936. Important though he was, the first problem with the standard narrative is the Second Viennese School works were represented in the concert repertoire both before the BBC was founded as well as after 1936, when Clark left. There was considerable interest in Second Viennese School works among the public *prior* to the existence of the BBC, which was founded in 1922. In 1926, Percy Pitt, Director of Music at the BBC (1924-1929) made the following statement about the envisaged role of the BBC: "There is a large public [the BBC] believes who will be interested to follow the stream of thought in modern music".[138] This inquisitive and open-minded audience pre-existed the BBC programming and Pitt thinks that it made the BBC's venture worthwhile. The BBC may have nurtured this audience, but *they did not create it*. It is this same audience who were later to an extent appreciative of Schoenberg. Perhaps it is not clear what Pitt intends by "modern"; but the audience is not thought to be overly conservative. It is at least curious, and therefore open in principle to modern music, whether of the more conservative kind or "ultra-modern" music. Since this curiosity predates the BBC, this sympathetic audience was not explained by the BBC. Furthermore, as will be detailed below, after the launch of the BBC, there were many concerts especially in the provinces that had nothing to do with the BBC; and even in London, there were many Second Viennese School concerts that had no connections with the BBC. (These are listed in Appendix H.)

[137] Richard Capell, "The Tragedy of *Wozzeck*. A Barrack-Room Ballad in the New Viennese Manner", *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 March 1934.
[138] Cited in Doctor, *op.cit.,* p. 94.

With Clark's resignation from the BBC in 1936, the organization took a different turn, and almost no Second Viennese School works were broadcast (although some contemporary Russian music was broadcast during the war due to the wartime alliance). Nevertheless, the music of the Second Viennese School maintained a presence in the concert repertoire in Britain after 1936. At the very time that the BBC was turning away from the Second Viennese School, independent societies continued playing them, both in the provinces and in London in the 1940s. Performances of Second Viennese School works did not lessen after the war relative to other kinds of music, although the war obviously interrupted much live music.

One might wonder why this was the case if the BBC was the dominant factor in propagating Second Viennese School music, as Doctor says. One suggestion would be that it was momentum. However, if its presence was "almost entirely due" to the BBC, it is surely surprising that there was such a persistent and widespread effect of that single source. This idea of momentum is surely rather unpromising.

Putting to one side the interest in Second Viennese School music before the BBC and after Clark's departure, we may consider the BBC's influence during Clark's tenure. When we do so, we need to keep an open mind about the *extent* of the BBC's contribution to changing the public's taste even during that period. The second problem for the standard narrative is the provinces: even during Clark's tenure is that there were *many* concerts, mostly outside of London, featuring the Second Viennese School's works, which were independent of the BBC. As early as 1914, several of Schoenberg's songs were performed in the Lovaine Hall in Newcastle[139], and at the Church Institute in Leeds[140]. Schoenberg's music was heard for the first time in Manchester as early as January 1915, in the Brand Lane Concerts series[141]. There were several concerts of the Second Viennese School works in Aberdeen (the *Pro Arte* String Quartet played Berg's Lyric Suite in 1934), in Birmingham (the Birmingham City Orchestra, conducted by Leslie Heward, played Webern's Symphony, op. 21 in 1933), in Bradford (the Hirsch String Quartet with guests played Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* in 1933), in Edinburgh (The Kolisch Quartet played

[139] "Schonberg and his music. Mr. Edgar Bainton and the 'Futurist' school", *Newcastle Journal*, 16 February 1914, p. 3.
[140] *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (Yorkshire, England) 16 March 1914, p. 7; *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 16 March 1914, p. 6.
[141] "The Brand Lane Concerts", *The Manchester Evening News*, 14 October 1914, p. 2.

Webern's *Five Pieces for String Quartet* in 1935) and there were also Second Viennese School performances in Bristol, Coventry, Derby, Glasgow, Hastings, Harrogate, Leeds, Liverpool and Oxford. None of these concerts had any obvious connection with the BBC. There were also many Second Viennese School concerts in London that had no connection with the BBC, sixteen of which are listed in Appendix H.

The overestimation of the role of the BBC tend to go along with the underestimation of the role of the provinces in giving a home to this music, even though in the earlier days regional centers had some autonomy. In the list of concerts just given, the concerts took place all over the country (with no BBC connection). To drive home this concern, consider Appendix A of Doctor's book, which she entitles "British performances of Second Viennese School works, January 1912-May 1936". Here Doctor lists 136 concerts of Second Viennese School works. But only *three* in this list were not in London—two in Glasgow and one in Manchester. Doctor takes her list to be representative, writing:

> Since other performances not mentioned in these or other consulted sources probably took place, this list is undoubtedly not comprehensive; however, it includes the most significant British performances of Second Viennese School works during the period and provides a representative idea of which works received attention and the frequency with which such performances took place.[142]

Given the very large number of Second Viennese School works performed in the provinces, Doctor's list is unrepresentative. Are concerts in the provinces somehow not "significant"?

Appendix E of this paper lists thirty-five Kolisch Quartet Concerts in London, the provinces and also Ireland, thirty-three of which we have the programme. Of those that are listed, thirteen took place in London while twenty-two were in the provinces. Of these twelve included Second Viennese School works. Appendix F lists thirty Second Viennese School concerts in the provinces between 1914 and 1949, excluding concerts given by the Kolisch Quartet. And Appendix G lists twenty-nine *non*-Second Viennese School modernist concerts in the provinces, excluding those given by the Kolisch Quartet (who sometimes played Bartók). While this is no doubt not an exhaustive list of every Second Viennese School concert, or every non-Second Viennese School

[142] Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936*, *op. cit.,* p. 337.

modernist concert, it is based on a reasonably representative sample, and it shows that the provinces were accepting of this kind of music and were not lagging behind London in pursuing and performing "ultra-modern music". This data represents a reality rather different from what is represented in Doctor's list. This matters because Doctor gives an incomplete picture of the way that the music of the Second Viennese School was propagated in Britain, sidelining provincial concert activity.

What about the balance between the earlier tonal and the later atonal modernist works in provincial concerts? It might be thought that even though there were provincial performances of Second Viennese School works, most of the performances in the provinces were the early tonal works such as Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and Berg's Piano Sonata, op. 1. Now, the Kolisch Quartet, of course played many classic composers, such as Beethoven and Schubert. But *when* they played Second Viennese School works, they played three times as many atonal works as they played tonal works. And most of the atonal works that they played were in the provinces, not in London. It is true that Appendix F shows many more performances of tonal Second Viennese School works than atonal Second Viennese School works. However, combining Appendix F with just the provincial concerts listed in Appendix G shows that there were eighteen tonal works to thirteen atonal works performed in the provinces. Just over 40%, that is. This shows that organizers and audiences were not timidly sticking more closely with works not too far away from the classical canon with which they were familiar. Both tonal and atonal works were performed and experienced by audiences both in London and the provinces.

This separation of tonal and atonal works should not mean that we overlook the fact that even the early Second Viennese School works were experimental to an extent. We might even say that the early more conventional works were 'gateway' works, opening up audiences for the later atonal works. Furthermore, the BBC concert repertoire was not so different from the provincial concert repertoire, broadcasting performances of quite a lot of the earlier tonal Second Viennese School works. Both put

on a mix of works; neither was in advance of the other musically. Each was as 'ultra-modern' as the other.[143]

Moreover, Appendix G records non-Second Viennese School performances in the provinces, which included many atonal works by Hindemith. Appendix H lists non-BBC London concerts of Second Viennese School works, which shows three times as many atonal as tonal performances. Overall, when we consider the tonal/atonal distinction, we notice adventurous organizers as well as audiences, who were willing to perform and experience the latest developments in music.[144]

Suppose that there had been no Second Viennese School concerts in the provinces prior to 1922, or that they greatly increased after 1922 and declined after 1936. That would show the provinces to be musical backwaters, and that the action was just in London. In fact, modernist concerts were arranged independently of London and the BBC and were constant in frequency in pre-BBC years, in the Clark years, and after his departure. This shows that provincial taste was not due to London and the BBC.[145] Furthermore, given what was driving concert organization and audience attendance and appreciation, there is no reason to think it was BBC broadcasts.

Were the London BBC concerts somehow more 'important' or more 'significant' than the provincial concerts? Not if we consider the capacity of the halls. The London Queen's Hall capacity was 3000. Here is a list of British cities with concerts halls active in

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[143] "He [Adrian Boult] remarked that if ever he wanted to hear a good concert, he took the train to Manchester." Nicholas Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony Orchestra, 1930-1980*, London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1981, p. 9.

[144] Important work on music in the British provinces has been done and collected in Rachel Cowgill and Peter Holman's edited volume *Music in the British Provinces, 1690-1914*, London: Ashgate 2007. See especially the essays, Catherine Dale, "The Provincial Musical Festivals in Nineteenth Century England: A Case Study of Bridlington", and Christina Bashford, "Educating England: Networks of Programme-Note Provision in the Nineteenth Century". In many respects, the investigation in the present paper continues from where this volume left off. Certainly, many of the kinds of clubs and informal networks that they describe are familiar in what we find in the early twentieth century.

[145] This claim also runs contrary to Deborah Heckert's critic-led account in Deborah Heckert, "Schoenberg, Roger Fry and the Emergence of a Critical Language for the Reception of Musical Modernism in Britain, 1912-1914", in *British Music and Modernism 1895-1960*, edited by Matthew Riley, London: Routledge. Her views are discussed below. 2017. Heckert is discussed further below.

the 1920s and 1930s, with capacities of the main concert halls: Aberdeen, 1281; Belfast, 1000; Birmingham, 1935 and 1086; Bradford, 1335; Bristol, 2075; Dundee, 2300; Edinburgh, 2900; Glasgow, 1036 and 1541; Hull, 1200; Huddersfield, 1200; Halifax, 1512; Leeds, 1600 and 1550; Leicester, 2000; Oxford, 1000; Newcastle, 2135; Stoke-on-Trent, 1853. Thus, the capacity of provincial concert halls did not fall far short of the Queen's Hall in London.

§2. How Did These Concerts Come About?

It seems, then, that there was in fact a vibrant musical life in the provinces. A crucial part of this is the story of how these concerts came about, and also how they did not come about, is revealing of a lively provincial musical culture, which owed little or nothing to the BBC, and that owed something but not much to London (since British concert tours would often include London among other places).

These provincial concerts were organized by:

1. Independent music societies, such as the Yorkshire section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, the Glasgow Active Society and the Manchester Chamber Concerts Society.
2. Small music clubs, such as the Aberdeen Chamber Music Club, Bradford Music Club, Bristol Music Club and Edinburgh Music Club.
3. Universities, for example, the universities at Bristol, Edinburgh and Leeds, which all ran lively concert programs in which Second Viennese School works were played.
4. Galleries, libraries, and museums, such as Basnet Gallery of the Bon Marche in Liverpool, Leeds Museum, Manchester Central Library and the Austrian Legation in London.

These societies, clubs and institutions almost always had a subscription membership drawn from the local area, and they were mostly run locally by people who were not necessarily

involved with music professionally.[146] Almost all these institutions still exist.[147] Bojan Bujić details how the first British performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* came about in London in November 1923, performed in French by soprano Marya Freund and the Paris/Brussels ensemble, which was conducted by Darius Milhaud. Bujić writes that the concert was organized partly

> …as a result of an arrangement which followed unconventional lines … through the Federation of Music Clubs and with two well-heeled London music societies, the New Kensington Music Club and the Chelsea Music Society acting as hosts.[148]

Pierrot Lunaire was played three times in London in November 1923 at the Kensington Music Club, the Music Society, and the Chelsea Music Club after various performances by the same musicians in Paris. Bujić claims that the impetus came from personal contact and conversation with Egon Wellesz. In support of Bujić's claim, we may cite Wellesz's letter to Schoenberg of 1 June 1922, which was sent from London and after a performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* in Paris. Wellesz shares details of the planning of a performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* in London:

> Since Marya Freund has set too high standards for a performance of Pierrot in London, the planned Paris performance cannot take place in London. This makes it easier for me to suggest that the Vienna ensemble be invited. I have spoken to a young concert agent who is putting all his ambition into realizing this plan; I think that it will definitely be possible. I have shown Webern's pieces to musicians whenever I have had the opportunity and have also spoken to publishers.[149]

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[146] See for example the early history of the Aberdeen Chamber Music Club, at "Aberdeen Chamber Music Concerts" (www.aberdeenchambermusic.org/about/history/ last accessed 17 November 2022).
[147] See the websites for the Bristol Music Club (www.bristol-music-club.co.uk/ last accessed 21 October 2022), and the "Aberdeen Chamber Music Concerts", *op. cit.*
[148] Bojan Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship*, London: Plumbago, 2020, p. 95.
[149] "*Da Marya Freund für eine Aufführung des Pierrot in London zu hohe Ansprüche gestellt hat, kann die beabsichtigte Pariser Aufführung in London nicht stattfinden. Dies erleichtert mir meinen Versuch, den Vorschlag zu machen, man möge das Wiener Ensemble einladen. Ich habe mit einem jungen Konzertagenten gesprochen, der seinen ganzen Ehrgeiz darein setzt, diesen Plan zu verwirklichen; ich denke, dass es bestimmt möglich sein wird. Weberns Stücke habe ich, so viel Gelegenheit ich nur hatte, Musikern gezeigt und auch mit*

Even though London performances of *Pierrot Lunaire* exactly reproduced those in Paris, it shows Wellesz's collaboration in organizing London performances of *Pierrot Lunaire* and his efforts of propagating Schoenberg's school. Interestingly in the exact same letter, Wellesz warns Schoenberg not to put much hope in Clark in organising performances of Schoenberg's music:

> I was with Clark. He lost all the money he had at his concerts and is in serious trouble, as everyone who knows him told me. Don't take it amiss if he hasn't replied; he was apparently embarrassed to tell me how things are, but he still wants to try to do something.[150]

Both parts of this letter count against a narrative according to which Clark was a major moving force in bringing 'ultra-modern music' to Britain.

While personal contacts were important, the role of clubs and societies was crucial in enabling concerts. This is particularly notable because it was the first British performance of one of the most important atonal works by Schoenberg, *Pierrot Lunaire;* and it was organized by London music clubs, and not the BBC. Of course, the BBC was formed just in 1922, and was a very young institution back then. Nevertheless, the BBC here is hardly "shaping a nation's taste", in Doctor's words; instead, it was independent clubs and societies, plus personal connections that were doing that.[151] The same goes for the first British performance of Berg's Lyric Suite. The BBC broadcasted the *Lyric Suite*, played by the Kolisch Quartet at the Broadcasting House, in 1933. However, the Kolisch Quartet performed the *Lyric Suite* at the London concert at the St John's Institute in 1932, which was not organised by the BBC.

The Kolisch Quartet were arguably the pre-eminent musical group to program Second Viennese School works in Britain at this time. They played: Berg's Lyric Suite at

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Verlegern gesprochen." Egon Wellesz. Handwritten letter to Arnold Schoenberg of 1 June 1922 (in German). Arnold Schönberg Center, Letter ID: 21741.

[150] "*Mit Clark war ich beisammen. Er hat bei seinen Konzerten alles Geld, das erhatte, verloren und steckt in schweren Sorgen, wie mir alle Leute, die ihn kennen, sagten. Nehmen Sie es ihm nicht übel, wenn er nicht geantwortet hat; er hat sich anscheinend geniert, mitzuteilen, wie es steht, will aber trotzdem jetzt sich bemühen, etwas zu tun."* Egon Wellesz. Handwritten letter to Arnold Schoenberg, 1 June 1922 (in German). Arnold Schönberg Center, Letter ID: 21741.

[151] The way things happen is very much of the same kind as what is recorded in Rachel Cowgill and Peter Holman's *Music in the British Provinces, 1690-1914, ibid.*

the Bradford Music Club on 10 October 1933[152], Edinburgh Music Club's concert at the Freemasons' Hall on 13 November 1934[153], Manchester Chamber Concerts Society's concert at the Manchester Central Library on 1 March 1937[154], and University of Leeds on 9 February 1938[155]; Schoenberg's String Quartet No. 1 in d-minor, op. 7 at the Bristol University on 15 November 1934[156]; and Webern's Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5 at the Edinburgh Music Club on 19 November 1935.[157] (None of these concerts had anything to do with the BBC.) On one notable visit of the Kolisch Quartet to Aberdeen, large numbers of local schoolchildren heard some of the best performers in the world. The local newspaper reported:

> The hall was packed with children from the secondary schools of Aberdeen, who received four items with enthusiasm. The most popular, and perhaps the most interesting, was Schubert's posthumous work, the Quartet in D Minor on the theme of "Death and the Maiden," of which the Kolisch Quartet played the second movement.[158]

This reveals a sophisticated musical listening culture in Aberdeen. The children must have either taken time out from their daytime studies or been organized by their schools to go to the concert during school hours. Either way, this was perceived by many Aberdonians to be an important activity of great benefit to schoolchildren. It is one thing to attend a concert but thinking it worthwhile for the next generation reveals a sense of importance attached to the music and appreciating it. Moreover, the Kolisch Quartet concert was reported on the front page of the local newspaper on 10 November 1935. (See figure 2.) (The Pro Arte Quartet had performed Berg's Lyric Suite less than a year earlier.) This was

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[152] See H.P.D., "Bradford Music Club. The Kolisch Quartet in a Work by Alban Berg", *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 10 March 1937, p. 5.
[153] See "Edinburgh Music Club. The Kolisch Quartet", *The Scotsman*, 14 November 1934, p. 10.
[154] See W.W.R., "Manchester Chamber Concerts Society", *The Guardian*, 2 March 1937, p. 13.
[155] See A.H.A., "Kolisch String Quartet. Leeds University Recital", *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, Thurs., 10 February 1938, p. 5.
[156] See L.R.B., "To-night's Orchestral Concert – The Kolisch String Quartet – Music in Bath – Next Week on the Stage", *Western Daily Press* (Bristol, England), 9 November 1934, p. 4.
[157] See "Edinburgh Music Club. Beethoven, Webern, Debussy. The Kolisch Quartet", *The Scotsman*, 20 November 1935, p. 12.
[158] Aberdeen Journal (Aberdeen, Scotland), 2 November 1931, p. 2.

no philistine provincial culture following in the shadow more of ‘progressive’ culture in London.

War Office on Arrest of German——Page 7

Aberdeen Press and Journal

Wednesday, November 20, 1935

On Bonnie Loch Affric -:- To-day's Royal Christening -:- Strange Library

Loch Affric, Inverness-shire.—A famous beauty spot. Ishbel Marchioness of Aberdeen has suggested that this countryside should be preserved as a national park.

Dorothy Gill as Lady Jane in "Patience" in to-night's Gilbert and Sullivan opera at His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen.

The bride and bridegroom, confetti covered, make their way to their car.—Miss Jean Fraser, Aberdeen, and Mr Alexander Irvine Mackie, Culter, after their marriage at Trinity Church, Aberdeen, yesterday. ("P. and J." Copyright.)

The golden font in the Royal Chapel at Buckingham Palace which will be used for the christening to-day of the son of the Duke and Duchess of Kent.

Bringing a pump into action to drain some of the trenches dug for the foundations of the new school in Nelson Street, Aberdeen. ("P. and J." Copyright.)

The Kolisch Quartet which plays at to-night's meeting of the Aberdeen Chamber Music Club in the Cowdray Hall.

A strange library, consisting of glass plates, is in the Science Department at the University of Aberdeen. Each year a new plate is added on which is etched a record of the outstanding event of the year. The records date back to 1885. Professor Findlay examining the library.

Part of the ruin of Kinloss Priory, Morayshire.

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Figure 2. *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 10 November 1935

Performers who were based in Britain were also active in both playing and arranging performances of Second Viennese School works. In 1933, the Hirsch String Quartet (led by violinist Leonard Hirsch) played Schoenberg's sextet for strings *Verklärte Nacht* at Leeds University[159]; and in 1939, Merseyside Chamber Orchestra (under Louis Cohen) played *Verklärte Nacht* at the Bluecoat Hall in Liverpool[160]. The Kolisch Quartet was specifically formed to play Schoenberg's works, whereas the Hirsch String Quartet and Merseyside Chamber Orchestra had no such specific purpose, although they sometimes played Schoenberg's work. In order to illustrate the variety of organizations and clubs giving concerts of Schoenberg's works in Britain, we can mention Clarice Dunington's Women's String Orchestra at the Houldsworth Hall in Manchester, which played Schoenberg's sextet *Verklärte Nacht* in February 1938.[161]

Some concerts featured a pre-concert talk, or else works were presented within a lecture-and-recital format with the purpose of making the new work more accessible; in other words, there was sometimes an explicitly educational aspect to the events. On such case is that of the British-born composer Edgar Bainton gave a lecture on Schoenberg's music in the Lovaine Hall, Newcastle, under the auspices of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, in February 1914. Bainton was very far from being alone in this. Others also gave talks of a similar nature. In 1914, Albert Jovett gave a lecture on "Arnold Schoenberg and his Songs" at the Church Institute in Leeds, where seven Schoenberg's songs were sung by Gladys Peck.[162] Also in 1940, pianist Emil Spira, a student of Anton Webern, who fled the Nazi *Anschluss* in 1938, gave a lecture-recital to members of the Polygon Club at Rushworth Hall in Liverpool on "The Problems of Contemporary Music". Spira illustrated his lecture with two piano pieces by Schoenberg, three songs by Berg and two by Mahler,

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[159] H., "Next Week's Concert Programmes. Several Novelties. Leeds Symphony Orchestra on Saturday", *Yorkshire Evening Post* (Yorkshire, England) Saturday 14 October 1933, p. 3.
[160] B. M. "Chamber Concert Series Ends. Paul Cropper's Fine Viola Playing", *Liverpool Echo*, 15 March 1939, p. 2.
[161] G.A.H., "Manchester Women's String Orchestra", *The Guardian*, 22 February 1938, p. 13. The review is not generous.
[162] *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (Yorkshire, England) Monday 16 March 1914, p. 7; *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 16 March 1914, p. 6.

and some short pieces by Berg for clarinet.[163] There were more lectures during the 1940s, mostly by Austrian *émigré* musicians.

§3. Concert Repertoire Selection

There is a question about how the repertoire of these provincial concerts was determined; the main options would seem to be the musicians or the concert organisers. The programme of March 1931 concert at the Glasgow Music Club was chosen by the composer Eric Chisholm,[164] while the program of the September 1932 concert at the Bristol Music Club was decided by the flautist W. H. Cook.[165]

It was often the promoters who decided. At other times there was more of a struggle for power between musicians and the concert organisers. There is an interesting example showing how promoters overruled the performers in the case of Webern's String Trio. James Whitehead, cellist of the Philharmonic Trio[166], walked off the stage at Wigmore Hall on 15 March 1938 at the beginning of the performance. He gave his version of the incident to a representative of *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*:

> I am afraid I felt no sympathy with the piece and acted on the spur of the moment …. When I first saw the score I refused to play it. Then I was persuaded to work on it and felt even more certain. To me it is not music, but a nightmare and nonsense.[167]

The performer was apparently persuaded to continue working on the piece, only to back out, in protest, at the performance. (Other pieces on the program were by Beethoven and Victor Yates, a contemporary British composer). As it is later explained to readers by the correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*:

> The Committee of the Adolph Hallis Chamber Music Concerts, in a statement … said that the concerts were a co-operative venture in which artists were invited to take a financial share and agreed to play works recommended by the committee.

163 *Liverpool Daily Post*, Friday, 10 May 1940, p. 7.
164 *The Scotsman, 31* March 1931, p. 7.
165 *Western Daily Press*, 30 September 1932, p. 6.
166 David Martin (violin), Frederick Riddle (viola) and James Whitehead (cello).
167 "Why Cellist Walked Out: 'Piece A Nightmare – Not Music'", *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 17 March 1938, p. 12.

> The Philharmonic Trio, it is stated, agreed last May to play Webern's string trio, and it was not until Sunday that any reluctance to play the work was shown.
>
> The committee describes Mr. Whitehead's conduct as 'inexcusable' and a 'breach of faith with the public'.[168]

At least in this case, the organizing committee had more say in determining repertoire than the musicians. This particular incident is discussed by Hans Moldenhauer in his extensive monograph on Webern, where he forcefully assures the reader that this is "an isolated case and one quite uncharacteristic of Great Britain, where audiences showed a greater appreciation of Webern's music during his lifetime than in any other country."[169]

Who was in charge of the repertoire of the Kolisch Quartet? In fact, there is something of a puzzle concerning their repertory. It often consisted of two classical pieces and one modern work by a Second Viennese School composer. Sometimes they did not play *any* Second Viennese School music (or other modern repertoire), which is puzzling considering that the quartet was founded in Vienna for the performances of Schoenberg's music. Aberdeen Chamber Music Concerts hosted the Kolisch Quartet in November 1931, December 1934, November 1935, February 1938, but they did not play any modern pieces on those visits, and they played Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert. A reasonable speculation would be that it was in accordance with the wishes of the organizers, since we may assume given the founding rationale of the Kolisch Quartet, that the musicians would prefer Second Viennese School works. Again, it seems that organizers had a large role with respect to repertoire.

It is not easy to know the motives of the organisers or musicians when they selected a certain repertoire. To some extent it might have been an expression of their own taste, or they might be taking account of their audience. It seems likely that there might also have been political considerations flowing from the international situation given the knowledge that certain composers were disapproved of in Germany; but it is difficult to confirm this. Whether the considerations were aesthetic or political, it is unlikely that audience reception would form *no* part of their deliberations. A concert would usually be part of a series, the viability of which would require that they did not alienate their audience. It was important

[168] "Why Cellist Walked Out: 'Piece A Nightmare – Not Music'", *op. cit.* p. 12.
[169] Hans Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work,* London: Victor Gollancz, 1978, p. 503.

to build trust. So, it is likely that the audience played an indirect role in what was performed.[170]

This prompts the question: how did these organizers, musicians and those in audiences become aware of this repertory in the first place? One answer was that it was through the BBC broadcast concerts.[171] A second answer is that performers would play wide-ranging programs, which included works by members of the Second Viennese School. Counting in favour of this idea is the fact that, for audiences, very often, the performer was more important than the composers, works, or music styles they were performing. Audiences would flock to see stars like the pianist Artur Schnabel or violinist Fritz Kreisler, and they would be less concerned with what they played. The covers of many records of the Kolisch Quartet are revealing. On most of them the lettering of "The Kolisch Quartet" is larger than that of the composers or of the works they play. In the case of "The Kolisch Quartet Plays Schubert" (1929 and 1934), the lettering is of equal size. It is striking that one prominent exception is the covers of records of Schoenberg's works, where, unusually, the composer's lettering was often but not always larger than the performers.

[170] A typical season of music consisted of a fairly standard classical repertoire, but it would occasionally feature some modern music played alongside more traditional works. See: https://www.aberdeenchambermusic.org/programme/archives/. (Accessed 29 February 2024.) The Pro Arte Quartet played Berg along with Mozart and Beethoven in 1934, but in 1936 they played Beethoven, Haydn and Schubert, while the Kolisch Quartet played only Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert both in 1933 and 1935.

[171] One puzzling fact is that it seems that the BBC did not broadcast *recordings* of classical music as they did with popular (or 'light') music. It is not clear why not. Radio Luxembourg broadcast recordings of popular music from 1932; and it was widely thought that the BBC was more musically conservative than Radio Luxembourg in the popular music that was played, at least until 1967. The explanation is probably that the BBC had rules on 'needle time' in order to support live music. See Humphrey Carpenter & Jenny Doctor, *The Envy of the World: First Years of the BBC Third Programme and Radio 3, 1946-1996*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1996. This was to do with requirements issuing from the Musicians' Union. See Williamson and Cloonan *Players' Work Time* Manchester UP (2016).

Figure 3. Kolisch Quartet Record Covers**.**

Records like this were presumably selling to provincial audiences where the Kolisch Quartet toured. Of course, the 'star factor' drew audiences. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that the audience was in fact musically more discriminating than this suggests.

§4. Other Modernist Performances in Britain.

The music of the Second Viennese School was not the only modernist music in circulation. We can, therefore, consider the distribution of this other modernist music in the British provinces. It turns out that, as in the case of the Second Viennese School, there is an extraordinary number of performances of other modernist music throughout the British provinces, including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. (Again, this had little to do with the BBC.)

Here are some notable examples. As early as 1904, Béla Bartók gave a performance of his symphonic poem *Kosuth* (1903) in Manchester. It was Bartók's first visit in Britain. On 16 March 1922, Bartók performed at the seventy-seventh concert at Aberystwyth College in Wales, playing nine of his compositions for piano and taking a piano part in a Beethoven Trio. In February 1929, the Hungarian String Quartet played Bartók's String Quartet No.1 Op. 7 at the Foxon Five O'Clock Concert, Victoria Hall, Sheffield.[172] In March 1926, the City of Birmingham Orchestra played Bartók's 'Dance Suite'.

In the 1930's there were further Bartók performances in Cardiff, Glasgow and Edinburgh. In Bournemouth, in November 1928, the Pro Arte Quartet gave a concert of music by Goossens, Milhaud and Debussy. In Manchester, in November 1929, Milhaud's Sonata for two violins and piano was performed by Jelly d'Aranyi and Adila Fachiri in the Bowden Chamber Concert series. In the 1930's there were further Milhaud performances in Liverpool and Manchester. In the 1930s, Paul Hindemith was performed in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Belfast and Birmingham. In the 1930s, Igor Stravinsky was widely performed. For example, in 1932 in Huddersfield, the Pro Arte Quartet played Stravinsky's Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo (1919). In Bradford in 1933,

[172] The 'Five O'Clock Concerts' were started by Marie and Lily Foxon in 1915. They have been held weekly at the Victoria Hall in Sheffield. See E.D. Mackerness, *Somewhere Further North: A History of Music in Sheffield*, Sheffield: Sheffield Northend, 1974.

the performers from the Hallé Chamber orchestra played the *Pulcinella Suite'* (1920). In Newbury in 1934, The Amateur Orchestral Union played the *Firebird Suite*. In Birmingham in 1939, the Birmingham Philharmonic String Orchestra, played *Apollon Musagete*. And in Bournemouth, also in 1939, the *Firebird Suite* was performed. (More of these concerts are listed in Appendixes B and C.)

Many of these performances were not even in *large* provincial cities like, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol and Leeds. There was also a ready audience for these modern composers in smaller cities like Bournemouth, Bradford, Cardiff and Newbury; and we listed Schoenberg performances in Hastings, Aberdeen, Bradford, Oxford, Coventry, Newcastle, Harrogate, Derby, Dublin and Sheffield. (In Appendices A and B many of these concerts are detailed.) So, the provinces were very far from 'provincial' in the pejorative sense: they were not at all behind the capital in terms of performance and appreciation of this new music, and this gets overlooked in an account that focuses on London. Perhaps some who were listening in provincial centres were also passively consuming modernist works broadcast over the radio by the BBC. It is difficult to know what they thought of it. Even if such listeners were many in number, they had little connection with the vital and open-minded local music communities and small institutions who programmed Second Viennese School works and a similar audience who attended these concerts.

Concerning the Aberystwyth performance, an interesting letter of complaint was published in a local paper in which it was asked why such secrecy has been maintained over the visit of Bartók:

> … Music lovers at the collegiate town who realise the significance of this outstanding event are asking why no notice of it has been published; but the more pertinent question is: Why was not notification given to the press? Here is an eminent foreign musician whom some of the critics rank amongst the foremost composers of the day. … At any rate, Bartock [*sic*] and his music have been so much discussed that all musical Great Britain has been eagerly awaiting his forthcoming first visit to London. Yet Aberystwyth forestalls London, and no one is told anything about it, and the mere fact only leaks out by accident! Why this secrecy? Why were not the press informed that so eminent a composer was coming to Wales. Though the concert may have been of a semi-private character,

> the function was one of importance, not only to Wales, but to the whole of Great Britain. Those good people of Aberystwyth who are musically inclined have just reason to complain if they were not given an opportunity that could rarely come their way – and Cardiff and other places would have vied to provide an audience for such an outstanding event.[173]

This reveals a sophisticated concert-going public in 'provincial' Aberystwyth. Henry Walford Davies, director of the Welsh National Council of Music, referred to the criticism during a lecture at Swansea University on 21 March 1922: "We are not in the habit of advertising our doings, and do not see why we should."[174] This somewhat arrogant response at least indicates the ethos of those putting on concerts and illustrates the private nature of the organization of these events, that were not seen as creating a resource for random members of the public to enjoy. (This is not so far from nineteenth century private salon-concert culture in continental Europe.) Again, the concert organizing culture and practice of the time was unlike concert organizing practices in the twenty-first century.

§2. Concert vs. Radio Audiences

There is a question about the relation between the provincial concerts of Second Viennese School works and BBC radio broadcasts of Second Viennese School works. It is true that the broadcast concerts probably reached many tens of thousands of people, far more than attended the concerts. Radio audience size in this period was impossible to measure in remotely precise terms.[175] However, it would have greatly exceeded numbers attending live concerts. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that audiences at live concerts were mostly those who heard the broadcasts and would not otherwise have attended. There was a robust audience for live performances of Second Viennese School works even before the BBC started broadcasting. Not only were many people in the provinces already following modern developments, but the Second Viennese School was from the start being

[173] *Western Mail,* 20 March 1922, p. 9.
[174] *Western Mail*, 22 March 1922, p. 4.
[175] See further Humphrey Carpenter & Jenny Doctor, *The Envy of the World: First Years of the BBC Third Programme and Radio 3, 1946-1996*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1996.

propagated in a non-centralized way, far from London and the BBC. There is little reason to believe that these audiences were passively sitting by their radio sets to hear the cultural news from London, and then rushing off to arrange or attend concerts of the new music of which they were previously ignorant. Their knowledge had sources unconnected to the BBC.

There should be no puzzle about how people in places like Aberdeen were in contact with the Kolisch Quartet in Vienna. Information spread fast even before the internet! There were (and still are) multiple informal networks in which word of mouth was effective in spreading gossip as well as information. There are also local newspapers, letters, telegrams, posters. Local newspapers regularly carried reviews of concerts, in which new developments were mentioned. Some wealthier homes had telephones. There were informal networks held together by common interests and values, and people had multiple way of communicating and transmitting ideas. Consider that even in the 1910s and 1920s, there was knowledge of Second Viennese School works in South America and East Asia.[176] If such knowledge could reach those places, it is really not surprising that it could reach Aberdeen, Bradford, Hastings and other such places.

The point is that there seem to have been two streams of audience reception of the Second Viennese School in Britain: radio and concert performances. It is not being denied that BBC radio reached large numbers of people in their homes, and it introduced some of these people to Second Viennese School music. Even though there was no doubt some interaction between these two streams, they were mostly independent streams of British reception, each important in its own way. As has been shown, there was a lot of concert organization at least running in parallel to radio reception, not dependent on it. Moreover, we can ask: how much overlap between these streams was there? Can we even assume that most concert goers also listened to the radio concerts?

The problem is that Doctor has generated a narrative highlighting one at the expense of the other, which misrepresents the situation. Against the idea that the audience of concert performances were explained by BBC radio broadcasts, it suffices to point out that

[176] See the articles in *Cambridge Companion to Serialism*, edited by Mark Iddon, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023, especially the articles "Serialism in Latin America", by Björn Heile (pp. 266-277) and "Serialism in East Asia" by Nancy Yunhwa Rao (pp. 278-300).

provincial concert programming of Second Viennese School works predated the BBC; it continued during it; and it persisted after the Second Viennese School fell out of favour with the BBC.

There is another question, which we can explore without making value judgements, about the characteristics of each listening. One point is epistemological. Who knows what radio listeners thought? It is hard to know what many people listening in thought of the radio broadcasts. Any evidence is likely to be highly anecdotal and not such that generalization can be drawn from them. By contrast, concert reception can be gauged, as indeed, it is one job of reviewers to gauge the audience's mood. Concert audiences, as we will see in the next section, show some evidence of being quite independent-minded and open-minded. By contrast, we do not know the attitudes of the radio listening audience (although letters to the Radio Times tell us something.[177])

What we may reasonably assume is that attending a concert demonstrates a commitment to music, generally, and to a particular program, that would rarely be present in a radio listener. One votes with one's feet in attending a concert, and less so by switching on the radio and turning the tuning dial—far less is at stake in the latter activity. By contrast, there is a very conscious choice to attend a live concert, usually because of its programme or the performers. The positive interest is reflected in a considerable investment of time and money, unlike dialling in on the radio for some of a broadcast concert, perhaps while doing something else.

Another point is that as far as the program is concerned, radio allows little feedback to programmers; the concert is delivered on a plate over the radio and all the public can do is change the radio program or switch off the radio. Apart from writing to newspapers, radio audiences are comparatively powerless. By contrast concert audiences have muscle with respect to concert organizers. In this respect, radio is a comparatively passive audience medium.[178] When the Bradford Music Club, for example, put on a work by Webern, they knew that they had a sympathetic concert-going audience, and that they did not have to reckon with a hostile audience who would either not attend or express

[177] See David Hendy, *The BBC: A People's History,* London: Profile Books, 2022.

[178] *Theodor* Adorno later complains about the passivity of radio listening in the USA; but, as someone not greatly supportive of democracy, his reasons were rather different. See his "The Radio Symphony", in Richard Leppert, ed., *Theodor W. Adorno: Essays on Music,* Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002.

disapproval if they did. Attending a concert means making a decision. In buying a ticket, one is often voting in favour of the works, or at least one is open-minded, giving them a chance. Another aspect of live concerts is they are also social events. Communities meet there; and friends exchange cultural information and share news and interests with others. In this sense also radio listening is comparatively passive. A stay-at-home listener is unlikely to be socially networked like a live concertgoer.

Apart from this, there is reason to think that the kind of listening of the two audiences was generally different. It is easier to attend carefully at a concert than at home, where there might be children running around, people ringing on the doorbell and other distractions. Of course, it is common to occasionally daydream or even nod off in live concerts. (We have all done it!) Still, the level of concentration and attention is generally likely to be far higher at a live concert. Listening at home was unlikely to be dedicated time sitting listening to music, but probably doing something else at the same time, or at least overcoming distraction. This is not to say that there is anything wrong with that kind of listening. At any rate, the reception of Second Viennese School works in these two streams generally involves a different kind of listening by each audience.

§6. Closing Remarks

A common view of the propagation of Schoenberg and other Second Viennese School works in Britain was that they were performed by the established institutions, like the BBC, and mainly in London. As has been argued in this chapter, the real situation was more complicated. This is not to deny that the BBC played *an* important role in the British reception of the Second Viennese School. They did bring these works to many listeners over the airwaves. The point is just that the role of the BBC can be over-emphasized. It was certainly not the sole determining factor, and it was unlikely to be even the most significant factor in propagating Second Viennese School works in Britain. The British reception was certainly not "almost entirely dependent" on the BBC as Doctor says. This is obvious when we consider performances of Second Viennese School works that took place all over Britain (which were quite generously received). We may conclude that a BBC-centric and London-centric narrative is misleading. Our view of Schoenberg's reception in

Britain changes when we consider the many concerts in the provinces that were arranged by independent institutions.

Chapter 4

Audience Reception of Second Viennese School Concerts from 1912 to 1949

There is a reason to believe there was a relatively sophisticated British concert-going public in the 1930s who appreciated the Second Viennese School. This public is written out of a narrative that makes the activities of the BBC central, and also a narrative according to which a sophisticated London musical artworld took the music to the rest of the more backwards people in the provinces, an essentially passive but perhaps grateful provincial audience.

Some reviews at the time did credit a dominant role for the BBC in the reception of the Second Viennese School.[179] However, the reviews we examined suggest that the audience had its own taste, which means that the BBC can be given too much credit for bringing something completely new to the country. There had to be a *demand* for the new music, especially if it was being played outside London. In fact, there was a pre-existing wide-spread curiosity about new music. The performances of the Second Viennese School were not concentrated in the South-East. New performances occurred in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bradford, Hastings and many other parts of the country. The idea that it was Clark and his associates who were the dominant factor responsible for bringing Viennese modernism to the attention of the British public is a misrepresentation. The reviews indicate audience appreciation, which make it likely that there was a demand that was independent of the BBC, rather than there being a handful of individuals who were changing public taste. Public taste, often provincial public taste, was a force in itself. Moreover, sometimes the public taste was ahead of the critic's taste. There is no denying that *some* of the positive reception of the Second Viennese School works and style in

[179] Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936 Shaping a Nation's Tastes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999. Doctor also writes: "[The BBC's"] cultural-expansionist approach to broadcasting played a *vital* role in shaping the British public's musical taste" (my emphasis), *ibid.*, p. 334.

Britain was due to the BBC. However, it was also essential that there was a curious and open-minded audience. This audience was by and large ready to accept new music. The audience was often quite positive, but not always the critics. Above all, the audience does not appear to be docile and passive.

§1. Evidence From Critics About Concert Audiences' Reactions

What are our sources of evidence concerning the British public's responses to performances of Second Viennese School works in the first half of the twentieth century?

The first source of evidence examined here will be what critics say about audiences in their newspaper reviews. We will then turn more briefly to look at some statements by composers and a private diarist. Newspaper reviews typically cover both the performance of a work as well as audience reactions. Of special interest to us in the case of Schoenberg is where we find critics asserting or revealing a difference between critics and audiences in their experience and evaluation of the works. The first two reviews are of this kind.

In a review for the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* of a performance of Berg's *Lyric Suite* played by the Pro Arte String Quartet in 1934, Scottish critic George Rowntree Harvey[180] wrote:

> The composer of the Lyrische Suite goes to great trouble, and with abundant evidence of gifts, to make every sound we have previously thought ugly and unmusical and to imitate the sounds of objects we shut our windows to escape. The Allegro Misterioso – diabolically clever – was like tin cans swinging in a deserted castle hall or the Timmer Market heard through a sealed window. … The audience applauded, but that was, possibly, for the Quartet's clever work, above and below the bridge.[181]

This grudging review describes the sonic texture of the music in unappealing terms, but nevertheless grants "abundant … gifts" and "diabolical cleverness" to the composer. The reviewer notes the applause, but attributes to the audience an appreciation of the

[180] George Rowntree Harvey was a Scottish actor, music and drama critic, and a broadcaster at 2BD (BBC's Aberdeen station, which ran from 1923 to 1932).
[181] G. R. Harvey, "Mozart to Alban Berg. Aberdeen Chamber Music Club's Mixed Evening", *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 23 November 1934.

performance not the work. His speculation about the object of the audience's applause is presumably coloured by his negative view of the work. If he did not like the work, the audience cannot have liked it. So, the applause must be directed to something other than the work. However, applause is typically directed to both work and performance—to the performance of the work. And we have no reason to think otherwise in this case, despite what the bad-tempered critic says.

In the *Birmingham Gazette*, 1933 there is an anonymous review by 'D.M.F.' of a concert that included Webern's Symphony op. 21, played by Birmingham City Orchestra, conducted by Leslie Heward:

> It is absurd to be prejudiced against "modern" music as such (another Birmingham failing!), but it would be far more absurd to let modern musicians get away with such thin-spun nonsense as the Webern Sinfonie. Not only has it no recognizable harmonic or contrapuntal structure, but it is totally lacking in thematic interest. Without wishing to insult the animal kingdom, I can only compare Webern's so-called progressions with the last convulsive wriggles of a half-drowned spider. And the reception? Just the usual whispers and giggles, followed by feeble clapping of the hands. Nobody hissed or threw things at Mr. Leslie Heward. I am glad for the latter's sake, but sorry for the sake of Birmingham's artistic vitality.[182]

This very negative reviewer begins by saying he is not against 'modern' music as such, but then proceeds to complain about the work's failure to embody traditional musical characteristics. One wonders what the anonymous reviewer includes under "modern". When he turns to the audience, it is criticized for being too open minded. If they had had 'artistic vitality', the critic thinks that they would be hissing and throwing things. Instead, the audience did not reject it; they seem rather neutral ("the audience applauded", "feeble clapping of the hands"), but what is interesting and clear is that the audience accepted the music to a degree, more than the reviewer would have liked. He grudgingly has to record the applause. Here a discrepancy of audience and critical appreciation is revealed.

Some other quite negative critical responses record unambiguously positive audience reactions, and sometimes critics notice their distance from the audience. One

[182] D. M. F., "Still Living in the 1860's. Birmingham and Musical Appreciation", *Birmingham Gazette*, 17 February 1933, p. 7.

recent writer who draws attention to this disconnection in Britain between some critics and audiences for the music of the Second Viennese School is Bojan Bujić. After citing the Marya Freund and Louis Fleury's very positive descriptions of audience reactions to a performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* in November 1923 in London,[183] Bujić writes:

> Although Freund and Fleury's impression of the public was so positive, the London critics, unaware of the aesthetic parameters of German expressionism, appeared baffled by the work.[184]

Here Bujić highlights exactly the divergence between critics and audiences that we have noticed. One critic, in particular, evidently provoked Bujić–Cecil Gray, who wrote a critical study of Schoenberg in 1922 in *Music and Letters*, and then a review of *Pierrot Lunaire* ten years later, in the *Musical Times.*[185] Bujić writes damningly of the former piece:

> Purporting to be a critical evaluation of Schoenberg, Gray's essay was the typically confused reaction of an insular Englishman; he appeared to be unaware of Modernist tendencies in European music and, in common with many other English music critics of the time, he preferred witty turns of phrase to any penetrating critical judgement.[186]

Bujić's "insular Englishman" are English critics; he also thinks that many English audience reactions were positive. The unfortunate insularity just seems typically to afflict some uninformed and closed-minded critics of the time, by contrast with the enthusiastic audiences described by Freund and Fleury. While there is no doubt some "insular Englishmen", we have seen that not all English critics were closed-minded in a way that put them at odds with the audiences at the concerts they were reviewing.

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[183] Marya Freund, letter to Schoenberg, 29 November 1923, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Arnold Schoenberg Collection 13/30: Arnold Schoenberg Centre, ID 10734; Louis Fleury, "About 'Pierrot Lunaire': The Impressions Made on Various Audiences by a Novel Work", *Music and Letters* 5/4, 1924, pp. 347-56.
[184] Bojan Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship*, London: Plumbago, 2020, p. 99.
[185] Cecil Gray, "Arnold Schoenberg: A Critical Study", *Music and Letters* 3/1, 1922, pp. 73-89; Cecil Gray, "Pierrot Lunaire", *Musical Times* 970/64, 1932, p. 865.
[186] Bojan Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship*, London: Plumbago, 2020, p. 95.

A case in point is generous review in *The Sunday Times* of the first performance of Webern's *Passacaglia* in 1931 at the BBC Proms, which had been launched in 1927. "J.A.F." writes:

> The great British public, so often belittled in its critical faculties, listened with that polite interest, so characteristic of London audiences, and at the finish applauded most politely.
>
> It was a Saturday night audience. The Queen's Hall was packed, even to the platform and the corridors, and Saturday night audiences are critical, as for that, all "Prom" audiences know what they like, and are not, as a rule, far off the mark. Perhaps Webern and his "Passacaglia" were a bit over their heads, but I do not believe it[187].

The audience is said only to applaud "politely", even though it is critical. This suggests guarded but not wholehearted appreciation, not rejection. Certainly, it is tolerant. They are also described as "knowing what they like", that is, having their own taste. The hall was particularly crowded, but it was Henry Wood conducting, and the program included many popular works, so, we cannot infer that the audience was there for the Webern piece. But the piece was not rejected by the audience,

Other critics record unambiguously enthusiastic audiences. *The Scotsman* critic reviewed the performance of Webern's Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5, played by the Kolisch Quartet in 1935 in Edinburgh:

> Music does not stand still; there is continual progress, and it was profitable to have an introduction, at last night's concert of the Edinburgh Music Club, to the work of such a modern as Anton von Webern. … Prepared, thus, to catch a very fleeting impression, there was much to arrest attention in last night's delicate little impressions, beautifully played by the Kolisch Quartet. What a mediocre quartet might have made of them baffles conjecture, but as they were played last night, they

[187] J. A. F., "Webern at the "Proms". First Performance of "Passacaglia"", *The Sunday Times*, 23 August 1931, p. 10.

> were fascinating, even if highly unusual, and the audience was enthusiastic beyond expectation.[188]

This is a very positive review, of both work and performance. Furthermore, what is "modern" or at least musical "progress", are invoked in a positive way, unlike in the *Birmingham Gazette* review. Who had the "expectations" is unclear—presumably either the critic's or the audience's expectations. Either way, the appreciation seems to have been a spontaneous audience response to an impressive performance.

Another record of positive audience reaction can be found in a review by Edwin Evans in the *Daily Mail* about the 1934 Queen's Hall performance of *Wozzeck.* The large audience in the hall clearly liked it, as he reports:

> … as the work proceeded the tension increased, and long before the catastrophe was reached it was plain the music had gripped the audience, whatever effect it may have on that larger audience listening in.[189]

This is an unequivocal description of a positive audience. Being "gripped" means at least that their attention was caught, and that they found the music compelling. Evans also makes an important point (mentioned in the previous chapter), which is that the effect on radio listeners is hard to know. By contrast, the audience reception at a live concert is knowable because their appreciation can be seen and heard. Of course, radio broadcasts reached more people, but who knows what the radio-listening public thought of the music, for the most part. Even if there were private diaries or letters recording what some people thought, these would only be anecdotal, with no reason to take them to be indicative of the bulk of the listeners.[190] By contrast, an observer, such as a critic, can get a sense of an

[188] "Edinburgh Music Club. Beethoven, Webern, Debussy. The Kolisch Quartet", *The Scotsman*, 20 November 1935, p. 12. It is not quite clear whose 'expectations' are in question—those of the critics or those of the audience.

[189] Evans, Edwin, "Alban Berg's "Wozzeck". Last Night's Performance. Audience Thrilled", *Daily Mail*, (London, England), 15 March 1934, p. 17.

[190] Benjamin Britten listened to a broadcast of the entire opera. In his diary of 14 March 1934, he writes: "Listen to broadcast of concert performance of Wozzeck (1st in England) from Q.H. – by B.B.C. orch & Adrian Boult with Bitterauf as Wozzeck (superb) & Marie (seemed excellent) & a large & efficient cast. It wasn't very satisfactory as a broadcast – voices too loud, & blurring. Only the third Act (& bits of second) were intelligible. The music of this is extraordinarily striking without the action, while that of the first isn't – except for the exciting march & beautiful little lullaby. The hand of Tristan is over a lot of the intense emotion, but

audience's response, and, moreover, that is something critics attend to and are attuned to as part of their job.

Thus far, we have looked at evidence from critics about audiences' reactions. Other evidence can be gleaned from composers. The composer Ethel Smyth, writing in *The Suffragette* in 1913, records "an ovation" at the first performance of "Gurre-Lieder".[191] Much later, the British composer Elisabeth Lutyens wrote as follows about a performance of Webern's Cantata *Das Augenlicht* on 17 June 1938, at the ISCM at the Queen's Hall, under Hermann Scherchen, with the BBC Chorus and Orchestra:

> Thank goodness I have no memory of the programme note as being in today's jargon of technical obfuscation. The crowded public in the Queen's Hall were allowed, without the bewildering aid of critical blue-print, to listen. The work was received with bated breath and obvious emotion, the audience standing and cheering for minutes afterwards. It was an unforgettable experience ….[192]

Lutyens is a partisan enthusiast writing a long time after the event. However, even if she is exaggerating, the positive response is clear in addition to her verdict. So, two composers record positive audience reaction.

In case it is thought that we draw too much on the word of music professionals, the private diary of Lionel James Herbert Bradley (1898 - 1953) confirms much of the above.[193] Bradley was a librarian and musicologist, who attended concerts for many years and wrote detailed reports about each of them in documents he called 'bulletins'. Bradley regularly attended concerts not only in London, but also the Oxford Music Club, and in other places that were member's concerts or invitation concerts, such as in Manchester

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Berg emerges a definite personality." *Journeying Boy: The Diaries of the Young Benjamin Britten, 1928-1938.* John Evans (ed.), London: Faber & Faber, 2009, p. 202. However, one can hardly take Britten to be representative of the average listener.

[191] Ethel Smyth, "First Performance of Arnold Schönberg's 'Gurre-Lieder'", *The Suffragette*, March 14, 1913, p. 345.

[192] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, London: J.M. Cassell, 1972, p. 76.

[193] Lionel Bradley Collection, Royal College of Music, MS 10114 - MS 10332. See also a doctoral thesis by Kerri-Anne Edinburgh, *A Study of Experience of Listening to Music in World War Two Britain*, The Open University, Department of Music, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, June, 2018. As noted by Kerri-Anne Edinburgh, Bradley's so-called "... bulletins portray a willingness to experience contemporary, often modernist, music." p. 105.

Memorial Hall and Liverpool, among other places. Bradley both liked Schoenberg's works, finding them beautiful, as well as recording enthusiastic audiences. He writes on 24 May 1938 that Schoenberg's Quartet no. 4, "…had passages of real beauty" and that Webern's Six Bagatelles (opus 9) "have a beauty, all their own". Furthermore, he describes the audience's reaction: "The Kolisch Quartet played superbly & had a great ovation. After frenzied applause they came back to give us an encore and played a movement of Berg's Lyric Suite which after what had gone before sounded more lyrical than usual."[194] Likewise, of a performance of Berg's Lyric Suite on 13 February 1939, also by Kolisch Quartet, he writes: "There was great enthusiasm at the end to which they responded with an encore".[195] And of *Pierrot Lunaire*, in 1942, he writes: "I was surprised to find greeted so warmly" [196] Note that these concerts were not arranged by the BBC, and many of the concerts were put on by private music clubs. It was a different era for concert going.

We have accumulated evidence pointing in the direction of a degree of positive audience reaction that sometimes comes apart from critic's reactions. Further evidence from reviews will be offered below when looking at critics who contrast British with other audience reception.

§2. Characteristics of the Audiences

Musical culture in the early twentieth century was not isolated from other cultural activities. Our knowledge of *non*-musical culture in these times tells us that there was quite sophisticated culture-consuming public, and it is this same public who would have been the bulk of the audience at musical concerts. This audience definitely had something of an openness to the new and the foreign. The audiences at musical concerts may well have been quite internationalist in orientation. One might also suspect that this public tended to be left-leaning politically, especially in the light of recent events in Europe, and they may

[194] All quotations from 24 May 1938, Cowdray Hall, London Contemporary Music Centre, Kolisch Quartet.
[195] 13 February 1939, Wigmore Hall, Monday Pop, Haydn Quartet in B flat Op. 76 No. 4, Berg Lyric Suite, Kolisch Quartet.

[196] 26 June 1942, Aeolian Hall, *Pierrot Lunaire*.

have been inclined to sympathize with styles of art that were under attack in the new rising fascist states.

It is true that Picasso was for a long time not much appreciated by the London public. His 1921 London show was a financial failure. And his London shows in the 1930s and 1940s did not do much better.[197] By contrast, Matisse was very popular.[198] There was also an audience for non-European art. An exhibition of Persian art in 1931 at Burlington House in London[199] and a major exhibition of Chinese art at Burlington House from November 1935 to March 1935 were very popular. As noted by Jason Steuber, the exhibition was extraordinarily well received and attended, attracting a total of 401,768 visitors.[200] The Japanese Kimono became a fashion craze in the 1920s. There were also balalaika orchestras in many British cities in the early 1900s. An Austrian export to London was an Austrian café, *Fischers*, which opened near Baker Street/Marylebone in about 1935. It is still there. Their clientele surely cannot all have been *émigrés*.

What about the provinces? In 1913, both Burnley Art Gallery and Brighton Art Gallery hosted an exhibition of Modern Norwegian art.[201] In 1923, there was an exhibition of Modern Dutch Art in Glasgow.[202] And in 1938 there was an exhibition of Canadian and German Pictures in Edinburgh [203] So, the evidence points to the fact that there was no general hostility to the new as such, or to what was foreign. It seems that this was no conservative or provincial public.

A particular case yields some concrete evidence. The archives of the Hallé orchestra preserves lists of "members of the Hallé concert society" and lists of the subscribers to the "special guarantee fund".[204] Names do not reveal the type of audience

[197] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, vol 1. London: Pimlico, p. 159.
[198] Matisse's 1920 London exhibition was more critically successful more popular and more financially successful than Picasso's 1921 London exhibition.
[199] Laurence Binyon, "The Glories of Persian Art. Burlington House Exhibition. A Dazzling Array", *The Manchester Guardian*, 7 January 1931, p. 9.
[200] Jason Steuber, "The Exhibition of Chinese Art at Burlington House, London, 1935-36", *The Burlington Magazine*, August 2006, CXLVIII, p. 928.
[201] B.D.T., "Burnley Art Gallery: Modern Norwegian Art", *The Manchester Guardian*, 30 June 1913, p. 6.
[202] "Modern Dutch Art: Exhibition in Glasgow": The *Scotsman*, 25 April 1923, p. 9.
[203] "R.S.W. Exhibition in Edinburgh: Canadian and German Pictures", *The Scotsman*, 5 February 1938, p. 15.
[204] *Halle Concert Society Archives*, season 1931-32.

with certainty. Nonetheless some inferences are suggested by the names. In particular, the 1930 list contained the surnames: Aran, Behrens, Cohen, Frankenburg, Freund, Goldschmit, Hirschberg, Kessler, Levenstein, Mandleburg, Mayer, Quas-Cohen and Warburg. These are very likely Jewish names, either specifically Jewish such as 'Cohen' or Germanic names, probably of German-Jewish or eastern European provenance. During the period 1930-1935, at least ten or fifteen percent of the names on the member's lists had such characteristics. Of course, some with Jewish-sounding names might not be Jewish, and equally, some with non-Jewish-sounding names might be Jewish; but we can assume that these two groups roughly cancel each other out.[205] There was a significant Jewish presence in the audience for modernist works around the country (in particular, in Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow as well as London). Given the political situation in Europe, we might expect such an audience to be sympathetic to well-known composers whose works were discouraged or banned as 'degenerate' under rising fascist regimes. Moreover, this audience would also have had direct family, social and cultural connections to the continental artistic, literary and musical scene. Many of the visiting performers, after all, were Jewish. Recall also those British performers who played Viennese School works, mentioned above: Leonard Hirsch of the Hirsch String Quartet and Louis Cohen of the Merseyside Chamber Orchestra were both Jewish (as is unsurprising given their names).

Whether or not British Jews themselves played a particularly significant role in the reception of the Second Viennese School in Britain, this group were typical of the kind of audience that was a receptive audience for Second Viennese School works. It was these culturally aware middle-classes, sometimes with central-European or eastern-European connections, who were supportive of the new music. The reviews suggest that the taste for the new in music and for foreignness in music, as well as in some other cultural activities, to a significant extent, came from the people, or some of them, from the culture-consuming public: it was not imposed on them by those who 'knew better', such as those who might be characterized as the 'establishment' in the BBC. There was something non-hierarchical about the reception of the Second Viennese School in Britain in the sense that ordinary concert goers were not overly influenced by tastemakers of the musical establishment.

[205] See Barry Kosmin and Stanley Waterman, 'The Use and Misuse of Distinctive Jewish Names in Research on Jewish Populations' Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1985. Http://archive.jpr.org.uk/object-uk327. Accessed 23 December 2021.

A writer who has a very different view of the role of audiences in the reception of the new music is Deborah Heckert.[206] The point of mentioning this is not to draw attention to an implausible view, but to provide an illuminating contrast with what is suggested here. Heckert claims that in the case of post-impressionist modernist visual art, the availability of a *theory* for interpreting it (Roger Fry's formalism) facilitated its acceptance and popularity in Britain in the early years of the twentieth century. Moreover, she claims that there was a carry-over from visual art into music, so that the acceptance of post-impressionist, modernist visual art, facilitated the acceptance of modernist music, which was also facilitated by a music critical discourse of a formalist kind. She asks: "Why did this radical change occur in the London public's attitudes towards Schoenberg's music … in the first years of the twentieth century?"[207] Her answer is that the *critics* changed their minds. But such a grand role for criticism in both visual art and music is rather unlikely. It seems that the public found a beauty in the works of modernist visual art, and the same, as we shall have seen, is true for Schoenberg's works. Consider Cezanne's beautiful and wistful paintings of the French countryside. What the public enjoyed and valued in these works is unlikely to have been what the critics said what was important about them, which was an overly intellectual and rigid awareness of 'significant form'. The critical theory was never a convincing account of the value of these works of visual art, which is among other things a celebration of the French countryside and café life. Moreover, we have seen in this chapter, critics and audiences often diverged over performances of Second Viennese School musical works. It is very unlikely that music audiences' reactions were being led by music critics with elaborate theories explaining the music, to the extent that Heckert claims. Heckert's narrative of a super-fast turnaround in public reactions between 1912 and 1914, all brought about by a handful of music critics, who were adapting what visual art critics were saying, is not supported by the evidence.[208] Even *if* she was right that music critics were influenced by art critics, who used a notion of 'form' to explain and justify works of visual art—something we saw reason to reject in the chapter 1—one cannot read the critic's thoughts into the minds of the wider audience for these works, especially

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[206] Heckert, *op. cit.*
[207] *Ibid*., p. 49.
[208] We should mention also that there is also a large methodological problem with Heckert's essay, which is that she provides no independent evidence of audience responses. She speaks of "critics and audiences" as if they were the same thing.

considering that critics and audiences often diverge. Audiences often have a mind of their own. Critics might regret that, but they do. As has been illustrated in this chapter, audiences were often ahead of critics in their openness to the new music. The current of appreciation by music audiences up and down the country was not passively led by critics who attempted to explain the works any more than they were led by BBC programmers.[209]

§3. Compare and Contrast: The United States; Germany and Austria; Paris

Lastly, let us pursue some comparisons with concert audience reception in other countries with the aim of highlighting what was characteristic of the British concert audience reception. We will look, first, at Second Viennese School reception in the United States; second, at the reception in Austria and Germany; third, at the reception in Paris. Then, fourth, we consider the reception of other non-Second Viennese School modernist music in Britain to see if there were similarities with the reception of the Second Viennese School. This is an incomplete range of comparisons. In fact, the Second Viennese School made an impact as early as the 1920s in the Far East and in South America, for example. Nevertheless, much can be learned from the limited comparisons undertaken here.

Let us begin with Schoenberg's reception in the United States, which was in fact not so different from his British reception. Between 1907 and 1912 British music lovers attained first impressions of Schoenberg's music by way of correspondents' reports mainly from Austria and Germany. This is also true of Schoenberg's reception in the United States. According to Sabine Feisst "between 1907 and 1913 American music lovers attained a first impression of his music by way of journalistic reports from Europe."[210] It is significant that Ernest Newman was not only a British music critic but also a contributor to the *Boston Evening Transcript*. It is striking that the very first British Schoenberg performances were given by performers from the United States before they played it in their homeland. American pianist Richard Buhlig, who premiered the *Three Piano Pieces*, op. 11 in the Steinway Hall, London in 1912, "was recognised as being one of the first

[209] Notice also the importance Heckert places on the *London* public, the importance of which is also contestable.

[210] Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 15.

Americans to perform Schoenberg".[211] This event of 23 January 1912, was the very first Schoenberg to be heard in Britain, [212] whereas the very first Schoenberg performance in the United States took place on 23 October 1913. The baritone Reinald Werrenrath performed three early tonal songs, "Dank", "Wie Georg von Frundsberg", and "Warnung", from opp. 1 (1898) and 3 (1899-1903) at a concert in New York.[213] Likewise, the United States-based Flonzaley Quartet gave the first British performance of Schoenberg's String Quartet no. 1, op. 7 on 1 November 1913 at the Bechstein Hall in London. In 1914, the Flonzaleys gave the work's United States premieres in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia. This suggest that many musicians were enthusiastic about Schoenberg's work.

In October 1913, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Frederick Stock gave the United States premiere of Five Orchestral Pieces (the two concerts were sold out). Eric Delamarter reviewed the concert. He mentions applause, but describes it as "sarcastic", and mentions laughter, before directly describing the concert-going public in disapproving terms. However, he also records "astonishment, interest, fascination, and applause", and says: "This public lusts after novelties like a baby crying for a lighted match, and, getting it, has only its incredulity to blame".[214] So, there is at least a partly appreciative audience, which the critic disapproves of. Delamarter's own view is negative, but he reports the audience as being open to ("lusting after") novelty, although for him that is just because they are credulous. At any rate, it seems that the United States situation was not so different from the British one, with moderately open-minded audiences and less open-minded critics.

The reception of the new music in both these countries stands in marked contrast with the German and Austrian reception. In Germany and Austria there were riots. One reviewer describes a concert in Vienna as follows:

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[211] Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, p. 36.

[212] This concert was awkwardly reviewed by *The Times* critic, who wrote "… there was hardly a bar which did not sound affected and certainly not one which was not ugly. It only made one regret that Mr. Buhlig should be wasting his fine and delicate time over it." See "Mr. Buhlig's Recital", *The Times*, 24 January 1912, p. 10.

[213] See Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, p. 20.

[214] Eric Delamarter, "This Schoenberg Music", *The Inter Ocean* (Chicago, Illinois), Sat., 1 November 1913, p. 6 Quoted and discussed in Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, p. 18.

> Schoenberg's "Kammersymphonie"… was greeted by the opposition with hoots, jeers and cat-calls. Blows were exchanged in the gallery, and the police had to intervene.

Schoenberg, from his conductor's stand, then pleaded with the audience to be quiet, after which:

> …there broke out a wilder tumult than ever before, and the concert hall presented an extraordinary spectacle of shouting and gesticulating humanity.

Then, after an official from the society organizing the concert shouted from a box:

> Some of the demonstrators were ejected, but it was no easy matter to get them outside, for every vestige of order had vanished. Those in the front seats were fighting to reach the back of the hall, and those in the back were struggling forward. The frenzy spread to the orchestra, the members of which rose in their places and carried on an excited discussion with those members of the audience nearest them.[215]

There were similar scenes at German performances (see the reports below by Marya Freund and Richard Capell). That there was nothing similar in Britain cannot be simply explained as due to different national temperaments. It is true that a portion of the British audience was hostile; there were those who hissed and expressed dislike in other ways. But a significant portion was, if not positively in favour, at least guardedly open-minded. No wonder Schoenberg undertook to conduct his own music in a London concert hall on the explicit condition that the audience listen to that music in silence.[216] However, Schoenberg was pleasantly surprised by the British reception by contrast with what he was used to. (See further below in section 4 of this chapter.)

Many performers at the time explicitly contrast the British reception to the Austrian and German reception. Marya Freund (who sang in the British Premiere of *Pierrot Lunaire*) wrote:

> I cannot thank my London audiences too warmly for their courtesy. … Whatever they might think of Schoenberg – and London does not yet know him well

[215] "Concert Uproar. Arnold Schonberg and His Audience. Amazing Scenes", *The Globe*, 5 April 1913, p. 10.

[216] "Arnold Schönberg at Queen's Hall", *The Globe* (London, England), 19 January 1914, p. 4.

> enough to appreciate his greatness, his towering greatness over all other living composers – they did listen. What a contrast to other Schoenberg concerts! … I recall Schoenberg concerts at Vienna which have been again and again stopped for 10 minutes at a time on account of the catcalls, the fights among different sections of the audience, and the breaking up of furniture. I was at the first performance of 'Pierrot Lunaire' in Berlin in 1912. It began with 300 people in the hall. It ended with 5, including myself. And the 295 had not gone out quietly.[217]

And Richard Capell wrote:

> … in 1914, we had welcomed the composer of the orchestral pieces, op. 16 … Welcomed? Yes, comparatively speaking. Schoenberg's German audiences at that time were riotously breaking up the concert-room furniture. At any rate, the Queen's Hall in 1914 remained polite, if sceptical: no actual missiles were thrown. … What tempest was it in about 1910 that blew out the stained-glass windows and strewed the pavement with their glittering, puzzling fragments – the incoherencies of Schoenberg's op. 11?[218]

Both authors make a direct contrast between British audience reception and German and Austrian audience reception. Some of the contrast may be due to a polite British temperament; but not all.[219] Almost all of the concert goers in Vienna, as Freund recounts, not only disliked the music but expressed that dislike both by exiting during the performance and by doing so noisily. Above all they did not listen, which is perhaps the most important contrast with the British audiences. As we saw previously, at least a significant proportion of the audiences were positive, expressing that in sometime enthusiastic applause. It is, I suppose, possible that some might have been politely gritting their teeth at something they detested. Nevertheless, clearly many were

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[217] "Concert-Room Fights. Schönberg Singer's Troubles. Praise for London Audiences", *The Daily Mail*, 23 November 1923, p. 14.
[218] R. C. [Richard Capell], "Arnold Schönberg in London. The Metamorphosis of a Swan", *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 February 1933, p. 15.
[219] One critic writes that Schoenberg "need have had no fears as to the reception of his famous "Five Pieces for Orchestra" at Saturday's Symphony Concert. Though proverbially cold, the London public is not ill-mannered in its attitude to novelties, even when it has no notion of what to expect …" See "Arnold Schönberg at Queen's Hall", *The Globe* (London, England), 19 January 1914, p. 4.

listening in at least an open-minded way and reserving judgement, at least remaining open to a new experience, rather than storming out noisily. They were not rushing to judge, as in some other nations.

For a different contrast with the British reception, we can turn to Paris. Egon Wellesz reports riots in a letter to Schoenberg after a performance of the *Five Pieces for Orchestra* (*Fünf Orchesterstücke*) in Paris in 1922:

> The orchestral pieces were also a great success, despite the fierce fights that followed the performance, or perhaps because of them. A large number of critics supported the work with unprecedented enthusiasm, especially Florent Schmitt[220], who was led out of the hall bleeding profusely because he was punched in the nose by a gentleman whom he had confronted about his oppositional attitude.[221]

It seems to have been a polarized reception. By contrast, only two years later in London, the audience for *Pierrot Lunaire* seems to have been more predominantly positive. In a letter to Schoenberg describing a London performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* in November 1924, the pianist Marya Freund writes:

> You would have been satisfied with *Pierrot* (in French). The impression on the audience was strong. Deep silence between the individual numbers and loud applause at the end of each part. Quite different from Paris or Brussels. No whistling, no dissenting voices.[222]

This makes a direct contrast between Paris and London. By 1939, Paris seems to have lost interest in Schoenberg. Boris de Schœzer wrote:

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[220] Florent Schmitt (1870-1958) was a French composer; he belonged to the group known as *Les Apaches*.

[221] *Auch die Orchesterstücke waren ein großer Erfolg, trotz der heftigen Kämpfe, die sich an die Aufführung anschlossen, oder vielleicht gerade deswegen. Denn ein großer Teil der Kritiker hat sich in unerhört begeisterter Weise für das Werk eingesetzt besonders Florent Schmitt, der heftig blutend aus dem Saal geführt wurde, weil er einen Faustschlag in die Nase von einem Herren bekam, den er wegen seiner oppositionellen Haltung zur Rede stellte.*
Egon Wellesz. Handwritten letter to Arnold Schoenberg of 1922 May 17 (in German). Arnold Schönberg Center. Letter ID: 21740.

[222] Quoted by Bojan Bujić in *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship*, London: Plumbago, 2020, p. 96.

> Schoenberg's situation in Paris is most curious. The general public ignores Schoenberg, as do many other contemporary composers, moreover, and there is nothing surprising about this. What is much more serious is that the musical *milieux* also simply ignore him, all while recognising the importance of his work, the essential role played by the Austrian master in the development of music, the extent of the influence he has exerted in the post-war period. … In these conditions the première of a work, which is as representative of Schoenberg's current style as the *4th Quartet* (by the Kolisch Quartet, at the Société nationale), should have been regarded as a great musical event. Well, no! to read the criticism one would not even guess that anything important had happened: some remained silent, others contented themselves with a simple 'acknowledgement of receipt', or else performed some easy variations on the well-known theme: 'we Latins…'[223]

There seems to be neither hostility nor interest, merely a cool indifference, again which contrasts with a warmer or at least more open British reception that was more sustained at the time after the initial impact.

We have looked at only Britain, France, Austria and the USA and, apart from Britain, not in much detail. However, it suffices to put paid to some simplistic generalizations about audience reception. An example of someone who fails to recognise the diversity of the reception of Second Viennese School music in different countries, and thus makes overly generalised statements about audience reception, is Leon Botstein. He writes in an undiscriminating way:

> …perhaps audiences have been right all along. Abstract, inaccessible, unfriendly, harsh, hard to follow, dense, even boring are still the adjectives applied by most concert-goers to Arnold Schoenberg's music.

And he talks of

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[223] 'La situation de Schoenberg à Paris est des plus curieuses. Le grand public ignore Schoenberg, comme bien d'autres compositeurs contemporains du reste, et il n'y a rien d'étonnant à cela. Ce qui est beaucoup plus grave c'est que les milieux musicaux l'ignorent aussi en somme, ….' Boris de Schlœzer, 'Réflexions sur la musique: "Le jugement musical"', in *Comprendre la musique, contributions à La Nouvelle Revue Française et à la Revue musicale (1921-1956)*, Ed. Timothée Picard, Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011, p. 129.

> …the failure of Schoenberg's modernism to gain any audience beyond its own elite of admirers …[224]

But Botstein's claim (for which he produces no evidence) is to be an overly general one. Whatever the situation in Germany and Austria, as far as the United States and Britain goes, the evidence adduced here shows that Botstein's over-general assertion is more than little inaccurate. Many in Britain did not rush to condemn, as Botstein thinks they did. What may be true is that reactions were polarised, which means that many were positive or at least cautiously positive. There is just no such undifferentiated thing as 'Schoenberg reception'.

§4. Closing Remarks

It is only fair to record the views of Schoenberg himself. He concludes his essay "My public" (1930):

> But whether I am really so unacceptable to the public as the expert judges always assert, and whether it is really so scared of my music – that often seems to me highly doubtful.[225]

This is surely accurate at least as far as Britain is concerned, and in his attitude to the public, Schoenberg contrasts with other modernist icons, who seem to take pride in being inaccessible and obscure. (Perhaps an example would be the poetry of Edith Sitwell, at least she was often perceived in this way[226].) This was not Schoenberg's attitude. Furthermore, of his reception in Britain Schoenberg said this:

> … I admire the English audiences—they are receptive and appreciative.[227]

[224] Leon Botstein, "Schoenberg and the Audience: Modernism, Music, and Politics in the Twentieth Century", in *Schoenberg and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 19-21.
[225] *Schönberg*: *Style and Idea*, University of California Press, p. 99. Original date of publication 1930.
[226] See Richard Greene, *Edith Sitwell,* London: Virago, 2012.
[227]Quoted in: the *Northhampton Chronical*, 10 January 1931, p.1; *Nottingham Evening Post,* 10 January 1931, p. 5; *Lancashire Evening Post*, 10 January 1931, p. 4; *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 23 January 1931, p. 11.

He is not just talking about critics, or about the elites in the world of music in London, but about ordinary concert-goers throughout England.[228] Schoenberg's own views, then, are very much in line with the findings of this chapter. Many seem to imagine Schoenberg as a lonely elitist, whose music was unpopular. But our view of Schoenberg's reception in Britain changes when we consider the evidence for some positive audience's interest at these concerts all over Britain, albeit alongside some resistance and rejection.

[228] In 1937, Schönberg uses the word "audience" to refer to both professional critics and non-critical attendees of concerts, those who might fight "with their fists not their pens", see "How One Becomes Lonely", *Schönberg*: *Style and Idea*, University of California Press, 60th Anniversary Edition, 2010, p. 36.

Chapter 5

Émigré Musicians and the Second Viennese School in Britain

The central aim of this chapter is to achieve a better understanding of the specifically Austrian and German Jewish contribution to British musical culture during the 1930s and 1940s. It focuses on the so-called 'Second Viennese School' that surrounded Arnold Schoenberg as it landed in a new country, and it seeks to explain how Austrian-Jewish *émigrés* overcame considerable suspicion of the foreign and new in music so as to have a profound effect on musical culture in Britain. This happened as a result of a number of factors working together in a way that would have been inconceivable in Vienna itself. British musical culture was more open to innovation, particularly to the recent works of the Second Viennese School.

§1. General Introduction

During the 1930's, Jewish *émigré* musicians from the First Republic of Austria and then, after 1938, from the so-called *Ostmark* of the German *Reich*, were a significant factor in moving British musical culture into a new modern era. Britain took in around 100,000 refugees from the expanded Third Reich. Following the Austrian annexation in 1938, Britain did not make it easy for Jewish refugees, by insisting they obtain entry visas prior to their departure. The result was that more middle-class Jews arrived from Austria than from other countries. They were the cultural elite of Vienna, even though in Britain many of them were working as domestics (gardeners, nannies, cooks, housekeepers, etc.),

These *émigrés* had an impact on music in Britain, that is, in what was dubbed "the land without music".[229] In particular, they succeeded in strengthening the Schoenbergian

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[229] In Munich 1914, Oscar Schmitz published a polemic about England: *Das Land ohne Musik*, which despite the title said little about music.

tradition in Britain that felt alien to some more conservative-minded Britons. Jewish musicians from other European countries also carved out their own trajectories in Britain. Many of these musicians composed and performed music of a more traditional style. Nevertheless, there is something particularly interesting in the way the Austrian musical *émigrés* nurtured the new music of Vienna in the rather different context of Britain.[230]

§2. Musicians and Composers

The rise of Nazism and its aftermath led to a wave of German speaking musicians and composers, many of them Jewish, who were seeking escape to Britain during the 1930s and 1940s because of persecution in their home countries. Among them were composers and performers as well as publishers, and musicologists, who ended up living and working in Britain. Many Austrian musicians arrived in Britain in 1938: for example, Hans Gál, Joseph Horovitz, Egon Wellesz, Arthur Willner, three members of Amadeus Quartet, Helene Isepp, Hans Keller, Peter Stadlen, Erwin Stein, Ernst Roth; and also during the next wave in 1939, Karl Rankl, Leopold Spinner, Paul Hamburger, and many others.[231]

Émigré musicians had a significant and lasting influence on musical development in Britain. Rudolf Bing helped to establish Glyndebourne and the Edinburgh International festival. The prominent composers and musicians Leopold Spinner, Hans Gál, Erwin

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[230] An additional factor was that Schoenberg's music seemed particularly intellectual in orientation; indeed, many reviews mention this perceived intellectualism. But this intellectualism conflicted with a traditional British suspicion of intellectualism. For some background, see Walter E. Houghton, "Victorian Anti-Intellectualism*", Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 1952, pp. 291-313. In general, there was a somewhat generalised difference between British and continental attitudes to intellectual matters, which was amusingly described by the Hungarian *émigré* George Mikes in his well-known 1946 book *How to be an Alien*, where he writes: "In England it is bad manners to be clever or proud of your intelligence. Perhaps you know that two and two make four, but you must never say that two and two make four" (George Mikes, *How to be an Alien*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1946, pp. 14-15). This attitude is something the devotees of Schoenberg and his tradition had to overcome.

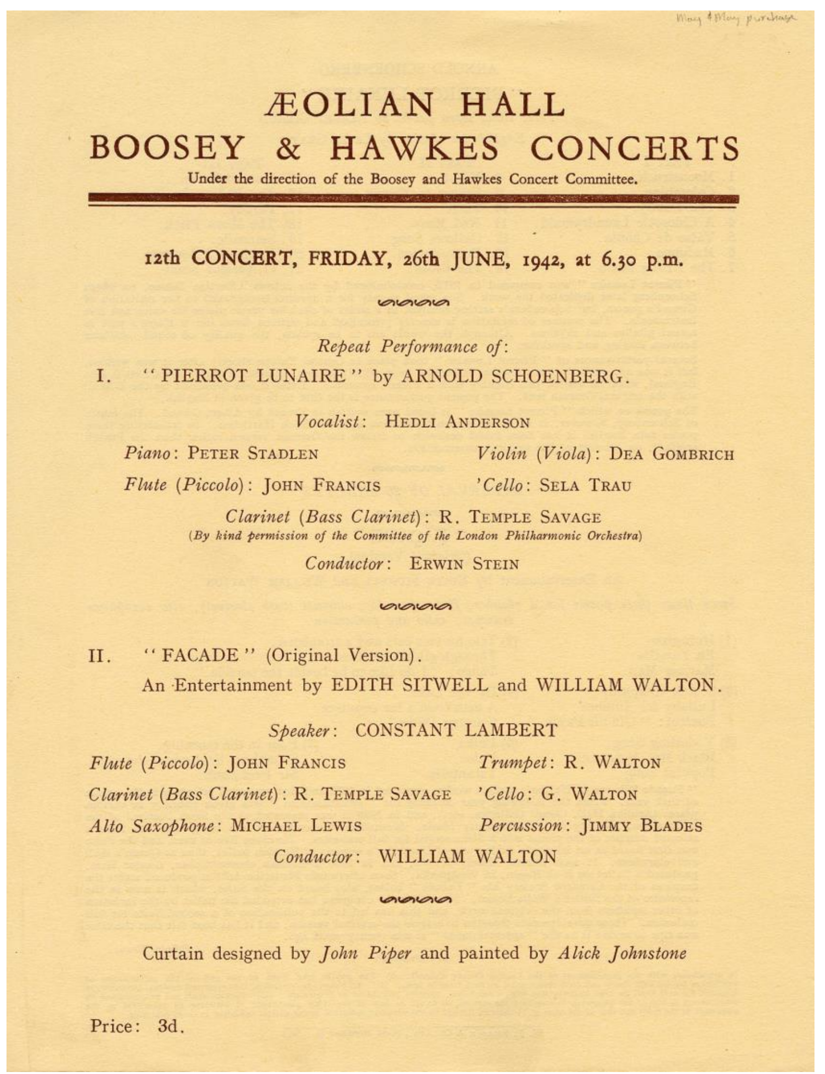
[231] See further Michael Haas, *Forbidden Music: The Jewish Composers Banned by the Nazis,* New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2013; and Stephanie Barron, *Exiles and Émigrés: The Flight of European Artists from Hitler,* Pittsburgh, PA.: Harry N. Abrams, 1997.

Stein, Karl Rankl, Egon Wellesz (all students of Schoenberg or Webern) were all born into Austrian families of Jewish origins, and arrived in Britain as refugees from the Nazis. Most of them actually abandoned composition as a profession in order to make their way in British culture. Egon Wellesz emigrated to the UK in 1938 and settled in Oxford, but he did not compose for five years after arrival. However, they were influential in other ways. Austrian Jewish musicians were enthusiastic and effective promoters of musical modernism in Britain. They had this influence in a variety of ways, including giving lectures and teaching.

The *émigrés* were often spread out in the country, being based in a number of provincial towns. Rankl arrived in Bristol, Spinner spent the war years in Bradford, Wellesz settled in Oxford, and Gerhard in Cambridge. Theodor W. Adorno, a student of Berg left Germany in 1934 and spent four years in Oxford before moving to the USA in 1938. Emile Spira, who studied with Webern in Vienna, fled to England in 1938, and in time stayed at Dartington, and later he was a music teacher at Isleworth Grammar School. They formed a subculture that constituted an interconnected network. This network was all the more influential for being spread out and not concentrated in one city. In this respect there could not have been more of a contrast with the centralised place of Vienna in Austrian musical culture. Structurally, the situations and modes of influence were completely different. The British structures were less centralised in Britain than in Austria, where the capital city, Vienna, played a dominant role. By contrast in Britain there was more of a dispersed interconnected web, spread out throughout the country. Quite often small towns were active, whereas in Austria, by contrast, there was little activity outside the main urban centres. Aspects of this network are described later in this chapter.

What sort of activities were the many composers and musicians who emigrated to Britain, who were strongly associated with Schoenberg's circle, engaged in? Although they performed Schoenberg's music, they also played a role in organising concerts. Music publisher Boosey & Hawkes became a prominent concert organiser, where *émigré* musicians actively played, and where Erwin Stein, one of the first Schoenberg student and enthusiastic collaborator, was working as an editor with a focus on Schoenberg's circle. One of Boosey & Hawkes concerts took place at the Aeolian Hall on 29 May 1942

and was repeated on 26 June 1942, where the first performance in English of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* op. 21 was given. (The English translation by Cecil Gray.)



ÆOLIAN HALL

BOOSEY & HAWKES CONCERTS

Under the direction of the Boosey and Hawkes Concert Committee.

12th CONCERT, FRIDAY, 26th JUNE, 1942, at 6.30 p.m.

Repeat Performance of:

I. "PIERROT LUNAIRE" by ARNOLD SCHOENBERG.

Vocalist: HEDLI ANDERSON

Piano: PETER STADLEN — *Violin (Viola)*: DEA GOMBRICH

Flute (Piccolo): JOHN FRANCIS — *'Cello*: SELA TRAU

Clarinet (Bass Clarinet): R. TEMPLE SAVAGE

(By kind permission of the Committee of the London Philharmonic Orchestra)

Conductor: ERWIN STEIN

II. "FACADE" (Original Version).

An Entertainment by EDITH SITWELL and WILLIAM WALTON.

Speaker: CONSTANT LAMBERT

Flute (Piccolo): JOHN FRANCIS — *Trumpet*: R. WALTON

Clarinet (Bass Clarinet): R. TEMPLE SAVAGE — *'Cello*: G. WALTON

Alto Saxophone: MICHAEL LEWIS — *Percussion*: JIMMY BLADES

Conductor: WILLIAM WALTON

Curtain designed by *John Piper* and painted by *Alick Johnstone*

Price: 3d.

Figure 4. Boosey & Hawkes Concerts Programme. London, 26 June 1942; courtesy of Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien, CP5745.

It is notable that four out of seven performers were Austrian or German *émigré* musicians: Erwin Stein (conductor), Peter Stadlen (piano), Dea Gombrich (violin) and Sela Trau (cello). The other three performers were Hedli Anderson (singer), Richard Temple Savage (clarinet) and John Francis (flute). This suggests a seamless cooperation between *émigrés* and natives focused on a common venture and shared musical values.

Another example of the role of *émigrés* is their networking role. For example, Adorno was responsible for Humphrey Searle's studies with Webern in 1937. Searle was studying for a degree in classics at Oxford, and he could only study music in his spare time. When he had completed his degree in 1937, Sir Hugh Allen, who was Professor of Music at Oxford as well as Director of the Royal College of Music in London, offered him a travelling scholarship which enabled him to study anywhere he wanted in Europe. But by this time Schoenberg was in America and Berg had died. Meanwhile, however, Adorno had come to Oxford, as a refugee from Nazi Germany. He was then known as an analyst of twelve-note music, who had studied with Berg. Adorno was able to arrange for Searle to study with Webern in Vienna, where Searle went in the winter of 1937-38. When Searle returned, he started writing twelve-note works, and some of these were performed at a concert in London in 1940.[232] In all this, the network connecting Searle with Adorno with Webern, made a crucial difference to a Searle's musical education and indirectly to the formation of his style. These kinds of informal networks were more decisive than institutional arrangements for the development of Viennese modern music in Britain. Further evidence for the network or networks will be forthcoming below.

§3. *Émigrés* and Anti-Semitism

Was Britain welcoming to *émigré* musicians or did it have hostile attitudes towards them? The critic of the *Liverpool Daily Post* wrote that:

> This country has always displayed a willingness to open its arms to musicians from abroad, sometimes even to the detriment of native interests. The present time is one for the exercise of special hospitality in view of the plight to which many Continental musicians have been reduced by political forces. It can scarcely be doubted that the musical culture of the country will be ultimately enriched by such an influx of talent as we have been receiving in recent years.
>
> Several letters have reached us recently on this subject. It is to be hoped that many of these unfortunate people will find an asylum here (some have already done so in

[232] Humphrey Searle Collection, Vol. cxv. Press cuttings: writings by Searle; 1936-1980, British Library Archives and Manuscripts, Add MUS 71835.

> Liverpool) and that they may be peacefully absorbed in the economy of our musical life.[233]

These words of this critic are positive and optimistic. On the one hand, there is a moral and political imperative to help Continental musicians; on the other hand, from a musical point of view, the influx is seen as positive for the country. There is also an appeal to a tradition of openness to foreign musicians. A tacit distinction is drawn between ‘native interests’, that is, the interests of particular British musicians, and something more general—'musical culture’, which can be benefitted and enriched, even if particular native interests are worsened. The writer expresses the hope that a way of reconciling these pressures will be found.

However, if we examine responses of the British institutions to Austrian-Jewish *émigré* musicians in Britain during the 1930’s and 1940’s, it becomes clear that the situation was more complicated. Even though the press and the public welcomed such high-quality musicians, the British institutions were very unyielding. As early as 1931, the Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM), which was headed by Sir George Dyson, published a manifesto in which it demanded restrictions on foreign musicians.[234] Dyson was successful in stopping the musical employment of German and Austrian refugees.[235] In 1934, this statement was made by an English music scholar William G. Whittaker:

> The music profession is at the present time faced with a very serious situation on account of political and racial expulsions from Germany. Numbers of refugees are seeking a means of earning a livelihood in Britain. A turn of the wheel in Austria may produce a similar upheaval there, and there will be another invasion of our coasts. … Our nation has always been in the forefront of helping distressed

[233] “Music and Musicians. The Refugee Problem”, *Liverpool Daily Post*, Thurs, 4 May 1939, p. 7.
[234] See “Music in the Present Crisis”, *The Official Journal of the Incorporated Society of Musicians*, November 1931.
[235] See Florian Scheding, *Musical Journeys: Performing Migration in Twentieth-Century,* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2019), p. 87. For more about the restrictions in details to which *émigré* musicians were subjected by the ISM, headed by Dyson, see also Jutta Raab-Hansen, *NS-Verfolgte Musiker in England*, Hamburg: von Bockel, 1996, pp. 100-117.

> peoples. But we must face facts. Can we absorb these musicians without dislocating our profession?[236]

This article and Dyson's manifesto were both published in professional musical journals and thus, perhaps, were addressing what they conceived to be the professional interest of the readership. But contrast sharply with the *Liverpool Daily Post* article. The pressures generating immigration are not described as particularly affecting Continental musicians. And there is a threat that is described as afflicting the "musical profession" and "the economy of our musical life". Presumably this was mostly a matter of employment. There seems to be no broader concern with 'musical culture' that might be benefitted by immigration. In the background, there is the recognition that many of the continental musicians seeking employment in Britain were superior to the natives, and thus could take work from them.

Was this just because they wanted to keep their jobs or was there positive hostility towards the musicians coming in on the ground of their ethnicity? Furthermore, was there a connection between anti-modernism in music and anti-Semitism? In this regard, it is interesting to note that as early as 1921, *The Observer* correspondent published an article about rising anti-Semitism in Austrian resorts, where he mentioned Schoenberg's case in particular:

> Racial intolerance has affected the tourist clubs also, and climbed high up to Alpine huts, thousands of feet above sea-level, where Jewish visitors are allowed to spend one night only. The otherwise obscure little village of Mattsee, in Upper Austria, has made itself immortal by attempting to "expel" the well-known composer, Arnold Schönberg, who is of Jewish descent, but as a student became Protestant. For the Municipal Council of Mattsee, however, that conversion proved insufficient, and he was given to understand that he had better "disappear", or force would be used, not even converted Jews being desirable at

[236] William Gillies Whittaker, "The Foreign Artist Problem", *A Music Journal: The Official Journal of the Incorporated Society of Musicians*, November 1934, p. 9.

> Mattsee. Of course, Schönberg, being of a peaceful disposition, notwithstanding his Futurist music, preferred to depart.[237]

This article is notable for recording everyday quite extreme anti-Semitism in Austria at quite an early date. It is also notable that the *Observer* took a clear stance against it.

Adolf Hitler's own hostile attitude towards modern art was well known in Britain. For example, the *Monday Gloucestershire Echo* published in 1937 a brief summary of a speech that Hitler gave in Munich: "Modernism in art … was a decadent by-product of Bolshevist Jewish corruption."[238] Some British press reviews echo Hitler's sentiments to the extent that the new music was perceived in Britain as being somehow Jewish in nature. Was this typical of British critical thinking? One example of someone who thinks in this way a decade earlier is a Scottish music critic who wrote a hostile announcement of Schoenberg's visit in London[239]:

> We have little knowledge here of Arnold Schoenberg, the Viennese composer who has aroused so much excitement on the Continent. A few of his earlier works have been heard, but not enough to arouse intense interest in his style, which in its later developments is said to out-Herod the most modern of Herods in its ruthless massacre of the dearest conventions of the conventional music-lover. They even had riots in some German and Austrian towns, the conflict of opinion over his music was so great. This excitement, aroused by a rather middle-aged Jewish musician, is at least proof of some distinctive quality in his work. As for its real artistic value, we shall be able to judge of that when Schoenberg comes in person to London to conduct his Gurrelieder through the medium of the Broadcasting Corporation. It is said that he is always attended by a group of admiring young intellectuals of Vienna and Berlin. He need not bring them here, for we can supply

[237] "Holiday Profiteering. Why Tourists Avoid Austria", *The Observer*, 31 July 1921, p. 11. Such race-based anti-Semitism was not new in Austria. Gustav Mahler was a victim of it, for example.

[238] *Monday Gloucestershire Echo*, 19 July 1937, p. 5.

[239] Schoenberg came to London to conduct the first British performance of *Gurrelieder* on 27 January 1918 at Queen's Hall.

> him with native examples of unintelligent worship if he cares for that sort of thing.[240]

Notice here that the critic unwittingly reveals that Schoenberg clearly had a following in Britain, even as early as 1928. It is described negatively as "unintelligent worship", but it is a following, nonetheless. The critic distinguishes "quality" from "artistic value", and concedes the former to Schoenberg, since it is proved by the controversy over his work. As for the latter, this hostile writer is officially open-minded about it, at least apparently, saying that we must judge it from the forthcoming BBC performance of Gurrelieder. There is something fair-minded about this, given the hostile general tone of the article. Nevertheless, the general tone illustrates what the émigrés may have had to overcome in the next decade, which was a negative attitude that comes more from the critics and the establishment than from the audiences, who seem to have been more receptive to the foreign and the new in music.

It does seem likely that there was some kind of hidden antisemitism in play. According to Florian Scheding, there was a BBC blacklist that included names such as Kurt Weill, Ernst Toch, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Arnold Schoenberg, Felix Weingartner, Alexander von Zemlinsky, Hanns Eisler, and Paul Hindemith, most but not all of whom were Jewish.[241] These names coincided to a great extent with Nazi lists of so-called 'degenerate' music. The BBC list even included Egon Wellesz, and Berthold Goldschmidt, who actually worked at the BBC, as well as Alban Berg and Gustav Mahler. The presence of so many Jewish composers on the list strongly suggests an undercurrent of anti-Semitism in central institutions of British musical life, such as the Royal College of Music and the ISM. By contrast, it seems very likely that there was less of such attitudes in the informal networks in which most *émigré* musicians and composers operated, outside the auspices of established music institutions. In particular, in these networks, there was extensive cooperation between the Jewish *émigré* and non-Jewish native musicians that would indicate a less prejudiced outlook. We saw such collaboration in the Boosey and Hawkes concert, for example.

[240] "Musical Epstein" in *Aberdeen Press and Journal* (Aberdeenshire, Scotland) Saturday 21 January 1928, p. 6.
[241] Florian Scheding, *op cit*., p. 94.

§4. Organizations

What were the new institutional structures of the *émigré* musical community? Within the large immigration of Central Europeans, distinctively Austrian music organizations began to form. One of them, established on 16 March 1939, was called the "Austrian Centre"; and it played an important role in the specific story of Austrian *émigrés* living in Britain. The opening of the Austrian Centre in Bayswater, London was even announced in the British press. There was "a coffee lounge and dining-room, gaily decorated with Viennese and Tyrolean scenes by two Austrian mural painters".[242] Sigmund Freud was its president. The Club provided a wide range of cultural and practical amenities (such as a small hostel). There was also a dedicated music room, as well as a library and a lecture room. The centre achieved a large membership of many hundreds, drawing on three and four thousand Austrian refugees who lived in London.

Another notable organization, where *émigrés* played some Second Viennese School music, was the Anglo-Austrian Music Society, founded in London in 1942 by the Austrian pianist Ferdinand Rauter and a number of other musicians, including Hans Gál and Egon Wellesz, which enjoyed the patronage of Myra Hess, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Adrian Boult. In June 1943, an interesting programme of music banned by the Nazis was given by the Anglo-Austrian Music Society at the Wigmore Hall, where music by Berg, Schoenberg, Wellesz and Gál was played. The concert was reviewed by the *Observer* music critic:

> The Adagio from Berg's Chamber concerto for piano and eleven instruments was played in an arrangement for violin, clarinet, and piano. One felt its imaginative power and sure construction without grasping the reserves of thought which may have stood behind the difficult idiom. Schönberg's piano pieces, op. 23, could be appreciated as a series of sensuous sounds; yet here again Peter Stadlen played with absolute certainty: he obviously gave more attention to the music than that involved in producing mere sensuousness. Finally, the Fleet Street Choir introduced choral pieces by two Austrian scholars living in this country – Egon Wellesz and Hans Gál. Gál seemed to aim at English competition festival music: I couldn't understand

[242] "Austrian Refugee Club", *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 16 March 1939, p. 6.

> why. The Wellesz poems had more character, but lacked immediacy which would have made them alive.[243]

This is obviously not a wildly enthusiastic review, but it does at least treat the music in a neutral way, without prejudice. The fact that the music was banned by the enemy of wartime Britain was not enough to give the music a free pass. The sense seemed to be that there was something behind Berg and Schoenberg's music, as it were, that was not immediately available, and the Wellesz and Gál compositions were not thought to be anything special. We might note that Peter Stadlen was an Austrian pianist, specialising in the composers of the Second Viennese School who was later quite well-known.

§5. Musicians in the Provinces

Branches of the Austrian Centre opened elsewhere in Britain: in Manchester, Glasgow, Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool and other cities. This is important, because it is not well known or emphasised in those writing on modern music in Britain in this period. The opening Austrian Centre in Birmingham in 1939 was reported in *The Birmingham Post*.[244] This was mostly a social club with weekly meetings and cultural activities taking place in a music room, as well as lectures on musicians and poets. Another such club was opened in Liverpool, also in 1939, reported in the *Liverpool Daily Post*.[245] This had the aspiration to program dramatic activities as well as musical events. There seems to have been a shortage of instruments, so donations were requested. Instruments they might lack, not the ability and willingness to play them.

Music was seen as an important manifestation of a wider Viennese culture for these *émigrés*. The point was not merely to support *émigrés* and help them adapt to new lives, but also to facilitate their cultural flourishing as a continuation of the way they had flourished in their native countries. After the war, some of these clubs closed since quite a few refugees returned to Vienna. The reporter of the *Manchester Evening News* regretted "The days when one could get Wienerschnitzel, Apfelstrudel, and Viennese coffee in the front parlour of this Manchester house are over." Of the music activities, the reporter

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243 "Banned Music", *The Observer*, Sun, Jun 20, 1943, p. 2.

244 "Austrian Centre in Birmingham. Open Two Days a Week", *The Birmingham Post*, 13 December 1939, p. 11.

245 "Music and Musicians. The Refugees", *Liverpool Daily Post*, Thurs, 25 May 1939, p. 5.

notes: “Musically the club was strong. There was a music circle, of which the singer, Mme. Lottie Eisler, now broadcasting regularly from Vienna, was a leading member. And there was a choir which sang in national costume.”[246] Charlotte Eisler was a leading member of the Manchester Austrian House. She was an Austrian singer and pianist, associated with the Second Viennese School. Her teachers were Anton Webern and Hans Eisler (she had married Eisler in 1920, but they separated in 1934). As a result of the *Anschluss*, she travelled on to Britain with her son George Eisler and remained there during the Second World War, finally returning to Vienna in 1946.

These clubs, in Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, were very active in the 1930s, and Austrian modernist music was a significant part of this activity. The clubs were hubs for Austrian’s *émigrés* of all kinds, in some ways recreating Vienna café society in the sense that they were institutions where people from very different cultural walks of life would meet and converse. The Austrian societies throughout Britain were crucial institutions through which the Second Viennese School music was propagated.

An interesting concert was given at the Austria House, Manchester, on 7 April 1945, where some songs and piano pieces by Hans Gál were sang by Charlotte Eisler and played by the composer himself. It reveals an interesting example of collaboration between *émigrés*. The concert was reviewed by *The Guardian* critic:

> On Saturday there was a gathering of friends in the Austria House, Manchester, to hear a recital in which some songs and piano pieces composed by the Czechoslovakian musician Dr. Hans Gal had a large share of the programme. Unfortunately the arrangements made for this recital were primitive and altogether inadequate, and though apparently much of the music chosen is in itself quite interesting the instrumental part of the performance fell far below the standard expected at a public concert.
>
> Mme. Eisler sang expressively a group of Dr. Gal’s songs that revealed considerable charm and originality, but when playing his own solos the composer was handicapped by the hardness of his touch and by the tone of the instrument

[246] “Back to Vienna”, *Manchester Evening News*, 8 October 1946, p. 3.

used. Dr. Gal's piano music must be heard in more favourable conditions before its value can be truly judged.[247]

The reviewer makes a positive comment on Gál's music, while criticising his playing and the instruments. It seems that the concert, as an event, was rather amateur, even ramshackle. This was probably not the kind of concert that the *Guardian* reviewer was used to reviewing—those run by experienced concert organisers, with a well-oiled organisation and an expensive Steinway piano. (We noted the shortage of instruments in Liverpool.) The event was probably thrown together in a amateur way by a circle of acquaintances. Unfortunately, the performance seems to have suffered, as least according to the reviewer.

Another *émigré* musician, who collaborated with Hans Gál, was a pianist Dorothea Braus, born in Heidelberg in 1903, emigrated to Britain in 1936. She gave the first British performance of three piano preludes by Gál on 8 November 1944 at the Leeds Museum. Braus gave a short introductory talk to her programme, explaining that "Gal was an Austrian, who, when Hitler invaded his country, came to England. The preludes were not published, and the composer himself sent her this manuscript."[248] She also played Berg's Piano Sonata op. 1, which became a popular piece among pianists. Braus performed it again on 4 January 1945 at the Lounge Hall, for the first time in Harrogate[249]. Berg's Piano Sonata was already popular among English pianists: Eileen Ralph had performed it in June 1939 at the Wigmore Hall in London and in February 1940 at Houldsworth Hall in Manchester; Sheila Dixon played it in February 1945 at the recital of the Music Guild at the Sandon Room in Liverpool, and Peter Stadlen performed it in January 1947 at the recital of the Derby Art Gallery.

§6. Concerts and Collaboration

Details of practical matters of concert organization are to be found the *émigrés* pianist Myra Hess's archives at the National Gallery in London. She organised a near-legendary series of concerts during the Second World War, which became a platform for refugee

[247] G.A.H., "Austrian Musical Circle", *The Gurdian*, 9 April 1945, p. 3.
[248] "Leeds Lunch-time Recital", *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 9 November 1944, p. 3.
[249] See *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 5 January 1956.

performers. Peter Stadlen, Emmy Heim, and many others used to play there. Although contemporary music received less attention, much of the music played at the National Gallery was Austrian or German. Incidentally, it is another case of the earlier generation of Jews in the music world playing a significant role with respect to the activities and influence of the incoming refugees. Among the audiences around the country who were receptive to this music were quite a few Jews who had come to Britain during an earlier wave of migration. New migrants interacted with established Jewish families, some of whom were in greater proximity to the British Establishment. This was part of the way the new network of *émigrés* came to have its influence.

There were also notable collaborations between native British musicians and Viennese *émigrés*. Many of the people involved in these musical collaborations moved in socialist circles. In a way this is no accident, given that it was common to conceive of socialism as a modernist project. Political modernism went hand in hand with modernism in music and design, including architecture. (The connection between socialism and literary modernism was less stable.) An interesting example of collaboration is a concert, given in November 1943 in Manchester. The performers included two Austrian refugee musicians: Charlotte Eisler, who was active in left-wing politics (she had been a communist, and she remained loyal Marxist); Friedrich Buxbaum (an Austrian Jewish cellist, who emigrated to England in September 1938); as well as the pianist Marjorie Nicholson (who was also well-known as a British socialist activist). Here is a review, mentioning different organisations:

> Last night the Austrian Musical Circle, which is affiliated to the Free Austrian Movement, was responsible for a concert of unusual interest in the Lower Albert Hall Manchester. Dr. Egon Wellesz is sixty this year; as a tribute to him two works of his were performed for the first time in our city. Not only is Dr. Wellesz a leading Austrian composer and an authority on Byzantine music; as a pupil of Schönberg he might be expected to provide really difficult fare for the concert-goer.
>
> But his song-cycle to words by Stefan George, as sung by Mme. Lottie Eisler and played by Miss Marjorie Nicholson, showed a musical idiom advanced in refinement rather than in complexity. As the cycle progresses from idyllic joy to frustration, so do discords sharpen, but not unduly so; both singer and player brought out excellently this gradual change of mood. As played by Professor

> Friedrich Buxbaum, the solo Suite for cello showed sufficient variety of mood and figuration to keep the attention occupied throughout the for movements.[250]

The reviewer has negative expectations, expecting "difficult fare" but instead finding "refinement", and it was not, after all, overly discordant. The collaboration was evidently a success. Both "moods and figuration" held one's attention. The reviewer was expecting to be bored by difficult complexity with little variety of mood, but in fact found the opposite.

Another exceptional case of collaboration is a concert, given by Emmy Heim – a Viennese singer and teacher who moved to Britain in early 1930's – the visiting Kolisch Quartet and Gerald Moore, the English pianist. The concert was reviewed by Richard Capell, the critic of the *Daily Telegraph,* which is worth quoting in full:

> The outstanding names in the programme were Alban Berg, Wellesz, A. von Webern and J. M. Hauer. These musicians, while no doubt among themselves as different as were Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms, have certain ground in common. In all this music we are conscious of exceptional sensibilities, a taste that is irreproachable, an intellectualism keener perhaps than there ever was before in music, and also a physical slightness and paleness suggesting the last scions of some expiring aristocracy.
>
> Mr. Kolisch and his friends began the evening with a marvellously fine performance of Berg's Lyric Suite (all six movements). Now that the composer's ultra-chromatic idiom no longer surprises, we feel nearer estimating the value of the music to us – nearer but not yet there. Is this music or the ghost of music? What has to be confessed is that its ethereal apparition makes other things – such as Ernst Toch's thoroughly able, vigorous, clever quartet. Op. 34, which was played at the end of the evening – seem coarse and earthy.
>
> In between we had had Webern's quartet, Op. 5 (1909). By the side of Webern even the fugitive Berg looks relatively substantial. This Op. 5 is music of that peculiarly

[250] W.W.R., "The Austrian Musical Circle", *The Guardian*, 3 November 1945, p. 3.

> Viennese sort in which a string quartet comes as near as nothing to the effect of an escape of gas.[251]

Although Capell described the kind of music as a product of "intellectualism", his description of what he heard belies that; he talks of an "ethereal apparition" and "escape of gas". Meanwhile, we might also note the reappearance of the Test of Time when he says "Now that the composer's ultra-chromatic idiom no longer surprises, we feel nearer estimating the value of the music to us"; that is, we are more able to evaluative the music after the initial surprise of something novel has worn off. The performance itself is by a mixture of visiting and native musicians. Above all Capell gives a sense of the variety of the music performed, which is some testament to its vitality.

Talks as well as concerts were organised. Leopold Spinner was responsible for propagating the twelve-note technique among British composers in talks. In May 1940, Emil Spira gave a lecture-recital "Problems of contemporary music" at the Rushworth Hall in Liverpool, in which he is reported as saying:

> … the loss of contact between the public and the modern composers was due to a tragic misunderstanding of what the composer was aiming at. The aim of the artist was to produce something new and vivid in expression and to reflect all those forces which promote life. The modern composer must have the courage to break away from conventional expression. After Wagner the resources of romantic harmony were found to be exhausted and a new order had to be sought. Hence, experiments in such things as quarter-tones and new tonal relationship which many people found so puzzling.[252]

Here we see an attempt to reach across a divide between composers and "the public", and to explain to that public the rationale for pursuing new musical forms. The proposed rationale is described as the pursuit of novelty and vividness in expression, and the promotion of "life", as well as dealing with the problems of a harmonic inheritance that was allegedly "exhausted", thus requiring new models. However, none of this would

[251] R.C. [Richard Capell], "The New Viennese Music. Concert at Legation", *The Daily Telegraph*, 25 April 25, 1934, p. 10.
[252] "The Aims of Modern Music", *Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 May 1940, p. 7.

carry much weight, or even be understood, if one were a puzzled member of an audience for one of these concerts.

Émigré musicians played in some surprising places, for example, the College of Nursing in London, where the pianist Else C. Kraus and the singer Alice Schuster performed Schoenberg's pieces on 13 December 1932. The concert was reviewed in the *Daily Telegraph*:

> In introducing the work of Arnold Schönberg, played and sung last night in the hall of the College of Nursing, it was remarked that after Opus 11 Schönberg adopted a new style and overthrew the tradition of three centuries.
>
> The recital which followed bore ample evidence to the profound truth of that remark, for we seemed to be surrounded, and at times overwhelmed, by bits and pieces – all that is left after that overthrow.
>
> The very labour of unravelling his purpose became fruitless after a while, and one listened admiringly to Fräulein Else C. Kraus and Miss Alice Schuster, who performed their laborious task unperturbed and without the aid of a score.[253]

This is a mixed review, although the reviewer more or less concedes that despite the confusion he initially felt, once he stopped trying to "unravel [Schoenberg's] purpose", he could "listen admiringly". Initially he thinks that we are "overwhelmed, by bits and pieces – all that is left after that overthrow", a sense of lack of order in the reviewer, and not yet a sense of "the new style". But having failed to locate a new order, he is happy to listen with pleasure to the performance. Ironically, once he had stopped trying to intellectualise the music that he has conceived as 'intellectual', he could sit back and enjoy it.

§7. 'Mr. Urbanus' Vs. Goehr

There is a revealing exchange in which attitudes concerning Britishness can be seen to be at work in thinking about *émigrés*. Someone calling himself "Mr Urbanus", writing in *Musical Opinion* (9th February 1947) complained about the *émigré* conductor Walter

[253] F.B., "Schönberg's Music", *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 December 1932, p. 8. "F.B." was probably Ferruccio Bonavia.

Goehr, who had been a student of Schoenberg. Goehr often conducted the music of the Second Viennese School in Britain. He also notably conducted the British premiere of Olivier Messiaen's *Turangalila* Symphony as well as a notable revival of Montiverdi's *Vespers*. Goehr was not only known as a conductor of works by Schoenberg and his school, but also as a significant propagator of British modernist composers, such as Lutyens and Searle, who were native composers. A representative example of Goehr's musical efforts is a concert that he conducted in 1943 at Wigmore Hall.

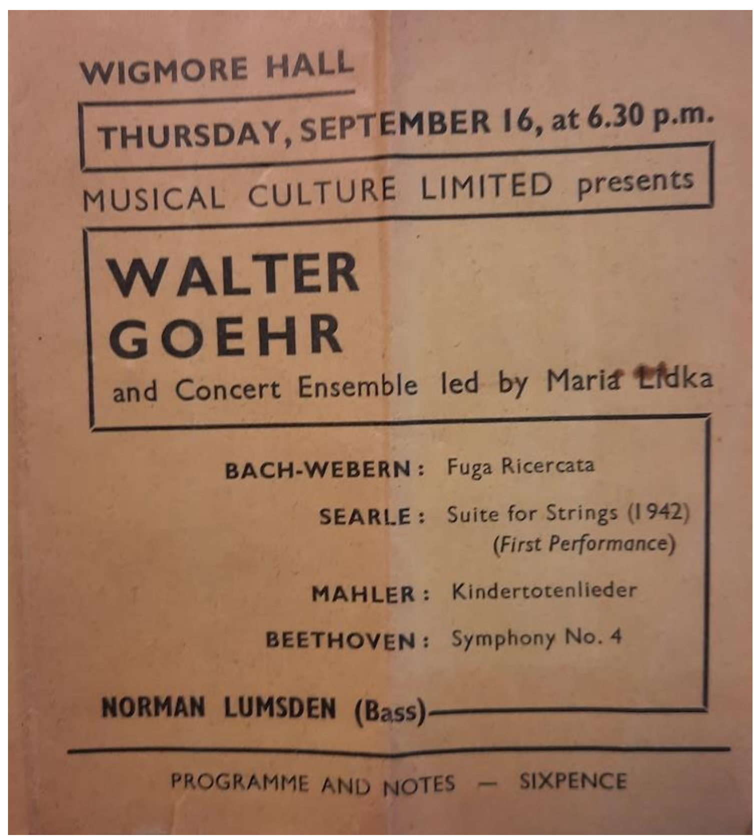

Figure 5. Concert Programme, Wigmore Hall, 16 September 1943.[254]

Goehr conducted Webern's little-known transcription of Bach's Fuga Ricercata, which was arranged in 1935, and also gave the premiere of Searle's Suite for Strings (1942). It is also notable that he collaborated with the *émigré* violin player Maria Lidka, who, like Goehr himself, was born in Berlin to Jewish parents.[255] Goehr's concert was described by

[254] This concert programme was found in the collection of Humphrey Searle. British Library Archives and Manuscripts. Add MUS 1747/2/3.
[255] Maria Lidka (1914-2013) emigrated to London from Berlin in 1934.

anonymous *The Times* music critic as “fringes of atonalism” even though none of the works in the programme were atonal.[256] Not everyone in Britain agreed with Goehr’s musical choices. One such person is a certain ‘Mr. Urbanus’, who complains as follows:

> WALTER GOEHR has, apparently, but little use for British music. Since his appointment as conductor for the B.B.C. Theatre Orchestra, he has to date performed fifty-six works, two of which are British. Let me repeat this: fifty-four works by foreign composers and two by our countrymen. Comment is needless![257]

He continues, attacking Goehr for under-valuing and under-playing British music, and attacking “an ignoramus” who said, “But foreign music is always much better than British music, isn’t it?”.[258] He feels that Goehr does not represent of the taste of the British public. Of course, we have seen before (in chapter 4) that the critic’s and public’s taste often diverge. Be that as it may, he thinks that there is a question about the British loyalty of Goehr—a standard prejudicial trope concerning outsiders, who are thought to possess a dubious and unreliable dual-loyalty. What is perhaps more interesting is that for ‘Mr. Urbanus’ it is “musical works” that are said to be British or not. Composers are divided between “foreign composers” and “our countrymen”; and works are foreign or not depending on whether or not composed by someone foreign or someone British. He thinks that the Britishness of *works* is in some way tethered to the nationality of their composer. This opinion piece provoked a lengthy letter of response from a twenty-one year old John Amis (1922-2013), who was later to become a well-known singer and music journalist. After quoting Urbanus, Amis responds:

> Whence has “Mr. Urbanus” obtained these figures? I opine it is from the Friday Concert programmes only, which are a small part of the Theatre Orchestra’s work. In all the Home Service and Light Programmes conducted by Walter Goehr between 1 October and 31 January, there were thirty-seven works by British composers. Some of their names – Balfour Gardiner, Bridge, Britten, Boughton, Elgar, German, Grainger, Harty, Lehmann, O’Neill, Poston, Somervell, Stanford, Sullivan, Toye, Vaughan Williams, Walton and Warlock –

[256] “Mr. Walter Goehr’s Concert. Fringes of Atonalism”, *The Times*, 17 September 1943.
[257] “Commentaries”, *Musical Opinion*, February 1947, p. 150
[258] *Musical Opinion*, February 1947, p. 151.

are enough to show that Walter Goehr has explored the highways and byways of British music.

Further, Walter Goehr, I have reason to believe, was responsible for the building of Theatre Orchestra programmes conducted by his colleagues, Harold Lowe and Clifton Helliwell, and guest conductors such as Sir Adrian Boult and Maurice Miles during this time. These programmes during this period included fifty-seven works by British composers. with a total of ninety-four works in four months by British composers performed since taking up his duties with the Theatre Orchestra, I feel he is not doing so badly!

Now let "Mr. Urbanus" consider those grim years of 1941-3, in London. The more famous orchestras were of necessity playing safe with Tchaikovksy and Beethoven. English music never got much further than "God Save The King", and the "Enigma Variations". Then Walter Goehr saved us from boredom (presumably at his own expense) with a series of concerts of really interesting programmes. In the very first of these, I think, he introduced us to the music of Michael Tippett. Walter Goehr gave the first performance of his Fantasy on a theme of Handel and later on the Concerto for double string orchestra. Britten's "Les Illuminations", Van Dieren's "Serenade", Dowland's "Lachrymae" were heard. The music of Anthony Hopkins was first heard in public at one of these concerts. He gave the first performance of Lennox Berkeley's "Divertimento" and Britten's "Serenade". With the London Philharmonic Orchestra, he gave the first performance of Tippett's "Child of our Time", and with the National Symphony Orchestra, the first London performance of the Tippett Symphony. He gave his service at two orchestral rehearsals of the Committee for the Promotion of New Music, conducting works by Elisabeth Lutyens, Humphrey Searle and R. W. Wood. Does this sound like a man who has but little use for British music?

In conclusion, may I say that when I rang Mr. Walter Goehr's secretary to check my figures, I was informed that he had gone to Zurich to conduct a concert there. Programme: Gibbon's "Fantasies", Elgar's "Dream Children", and the Tippett Symphony.

As Amis shows, Goehr was performing a great deal of British-composed music, both drawing on well-known British music from before and after the turn of the twentieth

century, as well as the more recent home-grown modernist music influenced by the Second Viennese School and the latest trends of continental modernism.[259]

One thing that is obvious here from the letter is just how vigorous were Goehr's efforts on behalf of British music, at least of the kind he thought worth cultivating. He worked unusually hard to promote British music. 'Mr. Urbanus's' churlish doubts about the loyalty of the 'International Jew' could not be more unfounded and the opposite of the facts. Amis does not directly address 'Mr. Urbanus's' biases; instead, he overwhelms the reader by citing facts, but any reader would have made a simple inference concerning 'Mr. Urbanus's' mind-set. Amis is not merely citing Goehr's efforts on behalf of British music as a kind of apologetics but pointing out Goehr's immense contribution to British life along many dimensions.

But something more telling here is the suspicion we are bound to have that 'Mr. Urbanus' is conceiving of this home-grown modernist music as somehow un-British, by contrast with the earlier generation of British composers and those composers still composing in that tradition. Indeed, Vaughan Williams argued that composers should draw on "British" themes, writing: If the roots of your art are firmly planted in your own soil and that soil has anything individual to give you, you may still gain the whole world and not lose your own souls. … It is better to be vitally parochial than to be an emasculated cosmopolitan.[260] This last phrase was omitted in the second edition of 1963, since "cosmopolitan" is often seen as having rather specific connotations which were less acceptable after the Second World War. Another writer who explicitly sees atonal music as non-British is an anonymous writer in *Musical Opinion* in 1948, who writes about Humphrey Searle's *Night Music* op. 2 (1943), which was dedicated to Webern on his sixtieth birthday: "There is nothing in this work to suggest that the composer is British—or doesn't that matter to British composers anymore?"[261] The modernist style is viewed as un-British, and perhaps as European as opposed to British,

[259] See Peter J. Pirie, *The English Musical Renaissance* (London: Gollancz, 1979); Robert Stradling and Meiron Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1840-1940*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001; Benjamin Britten, "The Folk-Art Problem", *Modern Music* 18, 1941, pp. 71-75.
[260] Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1934, p. 11. This last phrase was omitted in the second edition.
[261] *Musical Opinion,* March 1948.

by authors as varied as Vaughan Williams and 'Mr. Urbanus'. However, the composers that Goehr was promoting presumably did not see the tension between British and European that 'Mr. Urbanus' finds. This younger generation of composers saw themselves as both British and European. By contrast, those in what has been called the "English Pastoral School" of an earlier generation aimed at a specifically English musical style, which drew on earlier English musical models and English folk music.[262] It seems that this widening of British composer's conceptions of their musical identity, which invoked a wider and more cosmopolitan European conception of Britishness, was one of the achievements of the *émigré* musicians and composers, as British composers made native music in Central European mode. This, they thought of as *theirs*, not as something *alien*, which is the way it was viewed by Vaughan Williams and 'Mr. Urbanus'.

§8. Endword

I have described some of the ways that *émigré* musicians propagated Second Viennese School music in an interesting collaboration with young British musicians, often left-wing, all-over Britain. Some of them were semi-amateur, and some of them became very successful later. They collaborated partly by means of various societies, and also personal contacts. It did not happen through the auspices of major British music institutions, but in a far more informal, flexible and interactive way. If institutions were involved, they were often quite recently formed refugee organization, often in the provinces, which enabled many concerts at provincial centres. This somewhat spread-out loose network was the structure through which Second Viennese School music came to be absorbed into British musical life, and that was partly how many British audiences were persuaded to accept the new music that was in many ways foreign to more established British sentiments. And it was partly how British composers absorbed and made this new music their own.

[262] Meirion Hughes and Robert Stradling, *The English Musical Renaissance, 1840-1940: Constructing a National Music*, Music and Society, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001. This group included Ralph Vaughan Williams, Frederick Delius, Gustav Holst, George Butterworth, John Ireland, Frank Bridge, Edmund Rubbra, Gerald Finzi, Herbert Howells, Ernest John Moeran and Peter Warlock.

Meanwhile, for audiences and some critics, preconceptions about the intellectualism of the music seems to be overcome. Perhaps the anti-intellectualism of the British declined, or perhaps the intellectualism was seen as superficial, and actually there was a sensuous side to the music. Mikes might have felt like an alien in England, although he felt comfortable enough to poke harmless fun at his adopted country, which actually had much warmth in his humour. Meanwhile, many British people in the arts, and in music in particular, did not feel alienated from the culture of Mikes and his Central European friends, since they came to see themselves as British Europeans, and they thought of the music that they made as both British and European since Britain was a part of Europe, so conceived.

Chapter 6

Dorothy Gow: Britain's Pioneer Serialist Composer

Dorothy Gow (1892-1982) was both an accomplished early British modernist composer, if not the earliest, as well as playing a significant role in the transmission of serialism to Britain. For various reasons, she is not now well-known. Only one of her compositions was published; and her compositions were only intermittently performed before and after the Second World War. As we shall see, part of the reason for her relative obscurity lies in her self-effacing character. The investigation of Gow's works and influence is part of investigating the history of the influence of the Second Viennese School on British composers in the years leading up to the Second World War. Elisabeth Lutyens (1906-1983) along with Humphrey Searle (1915-1982) are often considered the leading figures of early British serialism, which then flowers after the war in Manchester School. As we will see this is the standard narrative. It is true that by the mid-1950s, Schoenbergian serialism came into widespread adoption in Britain as well as internationally, and this was only possible in Britain because serialism already had a foothold. However, in this chapter, I will argue that Gow, and her relationship to her teacher Egon Wellesz (1885-1974), are a crucial part of that story, even though only one of her pieces were published, her works were performed and also broadcast by the BBC. So, she had more of a presence than her one published composition would suggest. I trace some of this history, cast light on how her compositions evolve in the light of her pedagogical relation to Wellesz, and investigate how she influenced those around her, in particular Elizabeth Lutyens. There were émigré composers, such as Matyas Seiber and Roberto Gerhard; but they arrived later and, although they were influential after the war, serialism already had a foothold in Britain due to native composers, such as Gow, Lutyens and Searle.

Harold Bloom observes that “the history of fruitful poetic influence, which is to say the main tradition of Western poetry since Renaissance, is a history of anxiety and self-saving caricature of distortion, of perverse, wilful revisionism without which modern poetry as such could not exist.”[263] As we shall see, this is equally true of the way Second Viennese School music influenced British composers, which was complicated. The British situation was distinctive in many ways. In his study of twelve-tone music in the United States, Joseph Strauss claims that

> … there was no twelve-tone orthodoxy because there was no central authority and very little in the way of generally known principles of composition, and … American composers only had a vague idea of what twelve-tone composition might be and that sufficed for their compositional needs.[264]

Likewise, Gareth Cox notes in relation to twentieth-century Irish music that from

> … the late 1950s on, Irish composers discovered and experimented with twelve note techniques with varying degrees of engagement and success …, but where to turn for guidance in the Ireland of the late 1950s and 1960s? As there had been no twelve-note émigré in Ireland fleeing from Fascist Europe, Irish composers could not refer locally to someone with an intimate understanding of, or association with the music of someone with an intimate understanding of, or association with the music of the Second Viennese School.[265]

However, the situation in the United Kingdom after 1915 was completely unlike that in the United States and neighbouring Ireland. First, the theories and music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern were known and widely discussed in Britain before 1939 and there were numerous performances. By comparison, the first Irish performance of Berg’s Violin Concerto did not take place until 2 March 1962 at the

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[263] Bloom, Harold, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, Oxford University Press: New York, 1973, p. 30. For more on influence see Korsyn K., “Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence”, *Music Analysis*, 10 (1/2), 1991, pp. 3-72. Charles Rosen, “Influence: Plagiarism and Inspiration”, *19th-Century Music*, 4(2), 1980, pp. 87-100. Straus, J., *Remaking the Past. Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition.* Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1990. Whitesell, L., “Men with a Past: Music and the ‘Anxiety of Influence’”, *19th-Century Music*, 18(2), 1994, pp. 152-167.

[264] Joseph N. Straus, *Twelve-tone music in America*, pp. 179-80, and see n. 1.

[265] Gareth Cox, “The bar of legitimacy? Serialism in Ireland”, p. 187.

Phoenix Hall, played by Michel Chauveton with the RTÉ (Raidió Teilifís Éireann) Symphony Orchestra conducted by Edgar Cosma[266], whereas the British public premiere of the Violin Concerto had been on 9 December 1936 at the Queen's Hall with Louis Krasner as a soloist and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, directed by Sir Henry Wood. Secondly, many Austrian-German *émigré* composers and musicians, associated with Schoenberg's circle, took refuge in Britain. This prompts us to consider such questions as: exactly how and when did the British composers learn the twelve-note technique, and who was responsible for passing on the technique? In this paper, we will be particularly interested in exploring its influence on British composers, and in particular, the role played by Egon Wellesz. The area is relatively uncharted, but the task is not merely a job of filling in a part of history previously ignored, but of finding the main pathway or pathways by which British musical composition was changed in this period, which was crucial for what followed thereafter in British musical history.

Musical composition is not a race that composers need to run in order to decide who was the *first* to cross a finish line. Nevertheless, it is important to excavate what existing historical accounts may have overlooked – especially the work of British women composers, which in the interwar years was pioneering in many respects. Their story has only recently attracted attention.[267] The contribution of British women composers in this period is not sufficiently recognised in music studies, by contrast with literature studies, where there is much greater appreciation of their contribution. For example, Virginia Woolf is not a neglected writer. Some work has been done, especially on Elisabeth Lutyens and a number of others, such as Elisabeth Maconchy and Grace Williams.[268] However, one key player has been overlooked – British female composer Dorothy Gow. She won an Octavia Traveling Scholarship, which she used to study under Wellesz in Vienna in late 1932 (the scholarship yielded a prize of £100, £8900 in today's money.) This was a crucial early route of Viennese modernist music into Britain. She played a pivotal role, with a very large impact on Lutyens. For various

[266] *Irish Times*, 3 March 1962.
[267] For example, Annika Forket's forthcoming monograph: *Elisabeth Lutyens and Edward Clark. The Orchestration of Progress in Twentieth-Century British Music*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023.
[268] See Rhiannon Mathias, *Lutyens, Maconchy, Williams and Twentieth-Century British Music: A Blest Trio of Sirens,* Farnham: Ashgate, 2012.

reasons her output mostly remains unpublished. Although it is commonly thought that Humphrey Searle and Elisabeth Lutyens were the modernist pioneers of atonal and serialist techniques, it was in fact Gow who was Britain's first atonal and serialist composer, and Lutyens learned from Gow. This revised view of Gow presented here depends on archival research on her correspondence and diary, together with musical analysis of scores. The analysis of scores is necessary to establish the kind of musical innovation in question. Furthermore, Gow's music has its own characteristics, which needs describing and analysing.

This chapter has three parts. The first introduces some background about Dorothy Gow, her life, musical background, compositions and performances, as well as her relationship with her teacher Wellesz. The second part examines her relationship with her contemporary Elizabeth Lutyens, especially as far as the direction of influence is concerned. In the third, Gow's impressive Piece for Violin and Horn (this was probably written in the mid-1950s, but the exact date remains unknown), and her Song 'There is a place for a cool quiet certitude', for voice and piano (this was probably written in the 1970s, but the exact date remains unknown) will be analysed in depth in order to show her subtle and sophisticated grasp of twelve-tone technique.

§1. Biographical Notes and Compositional Output

Dorothy Gow is not now well known to those in the musical world, let alone those outside it. Not much is known about her eighty-nine years of life, or her handful of compositions, or her own views on music. Gow does have an entry in Grove, written by Sophie Fuller back in 2001, but it is less than 250 words.[269] There is only one well-known photograph of her, the one with a mandolin.

[269] Sophie Fuller. 'Gow, Dorothy'. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Second Edition). *Volume Ten*. Ed. by Stanley Sadie. London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2001, pp. 238-9.

Figure 6. Photograph of Dorothy Gow (1892-1982). Courtesy of Ian Henghes.

Eight volumes of Gow's selected manuscripts were presented to the British Library (Add MS 63000-63007) by Daphne Henghes, her niece, on 3 April 1984. Today Gow is outlived by her great nephew Ian Henghes, a son of Gow's niece Daphne Henghes, who kindly gave me permission to explore Gow's personal archive (compositional sketches, diary, correspondence, notes, etc.) in his home in Highgate, London. This enabled me to discover much more about her life and relatively small, but distinctive compositional output.

Gow was born in London to Scottish parents, who were tea dealers in Ceylon (as it was called then) in South Asia. She was the sixth and the youngest child in the family. Gow spent most of her life living in London in a number of places (addresses are seen on letters to her are 270 Fulham Road SW10, 14 Cope Place W8 and 10 Ashington Road SW6). She never married or had children and appears to have been in a long-term relationship with Eleanor Ramsbotham (1892-1952) with whom she lived from the 1930s until her sudden death in 1952.[270] Gow remained close to her brother

[270] *Music, Life and Changing Times: Selected Correspondence Between British Composers Elizabeth Maconchy and Grace Williams, 1927-77,* Sophie Fuller and Jenny, London: Rutledge: p. 145, footnote 34.

Colin Gow, his wife Dorothy Willett, and their daughter Daphne Henghes all her life. A photograph below captures Gow with her brother, sister-in-law, and niece.

Figure 7. Photograph of Gow's family: from the left: Dorothy Gow, Daphne Gow, Colin Gow and Dorothy Willett. Courtesy of Ian Henghes.

As it was told to me by Ian Henghes, the three women in the photograph above were known as "Dorrie", "Dollie" and "Daphie".

Figure 8. Photograph of Dorothy Gow as a girl. Courtesy of Ian Henges.

From 1924 Gow studied at the Royal College of Music with R. O. Morris and later with Ralph Vaughan Williams. She belonged to a generation of female British composers which included Elisabeth Lutyens (1906-1983), Elisabeth Maconchy (1907-1994), Grace Williams (1906-1977) and Imogen Holst (1907-1884). Gow was senior in this group (fifteen years older). All these women were students of Ralph Vaughan Williams, except Lutyens, who was taught by Harold Dyke. In 1926, together with these fellow female composers, including Williams, Maconchy and Holst, Gow formed a club at the College, and she was active in an informal composers' circle. Lutyens was not part of this particular club; as according to Rhiannon Mathias, "…she had a different teacher at College and her [Lutyens's] priority at this stage was to acquire a solid compositional technique."[271] We do know that the constitution of this club was predominantly female in an age when this was unusual. The club members would listen to each other's works, receive comments and criticism, discuss the latest contemporary

[271] Rhiannon Mathias, *op. cit.,* p. 3.

music, and, according to Anne Macnaghten, develop friendships that were to last all their lives.[272]

She was strongly encouraged by her teachers Ralph Vaughan Williams and Egon Wellesz, who told Gow that he preferred her music to John Ireland's.[273] Her peers thought highly of her musical talent: Anne Magnaghten described Gow as "a composer of great distinction."[274]. Elisabeth Lutyens writes that she was "utterly devoid of malice or ambition. Her talent is original and her ear remarkable…".[275] And according to Rhiannon Mathias, "she possessed an unusually distinctive and potent musical voice"[276]. Gow was, thus, very respected both by her teachers and her peers.

Gow wrote music for solo instruments: Variations 'on a Diabelli Variation' for piano (1925-26), Fugue for Piano (1927), Two Pieces for Oboe Solo (1953-54) and Theme and Variations for Solo Violin (1955). She also wrote duets: Piece for Flute and Piano (1919) (her first attempt at composition); Piece for Violin and Horn (1955); and Song 'There is a place for a cool quiet certitude' for voice and piano (1970's). There are also compositions for chamber orchestra and ensembles: Prelude and Fugue for Chamber Orchestra (1931); and Oboe Quintet (1936). Gow's best known, and the only one published composition, is String Quartet in One Movement (1947; published by Oxford University Press in 1957). Two other quartets are: Fantasy String Quartet (1932) and String Quartet in one movement (1933). All Gow's known works are listed in appendix I. Gow suffered from poor health most of her life, which partly explains why her compositional output was meagre. After suffering a stroke in 1978, Gow destroyed many of the manuscripts that she considered to be immature, but the works that survive are impressive.

In 1931, Anne Macnaghten and Iris Lemare had founded the Macnaghten Concerts Society to perform the works of young or little-known British composers. Gow had a close association with the Macnaghten-Lemare Concerts, at which several pieces of hers were given first performances, for example, Fantasy String Quartet

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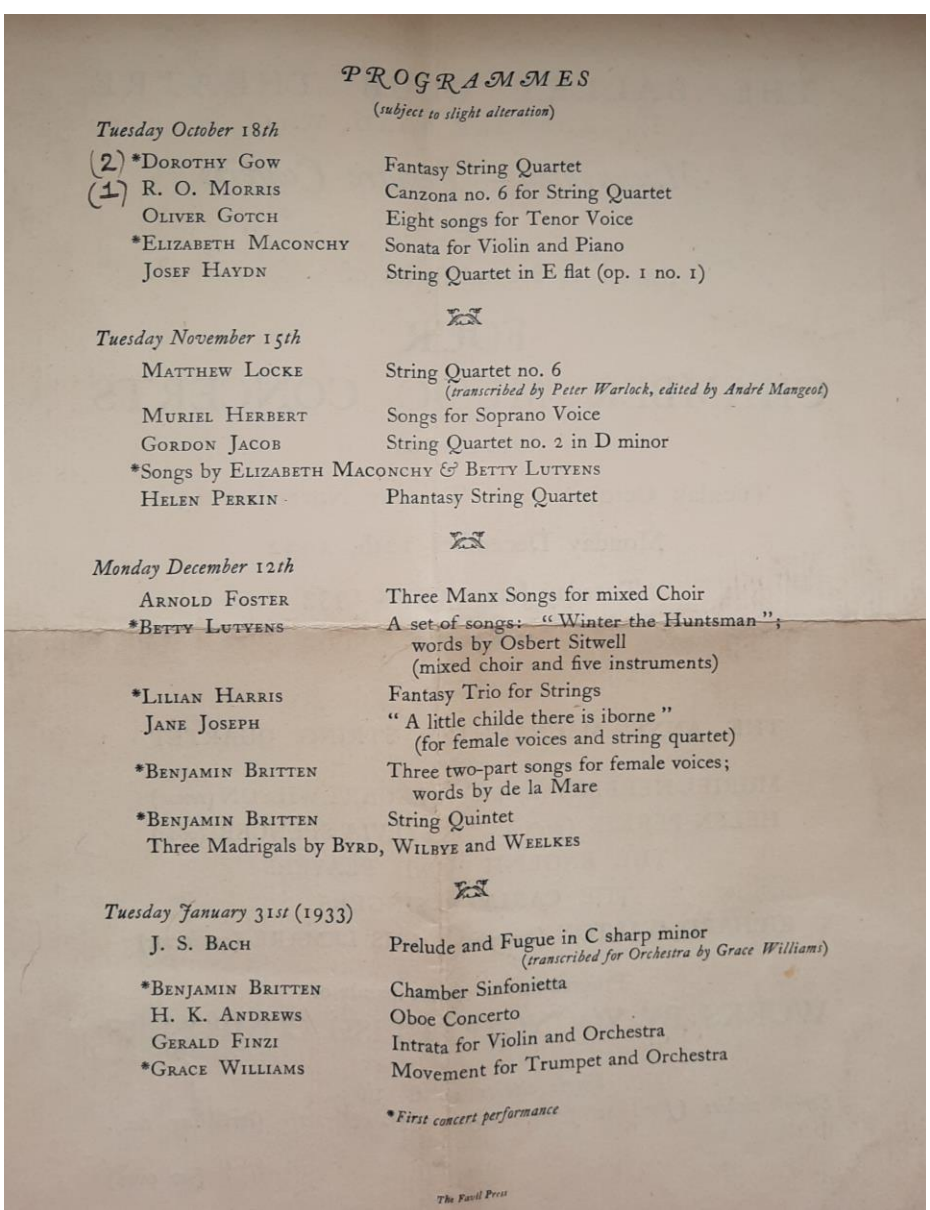
[272] Anne Macnaghten, "Dorothy Gow", *RCM Magazine* lxxix, pp. 61-62.
[273] Dorothy Gow. Handwritten diary. 19 December 1932. Private archive.
[274] Anne Macnaghten, 'Obituary: Dorothy Gow', *RCM Magazine* 79 ,1982, p. 61.
[275] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op.cit*., 1972.
[276] Mathias, Rhiannon, *Lutyens, Maconchy, Williams and Twentieth-Century British Music: A Blest Trio of Sirens*, Ashgate, 2012, p. 294.

(1932) on 18 October 1932, Three Songs for Tenor and String Quartet (1933) on 22 January 1934, Prelude and Fugue for Chamber Orchestra (1931), conducted by Iris Lemare on 26 February 1934, String Quartet in one movement (1933) on 17 December 1934 and Two Pieces for Solo Oboe (1954) on 6 December on 1954. Figure 9 below illustrates the first concert performance of Gow's Fantasy String Quartet at the Macnaghten-Lemare concerts series.



PROGRAMMES

(*subject to slight alteration*)

Tuesday October 18th

(2) *Dorothy Gow	Fantasy String Quartet
(1) R. O. Morris	Canzona no. 6 for String Quartet
Oliver Gotch	Eight songs for Tenor Voice
*Elizabeth Maconchy	Sonata for Violin and Piano
Josef Haydn	String Quartet in E flat (op. 1 no. 1)

Tuesday November 15th

Matthew Locke	String Quartet no. 6 (*transcribed by Peter Warlock, edited by André Mangeot*)
Muriel Herbert	Songs for Soprano Voice
Gordon Jacob	String Quartet no. 2 in D minor
*Songs by Elizabeth Maconchy & Betty Lutyens	
Helen Perkin	Phantasy String Quartet

Monday December 12th

Arnold Foster	Three Manx Songs for mixed Choir
*Betty Lutyens	A set of songs: "Winter the Huntsman"; words by Osbert Sitwell (mixed choir and five instruments)
*Lilian Harris	Fantasy Trio for Strings
Jane Joseph	"A little childe there is iborne" (for female voices and string quartet)
*Benjamin Britten	Three two-part songs for female voices; words by de la Mare
*Benjamin Britten	String Quintet
Three Madrigals by Byrd, Wilbye and Weelkes	

Tuesday January 31st (1933)

J. S. Bach	Prelude and Fugue in C sharp minor (*transcribed for Orchestra by Grace Williams*)
*Benjamin Britten	Chamber Sinfonietta
H. K. Andrews	Oboe Concerto
Gerald Finzi	Intrata for Violin and Orchestra
*Grace Williams	Movement for Trumpet and Orchestra

**First concert performance*

The Favil Press

Figure 9. Programmes of Macnaghten-Lemare Concerts. A Second Series of Four Chamber Music Concerts: 18 October, 15 November, 12 December 1932, 31 January 1933 at the Ballet Club Theatre, London. Private archive.

Three works were broadcast by the BBC: *Orchestral Prelude and Fugue* (1931) unknown broadcast date, *String Quartet* (1947) broadcast in 1958, and *Piece for Violin and Horn* broadcast in 1972. More performances of works by Gow are listed in appendix J.

The critics' press reviews were mixed. On the one hand Macnaghten notes that "there were interested and favourable comments in the *Daily Telegraph*, *Evening News*, *Music Lover* (Christian Darnton) and *Musical Times* (Marion Scott)"[277]. On the other hand, according to one critic, Edwin Evans, Gow's Quintet for Oboe and Strings (1936) "had sound qualities but was weighted down with excessive seriousness."[278] Sophie Fuller comments that "…more conservative critics, such as William McNaught and Jack Westrup, found the music of those such as Darnton and Gow hard to stomach."[279] Gow was not to everyone's taste.[280]

In 1932, Gow went to Vienna under the Octavia Travelling Scholarship to study with the Austrian modernist composer Egon Wellesz. She was not the only British composer, who went to Vienna to study composition with Wellesz. Others were Martin du Pré Cooper (1910-1986), Patrick Cairns "Spike" Hughes (1923-26) and Grace Williams (1930-31). Wellesz introduced Gow to the ideas of Schoenberg and his school that she acknowledged very early. On 10 November 1932, after the performance of Webern's Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10 (1913) in Vienna, she wrote in her diary: "… atonal music of the 12 tones", which indicates her precise knowledge of serialism. Gow's surviving works show her taking on board what Wellesz taught her, and that Schoenberg's ideas remained permanent in her works from 1932 onwards. Since Wellesz's influence on Gow was crucial for her different compositional perspective, the next section examines this influence and how it happened. We will focus on Gow's

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[277] Anne Macnaghten, 'Obituary: Dorothy Gow', *RCM Magazine* 79, 1982, p. 61.
[278] Evans, Edwin, "High Standard of New Music." Daily Mail, 14 April 1937, p. 6.
[279] Sophie Fuller, "Putting the BBC and T. Beecham to Shame", *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 2013, Vol. 138, No. 2, p. 397. Christian Darnton (1905-1981) was a British writer and composer. He was also called Baron von Schunck.
[280] More on critics' attitudes on Gow's works see John France, 'Dorothy Gow', *The Maud Powell Signature, Women in Music*, 2/ii (June 2008); website: www.maudpowell.org/signature/Portals/0/pdfs/signature/Signature_June_2008_issue.pdf; accessed 20 June 2023, pp. 87-9.

serialist works from different periods after her studies with Wellesz: early period (Oboe Quintet, 1936), mid-period (Piece for Violin and Horn, 1955), and late period (Song 'There is a place for a cool quiet certitude', for voice and piano, from some time in the 1970's). Also, Gow's pre-serialist phase will be discussed (String Quartet, 1933). The variety and gradual development of Gow's works will be considered: from atonality (String Quartet, 1933), serialism (Oboe Quintet), sophisticated use of double rows (Piece for Violin and Horn) to twelve-tone technique (Song 'There is a place for a cool quiet certitude).

Let us turn to consider the pedagogical relationship between Wellesz and Gow. Around fifteen pieces by Gow have survived (which are listed in appendix I). Looking at Gow's compositional output, we can see a line of development. Earlier on, she wrote musical pieces within a tonal framework, for example Piece for Flute and Piano (1919), Variations 'on a Diabelli Variation' for piano (1925-6), Mass for unaccompanied double choir (1926), Prelude and Fugue for Orchestra (1931). She only gradually developed towards serialism. Her musical language changes from 1932 onwards, after studying with Wellesz. Before that, musical textures are more homophonic. After Wellesz, and especially with her 1933 String Quartet, her language became more polyphonic—many canons and fugato, together with the free use of dissonances and no tonal centre. It is important to note that we can see the same tendency to write within the idiom of European modernism (atonality and rhythmic experimentation) in Frederick May's String Quartet in c minor, which was finished on May's return to Dublin in 1936. May certainly worked on his String Quartet while in Vienna studying with Wellesz. Mark Fitzgerald described May's String Quartet from 1936 as his "most chromatic (and thus in a simplistic sense most modern sounding) composition …".[281] Furthermore, Brian Cass states that May was "the first Irish composer to take the

[281] Mark Fitzgerald, "Inventing Identities: The Case of Frederick May", in Mark Fitzgerald and John O'Flynn (eds.), *Music and Identity in Ireland and Beyond*. London: Routledge, 2014, p. 7.

principles of Schoenberg seriously …”.[282] The influence of Wellesz is clear. He introduced his students to atonality and serialism. Cooper explains:

> The routine which he [Wellesz] established for my weekly lessons … was backed by a course of score-reading, stretching from Bach to Schoenberg… Naturally his own experience as a young man in the Vienna of the Secession and the Second Viennese School and his personal knowledge of such men as Schoenberg, Křenek and Hofmannsthal (among many others) gave all he had to say about twentieth century Central European art a quite exceptionally vivid, personal character.[283]

There is every reason to think that Gow's experience of Wellesz teaching would be similar to Cooper's. Part of what made Wellesz such a good teacher was the scope of his knowledge. But another part was the personal character of some of his knowledge, as Cooper says.[284]

Gow brought to Vienna her earlier works for Wellesz's feedback and evaluation. On their first meeting on 28 October 1932, she played Wellesz her Fantasy Quartet (1932): Gow writes that Wellesz is "mystified & says that it is difficult for him to criticise it as he has heard nothing like it before! An ambiguous remark. He then makes various suggestions to the opening & does after a bit of perusal say it interests him very

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[282] Brian Cass, "Modern Music in Ireland", in Enrique Juncosa and Christina Kennedy (eds.), *The Moderns: The Arts in Ireland from the 1900s to the 1970s*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2009, p. 554.

[283] Martin Cooper. Manuscript, Austrian National Library, F13Wellesz.1024.

[284] Cooper describes Wellesz as a teacher in vivid terms. He writes:
"He was the most equable of teachers, and I cannot recall a single occasion, in more than two years that I spent with him, of his showing impatience with my failure to understand or my limited abilities compared with his own formidable gifts. He always spoke quietly, almost always smiling; and I can still see the look of delight on his face when he had completed a complicated train of reasoning or association and felt that I had understood him. 'Ja' [*'Yes'*], he would say with an even broader smile than usual, 'darum handelt es sich!' [*'that is what it is!'*]. His house in the Kaasgrabengasse represented to me a friendly, as well as a fascinating beacon of light and a kind of haven of homeliness which made a welcome change from my succession of single bachelor-rooms that I inhabited during the two years I spent in Vienna. Although my linguistic difficulties were soon overcome, it was a delight to hear my own language spoken with such ease and elegance by his wife Emmy, whose welcoming smile always caused a stab of the homesickness from which I in fact suffered not at all in general." Martin Cooper (language unchanged). See Egon Wellesz archive at the Vienna National Library: Cooper, Martin, 1910-1986 [VerfasserIn]; Wellesz, Egon, 1885-1974 [Dokumentierte Person]. ÖNB Musiksammlung F13.Wellesz.1024/1.

much which I suppose is something."[285] The next day Gow hears from Cooper that Wellesz thinks highly of her Fantasy Quartet; and she comments: "Why didn't he tell me so instead of being so ambiguous & letting me think the worst?"[286] Gow is obviously nervous and cautious of Wellesz's opinions. But she does not always agree with him. Her Fantasy String Quartet evolved during her stay in Vienna. Gow describes this in her diary: "[Wellesz] finishes perusing my Fantasy Quartet. Some of the alterations I am sure are good, but one or two I don't feel eye to eye with him about. He likes the middle quiet bit the best."[287] She makes alterations to her Fantasy String Quartet because of Wellesz. On 31 October, Gow writes that she copies out a new amended version of Fantasy Quartet, and on 3 November, she acknowledges that she is having to add new bars to this quartet. Note that Gow's Fantasy String Quartet had its *first performance* in London at one of the Macnaghten-Lemare concerts series on 18 October 1932 (as figure 9 indicates) only few days before her trip to Vienna (Gow left for Vienna on 22 October 1932). It is unfortunate that this previous score of Fantasy Quartet has not survived. It would be instructive to know the alterations she made to this quartet in Vienna given Wellesz's suggestions. However, it is notable that Fantasy String Quartet marks a pre-serialist phase of Gow's entire compositional output. It is not yet serialism, but this work is clearly experimental and shows Central European modernist explorations.

Fantasy String Quartet was not the only one piece altered as a result of Wellesz's input. Gow says in her diary that Wellesz also made changes to her Prelude for Orchestra (1931) "with many good suggestions".[288] Wellesz gave Gow positive feedback on her Mass for unaccompanied double choir (1926) and said that "it is cleverly constructed".[289] Gow also showed Wellesz a few of her earlier compositions that have not survived today and presumably were destroyed by her. It is likely that she destroyed these compositions because Wellesz was not very keen on them. And this may explain why she considered these works as immature herself. For example, she shows Wellesz her Fugue for Wind Quintet, and he says that "it is too staccato for wind

[285] Dorothy Gow, Diary*, op. cit.,* 28 October 1932.
[286] *Ibid*., 29 October 1932.
[287] *Ibid*., 30 October 1932.
[288] *Ibid*., 7 November 1932.
[289] *Ibid*., 2 November 1932.

instruments & must turn it into a string quartet."[290] And about her Piano Concerto Wellesz thought that "the form was not what it should be, too much monotony & staying in one level for too long."[291] Neither of these compositions have survived.

Wellesz strongly urges Gow to take classical form seriously and to work with it. As a result, she wrote the first movement of String Quartet, copying closely the sonata form of the first movement *Allegro con brio* of Beethoven's String Quartet no. 11 in F minor, op. 95, from 1810. On the very first page of the manuscript, she scribbles in pencil that the "work done in Vienna when studying with Wellesz between October & December 1932".[292] This first movement is vigorously polyphonic in texture. She uses the full range of the chromatic scale and free dissonances.

Similarly, Gow's String Quartet of 1933, written presumably while studying with Wellesz in Salzburgh between June and August, is intricately polyphonic and chromatic. The Quartet is in one movement but grouped into three parts *Moderato*, *Lento Espressivo* and *Allegro Scherzando*. The opening *Moderato* takes after a fugal exposition. The quartet is clearly leading up to her adoption of Second Viennese School serialism. This String Quartet will be revisited when we consider Gow's influence on Lutyens.

The synthesis of classical form and Schoenbergian practise is seen in her later String Quartet, written in 1947, published by Oxford University Press in 1957, the piece that gained most success during her lifetime. This quartet had its first performance at the London Contemporary Music Centre in 1950. The Quartet is in one movement but has an explicit ternary structure consisting of three distinct sections and a short slow introduction. It is basically written in sonata form. The plan of the quartet is: slow introduction (*Sostenuto*, mm. 1-20), exposition (mm. 21-132), fast development (*Allegro – Meno mosso – Scherzando*, mm. 133-246), recapitulation (*Sostenuto*, 247-261), which clearly resembles the introduction. The musical texture of the quartet is once again polyphonic, especially the *Scherzando* (mm. 194-246), which is basically fugato.

[290] *Ibid*., 31 October 1932.
[291] *Ibid*., 17 December 1932.
[292] British Library archives and manuscripts Add MS 63001 (1932-1933).

The work is based on three themes: the first theme – A♭ G A A♭ B♭ B D D♭ A♭ A G; the second theme – E♭ E D E♭ F G G♭ F G G♭ A G; and the third theme – F G♭ E F E♭ E D E♭ D♭ D B. The first theme is introduced by the first violin and cello at the beginning. And the second theme is stated simultaneously with the first theme by the second violin and viola; the intervallic structure of the theme is closely connected by tone – semi-tone relations. The third theme appears early in the following development section. The quartet ends with the third theme. Schoenbergian traits are in evidence here too. For example, the third theme is seen as inversion in the recapitulation section. The existence of an eleven note 'row' and its inversion is an application of the techniques of Second Viennese School.

Example 1. Dorothy Gow String Quartet 1947 (published by Oxford University Press in 1957), mm. 244-255; the inversion of the third theme is highlighted in the recapitulation section.

This 1947 piece is constructed in serialist idiom and received great appreciation. For example, there were two letters to Gow from an Australian composer Malcolm Williamson and a British composer Peter Thorogood (see appendixes L and M) after the Macnaghten String Quartet performed it in 1953 on 30 March and 2 November.

All in all, Gow's string quartets show the application of all that Wellesz had taught her, and they display atonal musical language. It is important to note that in the

early 1930's Wellesz himself was writing a string quartet – *Sonette der Elisabeth Barrett Browning*, op. 52 for soprano and string quartet (the first version completed in 1934). This work, according to Bujić, "… marked a decided return to the idiom of the early Schoenberg, evoking the sound world of Schoenberg's Second Quartet."[293] So Wellesz and Gow were both scoring for a string quartet in the early 1930's in a similar Schoenbergian logic.

§2. Lutyens and Gow

Wellesz's influence on Gow can be profitably set alongside *her* influence on others; in particular, her role with respect to other British composers around her and how she stands in that emerging tradition.

Modern histories of twentieth-century music take the view that Searle and Lutyens were the first British composers to adopt twelve-tone technique around 1939. For example, Jennifer Doctor says: "Searle and Lutyens were the first English composers to adopt the twelve-tone technique, both having begun to experiment with it around 1939."[294] *The Oxford History of English Music* claims that Lutyens's Chamber Concerto for Nine Instruments, op. 8, no. 1 (1939) is: "…the first significant British composition to employ serial methods." [295] And Alexander Goehr says: "… the Manchester students … were the first in England to take the ethos of Schoenberg and Webern … dead [*sic*] seriously apart from Elisabeth Lutyens."[296] What all agree on here is in fact implausible. There are two main questions. The first is about influence: from where did Searle and Lutyens receive the impetus to adopt the twelve-tone technique? And the second: is it true that they were first?

[293] Bojan Bujić, op. cit., p. 186.
[294] Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 1.
[295] John Caldwell, *The Oxford History of English Music, Vol. II: c.1715 to the Present Day*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
[296] Bayan Northcott, 'Interview 1: Towards the Little Symphony', in Bayan Northcott (ed.), *The Music of Alexander Goehr: Interviews and Articles*, London: Schott, 1980, 12.

Searle's influence and impetus is uncontroversial. Searle, in a radio talk, mentions hearing the BBC broadcast of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* under Adrian Boult in 1934; and he went to study with Webern in 1937. He says:

> I heard a broadcast of it [Wozzeck] …, and though I didn't like modern music much at that time, I was so moved by these strange and powerful sounds that I determined to try and find out more about Berg, and the kind of music he wrote. Later, in the autumn of 1937 I was lucky enough to be able to go to Vienna and study with Anton Webern ….[297]

This line of influence is clear. But what about Lutyens? This is where the line of influence is less straightforward, and the conventional account unravels. The influences on Lutyens are unclear. Not just that, they appear to be deliberately muddied by Lutyens herself, who seems not to be fully honest in what she says and thinks about her influences. In particular, she maintains that she came to serialist methods *by herself*. Lutyens says:

> … the Purcell Fantasias (little known then) had a profound and lasting effect on me. It was hearing these works, with their equality of part-writing, coupled with my satiety – to screaming point – with diatonic cadential harmony, that led me to discover gradually, for my own compositional needs, what some years later I heard described as 'twelve-note', 'serial' composition.[298]

This is a surprising claim, to say the least. In fact, Lutyens was exposed to quite a bit of serialist music; for example, she heard the music of Webern for the first time in 1933, played by the Kolisch Quartet in London.[299] And in 1938, she heard the world premiere of Webern's *Das Augenlicht* at the ISCM Festival in London.[300] In fact, Lutyens's Chamber Concerto for Nine Instruments, op. 8, no. 1, written in 1939, the piece that she described as her "…first really serial work"[301] was, according to Meirion and Susie Harries, seen as "a pale imitation" of Webern's Concerto for Nine Instruments op. 24. For one thing, it had just the same instruments that Webern had used in his 1934

[297] Add MS 71826, ff. pp. 103-107, pp. 1949-1972.
[298] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op.cit*., 1972, p. 69.
[299] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op.cit*., 1972, p. 72.
[300] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op.cit*., p. 76
[301] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op.cit*., p. 99.

piece.[302] It is striking how this unlikely claim by Lutyens herself has taken root. For instance, Jim Samson writes: "…her arrival at a personal 12-tone technique in the Chamber Concerto no. 1 for nine instruments (1939) was largely an independent achievement, following only a brief acquaintance with scores by Schoenberg and Webern."[303] And even the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, repeats Lutyens's implausible claim: "Lutyens's stylistic evolution was a slow and arduous process worked out without knowledge of radical developments outside England."[304] This implausibility—that she came up with twelve-tone technique on her own—is important when we consider influences flowing between Lutyens and Gow. The truth is that Gow came to serialism first, and she influenced Lutyens, something that is not there in the conventional story or in what Lutyens says. This influence was not honestly acknowledged by Lutyens, and history has also buried this influence, which needs to be unearthed in order to give Gow her due. Let us chart the relations between Gow and Lutyens insofar as it bears on influential relations between them.

First, Gow and Lutyens were close friends. The two met regularly and exchanged musical ideas and techniques, although it appears that Lutyens learned more from Gow than vice versa.[305] Lutyens wrote in 1972 that "she [Gow] was the first of a long and still unending series of confidential *confrères* to whom I could show my works; discuss technical problems and obtain — most necessary to me — a reaction. We used to meet, almost weekly, to compare notes and receive mutual musical stimulus."[306] There is much evidence that the two women talked extensively and in detail about serialist composition, which Gow, unlike Lutyens, was exposed to in Vienna from one of its masters (Gow studied with Wellesz in 1932). Rhiannon Mathias notes that at the Royal College of Music Lutyens became particularly close to Gow, who "became a surrogate older sister to Lutyens and together they spent many hours poring over the details of

[302] Meirion Harries and Susie Harries, *A Pilgrim Soul: The Life and Work of Elisabeth Lutyens*, London: Michael Joseph, 1989, p. 90. They do not say who the detractors were.
[303] Jim Samson, in "Instrumental Music II", *Blackwell History of Music in Britain: The Twentieth Century*, ed. Stephen Banfield, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, pp. 279-342, page 304.
[304] New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Elizabeth Lutyens entry.
[305] Harries and Harries*, op. cit.,* p. 57.
[306] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op. cit.,* 1972, p. 49.

their latest pieces."[307] Since the two met and talked about music a great deal (Gow was one of Lutyens "*confrères*") it is highly unlikely that their musical development was independent.

Secondly, Gow wrote Fantasy String Quartet in 1932. In 1937, Lutyens composed *Fantasia for Strings* (two violins, viola, and two cellos), which is unpublished, and, unlike Gow's *Fantasy*, Lutyens's *Fantasia* has never been performed. Although 'phantasy' genre was common among British composers[308], we should acknowledge that both composers wrote 'phantasies' for strings in the 1930's in the atonal musical language. However, what is more striking is that Laurel Parsons argues that Lutyens's *Fantasia* is proto-serial because of its allusion to Purcell's string fantasias and atonality, and therefore apparently confirms Lutyens's "seemingly bizarre claim that the music of Purcell [rather than Second Viennese School] inspired her towards serialism."[309] Actually, Lutyens's *Fantasia* mimics Gow's String Quartet, from 1933 much more than Purcell's fantasias or anything in Webern's works, for example. Both of these works are written in the same principle. Compare two autograph scores below (figure 10 reproduces the first page of Gow's autograph score of String Quartet (1933)[310], and figure 12 reproduces the first page of autograph score Lutyens's *Fantasia* (1937)[311].

[307] Rhiannon Mathias, *Lutyens, Maconchy, Williams and Twentieth-Century British Music: A Blest Trio of Sirens* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p. 15.

[308] Notably quite a few British composers wrote 'phantasies' in the late 1920's or in the early 1930's, for example: Arnold Foster, Fantasy for Piano Quartet (1929); Helen Perkin, Phantasy String Quartet (1929); Lilian Harris, Fantasie Trio for Strings (1932); Benjamin Britten, Phantasy in F minor for String Quintet (1932); William Alwyn, Fantasia for String Quartet no. 12 (1937). See further Sophie Fuller "'Putting the BBC and T. Beecham to Sham': The Macnaghten-Lemare Concerts, 1931-7", *Journal of the Royal Musical* Ass*ociation vol. 138, no. 2*, 2013, p. 384.

[309] Laurel Parsons, "Early Music and the Ambivalent Origins of Elisabeth Lutyens's Modernism" in Matthew Riley (ed.), *British Music and Modernism, 1895-1960*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010, pp 278-9.

[310] British Library Archives and Manuscripts. Add MS 63002.

[311] British Library Archives and Manuscripts. Add MS 64518.

Figure 10. Dorothy Gow. String Quartet, 1933 (mm. 1-8).

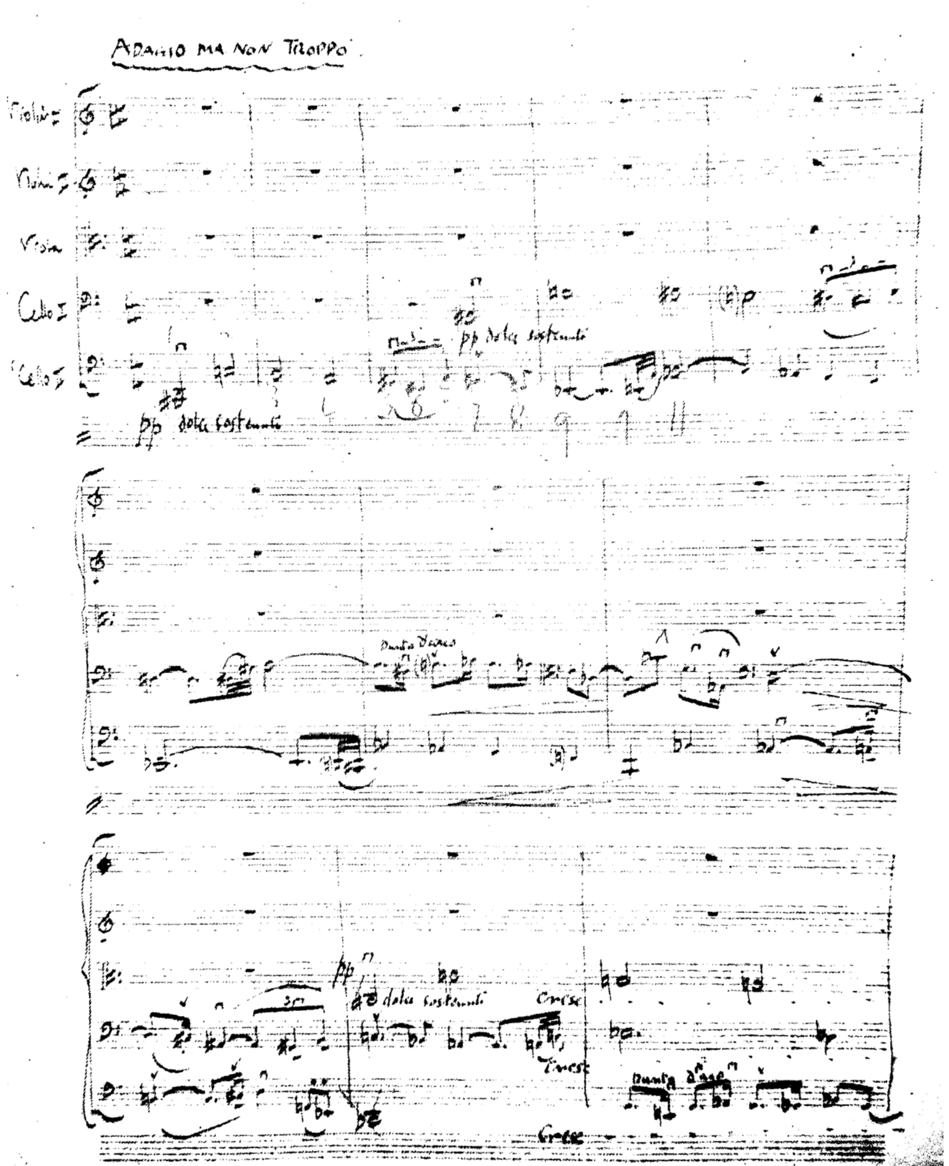

Figure 11. Elisabeth Lutyens. *Five-Part Fantasia for Strings*, 1937 (mm. 1-11).

The opening *Moderato* of Gow's String Quartet (1933) and the opening *Adagio ma non troppo* of Lutyens's *Fantasia for Strings* (1937) mirror a fugal exposition. The theme in both of these works begins with the rising intervals aiming at almost completely chromatic scale with each of the instruments entering one after another. Gow's String Quartet was given its first performance on 17 December 1934 by Macnaghten Quartet (see appendix J). It would not be plausible to think that Lutyens wrote *Fantasia* without knowing Gow's String Quartet. It was Gow who influenced Lutyens.

Thirdly, Gow wrote the piece Three Songs for Tenor and String Quartet in 1933 using Sixteenth Century poems. In 1937, Lutyens wrote Four Songs for Tenor and String Quartet using Sixteenth Century poems. Surely this is no coincidence, and it strongly suggests the influence of Gow on Lutyens. Gow does not identify the text of her Three Songs for Tenor in her 1933 manuscript apart from saying that there were "16th Century Poems". Lutyens, for her part, identifies the poets, writing on her 1937 manuscript "Rochford (?) 1536", "Anon 1613", "John Lyly 1584" and "Quarles 1632". Although the songs are different, (1) they are from the same period of English poetry; (2) they are for Tenor and string quartet; (3) there is not much difference in the number composed; (4) stylistically there is much in common. It is impossible to resist the idea that the Lutyens work has something to do with Gow's earlier piece.

The last point, and perhaps the simplest is that Gow was first. Her unpublished 1936 Oboe Quintet is a long time before Lutyens's more ambiguous 1939 work Chamber Concerto, op. 8 no. 1. Lutyens herself considered this her first serial composition. However, according to Parsons: "…although in reality this work is only intermittently serial and not at all twelve-note…" [312] By contrast, Gow's 1936 Oboe Quintet is unambiguously serialist. Let us now look at these works.[313]

The Oboe Quintet in one movement, written in 1936, was rediscovered by the English oboist George Caird, when he, as a soloist, recorded the quintet at St Michael's Church in London in 2004 – *An English Renaissance: Music for Oboe and Strings*

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[312] Laurel Parsons, "Early Music and the Ambivalent Origins of Elisabeth Lutyens's Modernism", *British Music and Modernism, 1895-1960*, ed. Matthew Riley, London: Routledge, 2010, p. 288.

[313] The theoretical framework and more consistent terminology underpinning the analysis of serial composition with the terms such as twelve-tone matrix, as it is used in this paper, was first introduced by American composer and music theorist Milton Babbitt who published a series of articles on the subject spanning from 1955 to 1974. Other authoritative sources are George Perle's books of 1962, *Serial Composition and Atonality: An Introduction to the Music of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press) and in 1977, *Twelve-Tone Tonality Webern* (Berkeley: University of California Press). Basic theoretical concepts for the post-tonal music of the twentieth century were later employed by Joseph N. Strauss in his *Introduction to the Post-Tonal Theory*, first published in 1989 by Prentice Hall. And in 2008, British music theorist Arnold Whittall provided a clear and informative outline of serialism and analytical tools of a serial composition – *Serialism* as part of *Cambridge Introductions to Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Inspired by Léon Goossens (Oboe Classics, CC2009). It is the only recording of the Oboe Quintet, appropriately combined with the works of other English and/or Irish composers such as Arthur Bliss, Benjamin Britten, Elisabeth Maconchy and E. J. Moeran. The first performance of the Oboe Quintet, as stated by Caird in a recording booklet, was at a concert of the London Contemporary Music Centre—the British branch of the ISCM. It is unknown who the performers were, but it is likely, however, that the oboist would have been Léon Jean Goossens (1897-1988), an English oboist, or one of his students because of Gow's connections with the RCM, where Goossens was teaching.[314]

The Oboe Quintet is in one longish movement although it is divided into four well-defined sections: *Moderato – Andante tranquillo – Scherzando – Tempo primo.* The way that all the instrumental parts are written is impressively integrated and yet expressive. There is a great sense of freedom—yet each instrument has its part to play. According to John France, "it is basically a string canon"[315]—a work of equal parts. Caird notes that the quintet is "scored brilliantly for the oboe and strings giving all instruments a free voice and the rhythmic construction of the music is both complex and constantly appealing." What is perhaps the highlight of the Quintet is an *Andante tranquillo*, which contrasts with the intensity of the opening pages. A final section of Gow's piece draws the material of the work together, which, interestingly, ends tonally on a D9 chord. This is powerful music that emerges from the English tradition of string writing. Yet the technique used—canon—is one that harks back to both early music and also to Gow's teacher—Wellesz. It is technically difficult music, yet it does not sound complex. Figure 12 reproduces the first page of the autograph score.[316]

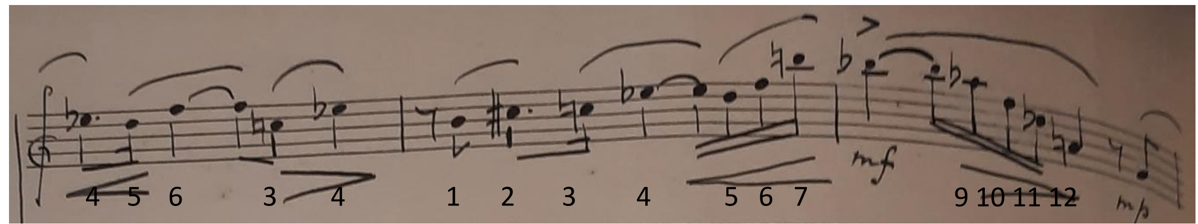
[314] Caird, George. 'Dorothy Gow'. *An English Renaissance: Music for Oboe and Strings Inspired by Léon Goossens,* Oboe Classics CC2009 (recording booklet).
[315] John France, "Dorothy Gow: Oboe Quintet in one movement (1936)", *British Classical Music: The Land of Lost Content*, 11 September 2018, Online article: https://landofllostcontent.blogspot.com/2018/09/ [Accessed: 18 November 2023].
[316] British Library Archives and Manuscripts Add MS 63004.

Figure 12. Dorothy Gow. Oboe Quintet, 1936 (mm. 1-15).

The Quintet is a clearly serial work where the 'tone row' is announced by the oboe solo after the short strings opening. The quintet is based on a twelve-tone row that is connected by the interval of the semitone. The row she is using is this:

B C# C E♭ D F B B♭ A♭ F D♭ A.

Example 2. ‘Tone row’. Dorothy Gow’s Oboe Quintet, mm., 16-18, oboe solo, autograph score.



This row resembles hidden symmetry around ‘F’, which is this:

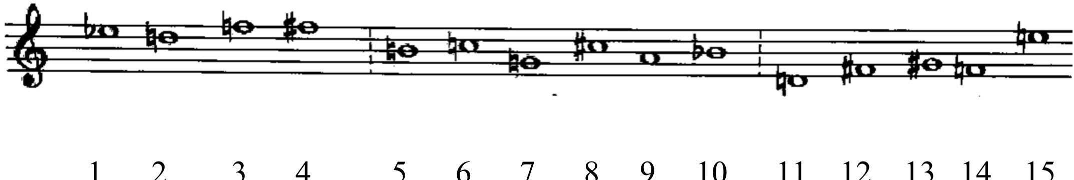
C C# D E♭ **F** A♭ A♮ B♭ B♮.

So, here ‘F’ is the centre of the row, where two groups of chromatic aggregation appear below and above ‘F’ (C-C#-D-E♭, and A♭-A♮-B♭-B♮). The resembling symmetry is perhaps an echo of Webern’s well-known deployment of symmetry.

Now let us compare Gow’s row with Lutyens’s row three years later in Chamber Concerto, op. 8 no. 1 (1939). She is using a fifteen-tone row, which is this:

E♭ D F F# B C G C# A B♭ D F# G# F E.

Example 3. ‘Tone row’. Elisabeth Lutyens’s Chamber Concerto op. 8.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

What we can clearly see here is that both rows are very similar in interval structure, relying firmly on the semitonal relationship. Interestingly, the first three notes, reproduced in example 2 (tones 4, 5 and 6 of Gow’s row) are exactly the first three

tones of Lutyens's row. Note that Gow's and Lutyens's tetrachord includes the minor third D – F. Moreover, as discussed by Annika Forkert, Lutyens's "… row evolves organically and broadly around an almost invisible central pitch E, which only materialises as the very last sounding pitch of the row. If E is taken as the centre of this row, groups of two inverted semitones begin to assemble below and above E (E♭ – D, F – F♯, and B – C)." This 'hidden symmetry' is very similar to what we have already seen in Gow's row. Forkert compares Chamber Concerto no. 1 row with the twelve-tone row of Webern's Concerto op. 24, which is provided below.

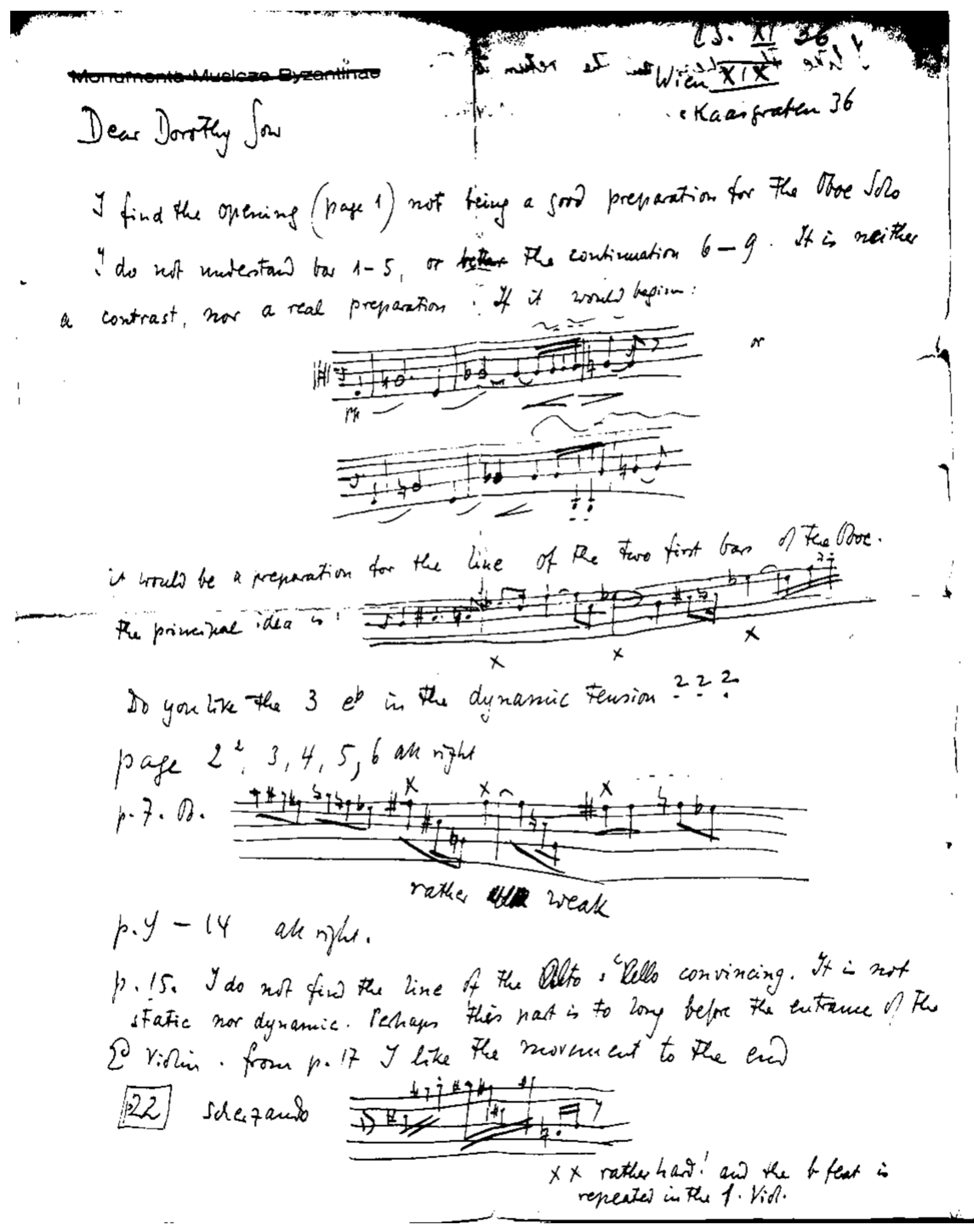
Example 4. Anton Webern. Concerto op. 24, twelve-tone row.

However, we can now see that Lutyens's row resembles the row of Gow's Oboe Quintet more than the one of Webern's Concerto op. 24.

Gow and Lutyens show definite awareness of atonal and twelve-note methods, even though both composers do not follow its postulates strictly in the compositions that we examined. Considering both composers, it is interesting to see how serialist methods gradually developed into more substantial ones. In Gow's case, serialism later became the coordinating principle of her compositions, especially in the post-war works, such as Piece for Violin and Horn, where she uses two 'tone-rows' simultaneously, and in Song for voice and piano, which is written entirely in twelve-tone technique. Lutyens, on the other hand, has never achieved this kind of Gow's masterly crafted use of the technique.

Gow's influence on Lutyens is clear, but what about influences on Gow? The Oboe Quintet is heavily influenced by the Second Viennese School and its disciple Wellesz. In fact, Gow received help from Wellesz in composing her Oboe Quintet, even though she was not studying with him anymore in 1936. There is an autograph

letter from Wellesz to Gow, written on 23 November 1936, where he comments on Oboe Quintet in detail. Figure 14 reproduces the first page of the autograph letter.



Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae

23. XI 36
Wien XIX
Kaasgraben 36

Dear Dorothy Gow

I find the opening (page 1) not being a good preparation for the Oboe Solo
I do not understand bar 1-5, or the continuation 6-9. It is neither
a contrast, nor a real preparation. If it would begin:

it would be a preparation for the line of the two first bars of the Oboe.
the principal idea is:

Do you like the 3 e♭ in the dynamic tension ???

page 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 all right
p. 7. 8.

rather weak

p. 9 – 14 all right.

p. 15. I do not find the line of the Alto & Cello convincing. It is not static nor dynamic. Perhaps this part is to long before the entrance of the 2nd Violin. from p. 17 I like the movement to the end

22 Scherzando

xx rather hard! and the b flat is repeated in the 1. Viol.

Figure 13. Egon Wellesz. Handwritten letter to Dorothy Gow, 23 November 1936. Private archive.

Wellesz writes that he finds "the opening (page 1) not being a good preparation for the Oboe Solo. I do not understand bar 1-5, or the continuation 6-9. It is neither a contrast, nor a real preparation…", and he actually gives her a musical example of how it should be written. Wellesz comments are very precise, saying what he likes and dislikes about

it: "I do not find the line of the Cello convincing. It is not static nor dynamic…" or "I think the part for the Oboe is, from the instrumental point, very good." So, it is clear who was Gow's guide for composing Oboe Quintet. But what about Lutyens?

In order to consider this, it is important to bear in mind that to understand serialist techniques it is not enough to listen, without a score. According to Meirion and Susie Harries "… systemic study was never [Lutyen's] style. She was not particularly well educated musically – in comparison, say, with William Walton ..."[317] So, even if Lutyens saw scores of the Second Viennese School it would not be easy for her to analyse them methodically without a knowledgeable guide. For Lutyens, that guide was Gow. It was Gow who *fully* understood serialist techniques, as shown in 1936 Quintet for Oboe and Strings.[318] By contrast, although Lutyens did use the serialist method in her 1939 and later pieces, she never used it systematically and comprehensively, as did Gow. This claim about Gow will be supported below by analysing two of her later works.

What alternative hypotheses might there be about the route by which Lutyens got her serialism? It is clear that one line of serialist influence goes from Schoenberg to Wellesz to Gow. But the question we need to consider is whether it also goes from Gow to Lutyens. In principle, Lutyens could have gained access to information about serialism from Edward Clark who got it from Schoenberg. However, this is unlikely because Clark was with Schoenberg before his serialist phase (1910-12). And Lutyens and Clark only met in 1938. And it hardly needs saying that it is completely improbable that Lutyens invented it all herself, despite what she claims. Lutyens claims that she learned *nothing* from Schoenberg – As Meirion Harries and Susie Harries say: "In its most extreme form it led her to say, 'Oh – did Schoenberg use the twelve-tone method too?'"[319] This seems either untruthful or self-deceptive. It is certainly mean-spirited. Indeed, there is something delusional about her claims.

[317] Meirion Harries and Susie Harries, *A Pilgrim Soul: The Life and Works of Elisabeth Lutyens*, London: Michael Joseph, 1989, p. 91.
[318] The only recording of Dorothy Gow's Oboe Quintet from 1936 in one movement is on *An English Renaissance,* Oboe Classics CC2009. The oboe soloist is George Caird. It is the only opportunity that most listeners have to hear Gow's music.
[319] Meirion Harries and Susie Harries, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

There are parallels between Lutyens's *lack* of acknowledgement of Gow's influence and her explicit *denial* that she was influenced by Schoenberg and Wellesz. Lutyens's well-documented anti-Semitism[320] seems to have one factor that led her to underestimate the influence on herself of Schoenberg and Wellesz. But when it comes to Gow, it just seems to be ingratitude. Annika Forkert excuses Lutyens' denial of influence as being due to her being a woman composer: "She may have felt that as a female composer, whether identifying as such or not, the acknowledgement of influence carried a higher risk of being perceived as a weakness, lack of originality or dependence. "[321] Of course, this is not to deny that the fact that Lutyens was a female composer in a man's world may have been a significant factor. (The same of course was true of Gow.) But Lutyens should not be given a free pass for failing to acknowledge her debt to Gow just because she, Lutyens, was a woman composer. Likewise, we need not take seriously her claim that she got the twelve-tone technique from Purcell, a technique that was merely "associated" with Schoenberg.[322] This of course is strange and implausible. Both disavowals of influence, anxious or not, are shoddy and dishonest.

Ingratitude was not Lutyens's only personal flaw. In addition to also being anti-Semitic,[323] she consistently held flattering views of her own achievements and importance, which are clear in her autobiography.[324] She had some charm, but it concealed a certain arrogance, which led to distorted views of her own contribution and, especially, to downplay her own artistic and intellectual debts. As personalities, Lutyens and Gow were complete opposites. Lutyens was outgoing and self-important, while Gow was very shy and self-critical. Lutyens clearly *wanted* very much to be original, perhaps because of her famous architect father, Edwin Lutyens. But that seems to have blinded her to what she had learned from others.

[320] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op. cit., passim*.

[321] "RNCM Research Forum – Dr Annika Forkert - 10 Mar 2021" (www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GDaWMOJkcA, around 46 minutes in, accessed 19 December 2022).

[322] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl*, *op. cit.,* pp. 167-68.

[323] See Meirion Harries and Susie Harries, *A Pilgrim Soul: The Life and Work of Elisabeth Lutyens*, pp. 173, pp. 180-181, p. 222, pp. 252-253, pp. 272-273.

[324] Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl, op. cit., passim*.

It seems, then, that we can say that the evidence for a rival hypothesis concerning influence on Lutyens is slim, and therefore it is most likely that Lutyens was influenced by Gow, given the reasons pointing that way. Lutyens herself knew what she did not know. Mathias says of Lutyens:

> Although Dorothy Gow remained one of her closest friends, Lutyens was perhaps all too aware that she lacked the necessary training credentials to join what was, in essence, a clique of Vaughan Wiliams's students. As she wryly liked to say of her student days, 'people with real talent (such as Elisabeth Maconchy) went to Vaughan Williams, whereas people without talent (such as Elisabeth Lutyens) were sent to Harold Darke'.[325] Her compositional development proceeded at a much slower pace than that of Maconchy or Williams. Certainly, she was not thought as being a particularly interesting composer at College.[326]

By contrast, Gow's sketches show her working out twelve-tone structure in Schoenberg. Figure 14 shows Gow copying one of Schoenberg's rows.

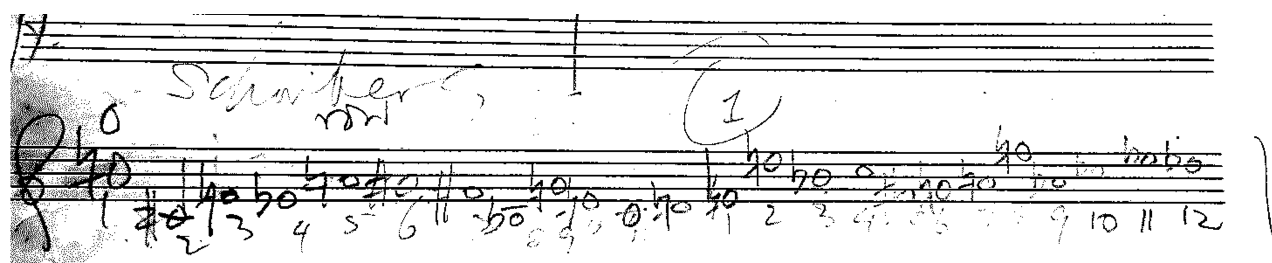


Figure 14. Schoenberg's row in the hand of Dorothy Gow. Private archive.

This is certainly Schoenberg. These are twelve-tone rows for the second piano piece (Op. 33b) from Two Piano Pieces, op. 33 (*Zwei Klavierstücke*), composed between 1928 and 1931. The first twelve notes what Gow marks 'O' (Original) is a prime row (P_0) for the second piano piece Op. 33b: B - C# - F - D# - A - G# - F# - A# - G – E – C – D. The following twelve notes, indicated by Gow as '1 or I' is an inversion-form row

[325] Lutyens as recounted by Robert Saxton in 'Fairest Isle: Lutyens and Maconchy' (Radio 3, 11 September 1995) [NSA Cat. No. H5688/1/1].

[326] Rhiannon Mathias, *Lutyens, Maconchy, Williams and Twentieth-Century British Music: A Blest Trio of Sirens*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2012, pp. 24-25.

that begins on E natural (I_9): E – D - A# - C - F# - G – A – F - G# - B - D# - C#. Gow also analysed Schoenberg's score in a pencil, which shows her familiarity with the twelve-tone technique. Gow wrote with on the score in pencil: 'row inverted at 5th', 'row backwards'.

KLAVIERSTÜCK

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG

Mässig langsam (♩ = 64)

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Figure 15. Dorothy Gow. Analysis of Arnold Schoenberg's *Klavierstück*, op. 33b. Private archive.

This is not the only one score by Second Viennese School composer with which Gow was familiar. Gow recalls in her diary that Frau Keller lent her the score of *Wozzeck*[327]. Gow is not only playing it on the piano before she sees the opera at *Wiener Staatsoper*

[327] Dorothy Gow. Diary, *op. cit.,* 25 November 1932.

on 25 November 1932, but also copies Marrie's *Lullaby*, which she later describes as "really beautiful"[328].

Figure 16. *Lullaby* from Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck* in the hand of Dorothy Gow. Private archive.

There is a significant personal dimension to these compositional influences. Gow was modest and lacked confidence, which meant she was not as ambitious as she might

[328] *Ibid.*, 26 November 1932.

have been, given her talents. Gow writes in a letter about her time at the Royal College of Music: “I was rather overawed by so much talent in my fellow students that I kept well in the background”. And she continued to be self-deprecating her whole life, when she did not really need to be. For example, when she had to contribute a few words about herself for the Macnaghten New Music Group, for the concerts on 3 February, 9 March and 30 March, she self-effacingly writes: “She does not consciously adhere to any particular style.” Gow seems to be hiding her influences. This aspect of her character meant that others could draw on her work without giving her due credit.

Now, influence has been extensively theorised in the last fifty years since Harold Bloom’s *The Anxiety of Influence*.[329] It is however apparent that we should avoid an over-monolithic view of ‘influence’. Perhaps some artistic influence involves the full Bloomian anxious influence, complete with rococo psychoanalytic embellishments. However, *other* influence can be more prosaic. Some influence can be a more prosaic causal process, like contracting a virus, or a meme, in just the way Bloom thinks it is *not* in the cases of great artists like Shakespeare. Bloom is surely right that *such* cases involve more than brute causation. However, not all artists are like that.

Joseph Strauss divides influences into various kinds.[330] They all involve some kind of composer’s self-awareness of the role of the past models. Nevertheless, there is *also* a cruder and perhaps less interesting influential process or route whereby the activity of one artist or composer has an effect on the activity of a later one. There is clear evidence of a causal link from the works of Gow to those of Lutyens, something Lutyens is not open about. The particular route of transmission of early twentieth century Second Viennese School modernism to British composers is of its own distinctive sort, and it may not conform to a neat classificatory scheme. What we see is in fact a story in which Gow plays a significant part that gets either lost or is deliberately erased in history. Although it is true that Bloom’s famous book *The Anxiety of Influence* from 1973 made plentiful elaborate psychoanalytic assumptions, underneath that some simpler basic relations are retained. He writes: “Criticism is the art of knowing the hidden roads that go from poem to poem.”[331] The road that Lutyens

[329] Harold Bloom, *op. cit.*
[330] Joseph Strauss, *op.cit.*, chapter 1.
[331] Harold Bloom, *op.cit.*

wanted to hide went from Schoenberg to Wellesz to Gow to Lutyens. If there was someone who was anxious about influence it was Lutyens, who wanted to present herself as uninfluenced and inventing it all herself. But she was either not fully honest to herself or to others.

Influence can take many forms. It can be of the full Bloomian kind. However, in some cases, influence can be somewhat shoddy and dishonest. The influence from Gow to Lutyens was of this more inglorious kind. Indeed, it has robbed Gow of her rightful accolade as Britain's first serialist composer.

§3. Gow's Later Works

Let us now turn to consider two of Gow's later works, which show that Gow remained firmly under Second Viennese School influence and produced sophisticated atonal works: Piece for Violin and Horn, and Song 'There is a place for a cool quiet certitude' for voice and piano.

Gow's unpublished Piece for Violin and Horn was probably written sometime in the mid-1950's. It is not based on a standard application of a single twelve-tone row, but rather it is composed using two eight-note rows. The first row is D B♭ E A♭ F C B G, and the second one is F# C# F E A D G. Even though both rows are eight-note rows, transpositions are made from all the notes of the chromatic scale. For primes and inversions, we will use P and I followed by a pitch integer to specify the starting note. For example, P_0 is an eight-note row starting on C, and so on. The same is the case for inversion (I) row forms, but the retrograde (R) and retrograde inversion (RI) row forms use the pitch integer of the *last* note in the row to indicate their transposition level. For example, R_0 ends on C, and so on.

Table 1. Row chart of the first-row of Gow's Piece for Violin and Horn.

P_2	D	B♭	E	A♭	F	C	B	G	R_2		I_2	D	G♭	C	A♭	B	E	F	A	RI_2
P_0	C	A♭	D	G♭	E♭	B♭	A	F	R_0		I_0	C	E	B♭	G♭	A	D	E♭	G	RI_0
P_1	D♭	A	E♭	G	E	B	B♭	G♭	R_1		I_1	D♭	F	B	G	B♭	E♭	E	A♭	RI_1
P_3	E♭	B	F	A	G♭	D♭	C	A♭	R_3		I_3	E♭	G	D♭	A	C	F	G♭	B♭	RI_3
P_4	E	C	G♭	B♭	G	D	D♭	A	R_4		I_4	E	A♭	D	B♭	D♭	G♭	G	B	RI_4
P_5	F	D♭	G	B	A♭	E♭	D	B♭	R_5		I_5	F	A	E♭	B	D	G	A♭	C	RI_5
P_6	G♭	D	A♭	C	A	E	E♭	B	R_6		I_6	G♭	B♭	E	C	E♭	A♭	A	D♭	RI_6
P_7	G	E♭	A	D♭	B♭	F	E	C	R_7		I_7	G	B	F	D♭	E	A	B♭	D	RI_7
P_8	A♭	E	B♭	D	B	G♭	F	D♭	R_8		I_8	A♭	C	G♭	D	F	B♭	B	E♭	RI_8
P_9	A	F	B	E♭	C	G	G♭	D	R_9		I_9	A	D♭	G	E♭	G♭	B	C	E	RI_9
P_{10}	B♭	G♭	C	E	D♭	A♭	G	E♭	R_{10}		I_{10}	B♭	D	A♭	E	G	C	D♭	F	RI_{10}
P_{11}	B	G	D♭	F	D	A	A♭	E	R_{11}		I_{11}	B	E♭	A	F	A♭	D♭	D	G♭	RI_{11}

Table 2. Row chart of the second-row of Gow's Piece for Violin and Horn.

P_6	F#	C#	F	E	A	D	G	E♭	R_6		I_6	F#	B	G	G#	D#	A#	F	A	RI_6
P_0	C	G	B	A#	D#	G#	C#	A	R_0		I_0	C	F	C#	D	A	E	B	D#	RI_0
P_1	C#	G#	C	B	E	A	D	A#	R_1		I_1	C#	F#	D	D#	A#	F	C	E	RI_1
P_2	D	A	C#	C	F	A#	D#	B	R_2		I_2	D	G	D#	E	B	F#	C#	F	RI_2
P_3	D#	A#	D	C#	F#	B	E	C	R_3		I_3	D#	G#	E	F	C	G	D	F#	RI_3
P_4	E	B	D#	D	G	C	F	C#	R_4		I_4	E	A	F	F#	C#	G#	D#	G	RI_4
P_5	F	C	E	D#	G#	C#	F#	D	R_5		I_5	F	A#	F#	G	D	A	E	G#	RI_5
P_7	G	D	F#	F	A#	D#	G#	E	R_7		I_7	G	C	G#	A	E	B	F#	A#	RI_7
P_8	G#	D#	G	F#	B	E	A	F	R_8		I_8	G#	C#	A	A#	F	C	G	B	RI_8
P_9	A	E	G#	G	C	F	A#	F#	R_9		I_9	A	D	A#	B	F#	C#	G#	C	RI_9
P_{10}	A#	F	A	G#	C#	F#	B	G	R_{10}		I_{10}	A#	D#	B	C	G	D	A	C#	RI_{10}
P_{11}	B	F#	A#	A	D	G	C	G#	R_{11}		I_{11}	B	E	C	C#	G#	D#	A#	D	RI_{11}

The first eight-note row is presented by solo horn at the very beginning of the piece. The row is presented twice: first time it appears incomplete – only five notes are presented, missing seven and eight notes of the entire row, and after a pause, the row is presented by solo horn for the second time in its complete eight-note structure. Then the second row is presented by horn, which overlaps with retrograde inversion of the second row that begins on A sharp (RI_7) played by violin. These rows are precisely combined together in a double canon.

Example 5. Dorothy Gow. Piece for Violin and Horn (mm. 1-18). Transcribed from the manuscript. British Library Add MS 63005 (1954-1956).

Piece for Violin and Horn

Note that Gow often uses overlapping tone rows as seen, for example, in bars 15 – 18. Here, for example, the final two notes (D natural and G flat) of the inversion I_{11} are the starting two notes for the retrograde row R_9.

B	E♭	A	F	A♭	D♭	D	G♭						
						D	G♭	G	C	E♭	B	F	A

Also, the same tone row migrates from violin part to horn and vice versa as seen, while often overlapping with another row. In bars 32 – 33, for example, the tone row presented by violin is inversion that starts on E flat (I_3), and the tone row simultaneously presented by horn is the prime row that starts on A natural (P_9). The fifth tone C and the seventh tone G flat are the same in both of these rows, and here they are in violin part, but also belong to the row P_9, played by horn.

Violin:		1	2	3	5	5	6	7	7	8
Horn:	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	

The form of the Piece for Violin and Horn is largely conventional – it is in one movement, but divided into three sections exposition, development, and recapitulation. The piece finishes with the first tone row in its original version, presented in horn part. Again, as at the beginning, we can see only the very first five tones of the original first row, it does not come back in a complete version, and actually horn part finishes on F natural – the fifth tone of the original first row. In violin part there is a prime row that starts on F natural (P_5) and then it ends with retrograde inversion RI_4.

At first sight this piece is hard to analyse after the first ten bars. The difficulty is caused by the fact that another different row is introduced, which runs alongside with

initial row. Gow's piece is like filigree jewellery; it is finely and precisely constructed in detail. The fact that she uses *two* rows, not just a single one, reveals a certain musical ambitiousness. It is highly sophisticated serialism. It is a pity that this work is still unpublished and uncelebrated. An interesting question is to whether this kind of double row sophistication is there in any other serialist composers. However, it seems highly likely that it is there in other British composers like Searle or Lutyens. Schoenberg himself seems to have experimented with more than one row. His Ode to Napoleon, op. 41 (1944), has three different orderings of the same hexachord (0-1-4-5-8-9); because of the distinct orderings they can be considered different rows. And there are other pieces where there are probably multiple rows.[332] Nevertheless, what Gow does is interesting enough in its own right such that it is not merely that she came first in some parochial British race.

An analysis of this composition can be found in Appendix N.

As a last example of Gow's thorough knowledge of twelve-tone technique, we can look at her Song for voice and piano 'There is a place of cool quiet certitude'. The date of this piece is unknown as she did not leave a clean copy. Sketches of the piece at the British library are incomplete. But another version survives in Gow's private archive, and it is possible to restore a more complete version, although it is still a draft.

The Song begins with the words: "There is a place of cool quiet certitude." The piece is written entirely in twelve-tone technique. It is just one row. The tone row is C-D-F-D♭-B-A♭-E♭-B♭-A-G-E-G♭. Below is a row chart of the piece.

[332] I am grateful to Lee Rothfarb for this information (personal communication).

Table 3. A row chart of Gow's Song 'There is a place of cool quiet certitude' for voice and piano.

	I_{0}	**I_{2}**	**I_{5}**	**I_{1}**	**I_{11}**	**I_{8}**	**I_{3}**	**I_{10}**	**I_{9}**	**I_{7}**	**I_{4}**	**I_{6}**	
P_{0}	C	D	F	D♭	B	A♭	E♭	B♭	A	G	E	G♭	**R_{0}**
P_{10}	B♭	C	E♭	B	A	G♭	D♭	A♭	G	F	D	E	**R_{10}**
P_{7}	G	A	C	A♭	G♭	E♭	B♭	F	E	D	B	D♭	**R_{7}**
P_{11}	B	D♭	E	C	B♭	G	D	A	A♭	G♭	E♭	F	**R_{11}**
P_{1}	D♭	E♭	G♭	D	C	A	E	B	B♭	A♭	F	G	**R_{1}**
P_{4}	E	G♭	A	F	E♭	C	G	D	D♭	B	A♭	B♭	**R_{4}**
P_{9}	A	B	D	B♭	A♭	F	C	G	G♭	E	D♭	E♭	**R_{9}**
P_{2}	D	E	G	E♭	D♭	B♭	F	C	B	A	G♭	A♭	**R_{2}**
P_{3}	E♭	F	A♭	E	D	B	G♭	D♭	C	B♭	G	A	**R_{3}**
P_{5}	F	G	B♭	G♭	E	D♭	A♭	E♭	D	C	A	B	**R_{5}**
P_{8}	A♭	B♭	D♭	A	G	E	B	G♭	F	E♭	C	D	**R_{8}**
P_{6}	G♭	A♭	B	G	F	D	A	E	E♭	D♭	B♭	C	**R_{6}**
	RI_{0}	**RI_{3}**	**RI_{5}**	**RI_{1}**	**RI_{11}**	**RI_{8}**	**RI_{3}**	**RI_{10}**	**RI_{9}**	**RI_{7}**	**RI_{4}**	**RI_{6}**	

There are seven bars of slow piano introduction and then the prime row begins in the voice part. Gow starts her row with the second tone D (missing the first tone C) and then continues all the remaining tones of the row. After the prime row, there is an inversion in the voice part, which begins with tone D (I_2). It is not a full row, only the first seven tones of the inversion row. The next row is retrograde, beginning with G♭, and the row goes 1-2-3-4-7-8-9-10-11-12, missing 5 and 6 tones. The next one is a retrograde inversion (RI_1), beginning with G, which continues 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12, all the full row. This overlaps with another row O_{11}, which goes 1-2-3-4, and that is all. And then it starts an inversion immediately, I_2. D-C-A-D♭-E♭-G♭-B, seven notes of that row. This is followed by one row that is RI_8, also beginning with D: all twelve notes of the row. The next row is O_6, and the row starts with the second note A♭, and it goes 2-3-4-5-6-5-6-7-8 and finishes there. The last note of this row is the first note of a new row, RI_{10}. The first four notes E-G♭-E♭-D♭ are in voice part, while the remaining notes, 5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12 are in the piano part. This leads to the next row, which in the voice part is P_7, beginning with G is a complete row, all twelve notes. That

row overlaps with a new row, which is P5. So, the first note of the row, F, is in the vocal part, then 2-3-4 are in the piano part. The fifth note, E, is in the voice part, 6 and 7 are in the piano, again, and 8, E♭, is in voice part.

Example 6. Dorothy Gow. Song ‘There is a place of cool quiet certitude’. Autograph score. Private archive.

The piano part is more complex as far as twelve-tone technique goes. The rows are shorter and there are overlaps, and she introduces three-note or four-note pivot chords. The piano part starts with the prime row; it goes 1-5-4-3-2-3-5-4-6-7 in the piano part, and then the row continues in the vocal part 8-9-10-11-12, and then returns to the piano

part 9-10-9-10. After that there is a new row, P_{10}, which starts with B♭, and there are six notes in this row. And then she introduces another row in the piano part, I8, which has four notes. After that, it gets even more complicated. We see a harmonic chord, which is P_6, but she uses 8-9-10-11-12 of P_6 notes to build that chord.

Again, we see a sophisticated use of twelve-tone technique. Either Gow acquired this knowledge from Wellesz on her 1933 visit (for which we have no diary entries) or she was inspired by Wellesz in this direction.

* * *

Gow's talent deserves to be more widely recognised. In a letter to Gow from 1935, Wellesz himself says just that of his female students Gow and Williams. He wrote:

> I have been so glad to hear from you, as I am always thinking what you and Grace [Williams] are doing and hoping that English Orchestras and Musicians will take the deserved notice of your compositions.[333]

It is common these days to retrieve artists and composers, from under-represented groups, especially women, and to aim to add them to canon, alongside apparently more privileged others, giving them the kind posthumous credit that was awarded to others in the same field from better represented groups. But the situation with Gow goes beyond this. She deserves recognition as Britain's very first 'serialist' or twelve-tone composer, a technique that was transmitted from Wellesz in Vienna in 1932. Gow was not alongside other British composers, but ahead of all of them. Her unpublished 1936 piece "Oboe Quintet" predates *any* other serialist work by any other British composer. Gow's primacy is not yet in conventional histories of music, but this should now be recognised.

Gow's work is logically rigorous, challenging, and ambitious. She is not just the first *woman* atonal and serialist composer in Britain but simply the first atonal and serialist *composer* in Britain. Furthermore, Gow's contribution is needed to make sense of how Schoenberg's ideas came to Britain. They came firstly by means of Wellesz,

[333] Egon Wellesz. A letter to Dorothy Gow, 29 October 1935. Private archive.

and then from him to his pupils who travelled from Britain to Vienna. Wellesz continued his influence, of course, after he emigrated to Britain in 1938, and started teaching in Oxford. But the main impetus came from the students who visited Wellesz, especially Gow.

Chapter 7

The Diary of Dorothy Gow's Sojourn in Vienna:

The Critical Attitudes of a Modernist Composer in the Making

Historians of twentieth century British music have made some effort to excavate composers who have been under-emphasized in existing historical accounts. Some have focused especially on the work of British women composers, who in the interwar years were pioneering in many respects. Their story has only recently attracted attention. Some research has been done, especially on Elisabeth Lutyens and a number of others, such as Elisabeth Maconchy and Grace Williams. However, one key player has not figured – Dorothy Gow (1893-1982). Gow was an early pioneer of musical modernism in Britain in the early 1930s. She studied at the Royal College of Music in London under Ralph Vaughan Williams, and in Vienna with Egon Wellesz, who had been a student of Arnold Schoenberg. Gow's music was more dissonant and brash than most others in the UK at the time. Only Maconchy, or perhaps early Grace Williams (in the 1934 Suite, recorded on Naxos), or Frank Bridge in the Third Quartet (1926) comes close to an idiom that sounds responsive to Berg or Schoenberg. But the language of the Oboe Quintet of 1936 is indeed fresh and unusual for British music of the day.

As we saw in the last chapter, some of her works from the 1930s predate anything by Elisabeth Lutyens or Humphrey Searle, who according to many music histories were the first British 'twelve-note' composers. In current histories of British music, Gow is rarely more than a footnote. For example, in his authoritative study *British Musical Modernism*, Philip Rupprecht mentions Gow once in passing in the context of talking about other composers, with no more to say about her: whereas of Lutyens, Rupprecht writes: "Lutyens, for better or worse, was known as the first major British composer to use twelve-tone serial

technique as a foundation of a style” (p. 39).[334] Another example is a recent survey article, “Serialism in Western Europe”, by Mark Delaere, which covers British modernism, in the also authoritative *Cambridge Companion to Serialism* volume. There Delaere writes: “Elisabeth Lutyens is considered to be the first composer of serial music in the United Kingdom exploring its techniques progressively from the *Chamber Concerto* op. 8.1 in 1939 to the *Motet*, based on Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, in 1953.”[335] Although scholars working in the field are very aware of Lutyens, few know of Gow’s existence, even though, as I argued, it was very likely Gow who in fact pioneered serialism in Britain before Lutyens.[336] Very little is known about Gow, and nothing of musical substance is thought worth pursuing. However, not only was she the pioneer of British serialism, she also has a distinctive compositional voice. Moreover, through her acquaintances, Gow was a significant route by which serialism came to Britain, which later flourished in the 1950s.

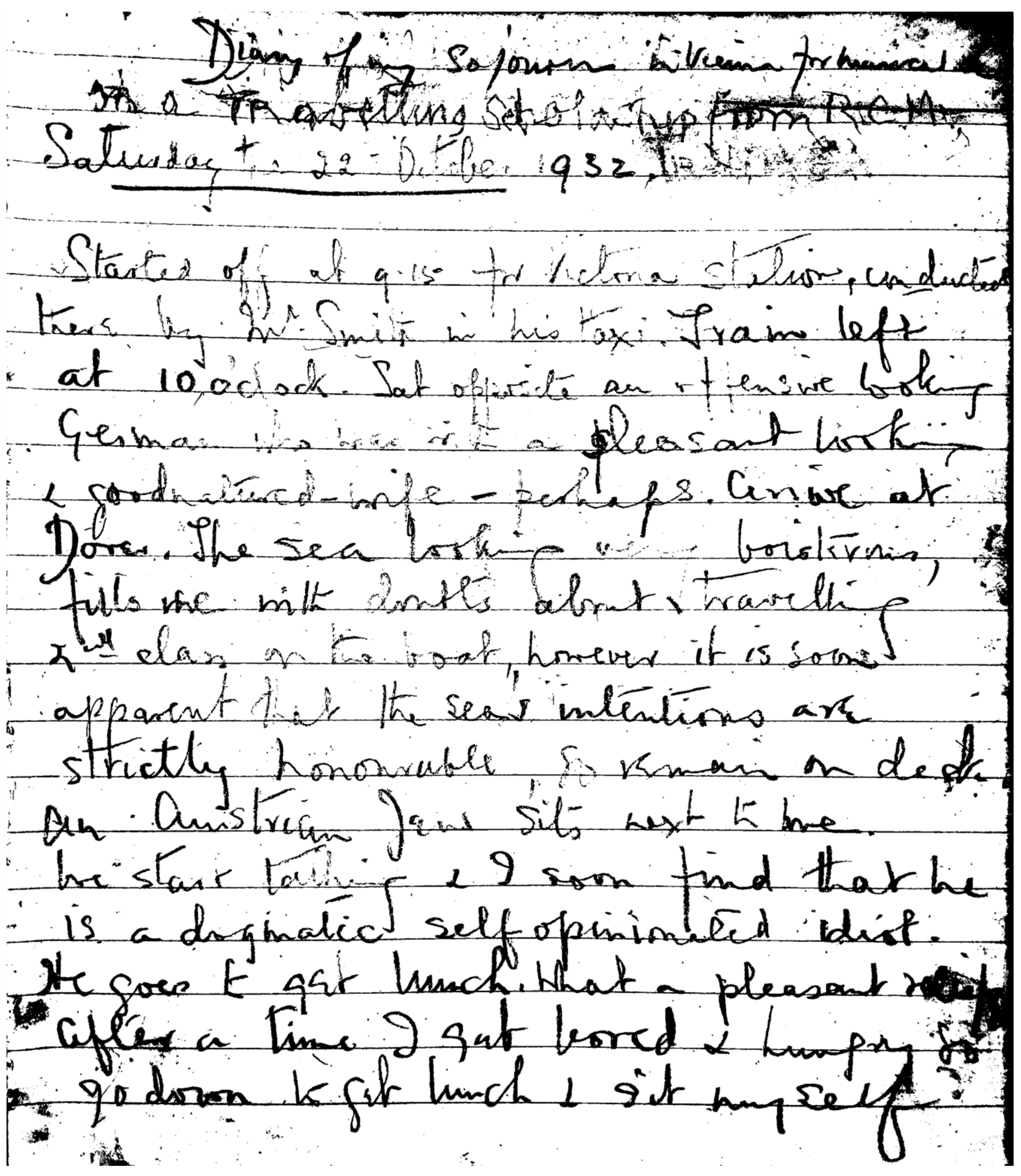
The story of Gow’s compositional activities and influence is a fascinating one, which we explored in the last chapter. However, in this chapter, we will focus not so much on Gow’s works but on her critical outlook. Of course, these are quite closely related, but analysing Gow’s compositions and pursuing her critical outlook are different endeavours. Each has some degree of freedom with respect to the other: it is not as if the critical outlook will fix details of compositions, and the compositions may be compatible with a range of alternative critical perspectives. The connection between the two is quite loose, although there is a connection. Furthermore, each is of interest in its own right.

The focus here will be on Gow’s critical outlook, as revealed in her diary. An avenue of research into Gow’s critical outlook is explored, which is made possible by my recent discovery of her decaying private archive, which includes music manuscripts, compositional sketches, extensive correspondence, photographs, and, above all, a fascinating diary from her three month long stay in Vienna studying with

[334] Philip Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 39.
[335] Mark Delaere, “Serialism in Western Europe”, in the also authoritative *Cambridge Companion to Serialism,* edited by Martin Iddon, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023, p. 206.
[336] Rhiannon Mathias also makes this speculation in passing in her book *Lutyens, Maconchy, Williams and Twentieth-Century British Music: A Blest Trio of Sirens*, London: Taylor & Francis, 2016.

Wellesz, which records Gow's reflections on her musical experiences and education, together with her reflections on composition and many other matters.[337] It is a treasure trove with much to offer, numbering over fifty pages. Her diary reveals much that is both intriguing about her life and much that frames her composition. It is also notable for its frank honesty. None of the materials in the archive have been studied before. It reveals the woman behind the work for the first time. Gow was outwardly a very private and reclusive person, and so her diary allows us to glimpse what would otherwise be hidden. Gow ripped off and destroyed all the pages of her diary until the very exact day when she leaves for Vienna (22 October 1932). We do not know much about her life before and after Vienna, but she documented in detail her stay in Vienna and her meetings with Wellesz. It shows the great importance this trip has had for her. Gow's diary spans from 22 October until 22 December 1932, when she returns to London. Her diary includes her reflections while studying in Vienna and contains thoughts on novelty, as well as opera, in general, and Wagner, in particular. She describes an intense program of concert-going, which she regarded as contributing to her training, together with her daily composition lessons with Wellesz. Her diary reveals her critical outlook, which not only casts light on her works, but gives us a fuller picture of the woman as composer. For the first time, the composer speaks to us.

[337] Private family collection.


Diary of my Sojourn in Vienna for musical
on a Travelling Scholarship from R.C.M.
Saturday the 22 October 1932.

Started off at 9.15 for Victoria Station, conducted
there by Mr Smith in his taxi. Train left
at 10 o'clock. Sat opposite an offensive looking
German [illegible] a pleasant looking
& goodnatured wife – perhaps. Arrive at
Dover. The sea looking very boisterous,
fills me with doubts about travelling
2nd class on the boat, however it is soon
apparent that the sea's intentions are
strictly honourable so remain on deck.
An Austrian Jew sits next to me.
We start talking & I soon find that he
is a dogmatic self opinionated idiot.
He goes to get lunch. What a pleasant relief
After a time I get bored & hungry so
go down to get lunch & sit myself

Figure 17. Dorothy Gow. Handwritten diary. First page of the autograph. Private archive.

§1. Egon Wellesz, Gow's Teacher

Let us begin with Gow's Studies with Egon Wellesz—a prominent composer, musicologist, Byzantinist, and an accomplished composition teacher. Wellesz was born on 21 October 1885 in Vienna of Hungarian and Jewish descent, and he was culturally Viennese. Wellesz was a student of Guido Adler in musicology and Arnold Schonberg in composition. And Wellesz was often called Schoenberg's 'third student' along with

Alban Berg and Anton Webern. Wellesz composed operas, ballets, nine symphonies, chamber music and church music. Although he was strongly influenced by Schoenberg's twelve-tone method of composition, tonality nevertheless remained important in his music. Wellesz was also admired as a scholar who propagated Schoenberg's music and his way of composing. He wrote the first biography of Schoenberg in 1921, which was translated into English, and widely read.[338] Later in their lives, the relationship between Schoenberg and Wellesz soured, as Bojan Bujić documents in a recently published study.[339] However, this does not detract from their musical convergence.

In 1938 there was the *Anschluss* with Germany, which meant that Wellesz came under threat from the Nazis, because of his Jewish heritage, even though his parents were officially Christians. Not only was he banned from working in Vienna, but his music was also banned from performance. Because of Wellesz's connection with Oxford, he was able to escape the Nazi regime. Indeed, Wellesz was awarded an Honorary doctorate from Oxford University in 1932. He emigrated to England in 1938 with his wife and two daughters, and he began teaching at Lincoln College, Oxford. He spent the rest of his life based in Oxford, returning only for brief visits to Vienna. Wellesz made his home in England, and he was a fellow of Lincoln College for thirty-seven years. Nevertheless, Wellesz remained something of an outsider. It was not so easy to adapt; he was so disorientated on arrival that he could not compose for several years. Vienna had been in many respects the centre of the world in many domains of cultural and scientific life, and it had also been his home. Oxford must have seemed very different, and perhaps a little alien. Despite this, Wellesz also has a major impact on Oxford University as an institution because musicology was not a recognised discipline in Oxford when he arrived.

One might think that Vienna composers of the Schoenbergian school began to have an effect on British musical life only after immigration to Britain. In fact,

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[338] Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg*, Vienna: E. P. Tal & Co., 1921; English translation: *Arnold Schönberg*, trans. W. H. Kerridge, London: Dent, 1925; reprint (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969); another reprint was published as *Arnold Schoenberg: The Formative Years*, London: Galliard, 1971, with a new preface by Wellesz.
[339] Bojan Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship*, London: Plumbago Books, 2020.

however, Wellesz, and through him Schoenberg, had a considerable influence on British musical life before Wellesz arrived in the country. This was because many of the budding young British talent of the time went to Vienna to learn of the exiting musical developments there, since Vienna was a powerhouse of the new modernist explorations. This mode of influence was all the greater because Wellesz was an excellent teacher, who kept in touch with his former admiring students for life.[340] Later one of them, *The Times* music critic Martin Cooper, dedicated his monograph on Beethoven to Wellesz.[341] It is interesting to note that Ralph Vaughan Williams, who himself was never particularly interested in Schoenberg's school[342], and later famously called him and his followers 'the wrong note school'[343], sent his students from the Royal College of Music to study with one of Schoenberg's established students – Wellesz (Grace Williams, Dorothy Gow, Frederick May). Grace Williams wrote:

> He [Ralph Vaughan Williams] knew, of course, that Wellesz had studied with Schönberg, and although he had no love for Schönberg the composer, he must have been influenced by the fact that Schönberg was a strict disciplinarian; consequently he hoped that Wellesz's teaching would be full of practical and detailed criticism of the kind which he himself felt unable to give (although he

[340] There is an extensive correspondence between Wellesz and his former students Grace Williams and Martin Cooper, for example. See Wellesz's archive at the Vienna National Library: Brief. Williams, Grace, 1906-1977 [VerfasserIn]; Wellesz, Egon, 1885-1974 [AdressatIn]. ÖNB Musiksammlung F.13Wellesz.1698 MUS MAG.
Korrespondenz. Cooper, Martin, 1910-1986 [VerfasserIn]; Wellesz, Egon, 1885-1974 [AdressatIn]. ÖNB Musiksammlung F.13Wellesz.1166 MUS MAG.

[341] Martin Cooper, *Beethoven: The Last Decade 1817-1827*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970; revised edition 1985.

[342] After Schoenberg's death in 1951, Ralph Vaughan Williams wrote that "Schoenberg meant nothing to me – but as he apparently meant a lot to a lot of other people I daresay it is all my own fault." *Music & Letters* 32/4, 1951, p. 322. Also see, Manning, David (ed.), 'Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)', in David Manning (ed.), *Vaughan Williams on Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
2011), https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195182392.003.0035, accessed 4 Apr. 2023.

[343] In December 1947, in a letter to a music publisher Alan Frank, Ralph Vaughan Williams wrote: "Can you or Phyllis [Tate] suggest any pieces of the wrong note school (I mean the real thing – Schonberg, Berg, Lutyens, Gerhard – it doesn't matter which they all sound exactly the same to me). I want to find out how they achieve those nasty noises they make…". (*Letter from Ralph Vaughan Williams to Alan Frank,* 3 December 1947, British Library, MS Mus. 2017/04, Letter No.: VWL4308).

> was a fine and inspiring teacher in so many ways, Vaughan Williams was apt to say: "There's something wrong but I can't put my finger on it").[344]

So, while Vaughan Williams did not really 'get' Schoenberg's music, he was open-minded enough to appreciate Schoenberg and Wellesz's pedagogical qualities and eye for musical detail.

Gow studied with Wellesz twice: in the autumn semester of 1932 (October – December) in Vienna and then returning the following summer (June – August) to Wellesz's summer residence in Altaussee near Salzburg. Gow had been thinking about going to Paris to study with Nadia Boulanger, but changed her mind. Looking back much later, Gow wrote:

> I wanted to go to study in Paris[345], but Grace on her return had given R.V.W. such a glowing account of Egon Wellesz in Vienna that I rather reluctantly had to go there instead. How right she was; he was an excellent teacher. The concerts – and also the opera, which I had somewhat despised before – were marvellous.[346]

Many young talented people from Britain came to study with Wellesz in Vienna in the 1920s and 1930s. Patrick Cairns "Spike" Hughes was probably the first one, in 1923. He was followed by Grace Williams, Martin Cooper—who became *The Times* music critic—and then in 1932, by Dorothy Gow, who we will focus on. Frederick May went in 1933, and Austrian composer Peggy Glanville-Hicks, in 1936. Most of the visitors from Britain were studying at the Royal College of Music, and they were winners of the Octavia travelling scholarship. They mostly decided to go to Vienna, and not to Paris, for example. These young composers were interested in Viennese modernist activities. More Royal College of Music aspiring composers went to Vienna than Paris and

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[344] Grace Williams on Egon Wellesz, manuscript, ÖNB, Musiksammlung (MUS), F13.Wellesz.1024/1 MUS MAG, date is unknown.

[345] Gow considered studying with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Gow asked Imogen Holst about potential teachers with whom to study composition abroad. Holst won the Octavia Travelling Scholarship in 1930 and spent a year travelling in Europe. In a letter to Gow Holst praises Boulanger but warns that she is very expensive, and she recommends Vienna over Paris because there is more music to see there and because it is more pleasant especially for someone without the language. This letter is reproduced in Appendix K.

[346] Dorothy Gow. *Welsh Music/Cerddoriaeth Cymru: The Guild for the Promotion of Welsh Music/Yr Urdd er Hyrwyddo Cerddoriaeth Cymru*, Winter/Gaeaf 1977-8, Vol. 5/Cyf. 5, No. 7/Rhif 7, pp. 46, 47.

Prague (Elisabeth Maconchy studied with Karel Jirák in Prague in 1930). Although, the Paris group of British composers, who studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, was also significantly large (Lennox Berkeley in 1927 and Ivy Priaulx Rainier in 1937, for example), they were not students from Royal College of Music. Many composers, who left the Royal College of Music in the 1930's, having received the Octavia Travelling Scholarship for composition, chose to further their studies in Vienna: Grace Williams in 1930, Dorothy Gow in 1932, and Frederick May in 1933 went to study with Wellesz. Peggy Glanville Hicks went to study with Wellesz in Vienna and Nadia Boulanger in Paris in 1936. Helen Perkin, another Octavia winner, studied orchestration with Anton Webern and piano with Eduard Steuermann in Vienna during the early 1930s.[347] And Humphrey Searle, also a recipient of a scholarship, studied with Webern in 1937.

It was not easy to become Wellesz's composition student. In her diary, Gow notes meeting "… two American youths. One I liked very much; he is studying piano & had been to see Wellesz about studying composition with him. Apparently Wellesz seemed none too keen, and he put it badly by telling him that he had already had five American students & none of them paid up! However, I thought he seemed very intelligent & was delighted to talk again to somebody who is keen on contemporary music."[348] It is also notable that Wellesz seems to have attracted a number of woman composition students at a time when there were not many of them.

§2. *Pension* 'Atonal'

Gow was in Vienna at the same time as Martin Cooper, and Wellesz lodged them both in a very distinctive *pension*, which, according to Cooper, they all called the '*Pension* Atonal' in *Wickenburggasse*. It was run by Frau May Keller, who was in a longstanding lesbian relationship with Smaragda Eger-Berg, the sister of Alban Berg. Many of the guests there were middled-aged women in psychoanalytic therapy. Cooper gives an account of the *pension*:

> I have never made up my mind whether he [Wellesz] was fully aware of the clientele frequenting the so-called 'Pension Atonal', but I am very glad that my

[347] *Radio Times* Issue 695, 24 January 1937, p. 44.

[348] Dorothy Gow, handwritten diary, private archive, 27 November 1932.

> parents had no inkling of the true facts. All I realised at first was that I was kindly received, given a warm room where I could have my own piano, and excellently fed. It was in fact the food provided by May Keller, I suspect, quite as much as their friendship with Frau Keller, that bought Alban Berg and his wife to lunch there two or three times a week. His sister, Smaragda von Eger-Berg, was an even more frequent visitor, and it was she and the friends that she brought with her who first opened my eyes to the fact that the small English contingent among the guests – which included the composer Dorrie Gow, another Wellesz pupil, and the music-writer Robert Jacobs – were the only ones who were not patients of the psycho-analyst Dr. Stekel. These other guests, who came from all over Europe, were all women, mostly middle-aged (and therefore, as it seemed to me at 21, surely immune from erotic complications in their lives) I soon learned that I was wrong, and when I left the Pension Atonal after a few months for humbler lodgings I was a good deal more sophisticated than when I arrived.[349]

One might expect this to be a stiff and serious group of people studying highbrow composition; but, in fact, this was not at all the case. Gow recalls some of wilder times in her diary. One such occasion was the evening of 19 November when Frau Keller was giving a big party to which all the guests at the *pension* were invited. It was remarkably quite a wild party with plenty of refreshments served. Some of the high-spirited and alcohol-fuelled fun was recalled by Gow:

> A boy played Austrian country dances on an accordion & Frau Keller who by this time could hardly stand gave us a display. Then by 3 o'clock the Russian woman got completely guzzled & Cooper who asked her for a dance regretted it for he had to literally carry her round the room & she refused to stop, however eventually she could no longer stand & he managed to get her into a chair…"[350]

More important is that early in the evening Gow was introduced to Alban Berg – "a good-natured large man who resembles photos I have seen of Oscar Wilde. We had a very difficult time trying to understand each other as his knowledge of English is practically nill & we were both utterly exhausted after 10 minutes!"[351] So, although

[349] Martin Cooper. F13.Wellesz.

[350] Dorothy Gow, Diary*, op. cit.,* 19 November 1932.

[351] *Ibid.*

Gow met Berg, they could not communicate with each other because neither spoke the other's language. This evening was also when Gow finds out more unusual things about the *pension*, she stays in. Many of the men staying at the *Pension* Atonal were homosexual. (Maurice Bowra, for example, who later became very well known as a classicist, literary critic, poet and Oxford university administrator, as well as a wit.) But Vienna was apparently more famous for lesbianism, by contrast with Berlin, which, as Gow says, was more renowned for male homosexuality. She writes: "…it [the pension] is the most famous of lesbian establishments! Saw signs of it last night but hadn't noticed anything before. Frau Keller apparently lived in the lesbian bliss with Alban Berg's sister for 15 years. Nobody seems to think anything of it here. Vienna, I am told is the center for female lesbians & Berlin for the males. I do think this psycho-analysis encourages it."[352] At the same time, highly intellectual discussion took place. For example, Gow talked to someone who was a lawyer with Hayek-style views on freedom and the perilous state of Europe.[353] Gow obviously enjoyed the party: "Came to bed at 5 o'clock AM! I must say the whole show has been rather funny at first, I thought it was going to be very dull."[354]

Another time an American couple threw a party at their house, where there was music and dancing. Later, that evening they went on to the club 'Eden', where there was more dancing. A violinist even danced on the table.[355] Clearly, there was much fun to be had in these circles in Vienna.

Wellesz must surely have known what went on in *Pension* Atonal and cannot have thought that it interfered with his student's progress. Indeed, in spite of the bohemian lifestyle, Gow worked very hard during her stay in Vienna, having daily meetings with Wellesz in the library of his house in *Kaasgrabengasse*, in which she received feedback on her compositions as well as discussing standard works and performances in detail with Wellesz.

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[352] *Ibid.*
[353] *Ibid.*
[354] *Ibid.*
[355] Dorothy Gow, Diary*, op. cit.,* 10 December 1932.GS

§3. Gow's Concert Experiences

Her attitudes are revealed most clearly in her reactions to concerts. However, they are also manifest in her discussions about music with Wellesz and others, as well as in her thinking about topics other than music—for example, architecture and literature. Many other sources mention the way Wellesz thought of concert going as part of musical education and specifically part of the education of a composer. This pedagogical aspect of Gow's concert-going experience may influence the kind of comments she makes in her diary. Her experience, and her description of her experience, may have this particular focus or filter. There is also the question of changes in Gow's views over the two months. For example, her views on Wagner seem to harden into a negative overall view, while her general views on opera seem to soften.

The concerts that she saw represent a selection of what was available in Vienna at that time. She attended a concert roughly every two days. The concerts range from chamber music to grand opera. They also varied from a salon concert and the cathedral to the most famous concert halls. She saw some of the most famous conductors and musicians of that time, for example, the conductors Wilhelm Fürtwangler, Bruno Walter, Clemens Krauss, and cellist Emanuel Feuermann. In all, she had a variety of kinds of musical experiences, although there were also concerts with more traditional fare. For example, on 3 November, there was a concert at the *Wiener Konzert Haus* with music by Schubert, Korngold, Grieg and Puccini on the programme; on 12 November, there was a concert with music by Schubert, Mozart and Beethoven; on 18 November, there was a concert with music by Dvořák, Gershwin and Taylor. Gow attended none of these concerts. Nor did she attend any others on the same days. So, it seems that she deliberately by-passed these concerts and many other like them. This may reflect her taste, or it may reflect her particular purpose in attending concerts during her education as a composer. Gow viewed her concert experience as part of her musical education, in line with Wellesz's approach to teaching composition.

Her diary contained her reflections on these concerts as well as about other relevant matters. Three overlapping themes stand out: first, her sensibility and her attitudes to modernism and romanticism; secondly, her views on opera; and, thirdly, her reactions to and views on Wagner. The following is a list of the twenty-seven concerts she attended in Vienna from October to December 1932.

Table 4. List of concerts Gow attended in Vienna between October – December 1932.

No.	Date	Programme	Place	Performed by
1.	29 Oct 1932	Richard Wagner *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Director: Lothar Wallerstein Conductor: Clemens Krauss *Hans Sachs*: Josef von Manowarda *Veit Pogner*: Nicola Zec *Kunz Vogelgesang*: Georg Maikl
2.	30 Oct. 1932	Beethoven Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major "Eroica"; Mozart Piano Concerto No. 27in B-flat major, K. 595; Weber Invitation to the Dance (*Aufforderung zum Tanz*), op. 65, J. 260.		
3.	31 Oct 1932	Richard Strauss *Elektra*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Music Director: Clemens Krauss *Klytämnestra*: Gertrude Rünger *Elektra*: Rose Pauly/ Pauly-Dreesen *Chrysothemis*: Viorica Ursuleac *Aegisth*: Josef Kalenberg
4.	2 Nov 1932	Giuseppe Verdi *Don Carlo*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Music Director: Clemens Krauss *Philipp II*: Josef von Manowarda *Elisabeth von Valois*: Viorica Ursuleac *Don Carlos*: Franz Völker
5.	5 Nov. 1932	Paul Hindemith *Philharmonisches Konzert, Variationen für Orchester* Hector Berlioz *Romeo und Julia, Scherzo: Fee Mab*	*Musikverein*	Conductor: Clemens Krauss Cello: Emanuel Feuermann

		Antonín Dvořák *Konzert für Violoncello in h-Moll, op. 104* Johannes Brahms *Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, op. 98*		
6.	6 Nov. 1932	Cathedral Choral Singing		
7.	8 Nov. 1932	Mahler *Kindertotenlieder;* Tchaikovsky.		Enid Szanthe (singer)
8.	9 Nov. 1932	Johannes Brahms Symphonie Nr. 1 c-moll op. 68 (1876) Franz Schmidt Variationen über ein Husarenlied (1931) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Drei deutsche Tänze K 605 (1791) Ludwig van Beethoven Ouverture Nr. 3 zu »Leonore« »Leonoren-Ouverture Nr. 3« (1805-1806)	*Wiener Konzerthaus*	*Wiener Sinfonie-Orchester* Conductor: Leopold Reichwein
9.	10 Nov. 1932	Purcell String Fantasia; Webern Five Pieces for Orchestra op. 10 (1913); Mozart.		
10.	10 Nov. 1932	Beethoven String Quartet op. 95 in F minor; Schubert String Quartet no. 14 in d minor D. 810 “Death and The Maiden”; Ravel String Quartet in F major.		
11.	13 Nov. 1932	Beethoven Egmont Overture, op. 84; Bach Double Violin Concerto in D minor BWV 104; Wolf Songs; Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36.	*Musikverein*	
12.	14 Nov. 1932	Johannes Brahms Trio Es-Dur op. 40 für Violine, Horn und Klavier (1865)	*Wiener Konzerthaus*	Christa Richter, Violine Lotte Hammerschlag, Viola

		Sonate G-Dur op. 78 für Violine und Klavier (1878-1879) Klavierquartett Nr. 1 g-moll op. 25 (1857-1861)		Beatrice Reichert, Violoncello Gottfried Freiberg, Horn Karl Frotzler, Klavier
13.	17 Nov. 1932	Richard Strauss *Der Rosenkavalier*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Conductor: Clemens Krauss *Die Feldmarschallin*: Viorica Ursuleac *Der Baron Ochs auf Lerchenau*: Richard Mayr
14.	19 Nov. 1932	Ludwig van Beethoven *Overture to the Tragedy "Egmont" by J. W. v. Goethe, op. 84* Ludwig van Beethoven *Symphony No. 6 in F Major, op. 68 ("Pastorale")* Ludwig van Beethoven *Symphony No. 7 in A Major, op. 92*	*Musikverein*	Conductor: Wilhelm Fürtwangler
15.	25 Nov. 1932	Alban Berg *Wozzeck*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Conductor: Clemens Krauss *Wozzeck*: Josef von Manowarda *Tumbourmajor*: Josef Kalenberg *Andres*: Hermann Gallos *Hauptmann*: Georg Maikl *Doctor*: Hermann Wiedemann *Marie*: Rose Pauly/ Pauly-Dreesen
16.	26 Nov. 1932	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart *Symphony [No. 40] in G Minor, K. 550* Richard Strauss *"Don Juan", op. 20* Ludwig van Beethoven *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, op. 55 ("Eroica")*	*Musikverein*	Conductor: Bruno Walter

17.	4 Dec. 1932	Giuseppe Verdi *Messa da Requiem*	*Musikverein*	Conductor: Clemens Krauss
18.	4 Dec. 1932	Giuseppe Verdi *Otello* (in German)	*Wiener Staatsoper*	German translator: Max Kalbeck Director: Hans Duhan Conductor: Hugo Reichenberger *Otello*: Leo Slezak *Jago*: Alfred Jerger *Cassio*: Hermann Gallos
19.	5 Dec. 1932	Richard Wagner *Das Rheingold*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	*Wotan* Josef von Manowarda *Donner*: Viktor Madin *Froh*: Hermann Gallos
20.	10 Dec. 1932	Sergej Prokofieff *Symphonie Nr. 1 in D-Dur, op. 25, (Symphonie classique)* Igor Strawinsky *Le Sacre du Printemps (The Rite of Spring)* Peter Iljitsch Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, op. 36*	*Musikverein*	Conductor: Clemens Krauss
21.	10 Dec. 1932	Quartets by Mozart and Haydn and Dvorak Bagatelles, Op. 47.	Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner's house	
22.	11 Dec. 1932	Sergei Prokofiev *Symphonie Nr. 1 in D-Dur, op. 25, (Symphonie classique)* Igor Stravinsky *Le Sacre du Printemps (The Rite of Spring)* Peter Ilitch Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, op. 36*	*Musikverein*	Conductor: Clemens Krauss
23.	11 Dec. 1932	Richard Wagner *Die Walküre*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	
24.	12 Dec. 1932	Sergei Prokofiev *Scythian Suite*, op. 20		
25.	13 Dec. 1932	Richard Wagner *Siegfried*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Conductor: Robert Heger Director: Lothar Wallerstein Stage Design: Alfred Roller, Robert Kautsky

				Siegfried: Josef Kalenberg *Brünnhilde*: Maria Németh
26.	15 Dec. 1932	Richard Wagner *Götterdämmerung*	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Music director: Clemens Krauss *Siegfried*: Josef Kalenberg *Brünnhilde:* Henny Trundt
27.	17 Dec. 1932	Johann Strauss *Die Fledermaus* (note: Gow went there by a mistake. She thought it was Richard Strauss).	*Wiener Staatsoper*	Conductor: Hugo Reichenberger *Gabriel von Eisenstein* Erich Zimmermann *Rosalinde* Wanda Achsel-Clemens

Some thematic strands can be separated in her comments on these concerts and in her comments on other things that happen during her sojourn. Let us begin with modernism.

§4. Musical Modernism

Although Gow was a pioneer of modernist music, her reactions to concerts, as recorded in her diary, are seldom straightforwardly positive or negative. Often, for example, she praises the performance of a work she dislikes. Nevertheless, we may say that in broad outline, Gow's musical taste was broadly favourable to new music, without being narrow and unquestioning. At the same time, she could be opinionated, even dogmatic, about other music. Furthermore, her comments reveal an interest in compositional detail. She is open to, and interested in, modern music without being doctrinaire about what she is in favour of, while she is sometimes dismissive of other music.

For illustration, consider the following extract from her diary, from 30 October 1932. She rushes off to a concert, where the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra are playing Beethoven's "Eroica", Mozart's Piano Concerto in B minor and Weber's "Invitation to the Waltz". Gow reflects with honesty about her general reactions at the same time as recording details that particularly interest her; moreover:

> Have to force myself to face such a programme of antiques; at the same time, feel slightly guilty at feeling this way about it, but I do, so there it is. Guido Peters the pianist in the Mozart is extremely good I think he makes Mozart quite a robust fellow. Peters is almost an antique himself with snow white hair. The orchestra is

> very good, funny how the wood wind sounds so different to our English ones. To start with they use those silver flutes like the French. Personally, I prefer our wooden ones, they sound so much more reedy.

Three points or themes may be extracted from this entry. First, she distances herself from her own preferences and prepared to entertain the idea that they are idiosyncratic. Nonetheless, she is honest about her actual reactions, whether or not they are to be endorsed. The fact that she is only *slightly* embarrassed means that she is at least torn in her reactions, and half leans towards thinking them appropriate. Secondly, she is prepared to praise performances of works she does not much like. Again, this reveals a certain critical detachment. Thirdly, her focus on the wood wind instruments displays her interest in detail in this case of musical performance. We also see this interest in detail in a very unflattering descriptions of the clothing of two rotund Austrian men on the train on the way to Vienna (entry of 24 October 1932) and on the return trip two even more rotund German men (entry of 21 December). She listens and looks carefully and acquires a knowledge of the complexity of what she is attending to as well as of the elements. Moreover, she allows her general reactions and comments on particulars to have some independence from each other.

One important theme in Gow's diary is her attitudes to modernism and romanticism. One vignette reveals these attitudes is her description of an evening spent with Robert Jacobs who was a fellow resident or 'inmate' at the '*Pension* Atonal'. He was a psychoanalyst who was writing a novel and who had an interest in music. She has previously described his musical taste as "definitely poor" (9 November). What did she mean by that? What Gow writes about an evening spent with Jacobs on the 23 November helps with this question:

> After supper Jacobs would drag me to play duets. I made him first try to read Bartok and Malipiero, but he loathed them both. So we settled down to a Mozart symphony. He also played me a Liszt sonata & some Schubert songs. It was with great difficulty that I didn't hoot with laughter, as he became so impassioned over the music that the piano nearly toppled over even & the grimaces, he made were indeed sinister. He is a queer unbalanced human being, but I like him; he is so ingenuous. Having wasted my evening & the drums of my ears severely tested I will now to bed.

Presumably, poor Jacobs' 'poor taste' does *not* consist in his liking Mozart, Liszt, and Schubert, but in being *limited* and excluding more modern works. (This was presumably also the root of her irritation with those making cutting anti-modernist comments at her *pension*, cited below.) That is not all there is to it. When he plays the piano, she finds his gestures funny ("it was with great difficulty...") Her amusement at his over-emotional performance—both in his gestures and in his playing—is significant. Gow here reveals a certain standard anti-romanticism, if we take romanticism typically to valorise intense emotional episodes as part of the creation, performance, or experience of music. Indeed, on hearing Wolf songs, on 13 November, she writes: "There is something about that worthy German sentiment I can't stand, appoggiatura's right and left." And she really dislikes Mahler. After hearing his *Kindertotenlieder* she writes that she thinks that it is "… dreadful. Some of them are not even better than English ballad songs". Tchaikovsky, she also dislikes in principle although she always has respect for his orchestration, from which she tries to learn. He is at least better than the awful Mahler, she thinks. Of Tchaikovsky, she writes: "However self-pitying and sobbing he is, I can forgive it, for it is at least very sincere and spontaneous & of course the orchestration is so good." (8 November.) Nevertheless, she also writes: "I draw the line at the 4th [symphony]." (11 December.) Presumably she finds the way he draws on folk melodies simplistic and somehow uninteresting—even wallowing in sentiment. Her approach to musical understanding performance and listening is more intellectual than emotional.

Here we can see some clear, definite, and perhaps dogmatic aspects of her critical outlook. But these very definite views and reactions seem to be more manifest in her negative reactions and judgments—what she is against. She is more cautious in what she praises. For example, she is less than fully enthusiastic about Webern and Hindemith—composers who she might be expected to endorse.

Let us now turn to something that impresses Gow deeply. On Friday the 25 November she attended a performance of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* (completed in 1921) after having earlier played extracts from the score on the piano at home.

> Well, I was terribly interested in Wozzeck. I am not going to say that I liked it as that seems the wrong term for it, but I was very interested, and it is the first thing

> in the way of music, since I came to Vienna, that made me think about it lots afterwards.

Here we can see her to be self-reflective, stepping back from her own reactions to music in a sophisticated way—her critical detachment, again. She goes on to count positives and negatives in the work and in the performance:

> Some effects were tremendous and came off marvellously well, other things I didn't like at all, for instance after Wozzeck stabs Marie, he kneels down by her side, and just as the curtain goes down gives a fitting moan, which is imitated when the curtain goes down by the double bassoon, which has a cheap affect to my mind…

And she reflects more broadly on what she calls its "atonality", writing:

> Also the voices soar tremendously up into the heights and then right down, which is of course the atonal style I know, but I don't think it suits the human voice.

In fact, Gow later wrote a piece for voice written entirely in twelve-tone technique, so she may have changed her mind, or at least taken on a challenge. At any rate, here in her diary again we see how nondoctrinal she is. She does not blindly praise twelve-tone works. What is not clear is what her appeal to the human voice implies. Is it the *sonic* qualities of the human voice that does not fit well with 'atonality', or is it the fact that the human voice is a *meaning* maker? This makes a difference to whether she is taking *Wozzeck* seriously as an opera, as a combination of musical and drama, or whether she is just abstracting the narrowly sonic aspect. She writes:

> I should tremendously like to hear it again. Another effect which was really blood curdling was after the murder scene. The orchestra starts with one note sounded on just a few instruments & gradually all the other instruments join in just on the same note making a tremendous crescendo with a sudden stop, then the same procedure takes place again only this time joined by all the percussion instruments. It is an opera simply full of amazing moments. (all from 25 November 1932.)

What Gow find compelling about Wozzeck does not stem from the kind of intellectualism that many associate with Second Viennese School works. Far from it. She relished the sensory spectacle. But how does the story figure for Gow. In praising

the aftermath of the murder scene of *Wozzeck*, Gow *seems* to appeal sonic grounds, rather than the drama or the story. Is she less interested in some overall operatic experience, and more interested in how it is put together musically? Gow is certainly discerning, and she praises some effects but not others. She describes one use of a double bassoon as a “cheap effect” and criticises the use of a human voice. Other effects, though, she describes as “blood curdling”. One view would be that she praises this part of the opera as interesting due to its sonic effects—that is, in purely sonic terms that have little or nothing to do with the dramatic or literary aspect of the opera. She seems to be listening as a formalist might, abstracting the purely sonic aspects from the drama. On the other hand, “blood curdling” in the context of the murder scene looks like it is more than a sonic description and also describes the effect of the music-drama combination. So, this is unlikely to be a narrowly sonic achievement, for Gow. She also writes “it is an opera of fully amazing moments”; but firstly, clearly there are some moments that she thinks are less successful than others; and secondly, at least musically she seems to be implying that it does not hang together as a whole. Gow does not find a satisfying overall architectonic structure, at least musically. Nevertheless, she very much praises and enjoys various moments interspersed throughout the opera. Indeed, on 26 November, after playing *Wozzeck* at home on the piano, she remarks that the “…cradle song which runs through the opera is really very beautiful”. In her critical comments, Gow dissects the opera, or analyses it into its elements, rather than considering the overall effect, as a unity constituted by different elements. Her approach is analytical: she breaks down the work into its elements. This may stem from a tacit formalist aesthetic sensibility; or it may stem from a practical approach, as a student of composition, wanting to know how the works are constructed from elements, which is after all central to what a composer does.

Gow’s attitude to Berg’s *Wozzeck* may be compared with her reactions to the works of some other modernist composers. On Thursday 10 November Gow attended a concert of Webern’s Five Pieces for Orchestra. She writes without much enthusiasm:

> …rush off to hear a concert conducted by Scherchen[356], again composed of amateurs. They play very well indeed. Purcell's 3 Fantasias for String Orchestra, 5 pieces for Orchestra by Webern, & and a symphony by Mozart in A dur. The Webern pieces are very short & have some intriguing sounds, but if they were much longer they must surely make one suffer from their monotony. That idiom must be very difficult to get contrast. Certainly, the colour of the various instruments & peculiar percussion sounds must help them muchly, but they all sound very alike anyhow to my unpractised ear in atonal music of the twelve tones. Very enervating after a bit I find.

It is notable that Gow attends closely to the sonic texture of performances and works. This is a persistent theme in her critical comments. Despite talking of "intriguing sounds", Gow worries that "it must be difficult to get contrast of colour of instruments". These are somewhat negative comments, but they are more about what Webern has done within with atonal framework, and on the difficulty that the framework poses for the composer. Nevertheless, she does think that the piece is rather flat, lacking contrast, which is a negative evaluation. Here we see that Gow is not an uncritical evangelical follower of new musical fashions, but instead someone openminded enough to be critical of what they have done within the atonal framework, which she herself thinks has great potential and which she finds very interesting. Like Schoenberg, in many of his writings from different periods, in many of his essays collected in *Style and Idea*,[357] she thinks that it is not enough to be working in an atonal framework; it is what you do with it that matters. And Gow thinks that Webern's piece is not a success in those terms. Moreover, in this passage, Gow seems to conflate atonality and serialism. It is hard to know if Gow has ever read any of the early articles on the twelve-tone technique, such as Erwin Stein's "New Formal Principles" of 1924.[358] Most likely it was Wellesz who explained the technique to her. Gow's German was pretty poor, so it is likely that she did not read much in German, although, as

[356] Hermann Scherchen (1891-1966) was a German conductor. From 1922 to 1950, he was the principal conductor of the city orchestra Winterthur. Scherchen was well known for championing modern composers, such as Schoenberg, Berg and Webern.

[357] Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, Berkeley, California University Press, 1984; paperback edition with revisions.

[358] Erwin Stein, "Neue Formprinzipien." *Sondernheft des Musikblätter des Anbruch 6* (Arnold Schönberg zum fünfzigsten Geburtstag 13. September), 1924, pp. 286–303. .

known from her diary, she copied scores while studying in Vienna. Nevertheless, there is evidence that later Gow was certainly aware of some literature on Schoenberg. For example, Gow was consulting René Leibowitz's publication of 1949 on Schoenberg's Variations for Orchestra Op. 31[359] while she was composing her own Theme and Variations for solo violin (1955). Gow leaves a scribbled pencil reference to this specific source on the manuscript of her Variations.

On Saturday 5 November, Gow hears Hindemith's *Philharmonic Concerto* (Variations for Orchestra, 1932). She is not very enthusiastic, writing: "I liked it better than his others that I have heard". Meanwhile she mentions how excellent the playing was of pieces by Dvořák and Brahms at the same concert. So, it is not that Gow does not know how to express enthusiasm. On the 8 November she listens to Hindemith's *Konzertmusic* for brass and strings, op. 50, and she writes. "It does seem to me to have such an abrupt end. I don't care for it as much as the Variations I heard the other day." Gow seems mostly to like *Austrian* modernism. Again, this is evidence of the way her liking is not a blanket pro-modernist inclination. She picks and chooses. Even though she says of the people staying at her *pension*: "I loathe them when they make cutting remarks re. modern music",[360] her own enthusiasms within modern music were not very broad. However, she loves Stravinsky, writing of the Rite of Spring concert on the 10 of December: "The Sacre I was overjoyed to hear again." And she even goes to hear it again on the next day.

Her tastes in music, outside of modernist music, were actually quite broad. On 2 December, Gow praises Bach's B Minor Mass, writing: "The opening is glorious even done badly." On 8 November she describes Beethoven's late quartets as "… amazingly interesting".[361] And Gow reports on 10 November: "I enjoyed hearing Schubert in D moll and then the Ravel quartet". And she really likes Prokovieff's *Scythian Suite*, especially the end, even though she thinks his *Symphony Classique* is "a pointless exercise".[362] Given the music that she was composing, we might expect Gow to be an

[359] Rene Leibowitz, *Introduction a la Musique De Douze Sons Les Variations Pour Orchestre Op 31 D'arnold Schoenberg* (Paris: L'Arche, 1949).
[360] Dorothy Gow, Diary, *op. cit*., 6 November 1932.
[361] These are not classified as "antiques", unlike Beethoven's *Eroica*, which she saw just over a week earlier.
[362] Dorothy Gow, Diary, *op. cit*., 10 December 1932.

enthusiast for all or most modernist compositions. But although she has a guarded enthusiasm for Berg's *Wozzeck* and a more unconstrained delight in Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, she is not at all enthusiastic about performances of works by Webern and Hindemith. Gow was no follower of trends and seems to take each work on its own terms.

On 10 December, Gow goes to see Prokofiev's Symphonie Classique, and, by contrast with what she says about Prokovieff's *Scythian Suite,* she writes "The Prokofiev symphony I was disappointed in. I can't see the point of writing a thing like that in the style of the past. I reason, I am told, is that he wanted to write a classical thing with the benefits of modernized instruments, but I don't think it justified the results." She would, we might conjecture, equally object to designing buildings in the classical style, in the late twentieth and twenty-first century. If she had said, "…the results did not justify the effort", it could be open-minded about composing in that style, but writing it the other way around: "I don't think it justified the results" implies that the result was not worthwhile, being composed in a traditional style, and the intellectual ingenuity required for the composition did not outweigh the dubious deed. So, she does hold the characteristically modernist idea that an artwork should be of its time.

While this is true, it is evident that Gow was no narrow modernist ideologue. Even though she had broad modernist sympathies, she liked much else. Gow was most interested in one main current of musical modernism. There is a question about why she did not pursue other kinds of modernism more than she did. There are Stravinsky and Bartók scores in her archive.[363] Nevertheless, Austrian modernism seems to have been her main enthusiasm.

§5. Non-musical Modernism

Gow's sympathy for musical modernism chimes with her taste, and sentiments more broadly, concerning other things. This is particularly striking in her comments on

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[363]Piano scores of Béla Bartók, owned by Dorothy Gow: Suite for Piano, op.14, 1916; 15 Hungarian Peasant Songs, 1914-1918. Scores of Igor Stravinsky, owned by Dorothy Gow: *Symphonie de Psaumes*, 1930: *Three Songs from William Shakespeare*, 1953.

architecture. For example, when Gow first sees the opera house on 26 October, she writes: "Looks like most opera houses—ornate with statues round it." On 27 October she speculates about the interior of St Stephan's cathedral (which she does not see), that it is "ornate gothic". On 6 November she sees the cathedral and writes: "… impressive outside very ornamented gothic—but inside plainer with lovely columns & a rather low circle under the organ loft which satisfies me greatly." The word "but" reveals that there is a contrast between the ornamented outside and what she likes inside. "Ornament", of course, is a modernist buzzword carrying its full negative load in Gow's language, whether consciously or not.

On Thursday 24 November, she praises (and describes) of a modern sanitorium building where her friend Cooper is recovering. By contrast, on Sunday 4 December, she reacts to the room where Cooper lives, writing: "See his antiquated room which is an Austrian counterpart of a Victorian room at its worst." She seems to have a general dislike and disrespect for pre-modernist traditional styles of interior decoration. For example, in the staging of the Johann Strauss opera, she objects to "Ballroom, chandeliers, and ballet complete with male violinists in lavender tights! And they all end up in a whirl of waltzing". She finds such an aesthetic laughable and ridiculous, just as she finds Verdi "warbling around in thirds" laughable and ridiculous (see below).

On Monday 15 November, she has a conversation with her hotel-mates, after which Gow writes: "We nearly come to blows over the equality of the sexes & baroque art!" This is an interesting juxtaposition, and we can see that her views on both politics and art were aligned to some extent. In both, she tends to sympathize with newer ways of thinking and newer tastes.

What we see from these extracts is a general orientation towards new cultural things and activities some of which can be called "modernist", but others were just new 'crazes' such as rhumba, which she appears to be adept at dancing. And in her habits and her personal life she is very much an independent-minded modern woman: she

smokes, for example, and later lives for many years with a woman (Eleanor Bevan Ramsbotham).[364]

At the same time, she is unremittingly and witheringly sceptical about psychoanalysis, which was also a recent 'craze'. In *Pension* 'Atonal' and in the previous hotel where she stayed, she was surrounded by foreigners who had come to Vienna to be psychoanalyzed just as Gow had come to Vienna because of modernist music. So, not all things new received her approval, not even all things new from Vienna. Likewise, socialism and fascism were in many ways kinds of modernism in politics, both aiming to sweep away old political orders in favour of a new reconstituted order, just as in music, traditional tonality was being swept away to open-up new musical possibilities.[365] Yet neither seemed to have appeal to Gow. Again, while her negative views were quite definite and dogmatic, her positive enthusiasms were guarded and discriminating. She is no naïve enthusiast for all things new. Yet, for all that, there is a general sympathy for many new directions in the sphere of the arts.

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[364] See Sophie Fuller, *Music, Life and Changing Times: Selected Correspondence Between British Composers Elizabeth Maconchy and Grace Williams, 1927-77. Volume 1 and 2*, edited by Sophie Fuller and Jenny Doctor, London: Routledge, 2021.

[365] While we are on the subject of politics, on Wednesday 9 November, Gow writes that she: "Went to the concert in the other & smaller concert hall. The conductor was Reichwein a National Socialist and therefore a great Hitlerite. Crowds of students all young Hitlers were there wearing coloured student caps & some wearing the Hitler uniform, warlike kaki with a red band round the arm. They were terribly enthusiastic over the conductor but he left me cold." Unfortunately, Gow does not say *why*, which would have been interesting. Nevertheless, it is notable that she appears to retain her objectivity about the conductor qua conductor. A few days later, on Saturday 12 November, on the national holiday, celebrating the anniversary of the republic, she writes "… marching along the ring to the university were the National Socialists, followers of Hitler. They were throwing about paper swastikas, which is their symbol of hatred of the Jews, I am told." We might initially be surprised that this is all she says. But, for one thing, we are looking back with knowledge of what was to come, and, for another, the presence of fascists in the streets might well have appeared to be unremarkable and familiar to her when we consider that at that time Oswald Mosely and his 'blackshirts' had a similar presence on the streets of London.

§6. Opera

Gow makes extensive remarks both on opera in general and on Verdi and Wagner in particular. Her general comments on opera with be separated from those she makes abut Wagner. What she says about opera in general certainly reveals a modernist orientation.

Gow comes to Vienna with quite general negative attitudes to opera, which she initially connects with her sympathy with modernism. However, this general negative attitude changes after she sees Berg's *Wozzeck*.

Early in her trip, on 29 October, she goes to the opera to see Wagner's "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg"[366] where she stood from 6.30 until 11.30. She writes with a generally negative attitude, although what she says is tempered, as we noticed before, by an independent fair-minded attention to details:

> Can't say I enjoyed it much. May have been partly due to the discomfort of standing, not being able to see & the stuffy atmosphere including the Austrian garlic mixed with Heaven knows what smell! I wonder if I shall ever wholeheartedly enjoy opera. I think not. Haven't got the operatic temperament or mind evidently. The opera house is like most opera houses very ornate. Blue skies, Venus's of huge proportions with gowns artfully falling off one shoulder. Masses of gilt all over the place but I must say the Austrians do take opera very seriously. I thought that the brass very very good.[367]

None of this is directly about Wagner, but Gow seems to think that her reaction to the performance derives from her general attitude to opera. At one point Gow says that she does not really like opera, but she puts it down to her individual preferences which she puts down to her "temperament". Again, this comment reveals an interesting distinction between considered judgment of taste or value and mere idiosyncratic preference. This is a neat echo of what Hume says in "Of Standard of Taste" (1757) where he allows a divergence of taste that is "blameless on both sides".[368] Hume considers two people a younger man who prefers Ovid and an older man who prefers Tacitus. Gow reveals

[366] *Wiener Staatsoper*, Director: Lothar Wallerstein, Conductor: Clement Krauss.
[367] Dorothy Gow, Diary, *op. cit*., 29 October 1932.
[368] David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste", in *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary,* ed. Eugene Miller, Indianapolis: Liberty Press.

such sophisticated attitudes to her own sensibility, where mere preference is one thing, and considered judgement is another. Here she makes no general claim about opera, she just records her reactions. Or so it appears.

However, if we consider the juxtaposition of the comments on opera with her comments on the architecture of the opera house, we can extract an evaluation. For Gow is more than hinting that the opera house is *overly* ornate. She may or may not be consciously thinking of Adolf Loos's famous modernist statement *Ornament and Crime,*[369] but even if not, her criticism evinces a modernist sensibility in its more zen-like focus on essentials and less on dispensable decoration. She disdains baroque art, for those reasons. This outlook would link to a general dislike of opera, as Gow had hitherto experienced it. Crucially, however, this entry is written early in her trip before she saw Berg's *Wozzeck* (25 November). It is unlikely that she would have made such a sweeping negative statement about opera later in the trip. It is not just the music (the sounds) of Berg's opera that Gow praises, or values, but its musical-dramatic combination. So, her anti-opera stance shifts markedly over this trip. Nevertheless, Gow never attempted an opera herself, although she did compose some vocal music. There are her Three Songs for Tenor (1931 or 1933), an atonal piece Song, as well as Mass for Unaccompanied Choir (probably 1926).

On 4 December she see two helpings of Verdi in one day. First, is Verd's Requiem. She writes: "I was hoping to like it but it left me very cold. Altogether too operative for me. A good deal of Aida was noticeable. Anyhow it is not at all my idea of what a Requiem should be." This is not ideological modernism at work, since the objection is the lack of fittingness of the music for a requiem, presumably because the music is over-operatic. (Recall her "I wonder if I shall ever wholeheartedly enjoy opera".) On the same day, she sees Verdi's Othello, and writes: "God what a day of Verdi I have had! Of its kind it is very good I suppose, but I simply *cannot* enjoy this kind of stuff. It certainly has some fine dramatic moments, but oh that warbling around in 3rds, which Verdi will make his males do." Again, the more fundamental objection is musical. What counts as "operatic" is analysed musically ("warbling around in 3rds"). This objection to 'ornament' in music echoes Loos's objection to ornament in architecture. The "fine dramatic moments", most likely pertain to the drama, to story; it

[369] Adolf Loos, *Ornament and Crime*, Harmonsworth: Penguin Classics, 2019.

is not musical drama. Nevertheless, she does have the good grace to admit that she had very bad standing position and there was too much garlic in the air… so as she says: "Certainly this is seeing & hearing opera under the worst conditions and may bias one a bit." Again, we see here her sense of fair-play and distance in judgement.

Gow and Wellesz differ over opera. For Gow it is not central, whereas it is Wellesz's favourite genre. He wrote many operas and enjoyed operatic experience.[370] In their meetings, they often discussed operas and in particular Wagner's operas, but their conversations centre more on a purely musical aspect rather than theatrical or literal dimensions. While Gow appreciates the music of *Die Walkyrie*, for example, she thinks very badly of a story and hopes Wellesz will not question her about the opera (12 December). Nevertheless, during the period in Vienna, Wellesz may have softened Gow's negative stance towards opera as a genre, but, as we shall see in a moment, not towards Wagner's efforts in that genre.

§7. Wagner And Analysis

Gow's attitudes to Wagner are not simple consequences of her general attitudes to opera. Her thoughts and remarks about Wagner are complicated by her discussions with Wellesz, and her knowledge that Wellesz thinks Wagner is important. We can here leave aside what she said after the *Meistersinger* performance, covered above, since she said little about that particular opera. Her remarks on Wagner are interesting, but how do they bear on her compositions given that she never composed an opera, and she disliked Wagner? But this very absence is important. Influences can be both positive and negative. The earlier generation, such as Vaughan Williams, was influenced by Wagner's operas, as well as folk music. Not Gow. And this very negativity is interesting and an indicator of newer modernist sympathies.

In her remarks on Wagner, Gow is not at all guided by Wagner's ideology of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[371] Gow has no qualms about dissecting Wagner's operas, and then distinguishing different aspects, condemning some while praising others. Many times,

[370] See Bojan Bujic, *Arnold Schoenberg and Egon Wellesz: A Fraught Relationship* (London: Plumbago Books, 2020).

[371] Richard Wagner, "The Total Work of Art", *Wagner Journal* 8, 2014.

she takes the route of *analysis* into elements. This is fundamental to Gow's approach, wherein she isolates elements, rather than prioritizing the experience of the whole. Gow's comments on Wagner are both strong and interesting. In rough outline, she is unimpressed with the literary/dramatic aspect, but has lots of time for the musical aspect. She clearly separates out the beauty of some of the music from the drama in which she finds little value. More than once, she compares Wagner's music to Baroque art, which is something we have met before in her general attitude to the standard opera canon.

On 5 December, Gow writes that she hopes to hear a very good performance of Wagner's *Das Rheingold*. Before the performance, she writes:

> … apparently Richard Strauss conducted here for 10 years & was famous for his conducting of the Ring, so Clemens Kraus the conductor at the opera house has taken his cue from him, so we shall hear it well done I hope.[372]

And after seeing it Gow comments:

> Cooper and I sat together & followed it with the score. I was amazed when the curtain went up to behold the Rhine maidens floating in mid air on wires! Heaven knows how they can manage to sing for the whole act in that suspended state the opening suggesting the flowing Rhine I enjoyed & also some of the Rhine maidens singing, but better not to look at them if one doesn't care for transformation scenes in the pantomime! The beginning of the 2-act seems to be a domestic quarrel between Wotan & his wife. … is really to me all rather a feeble story. … all do such stupid things such as. … is worthy of a child's game. However, I am very glad to have seen it & shall feel better musically educated when I have seen the whole "Ring". The Rhine maidens singing in the distance is lovely sound.[373]

Her reactions here are manyfold: first, Gow was amazed at the staging. Secondly, she compares some of the staging with pantomime. Some of the staging she finds ridiculous or even amusing. Thirdly, she is very damming of the libretto or a story. She says that the story is feeble, people do stupid things, and what they do is trivial (such as have

[372] Dorothy Gow, Diary, *op. cit*., 5 December 1932.
[373] *Ibid*., 5 December 1932.

domestic quarrels). This could not be more opposed to the high Germanic) seriousness with which Wagner's operas in their totality is taken by many of his followers.[374] Fourthly, Gow nevertheless says she is *very* glad to have seen the opera. She seems to view it as part of her musical education. Perhaps Wellesz is tacitly in the background here. At least, she views seeing Wagner as an important part of her musical education. Finally, Gow says that she enjoyed some of the singing; in particular, the Rhein maidens singing in the distance is said to be "lovely sound". This description is very revealing. This is what she praises, not a haunting musical realization in performance of part of a profound story, as a Wagnerite might say.[375] Some would criticise Gow for having over-limited interest in this narrowly sonic aspect of Wagner's opera, which flies in the face of Wagner's entire idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*[376] and it is against the approach of many of those who have written about or enjoyed Wagner. Nevertheless, as we have noted, Gow *dissects* his works and their performances. She attends to the elements in abstraction from the whole. (It is all rather un-"*Gesamt"*.) Is this closeminded and overly limited? Those of a more formalist inclination might say that whether or not she is over-limited in her attention, there is no reason to believe that her limited and partial comments are not fair enough in their own way. Others would object that by concentrating on the elements in isolation Gow has missed the whole point, or at least what she focuses on is trivial compared to what is obtainable from the whole. Certainly, that is what Wagner himself would say. That is why he refused to allow concert performances of parts of his operas until much later in his career. We can leave this issue open. Meanwhile, however, we can note that Gow's views are in alignment with one rather than the other of these approaches.

The next Wagner concert she sees, four days after seeing *Das Rheingold*, is the *Die Walkürie.* Gow writes after the performance:

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[374] A prominent example is George Bernard Shaw, The Perfect Wagnerite: A Commentary on the Niblung's Ring, London, 1898; A contemporary 'Wagnerite' who prioritises the dramatic themes is Roger Scruton; see for example his *The Ring of Truth*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2016.

[375] Charlotte Purkis draws attention to Shaw's description of the Rheinmaidens singing, which stands in dramatic contrast with Gow's bare description. See her "Passion or Fashion? British Female Wagnerites 'Out and About' Around 1900", *The Wagner Journal* 15, pp. 23–39, see especially pp. 27-28.

[376] Richard Wagner, "The Total Work of Art", *op. cit.*

> Cooper rings up at 6 o'clock to say he has got 2 Stehplatz for this evenings performance of Walkurie, all the seats were sold out yesterday. So I rush off to the opera & get there about 6.20. It was frightfully crowded & we had to sit on the floor trying to read the score in a very dim light. It really was seeing opera under the worst conditions, when I say seeing I mean hearing as there was no question of seeing at all except a few heads. It was a good performance I should say, but dear oh me it does seem to [text unclear] when Fricka & Wotan have their usual scrap. I cannot feel that Wagner was a really good operatic writer. Perhaps if he had chosen different texts he might have been. It seems to me that he got his most dramatic affects by childish incidents. The battle between Hunding & Siegmund is very childish & then the flames round Brunhilde in the last act appeal to me cheap & spectacular instincts in one, although the fire music is lovely. However, I am very glad I have been, but hope Wellesz will forget to cross question me about it tomorrow.[377]

The fact that Walkurie was sold out shows how popular Wagner was in Vienna at that time. Due to their bad seats, Gow describes herself as *hearing* the opera rather than *seeing* it. Nevertheless, she describes the *performance* as good, so that must have been a matter of how it sounded, rather than how it was staged and acted. Gow harshly criticises the libretto and dramatic aspect, finding the story of Fricka and Wotan uninteresting and unconvincing, even describing some of the drama as "childish". Many will think Gow's judgement superficial, while others will agree with her. This is not the place to enter this kind of debate. The important thing is her separation of story from music. Gow does think that some of the music is "lovely". Nevertheless, she apparently thinks of this opera, and probably Wagner's other operas, as overwrought melodrama with some redeeming musical moments. Not only is she *separating* the musical beauty of the sounds from the story, she is bracketing that off from whatever is achieved at the level of the whole work. She analyses its elements. Partly this is due to her compositional interest, which is bound to focus on how a work is put together from its elements since composing is building a whole work out of the elements that are its parts. Nevertheless, it also reflects her critical sensibility and what was important to

[377] Dorothy Gow, Diary, *op. cit*., 11 December 1932.

her, which was more purely musical, that is, a concern with the purely sonic aspect rather than the musical-dramatic whole.

Only two days later, on the 13 December, she rushes off to hear Wagner's *Siegfried*[378]:

> Have my usual tea & work again for a bit & then rush off to see "Siegfried". Both Cooper & I began to feel almost violent in our boredom. Five whole long hours of unrelieved Wagner is too much for the patience of any man and woman. Wotan kept on coming on the stage as "the wanderer" [in]a kind of violet tea gown & felt pictiere [word unclear] & how glad I was when Siegfried breaks the [farmer's?] spear which means his death & one is safe in the knowledge that he won't appear again. The last act is a disgraceful love scene between Brünhilde & Siegfried. Siegfried immediately conceives a passion for her well exceeding boiling point & pursues her across the stage whilst Brunhilde gives three lumpish operatic runs to avoid his molestations, this goes on ad lib but finally the curtain goes down on them having a never-ending embrace. Wagner's music, I know now, means the same to me as Baroque art. Come home completely fagged & feeling very intolerant.[379]

This is trenchantly negative without even some grudging admiration for beautiful singing or occasional musical beauty. The exclamation "too much for the patience of any man and woman" is a clear value judgement. Here there is no idea that it is an idiosyncratic preference. Gow criticises both the performance and the work. She has nothing positive to say, not even of the musicianship of the players. Gow seems to have reached a kind of decision. This may have to do with her positive experience of *Wozzeck*. She describes herself and Cooper as "violent with boredom", which is interestingly strong. This is not just a lack of interest but a positive rejection. Gow compares Wagner with Baroque visual art, something in her stable archive of negative judgements. One thing this comparison implies, for Gow, is the fault of over-ornamentation, or fuzzy excessive artistic design without clarity and strength of expression. The other thing she implies with the comparison is that, for her, Wagner is the art of the past, not the future. Notice that Gow is very isolated in her opinions at the

[378] Robert Heger, conductor.

[379] Dorothy Gow, Diary, *op. cit*., 13 December 1932.

concert. These were sell-out concerts with much applause after the performance. She is independent minded and not swept along by the enthusiastic crowd around her.[380]

Her last experience of Wagner in Vienna, on 15 December, was *Gotterdammerung*, only two days after her disappointing experience of *Siegfried*. She writes:

> Have tea and work again (no success) until it is time to rush off to the "Gotterdammerung". Well I am utterly relieved to think I have seen the Ring in its entirety & also that it is over. The Gotterdammerung is very loud, the brass fairly blazes, & Brunhilde has to shriek to get her voice through the brass. It lasted 5 hours. Each act would be quite sufficient for one evening I think. I must say I haven't received much musical pleasure from [word missing] of the Ring. Certainly, there are moments of great beauty, but what are they in comparison to the bulk of the enormous work. However it doubtless appeals to a good number of people. We had very good seats having sported 7.25 schillings for front row of the IV Gallerie.[381]

Gow is completing the whole Ring Cycle, and this time she had a good seat, so her reactions cannot be put down to defective viewing conditions. She is glad it is over. Gow got "little musical pleasure, although "certainly, there are moments of great beauty." Notice how she links pleasure and beauty. And the beautiful music is the aspect of the whole that she has enjoyed. However, that beauty comes dispensed in miserly "moments",[382] rather than being part of some longer drawn-out complex impression. Wagner and his followers would tell her, of course, that she has missed the point. They would say that Wagner is not aiming merely to be musically beautiful, especially not in various *moments*, but to go beyond that, with the sublime, or with some combination of many values in one large overall bundle. Wagner's defenders would say that Gow misses the point in just considering the moments apart the whole that they constitute. Nevertheless, Gow insists on distilling one aspect, the musical component, just as Clive Bell in 1914 attempts to separate the literary aspects of

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380 See Solomon Asch, "Studies of independence and conformity: I. A minority of one against a unanimous majority". *Psychological monographs: General and applied, 70(9),* 1956, pp. 1-70.

381 Dorothy Gow, Diary, *op. cit*., 15 December 1932.

382 Compare Jerrold Levinson, *Music in the Moment*, Cornell University Press, 1997.

painting from their visual beauty.[383] That was notably implausible, and it persuaded few people. But perhaps the situation for music is different somehow. The idea, though, is similar, of a kind of *analysis* of a work into its elements, and a focus on elements rather than the whole.

Gow's focus on analysis is not just an aspect of her interest in composition and in how works are put together, as part of her studies, which were after all ultimately practical. Of course, a composer needs to know how a whole is put together out of parts. It is also a matter of her critical sensibility that she analyses Wagner's operas, which enthusiasts of Wagner would see only as a kind of inappropriate autopsy. By contrast, in her comments on *Wozzeck*, although she does focus on the purely musical aspect, she also makes positive and negative comments on the dramatic *combination* of music and libretto and the staging in the performance. So, Gow is not in principle opposed to seeing a unity of music and text and drama operative in a work and performance. It seems, therefore, that this is a response particularly to Wagner's operas. She clearly thinks that Berg's *Wozzeck* has more dramatic substance than these Wagner operas, and for that reason a more holistic approach has more point.

By contrast with most of the Wagner operas that Gow sees, which she criticizes for trivial or pretentious plots, the theme of *Meistersinger* surely ought to have interested her, since it has music as its very theme, not some petty domestic quarrel or pretentious theme. However, she saw *Meistersinger* right at the very beginning of her trip. Moreover, the poor conditions in which she saw *Meistersinger* may have led her to overlook dramatic themes that she might have had time for and even found interesting. One wonders how Gow's attitude to Meistersinger might have been different if she had seen it later in her trip, and under good conditions. She surely could not have complained, at least, in the same way, about the plot; and if so, the 'total' music and drama combination would beg to be considered. But this is counterfactual reception history! If we are going to go down that route, it remains significant that Gow has a general lack of appreciation of opera, and *some* of her reactions to Wagner's operas are coloured by that general fact, but not all.

[383] Clive Bell, *Art*, Chatto & Windus, 1914.

* * *

Gow's diary gives us a vivid portrait of a pioneer composer documenting her time in Vienna, her attitudes, reactions, and her growth during that formative time. The diary entries not only tell us how it was for her, as an evolving musical personality, but also about musical life in Vienna at an important moment in musical history. She may have been shy and retiring in her public persona, but her diary reveals many forthright and interesting views and attitudes concerning music as well as other things. Yet her views are often nuanced and graded. Moreover, there is considerable honesty, for example, when she records feeling something and yet worries that it is just a feeling. We see how she tends towards analysis of a work in terms of its constituent parts. From her diary, we gain a rare glimpse into the inner life of an unusually strong-minded yet self-deprecating woman of great talent and promise.[384] Her diary reveals to us some of the outlook of a modernist composer in the making, who was not much later to flower in writing some of Britain's earliest serialist compositions.

[384] Of course, her musical taste is reflected in her compositions, although this is not something demonstrated in this article.

Conclusion

There is a particularly British road to musical modernism. In this thesis, I have considered four aspects of the British reception of the works of Schoenberg and his associates: critical reception; audience reception; performance; and compositional influence. In each respect, the reception was distinctive, and I have aimed to articulate the respects in which it was distinctive. For instance, much of the critical perspective from which the works were described and evaluated in the press and in correspondence drew on particularly British modes of thinking, such as the sentimentalist tradition. Not only was the critical apparatus distinctive in Britain, it was also rather positive, overall. Something else that was characteristic of the British reception was that the audience for these works was spread out in Britain. It was surprisingly sympathetic, or at least open-minded, in part, to the new works, and it was not somehow just an echo of the outlook of centralised organizations, such as the BBC. The audience had some degree of autonomy and in many cases was in advance of conservative critics. This was different from the situation in Vienna, and it is interesting that one would not think of adding, "and the rest of Austria", because as far as music goes, Vienna pretty much was Austria. It was highly centralised. This was not at all the case in Britain. Performances were also spread out in Britain, and the role of *émigrés* from Austria and also Germany, usually Jewish *émigrés*, was central in both the organization and the playing of these works. Lastly, the influence of Schoenberg's works on native composition was brought about mostly by Schoenberg's students, especially Wellesz and Webern. While these composers were still in Vienna, they were a magnet for British aspiring young composers; and these composers, in their turn, transmitted the Second Viennese School musical ideas to the next generation (the Manchester school, for example). Thus, the tradition spread early in Britain, in the 1930s. I focused on one important but unrecognised link in this chain, the composer Dorothy Gow.

Much more research remains to be done on the four aspects of reception examined above. Indeed, each aspect could have been a separate doctoral dissertation

by itself. Chapters 1 and 2, isolated representative articles by particularly interesting music critics and letter writers; but there are many other resources of this kind to be examined both in national and local newspapers, as well as in other modes of recording and debating issues of novelty and dynamic principles of criticism. And other evidence of the sentimentalist undercurrent might be sought. As for the provincial reception considered in chapters 3 and 4, there is an untapped wealth of local archives to be explored, which were unavailable during the period of the research produced here due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. All sorts of other means of accessing the audience's experiences and reactions might be sought. Private diaries, for example. And other demographic information about audiences might be unearthed. In chapter 5, the *émigrés* networks around the country invites further probing, and there is more to tell about the history of their arrival and their activities. Gow's progress, in chapter 6, was tracked only by some of her compositions, and there are other compositions that can be analysed, and their history traced. In each respect of influence, there is more to investigate. What I have done is to open four doors, and to investigate what seemed most interesting. Meanwhile, there are further fruitful and interesting areas beyond each door.

One issue that underlies the various different aspects of the British reception of the Second Viennese School music is that of identity: British *or* European, or perhaps both British *and* European? Composers such as Dorothy Gow and Elizabeth Lutyens chose to throw their cultural lot in with the British *and* European camp, while other composers—those following Vaughan Williams, Frederick Delius, Herbert Howells, John Ireland, George Butterworth and Gerald Finzi—thought of themselves as musically British as opposed to European. And so they composed what Lutyens called "cow pat" music in the English pastoral tradition. Turning their back on that tradition, Gow along with many others thought of themselves culturally as Europeans, which meant that they felt entitled to adopt and run with the modernist music of central Europe that was equally part of their identity. The issue back in the 1930's for composers about their identity—British or European? —has hardly gone away. In fact, this issue: British *or* European *versus* English *and* European, has been very much on people's minds in recent years. Indeed, not much less than a century later, in 2016, the 'Brexit' issue was much debated in terms of issues of identity. Philip Clark writing for *The Guardian* in 2019, wrote:

> Since the 2016 Brexit referendum, the UK has suffered a collective breakdown over national identity and our relationship to Europe, and it should perhaps be no surprise to see 48/52 divide reflected in our musical tastes. … This exploration of "British" music has (apart from Haydn, Handel, Sibelius and Shostakovich) been exclusively English, sending the message that the only "landmark" classics that matter are those preserving a narrow definition of what it is to be English. … Yes, English music is Elgar, Vaughan Williams and Walton. But music made in Britain is also Elisabeth Lutyens and Humphrey Searle, giving British music a shot in the arm in the 1950s by applying what they had learned from Schoenberg and Webern. …Wrap British music up in a blue passport if you like, but sound doesn't care. It has freedom of movement across borders – and that is never going to change.[385]

Back in the 1930's some composers saw themselves as more British, others as more European, but the issue, then and now, was not so much something to be *discovered* as something to be *decided* by each composer and each critic. Those composers who went to Vienna to learn what central Europe could teach composers from an island off the west of Europe were making a decision about their identity and thereby about their preferred direction for the future of music on that island. They chose to tap into the main current of European modernism rather than the local particularities of England, celebrated by Vaughan Williams and others.[386] Perhaps both tendencies are to be expected, and perhaps both have their place in their own way. In the 1930's, the modernist European cultural currency was experienced in Britain an import from continental Europe. But due to people like Gow, Lutyens, Searle and others, composition in Britain took on a European modernist flavour, which paved the way for later excursions in British modernist composition in the Manchester School in the 1950's and beyond. These questions of identity also confronted critics, audiences and performers. Matters of identity were at stake, but not as something given and unchangeable, but as an active choice to embrace a narrower or broader musical identity, and with that, a narrower or broader musical future.

[385] Philip Clark, "This isle is full of noises: the trouble with 'English music'", *The Guardian*, 11 December 2019.
[386] See Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934.

Appendix A: Press cutting. Ernest Newman. “This Schönberg Question – I”. *The Sunday Times*, 28 October 1945.

This Schönberg Question—I

By ERNEST NEWMAN

IF anyone is entitled to a respectful hearing on the subject of Schönberg it is Dr. Egon Wellesz, a pupil of the master in the early Vienna days, the author of a book on him published in 1921, a great musical scholar whom it is Oxford's good fortune to possess now, and a composer of distinction. It is with pleasure, therefore, that I commend to the notice of my readers a brochure by him—"Arnold Schönberg, an Appreciative Monograph"—which has just been issued by Counterpoint Modern Art Publications, 9/10, Broad Street, Oxford, at eighteenpence. I myself feel in my bones that this is not, and should not be, Dr. Wellesz's last word on the subject. Schönberg is now in his seventy-second year. His music has undergone some notable changes in content and manner and theoretic orientation since the first songs and the "Verklärte Nacht" of about 1898-1900; and though his present phase may possibly not be his final one, he has already done enough during the last few years to necessitate a reconsideration of some of the earlier views of the Schönbergian inner circle on his work.

✦ ✦ ✦

Two facts stand out as beyond dispute, that Schönberg, an incomparable teacher, has made a great impression on the musical practice of our epoch, and that his is one of the three or four most remarkable musical faculties in the whole history of the art. In this last clause I am referring to the nature and scope of the faculty itself, apart from the debatable question of the aesthetic value of this or that of its products: I mean simply that purely as a brain built to function in terms of the material and the forms of sound, Schönberg's is as unique in its own way as that of a great mathematician or geometrician constructed to function in terms of the relations of lines and spaces and numbers. To the vexatious problem of the aesthetic values of much of Schönberg's music I shall come in a later article. For the moment I wish merely to epitomise Dr. Wellesz's pamphlet and to draw one or two conclusions from it.

As he points out, Schönberg's music exhibits four main phases, (a) that of an expansion and subtilisation of the older idiom, as in the "Verklärte Nacht" and the "Gurrelieder," (b) the consciously atonal phase, beginning with the Three Piano Pieces (op. 11), (c) a period, commencing with the Suite for Piano (op. 25), during which he developed the system of twelve-tone composition to its logical limits, and (d) the latest phase, which includes certain works in what Dr. Wellesz calls "a simpler style, in which tonality is once again more marked." Now changes in the substance and the complexion of so rich and powerful a musical mind in the course of nearly half a century are only what might be expected; they indicate not a "recantation" on his part at any time but an imperative inner development. All the same, these changes seem to me a trifle disconcerting for some of the out-and-out Schönbergians in the light of what they wrote about him twenty-five or forty years ago.

For if the master himself has come to feel, in riper years, that atonality, for instance, is not everything, does it not justify the caution of those among us who ventured to doubt at the time that it was everything, in face of the vehement claims made for it by the younger members of the inner circle from about 1910 onwards? We thought at the time that some of these composers who paddled in Schönberg's wake were a rather absurd crew, and their atonal music devoid of real ideas; and now we learn that Schönberg himself was acidly contemptuous of "some of the young men who came to him recently in Hollywood to learn from him in easy lessons 'all about twelve-tone composition.'" He told them in effect, that they had better go back and begin at the beginning, and offered to "teach them the elements of music which they thought they knew so well, but which they had to learn first before they could think of surpassing them." Precisely, in fact, what many musicians told these would-be "revolutionaries" long ago.

Or take Schönberg's present attitude towards tonality. Dr. Wellesz reports him as saying angrily one day, after seeing the score of a composer who

"illogically heaped dissonance on dissonance, 'You'll see! I shall let these boys down some day and write a piece in C major.' Indeed," continues Dr. Wellesz, "Schönberg has let down the critics and some fanatics among his pupils and adherents during these last years in America by the Suite for String Orchestra and other works in simpler style, in which tonality is once again more marked. But is it not natural that the ripest works of a composer should show more clarity and be more accessible to the general public than those of the years of his struggles? Such an evolution does not herald a 'capitulation' on Schönberg's part, as some people seem to believe. It only shows that Schönberg, the septuagenarian, is once again ahead of his followers."

I find this more illuminative than perhaps Dr. Wellesz thought it would be. For it admits (a) that some of the "followers" and "fanatics" have been rather foolish and needed a sharp pulling up, (b) that there is a good deal in the master's earlier and middle period works that is lacking in clarity and general accessibility, and (c) that the possibilities of tonality are by no means exhausted as yet: which is precisely what many musical people have been saying all along, and have been called "reactionaries" for their pains.

BARTOK

At the Boosey and Hawkes concerts in the Wigmore Hall the six string quartets of Bartok are being given in chronological order: the first three have been heard this last week, and the others will follow on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday next. I will discuss the works as a whole when the series is completed.

E. N.

Appendix B: Press cutting. Ernest Newman. "This Schönberg Question – II". *The Sunday Times*. 4 November 194.

This Schönberg Question—II

By ERNEST NEWMAN

I TRIED last week to draw a distinction between Schönberg's musical endowment, which is enormous and will always command respect among musicians, and the actual aesthetic value of his achievement. I do not think it can be disputed that in the musical world as a whole his stock does not stand as high as it did a generation ago. I well remember the avidity with which I myself fastened on the early songs somewhere round 1910: here, I felt, was the promise of something new and vastly significant for the future. In 1914 I was writing enthusiastically about the "Gurrelieder"; and I was greatly interested in the "Verklärte Nacht" when the score of that appeared. In these and other works one felt at that time that the composer who could add so much of his own of the rarest quality to the best of what had been done in nineteenth century music would be capable of scaling almost any heights when he had broken the last links between himself and his great predecessors, especially Wagner. But after that time, broadly speaking, he made less appeal to me by virtue of the actual achievement of his music than by the significance inherent in his new methods of composition. And that, I fancy, has been the experience with him of the keener section of the musical world as a whole. I can recall the time when the announcement of a new work of his aroused the liveliest interest in everyone who felt that the art had arrived at a vital turn of the ways. But to-day the musical world in general does not feel like that about him; the preliminary interest in a new work from him is tepid, and the work itself, when it is heard, creates no rapture except in the ranks of the faithful.

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Is the public right or wrong in this tacit rejection of him after an experience of so many years? Thirty-five years ago, twenty-five years ago, the devotees were confident that while the world was not yet ripe for him his day of glory would assuredly come. In this connection it is profitable to do to-day what I have been doing recently, to read once more through two little volumes that are now rather scarce—a collection of essays on him by his young pupils and admirers published in 1912, and a volume of tributes by Anton Webern, Paul Bekker, Malipiero, Schreker, Casella, Alban Berg and many others presented to him in 1924 in honour of his fiftieth birthday. These books are rich in prophecies of Schönberg's future triumph. In 1912 we were told by one adherent that at the moment his genius was so transcendent that the capacity to recognise it was granted only to a few rare spirits in advance of their time, but that the day of universal recognition would surely come. Tonality and the triad, said one writer, were things of the past: a new music had come, which the world would appreciate however, only when it had shaken from its limbs the last fetters of the centuries-old past.

It was a mistake, said another of these writers of 1912, to regard Schönberg as merely a theoretician: his music came from the heart, and to the heart it would go in the fulness of time. "Schönberg fifty years old," wrote Marya Freund, who used to sing in the "Pierrot Lunaire." "He is a hundred years old, for he is many centuries in advance of our epoch." And so ad infinitum. But does anyone speak of him in such terms of confident prophecy to-day? Is not the tendency now, even among the devotees, to lay emphasis less on the positive appeal of the works of the second period and onwards than on the importance, which no one will dispute, of the new ideals he has infused into the art of music and the new technique he has brought to bear on it?

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In 1912 it was safe enough to take the bold line that, as Karl Linke put it, his music was for a "chosen few" who "understand him even before he has spoken," while the rest of the world would mostly have to be content to grope about in the outer darkness: this music was "a kind of mystery, understood only by those of a similar constitution." But, to put it colloquially, that cock won't fight to-day. Some thirty-five years have gone by since the inner circle began to talk like that from the summit of their Sinai, and still the musical world as a whole remains unconverted, unconvinced; so that we are driven to wonder, in all humility, whether these devotees who regard themselves as the super-vessels of a divine pre-election may not, perhaps, be the victims of a delusion. We were told the other day, for instance, that the new piano concerto was very "witty." Well, the average concert-goer and opera-goer is familiar with all the best wit in music during the last two centuries; and if he fails to perceive the superlative wit of the concerto only one of two conclusions seems to be possible: either he is a dullard beyond intellectual redemption, and the people who find wit in this work are so immensely his superiors that it is hopeless for him to try to raise himself to their level, or they have lost contact with musical realities and are talking through their headgear. It will be interesting to see how that question looks in the eyes of musicians in general ten years from now.

Appendix C: Egon Wellesz, the first page of an autograph letter to Ernest Newman, 29 October 1945; by courtesy of *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.*

E. WELLESZ
51 WOODSTOCK ROAD
Oxford

29 Oct. 45

Dear Mr Newman

I wanted to write to you since I came to England in March 1938,
but one is rather shy to do so in these days. Your article in yesterday's
'Sunday Times' however gives me the welcome opportunity of telling you
how often I have found views expressed in your articles which harmonize
completely with my own on the same subject.

Your article on the Schönberg Question is very wise and I can fully
see your point. You are perfectly right: the last word on the subject
cannot be said at present. From my own experience – I think of Hofmannsthal
the greatest Austrian poet – I know that we can clearly see an artist's
work as a whole when he has been taken from us.

But I should like to say a few words about the last paragraph of
Your article in which you speak of Schönberg's lack of clarity in his
middle period. May I remind you of Melanchthon's letter in
which he speaks about Dürer's confession 'postea se senem coepisse
intueri naturam et illius nativam faciem imitari conatum esse,
eamque simplicitatem tunc intellexisse summum artis decus esse.'

It is true, some artists are blessed by fate with the rare gift of
'clarté latine', but you know best how seldom this is the case with
the artists of Central Europe who are more often 'Faustische Naturen.'
Such an artist cannot achieve real simplicity without having
gone through a stage in which he was attracted by 'monstrosae
et inusitatae figurae', as Dürer was when he was young.

I fully agree with you that the approach to Schönberg's works
of the middle period is difficult. But I am convinced that he
could never have written a single bar without having been

Appendix D: Ernest Newman, the first page of an autograph letter to Egon Wellesz, 9 November 1945; by courtesy of *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.*

POLPERRO,
EPSOM LANE SOUTH,
TADWORTH, SURREY.
TEL. BURCH HEATH 889.

9. 11. 45

Dear Dr. Wellesz,

I must apologise for not having replied to your letter before now. I've been overworked and very unwell for a long time, and correspondence has been difficult. At the moment I feel just about at the end of my physical resources, and I am taking a few weeks off from the paper after next Sunday.

I feel honoured that you should agree with at any rate part of my view of the Schönberg case. That case is only one of many, all of them difficult. We have to admit that music, like the world in general, has passed into a phase that baffles us: the people who do the most thinking about either music or the world are the people who are most conscious that they are witnessing one of the major changes of history – perhaps something that will be seen a century hence as the equivalent of one of the great geological "epochs" of the past. No one can foresee what will be the ultimate outcome of it all: the past has almost ceased to have any validity either as a reading of the present or a guide to the future. In the circumstances what can we do but

Appendix E: Kolisch Quartet Concerts in London, the Provinces, and also The Republic of Ireland

Date of performance	Place of performance	Work(s) Performed	Performed by:	Organised by:
1928 Feb. 14	London, Aeolian Hall	Schoenberg second quartet Schubert Death and the Maiden Beethoven C major quartet	Frau Ruzena Herlinger	Organised by Gerald Cooper
1931 Feb. 25	Dundee, Training College Hall (first appearance in the city)	Mozart Quartet in C Major Schuber Quartet in A Minor Darius Milhaud quartet	Kolisch Quartet	Dundee Chamber Music Club
1931 Nov. 3 **afternoon**	Aberdeen, Cowdray Hall	Four items were given, the most popular Schubert Quartet in D minor “Death and the Maiden” 2nd mvmt.	Kolisch Quartet	Children from the secondary schools of Aberdeen
1931 Nov. 3 evening	Aberdeen, Ballroom of the Music Hall	Haydn in B flat major, op. 76, No 4 Beethoven, string Quartet No. 13 in B flat major, op. 130. Ravel Quartet in F major, and an “extra bit” andante from Schubert	Kolisch Quartet	Aberdeen Chamber Music Club
1931 Nov. 10	London, St. John’s Institute	A new composition by Theodor Berger Haydn Quartet op. 76, No. 4 Beethoven Quartet in B flat major (op. 130)	Kolisch Quartet	Music Society
1932 Mar. 31	London, St. John’s Institute	Haydn Quartet in C (“The Emperor”) Schubert Quartet in D minor “Death and Maiden”	Kolisch Quartet	

1932 Apr. 1	London, St. John's Institute	Haydn "Sunrise" Quartet Berg Lyric Suite	Kolisch Quartet	
1932 Apr. 4	London, St. John's Institute	Haydn "Lark" from op. 64 Mendelssohn E flat octet	Kolisch Quartet Mangeot's Quartet	
1932 Apr. 4	London, Austrian Embassy 18 Belgrave Square		Elisabet Schumann (sang), Carl Alwin (piano) Kolisch Quartet	Austrian Minister
1933 Feb. 14	London, St. John's Institute, Westminster	Brahms Quartet in A minor Brahms Quintet for piano and strings op. 34 Handel Variations and Fugue	Kolisch Quartet, Josepha Rosanska (piano)	Music Society
1933 Dec. 19	Aberdeen, Ballroom of the Music Hall	Beethoven op. 131 Mozart K421 Schubert D804 op29		Aberdeen Chamber Music Club
1934 Nov. 13	Edinburgh, Freemasons' Hall	Haydn "Lark" Quartet in D major, Mozart Quartet in D minor K 421, Dvorak quartet no. 13 in F major op. 96 Berg Lyrische Suite		
1934 Nov. 15	Bristol, University of Bristol, Victoria Rooms	Mozart String Quartet No. 19 in C major, K. 465 Schoenberg String Quartet No. 1 in D minor (op. 7) Beethoven String Quartet in F minor, op. 95		Organised by M.H. Carrè for the University of Bristol Musical Society
1934 Nov. **(Date unknown)**	Glasgow	Schoenberg Quartet op. 7		Glasgow Chamber Music Society

1934 Apr. 24	London, Austrian Legation	Berg Lyric Suite and a few songs, Webern early string quartet, Egon Wellesz and Hans Eisler – songs, J.M. Hauer Hölderlin songs, Ernst Toch String Quartet	Emmy Heim (soprano) Kolisch Quartet	Under the auspices of London Contemporary Music Centre
1935 Nov. 1	Aberdeen	Beethoven op 132 Mozart K575 Schubert D887 op 161		Aberdeen Chamber Music Society
1935 Nov. 19	Edinburgh	Webern Five Pieces for String Quartet op. 5 Beethoven Quartet in C sharp minor op. 131, Debussy Quartet in G minor op. 10		Edinburgh Music Club
1935 Nov. 25	Ballsbridge, Dublin, Ireland	Afternoon programme: Mozart Quartet in D minor K 575 Brahms Quartet in C minor No.1 Beethoven Quartet in F flat major op. 74 Evening programme: Schubert Quartet in A minor op. 29 Mozart Quartet in B flat Beethoven Quartet in F major No. 1 of the Razoumowsky		
1935 Nov. 27	Aeolian Hall	String Quartets by Mozart, Beethoven, and Ravel		The Chamber Music Society presented
1935 Nov. 29	Derby, Central Hall	Ravel in F, Beethoven op. 95 in F minor, Mozart in B flat major (K 458)		
1935 Dec. 10	Bradford	Beethoven, Schubert and Alban Berg		Bradford Music Club

(Cancelled owing to an illness of a member of a Kolisch Quartet)				
1937 Mar. 1	Manchester	Mozart String Quartet in D Schubert D minor Quartet, Debussy Quartet, Berg three movements from the Lyric Suite		Manchester Chamber Concerts Society
1937 Mar. 5	Bedford, High School Hall		Kolisch Quartet	Bedford Music Club
1937 March 9	Bradford	Beethoven in F major (op. 59 no. 1), Schubert “Death and the Maiden”, Berg Lyric Suite (2nd, 3rd, and 4th mvts.)		Bradford Music Club
1938 Feb. 1	Aberdeen	Beethoven in C sharp minor, op 131 Mozart in F major, K590 Schubert in G major, D887 op 161		Aberdeen Chamber Music Society
1938 Feb. 9	Leeds University	Berg Lyric Suite Haydn String Quartet op. 76 no. 4 in B flat major “Sunrise” Beethoven String Quartet op. 132 in A minor		
1938 Feb. 12	Aeolian Hall, London	Schubert Quartet in D minor Haydn B flat, op. 76 No. 4 Beethoven Quartet in C sharp minor, op. 131		

1938 Feb. 14	Ballsbridge, Dublin, Ireland	Mozart Quartet in C major K. 465 Haydn Quartet in B flat major Ravel Quartet in F major Schubert Quartet (Death and Maiden) Beethoven Quartet in E minor No. 2 of the Rasoumowski Dvořák String Quartet, No. 12 in F major, op. 96.		Royal Dublin Society
1938 Feb. 16	Huddersfield, Highfield Assembly Hall	Haydn Quartet in B flat major op 76 no 4 Schubert G major op 161 Dvorak String Quartet, No. 12 in F major, op. 96.		Huddersfield Music Club
1938 Feb. 18	Aeolian Hall (second of the Kolisch Quartet recitals), London	Mozart in D minor (K.421) Schubert in A minor Beethoven op. 130 (with the Fugue)		
1938 Feb. 21	Glasgow	Bartók fifth Quartet		Glasgow Chamber Music Society
1938 May 24	Contemporary Music Centre, Cowdray Hall, London	Schoenberg fourth quartet Five movements from Webern op. 5, Bartók fourth quartet		
1939 Feb. 8	Ballsbridge, Dublin, Ireland	Beethoven Quartet in F flat major, 130, With the Grosse Fugue, op. 133, Berg Lyric Suite		Royal Dublin Society

		Brahms Quartet in C minor No. 1 op. 51 Schubert C minor posthumous Quartet		
1939 Feb. 3	Wigmore Hall, London	Brahms in C minor Mozart in B flat Schoenberg in D minor		
1939 Feb.	Wigmore Hall, London	Beethoven C minor op. 18 no. 4 Beethoven F major op. 135 Beethoven E minor op. 59 no. 2		
1939 Apr.	Glasgow		Kolisch Quartet	Glasgow Chamber Music Society

Appendix F: Second Viennese School Concerts in the Provinces, excluding Concerts given by the Kolisch Quartet (See Appendix E)

Date of Performance	Place of Performance	Work(s) Performed	Performed by	Organised by	Reviewed
14 Feb 1914	Newcastle Lovaine Hall	Several Schoenberg songs, and some examples of his piano music	W. G. Whittaker, E. Bainton (lecturer/piano), James B. Clark (presided)	Incorporated Society of Musicians	*Newcastle Journal*, 16 Feb 1914, p. 3.
14 Mar 1914	Leeds Church Institute	Seven songs by Arnold Schoenberg.	Albert Jovett (lecturer), Gladys Peck (singer).	Yorkshire Session of Incorporated Society of Musicians. J. A. Rodgers (Sheffield) presided.	*Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (Yorkshire, England) 16 Mar 1914, p. 7. *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 16 Mar 1914, p. 6.
20 Mar 1922	Manchester Memorial Hall	Schoenberg sextet *Verklärte Nacht* Ethel Smyth Quartet in E minor, Mozart Quartet in C major	Edith Robinson Quartet (all female string quartet) Carl Fuchs (German cellist)		*The Guardian*, 18 Mar 1922, p. 6.
5 Oct 1926	Bradford Town Hall	Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht*	Virtuoso String Quartet: Marjorie Hayward, Edwin Virgo, Raymond	Chamber Music Festival of Classical and Modern Works	*The Times*, 6 Oct 1926, p. 10.

		Brahms String Quartet No. 2 in G, First Razumovsky quartet of Beethoven, Mozart Pianoforte Trio in E, Faure early piano quartet in C minor	Jeremy and Cedric Sharpe. James Lockyer (viola), Amrose Gauntlett (violoncello), William Murdoch (piano)		
30 Jan 1930	Manchester Free Trade Hall	Tchaikovsky Serenade for Strings Brahms Concerto for Pianoforte no 1 in D minor Respighi Three Botticelli Pictures, The Adoration of the Magi, Spring. Weber Konzertstück for Piano and Orchestra Ernst Krenek Potpourri	Arthur Schnabel (piano) Halllé Orchestra	Hallé Concerts Society	*The Manchester Guardian* (1901 – 1959), 18 Sep 1929, p. 5.
30 Mar 1931	Glasgow, Stevenson Hall, the Academy of Music	Four pieces for piano and violin by Anton Webern Works for piano and	Edward Dennis (violin); Erik Chisholm (piano)	Glasgow Active Society	*The Scotsman,* 31 Mar 1931, p. 7

		violin, including Bloch sonata; the third sonata of Delius; Bartók second violin sonata. Erika Chisholm chose the programme			
20 Dec 1931	Hastings White Rock Pavilion	Songs by Schoenberg Korsakov Scheherazade op. 35	Norman Attwell (conductor) Enid Cruickshank (contralto)		*Hastings and St Leonards Observer* (Sussex, England), 26 Dec 1931, p. 10.
Sep 1932	Bristol Music Club	Three movements from Schoenberg Suite for Piano op. 25 Beethoven work for flute and piano, French folk tunes by Ethel Smyth, Bach Trio in G, Frank Quintet. Programme arranged by W. H. Cook.	W. H. Cook (flute) F. Trott (piano) String Quartet: A. H. Morgan, K. Jocelyn, H. W. Hunt, and J. Reece	Bristol Music Club	*Western Daily Press* (Bristol, England), 30 Sep 1932, p. 6.
15 Nov 1932	Liverpool Basnett Gallery of the Bon Marché	The programme of works by Brahms, Mozart,	John Hunt (piano)		*The Liverpool Echo*, Nov 15, 1932, p. 12.

		Alban Berg, and Beethoven			
16 Feb 1933	Birmingham Town Hall	Webern Sinfonie, op. 21 Beethoven Violin Concerto in D major, op. 61 Berlioz Queen Mab Scherzo Franck “Le Chasseur Maudit”	Birmingham City Orchestra Leslie Heward (conductor) Albert Sammons (violin)		*Birmingham Gazette*, 17 Feb 1933, p.7.
10 Oct 1933	Bradford Music Club	Schoenberg String Sextet *Verklärte Nacht,* op. 4 Brahms String Sextet No. 2 in G major op. 36 Dvorak String Quintet No. 2 in G major op. 77	Hirsch String Quartet (Leonard Hirsch, Reginald Stead, Norman Cunliffe and Haydn Rogerson) Keith Cummings (viola) Leonard Baker (cello)	Bradford Music Club	*The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 11 Oct 1933, p. 10.
18 Oct 1933	Leeds University	Schoenberg String Sextet *Verklärte Nacht* (1899) Mozart String Quintet No. 3 in C major K. 515 Brahms String Sextet	Hirsch String Quartet	University of Leeds Chamber Concerts	*Yorkshire Evening Post* (Yorkshire, England), 14 Oct 1933, p. 3.

		No. 1 in B flat major, op. 18			
22 Nov 1934	Aberdeen Music Club	Berg Lyrische Suite Mozart Quartet in D major K 575 Beethoven Quartet in A minor op. 132	Pro Arte String Quartet A. Onnou, G. Prevost, L. Halleux and R. Maas	Aberdeen Chamber Music Club	*Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 23 Nov 1934, p. 5.
19 May 1935	Manchester the Round House of the University Settlement in Ancoats	"Waiting for Lefty", a short play in six scenes by Clifford Odets, "Free Thaelmann", A group of songs by Hanns Eisler	The Theatre of Action, J. H. Miller (singer)		*The Manchester Guardian*, 20 May 1935, p. 11
19 Feb 1936	Leeds University	Schoenberg String Quartet No. 1 in D minor op. 7 (first performance in Leeds) Mozart String Quartet No. 18 in A major K. 464 Haydn String Quartet op. 74 No. 3 in G minor	Pro Arte String Quartet	Leeds University Chamber Concerts	*Yorkshire Evening Post* (Yorkshire, England), 15 Feb 1936, p. 10.
20 Nov 1936	Manchester Memorial Hall	Stravinsky Concerto for two pianos (1935)	Lucy Pierce (piano)	Manchester Contemporary Music Centre	*The Manchester Guardian*, 21

		Hindemith Sonata for Violin and Piano Roussel Trio for Flute, Viola and Cello Krenek ‘Durch die Nacht” Kilpinen six songs	John Brennan (piano) Leonard Hirsch (violin) E. Brunner Paul Cropper Peggy Robson Elsie Thurston (singer) Muriel Robinson (singer) Dora Gilson (piano)		Nov 1936, p. 15.
3 Nov 1937	Edinburgh, Hamilton Place	Schoenberg String Sextet *Verklärte Nacht* Brahms sextets for strings in B flat and G	John Fairbairn (violin) Douglas Dickson (violin) Joseph Smith (viola) Etta Yong (viola) Ruth Waddell (violoncello) Eleanor Gregorson (violoncello)	Nelson Hall Concerts	*The Scotsman*, 4 Nov 1937, p. 10.
14 Nov 1937	Edinburgh University, Usher Hall	Schoenberg String Sextet *Verklärte Nacht,* op. 4 Brahms String Sextet No. 1 op. 18 in B flat Brahms String Sextet No. 2 op. 36 in G major	John Fairbairn (violin) Douglas Dickson (violin) Joseph Smith (viola) Hilda Yong (viola) Ruth Waddell (violoncello)	Professor Donal Tovey’s Sunday Concert, Reid Chamber Concert	*The Scotsman*, 15 Nov 1937, p. 10.

			Eleanor Gregorson (violoncello)		
21 Feb 1938	Manchester Houldsworth Hall	Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht* Haydn, Vivaldi, Mozart	Clarice Dunington's String Orchestra Scott Joynt (songs)		*The Guardian*, 22 Feb 1938, p. 13.
14 Mar 1939	Liverpool Bluecoat Hall	Schoenberg String Sextet *Verklärte Nacht* (1899) Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major, BWV 1048 Mozart Divertimento in D major K. 136 Sibelius Canzonetta op. 62a Herbert Howell Elegy for Viola, String Quartet and String Orchestra (1917)	Merseyside Chamber Orchestra Louis Cohen (conductor)		
20 Feb 1940	Manchester Houldsworth Hall	Berg Piano Sonata op.1 The 'Hill Tune' of Arnold Bax; Bartók bagatelles; Toccatta by Herbert	Eileen Ralph (piano)		*The Guardian*, 21 Feb 1940.

		Murill, Mozart.			
9 May 1940	Liverpool Rushworth Hall	Berg, Schoenberg	Emil Spira (piano) Helen Mitchell (soprano) D. V. Welsch (clarinet)	Lecture-recital 'Problems of Contemporary Music'	*Liverpool Daily Post*, 10 May 1940, p. 7
8 Nov 1944	Leeds Museum	Berg Sonata op. 1 Hans Gál Three Preludes (manuscript) Chopin Sonata in B flat minor	Dorothea Braus (piano)	Leeds Lunch-time Recital	*Yorkshire Post* and *Leeds Intelligencer*, 9 Nov 1944, p. 3
4 Jan 1945	Harrogate Lounge Hall	Berg Piano Sonata op. 1 It was being heard for the first time in Harrogate.	Dorothea Braus (piano)		Yorkshire post and Leeds Intelligencer, 5 Jan 1945
7 Apr 1945	Manchester Austria House	some songs and piano pieces by Hans Gál	Charlotte Eisler (voice) Hans Gál (piano)		*The Guardian*, 9 Apr 1945, p. 3
2 Nov 1945	Austrian Musical Circle at the Manchester Lower Albert Hall	Egon Wellesz song cycle to words by Stefan George, the solo Suite for cello (Wellesz is 60 as a tribute of him two works of his were performed) Beethoven early Sonata for piano and cello in G minor	Lotte Eisler (voice, piano) Marjorie Nicholson (piano) Friedrich Buxbaum (cello)	The Austrian Musical Circle	*The Guardian*, 3 Nov 1945, p. 3

		Richard Strauss early F major sonata for cello and piano			
18 Dec 1945	Coventry	Schoenberg Six Short Piano Pieces Bartók Ireland "Darkened Valley"	Lecture – recital by Dr. Thomas Armstrong (piano)	The Coventry Philharmonic Society	*Coventry Evening Telegraph* (Warwickshire , England), 19 Dec 1945, p. 4.
4 Jan 1947	Derby Art Gallery	Berg Piano Sonata op. 1 Piano sonatas by Schubert and Mozart and 6 bagatelles op. 126 by Beethoven	Peter Stadlen (piano)		Derby Evening Telegraph, 6 Jan 1947
15 Feb 1947	Liverpool Sandon Music Room	Berg Sonata op. 1 Eight songs by Ivor Gurney, the first book of Dvorak "Biblical Songs", songs by Wolf, Mahler and Weingartner, and dances by Tansman and Smetana.	Dorothy Reid (singer) Dr. Wallace (accompanist) Sheila Dixon (piano)	Liverpool Music Guild	*Liverpool Echo*, 15 Feb 1947, p. 3.
12 Jan 1949	Manchester Albert Hall	Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht* Hindemith 'Mathis der Maler'; Debussy two dances for	Barbirolli (conductor) Rosemary St. John (harp); Hallé Concerts		*The Guardian*, 13 Jan 1949, p. 3.

		harp and string orchestra ('Danse profane'); Schumann Symphony in D minor			

Appendix G: Some examples of Non-Second Viennese School Modernist Concerts in the Provinces, excluding Kolisch Quartet Concerts

Composer	Date of performance	Place of performance	Work(s) performed:	Performed by:	Organised by:
Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)	1932	Huddersfield	Three Pieces (first Stravinsky heard in Huddersfield)	Pro Arte Quartet	
	1933 Jan. 6	Bradford	'Pulcinella' (suite was heard here for the first time)	Chamber orchestra of Hallé players, conducted by Anthony Bernard	
	1934 May 2	Newbury	'Firebird Suite'	The Amateur Orchestral Union under George Weldon	
	1939	Birmingham	'Apollo Musagetes'	Birmingham Philharmonic String Orchestra, conducted by Victor Fleming	Philharmonic Midday concerts
	1939 Apr. 20	Bournemouth	'Firebird Suite'		
	1941 Feb. 17	Bristol	'Capriccio'	Philip Levi (piano)	
	1944 Feb. 23	Wolverhampton	'Firebird Suite'	Hallé Orchestra	
Béla Bartók (1881-1945)	1921 Jan. 26 1921 Jan. 18	Leeds Leeds University	String Quartet 1 or 2.	Bohemian Quartet	
	1926 Mar. 24	Birmingham	'Dance Suite'	City of Birmingham Orchestra	

	1936 Nov. 27	Cardiff	Fourth String Quartet, Milhaud seventh Quartet (in B flat)	Pro Arte Quartet	Cardiff Chamber Music Society
	1938 Feb. 21	Glasgow	Fifth Quartet	Kolisch Quartet	Glasgow Chamber Music Society
	1938	Edinburgh	Second Quartet in A minor	Budapest String Quartet	Edinburgh Music Club
Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)	1931 Oct. 29	Manchester	'Overture' from the opera 'News of the Day' (heard first time in Manchester)	Sir Hamilton Harty	
	1931	Manchester	Third String Quartet	Hirsch Quartet	
	1935	Glasgow	Works by Busoni, George Antheil, Shostakowitch, David Stephen, Debussy, and Hindemith		The Active Society, directed by Dr. Erik Chisholm
	1936 Feb. 4	Edinburgh	'Kleine Kammermusik', op. 24, No. 2	Philharmonic Wind Quintet	Edinburgh Music Club
	1938 Jan. 13	Belfast	'Kammermusik'	Société des Instruments á Vent de Bruxelles	British Music Society of Northern Ireland
	1938 Feb. 15	Edinburgh	A programme of Handel, Mozart, J.S. Bach, J.C. Bach, Hindemith, Lekeu and Britten	Boyd Neel Orchestra	Edinburgh Music Club
	1939	Birmingham	Works by Debussy, Hindemith, and Ireland		Birmingham Music Club
	1944 Aug. 2	Birmingham	Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1938)	Leon Goosens (oboe), Gerald Moore (piano)	Midland Music Club

	1944	Bradford	Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1938)	Leon Goosens, Gerald Moore	Bradford Music Club
Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)	1928 Nov. 7	Bournemouth	Music of Goossens, Milhaud, and Debussy	Pro Arte Quartet	
	1929 Nov. 9	Manchester	Sonata for two violins and piano	Jelly d'Aranyi, Adila Fachiri	Bowden Chamber Concerts
	1931	Liverpool	Quartets by Debussy, Milhaud (No. 4), Haydn (the 'Emperor'), and Bartók (No. 3)	Pro Arte Quartet	British Music Society
	1934	Liverpool (Rodewald Concert)	Seventh String Quartet	Reynaldo Hahn's Pianoforte Quintet	Liverpool Music Society
	1938/1939	Manchester	Rawsthorne Theme and Variations for two violins, Milhaud seventh Quartet and Hindemith third		Contemporary Music Centre
	1941 Feb. 15	Bristol	'Scaramouche'		Bristol Music Club
	1945	Birmingham	'Suite Provençale'	London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Roger Désormière; Ginette Neveu (violin)	

Appendix H: Non-BBC Auspices Second Viennese School Concerts in London, Excluding those of the Kolisch Quartet

Date of performence	Place of performance	Work(s) performed	Performed by	Organised by	Reviewed
9 Feb 1925	Wigmore Hall	Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht* Beethoven String Quartet no 9 in C major, op. 59 no 3 Mozart Quartet in D major K. 575	The Spencer Dyke Quartet - Spencer Dyke, Edwin Quaife, Ernest Tomlinson, B. Patterson Parker; James T. Lockyer (second viola), Edward L. Robinson (second cello)		The Daily Telegraph, 10 Feb 1925, p. 5
22 May 1930	Grotrian Hall, London	Krenek 'A Traveller's Diary of the Austrian Alps' (first performance in England)	Thelma Bradsley (singer) T. H. Ingham (piano)		The Manchester Guardian, 23 May 1930, p. 8.
24 Apr 1934	London Austrian Legation	Berg Lyric Suite Webern Five Movements for String Quartet op. 5 Ernst Toch String Quartet no 11 op. 34 Five songs by Josef Matthias Hauer	Kolisch Quartet Emmy Heim (soprano) Gerald Moore (piano)		The Daily Telegraph, 25 Apr 1934, p. 10
30 Oct 1936	Wigmore Hall	Schoenberg, Suite for Strings, the first concert performance	The Boyd Neel String Orchestra, conductor Boyd Neel		
19 Apr 1938	London Cowdray Hall	Krenek, 8 songs from the 'Reisebuch aus den Osterreichischen'; Second suite from op, 26	Erika Storm Ernst Krenek		The Observer, 24 Apr 1938, p. 14

		Twelve new variations op, 79			
14 Dec 1938	Aeolian Hall	Webern String Trio op, 20	Washbourne Trio		Daily Mail, 15 Dec 1938, p. 9
3 Apr 1939	Conway Hall	Schoenberg, "Peace on Earth"	The Fleet Street Choir, conductor: T. B. Lawrence	Festival of Music for the People, London 1939	
17 Apr 1939	Aeolian Hall	Webern Five Movements for String Orchestra, op 5 (first English performance) Searle Scherzo malinconico (first performance) Bernard van Dieren Adagio cantando from Quartet no 5 (first orchestral performance)	London String Orchestra Humphrey Searle (conductor) Robert Irving (piano)		The Daily Telegraph, 18 Apr 1939, p. 12
28 Apr 1939	Aeolian Hall	Brahms 'Von ewiger Liebe', 'Der Schmied' Mahler 'Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen' Two songs from Schoenberg 'Das Buch der hangenden Gärten' Krenek 'Friedhof im Gebirgsdorf" from the 'Reisebuch' Hugo Wolf 'Geh, Geliebter'	Erika Storm Mosco Carner	London Music Festival	The Manchester Guardian, 1 May 1939, p. 13
27 June 1939	Wigmore Hall	Berg Piano Sonata op 1	Eileen Ralph (piano)		Daily Mail, 27 June 1939, p. 8

		Three early pieces for piano by Schoenberg Busoni Sonatina and some early Bartók, Beethoven Sonata in E major, op 109			
4 Jun 1940	Contemporary Music Centre	Berg slow mvmt. from Chamber Concerto (arrangement for violin, clarinet, and piano) Franz Reizenstein prologue, variations and finale 'En Forme d'Une Danse Fantasque' for violin and piano 'L'Eventall de Jeanne' (1927), a ballet for piano (four hands) by ten French composers; Milhaud Polka Poulenc *Pastourelle*, and the valses by Jacques Ibert and Florent Schmitt	Sidney Harrison (piano) Franck Merrick (piano) Henry Holst Pauline Juler		Liverpool Daily Post, 9 May 1940, p. 6 Liverpool Daily Post, 5 Jun 1940, p. 2.
29 May 1942	Aeolian Hall	Schoenberg, "Pierrot Lunaire"	Vocalist: Hedli Anderson Piano: Peter Stadlen Violin (viola): Dea Gombrich Flute (Piccolo): John Francis Cello: Sela Trau	Boosey & Hawkes Concerts	

16 Jun 1943	Wigmore Hall	The Adagio from Berg Chamber Concerto for piano and eleven instruments (was played in an arrangement for violin, clarinet and piano) Schoenberg Piano Pieces, op. 23 Choral pieces by Egon Wellesz Hans Gál Programme of music banned by Nazis	Peter Stadlen (piano) Fleet Street Choir	Anglo-Austrian Music Society	The Observer, 20 Jun 1943, p. 2
28 Sept 1944	Wigmore Hall	Five early songs by Berg Five songs of various dates by Mahler Britten Phantasy Quartet for oboe, violin, viola, cello Tippett Boyhood's End (1943) – cantata for tenor and piano, based on text by William Henry Hudson	Peter Pears (tenor) Benjamin Britten (piano) The Carter String Trio Leon Goossens (oboe)		The Scotsman, 29 Sep 1944, p. 4
10 Jul 1946	Goldsmith's Hall	Schoenberg, "Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte" for Reciter, String Quartet and Piano (1944)	Reciter: Cuthbert Kelly The Aeolian String Quartet Piano: Else Cross		
2 Dec 1948	St. Paul's, Portman Square, W.1.	Schoenberg, Variations on a Recitative, op. 40	Ralph Downes (organ)	The Organ Music Society	

Appendix I: List of known works by Gow

No.	Year	Composition	Note
1.	1919	Piece for Flute and Piano	First attempt at composition
2.	1925-26	Variations 'on a Diabelli Variation' for piano	
3.	1927?	Fugue for piano	
4.	1926?	Mass for unaccompanied double choir 'Kyrie' 'Gloria' 'Sanctus' 'Hosanna'	
5.	1931	Prelude and Fugue for Orchestra	Full versions for chamber and large orchestra
6.	1932	Fantasy String Quartet	
7.	1933	String Quartet No. 2	
8.	1931 or 1933	3 Songs for Tenor and String Quartet I. 'Hey Nonny No' II. 'Tristia' III. 'I mum be married on Sunday'	Versions for voice and piano
9.	1936	Oboe Quintet	
10.	1947	String Quartet in one movement	Published by Oxford University Press in 1957; broadcasted by the BBC in May 1958.
11.	1953-54	Two Pieces for Oboe Solo Adagio Capriccio	
12.	1955	Theme and Variations for Solo Violin	
13.	1955 or	Piece for Violin and Horn	

	1971		
14.	unknown	Song, ‘There is a place for a cool quiet certitude’, for voice and piano	Reconstructed by the author
15.	1930s-1950s?	‘Musical Consequences’	By Dorothy Gow, Grace Williams, and Ralph Vaughan Williams

Appendix J. List of Some Performances of Gow's Compositions

18 October 1932	Fantasy String Quartet (1932) *first performance*	Macnaghten – Lemare Concerts The Anne Macnaghten String Quartet: Anne Macnaghten, Elise Desprez, Beryl Scawen-Blunt, Mary Goodchild	The Ballet Club Theatre, 2A Ladbroke Road, W. 11
1933 June 22	Fantasy Quartet (1932)	Mrs L. H. Walters at home Macnaghten Quartet Aane Macnaghten, Elise Desprez, Beryl Scawen-Blunt, Mary Goodchild	5 Swan Walk S. W. 3
22 January 1934	Three Songs for Tenor and String Quartet (1933) 'Tristia'; 'Hey, nonny no'; 'I mun be married on Sunday' *first performance*	Macnaghten Quartet; Steuart Wilson (tenor); Irene Kohler (piano)	
26 February 1934	Prelude and Fugue for Chamber Orchestra (1930_1) *first performance*	Orchestra conducted by Iris Lemare	
17 December 1934	String Quartet in One Movement (1934) *first performance*	Macnaghten Quartet (Anne Macnaghten; Elise Desprez, Beryl Scawen-Blunt, Olive Richards); Marie Kortchinska (harp); Jan van der Gucht (tenor); Alan Frank (clarinet); Richard Savage (clarinet); John Francis (flute)	

17 December 1934	Three Songs for Tenor and String Quartet (1933)	Macnaghten Quartet (Anne Macnaghten; Elise Desprez, Beryl Scawen-Blunt, Olive Richards); Marie Kortchinska (harp); Jan van der Gucht (tenor); Alan Frank (clarinet); Richard Savage (clarinet); John Francis (flute)	
13 April 1937	String Trio by Victor Yates Arnold Cooke's Quartet for flute and strings Dorothy Gow Quintet for Oboe and Strings		London Contemporary Music Centre at the Cowdray Hall
30 March 1953	String Quartet in one movement (1947)	Macnaghten New Music Group Sophie Wyss (soprano) Ruth Dyson (piano) Macnaghten Quartet (Anne Macnaghten (Violin) Elisabeth Rajna (Violin) Geoffrey Gotch (Viola) Arnold Ashby (Cello)	Great Drawing Room, Arts Council of Great Britain, 4 St. James's Square, London, S.W.1
2 November 1953	String Quartet in one movement (1947)	Macnaghten String Quartet: Anne Macnaghten (violin), Elisabeth Rajna (violin), Margaret Major (viola), Arnold Ashby (cello)	Great Drawing Room (Arts Council of Great Britain), 4 St. Jame's Square, London S.W. 1
6 December 1954	Two Pieces for Solo Oboe (1954) *first performance*	Macnaghten New Music Group Sophie Wyss (soprano); Joy Boughton (oboe); Ruth Dyson; Macnaghten String	Great Drawing Room (Arts Council of Great Britain) 4 St. James's Square, London, S.W. 1

		Quartet: Anne Macnaghten, Elisabeth Rajna, Margaret Major, Arnold Ashby	
16 May 1955	Theme and Variations for Solo Violin (1955)	Macnaghten New Music Group Antonio Brosa (violin) A Chamber Ensemble conducted by Iris Lemare	Arts Council of Great Britain, Drawing Room, 4 St. James's Square, London, S.W. 1
12 December 1969	String Quartet (1947)	Society for the Promotion of New Music; Wissema String Quartet: Nella Wissema (violin), Fay Campey (violin), Ludmila Navratil (viola), Paul Ward (cello); with David Lloyd (piano)	Purcell Room, South Bank, S.E.1
13 January 1984	Capriccio and Adagio for solo oboe	Tess Miler (oboe) Michael Maxwell (piano) Mary Wiegold (soprano)	Colet House

Appendix K: Letter from Imogen Holst to Dorothy Gow

The following is a letter from Holst to Dorothy Gow, written most likely in 1932. (Gow's letter to Holst has not been found.)

Dear Dorothy,

Very many congratulations on having got the Octavia: - I am glad, and I hope you'll enjoy yourself as much as I did.

I'm fearfully sorry not to have answered your letter, but I have been away, and there was a muddle overforwarding my letters.

I'm afraid I'm not much use about professors, because I didn't actually study with anyone while I was abroad, I only had odd lessons from people every now and then.

I met Wellesz in Vienna, but I never had a lesson from him. As a composer he seems very academic, but Grace [Williams] thinks a lot of him as a teacher. She'd be the person to ask.

I've not come across Nadia Boulanger personally, but my father thinks very highly of her, and she has got the most terrific reputation of being one of the best composition teachers that has ever happened. Her lessons are very expensive; - something like two and a half guineas an hour! But with the right introductions you'd probably be able to get her to take less.

But you see I don't know either of them personally, so I'm really no use whatsoever.

I think you'd find much music in Vienna than you would in Paris, and the opera is nearly always first-rate for 2 or 3 evenings every week. It doesn't matter a bit not knowing the language when you first go there: - I didn't either. And Vienna is a lovely city to live in, even if you don't know a soul. It's a much more friendly place than Paris or Berlin or Prague.

I hope you'll have a wonderful time, and if I can be of any use about *pensions* etc do let me know.

Yours

Imogen Holst.

(Imogen Holst to Dorothy Gow, handwritten letter, 27 September, the date is unknown, private archive.)

Appendix L: Letter from Malcolm Williamson to Dorothy Gow

13 Essex Villas
Kensington W. 8.
30th March

Dear Miss Gow,

I take the liberty of writing to say again how impressed I was with your quartet. After leaving S. James's Square I met Edward in a bar, where he demonstrated the fact that he was as elated as I was by this work. I was deeply impressed at the first hearing, and my impressions were clarified in the second (We all applaud Miss Macnaghten's arrangement). Why have I, coming from Australia, never heard of you except from Miss Lutyens? Your quartet seems to me vastly superior in the substance of its musical thought, in the intellectual strength of musical procedure, to almost any contemporary British chamber music. it is supremely satisfying music written in a pure, unique distinctive style. I find it hard to believe that you might have written works of this calibre, quickly, or many of them. The energy never flags; every idea seems to develop in a completely satisfying and resourceful manner. It is all thoroughly suitable to the strings – or else (and I doubt this) the players were so well prepared, that they made it sound well. I hope that the depression of the B.B.C. and press rebuffs have not caused you to retard the pace of your work. No-one will pretend that you have taken a 'via media', nor that you write for the salon; for less that you sing for your supper! Consequently the appeal of such frank, tant music, although it is of prime relevance, must be limited.

Looking forward to examining the score of this work,

Yours faithfully,

Malcolm Williamson

Appendix M: Letter from Peter Thorogood to Dorothy Gow

RAINHAM 3753

ALBYNS FARM,
RAINHAM,
ESSEX .
1st. December 1953

Dear Miss Gow,

I am still smarting from a remark I made during the discussion after the S.P.N.M. Concert this evening, and the smile on Mr. Arthur Benjamin's face has prompted me to write this letter of explanation.

To my discredit, I remember saying, "I do not know whether Miss Gow has experienced something profound before she wrote this work, but it seemed to me to have been written with considerable emotional force." At Mr. Benjamin's "face-value", that remark obviously looked as if I was trying to say something of a more personal nature which it was no business of mine to express in public. This was certainly not the case. As fatuous and naïve as it may have sounded, I would like to have added that so much modern music seems soulless and barren, written with text-book facility, discounting the existence of spiritual progress altogether. It is so very difficult to find the right words with which to express an intense feeling, and whatever one manages to blurt out, impromptu, unpremeditated, seems pitifully inadequate. So it was this evening. Your beautiful Quartet was a valuable musical experience for me, which I shall not forget. Being a Romantic at heart, I have avoided contact with the musical text-book and composed bad music from the emotions. Your writing, as Mr. Frankel remarked, is so obviously perfect, technically and emotionally, that even the uninitiated cannot help being affected by it. Perhaps, instead of using the word "assimilated" I should have said "nature", as so much of the previous music seemed experimental and <u>un</u>assimilated. The remarkable thing was that the audience was unanimous in its verdict on your work, (regarding it as the best performance of the evening), when it seemed so divided on the issues involved in the discussion of the other works in the programme.

Having been rejected by Mr. Benjamin Frankel as a pupil, and yet hearing him praise your music so admirably, I feel there is yet hope for my own development as I aspire to working in your style but lack the technical facility and training.

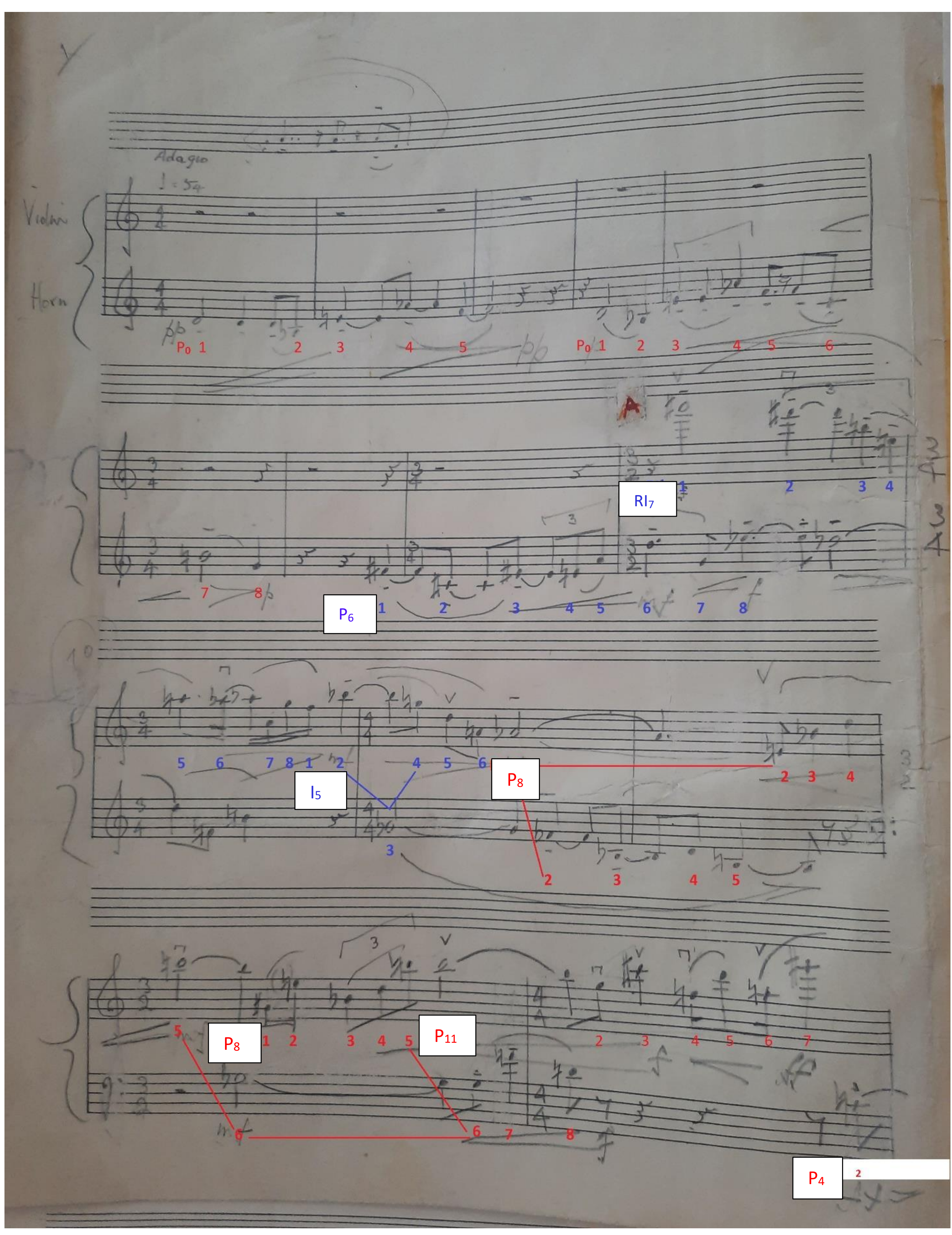
And so, your Quartet was both encouraging and elevating and what a joy to hear a “constructive” work in the midst of a sea of gloom and hopelessness which seems to characterise contemporary musical development!

Once gain I must apologise for my misunderstanding of my intentions. I sincerely hope to be afforded the chance of hearing the Quartet again.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Thorogood

Appendix N: Dorothy Gow. Piece for violin and horn (1955?). Analysis of the manuscript (Dorothy Gow. Piece for Violin and Horn (1955?). British Library Archives and Manuscripts, Add MS 63005). Page 1



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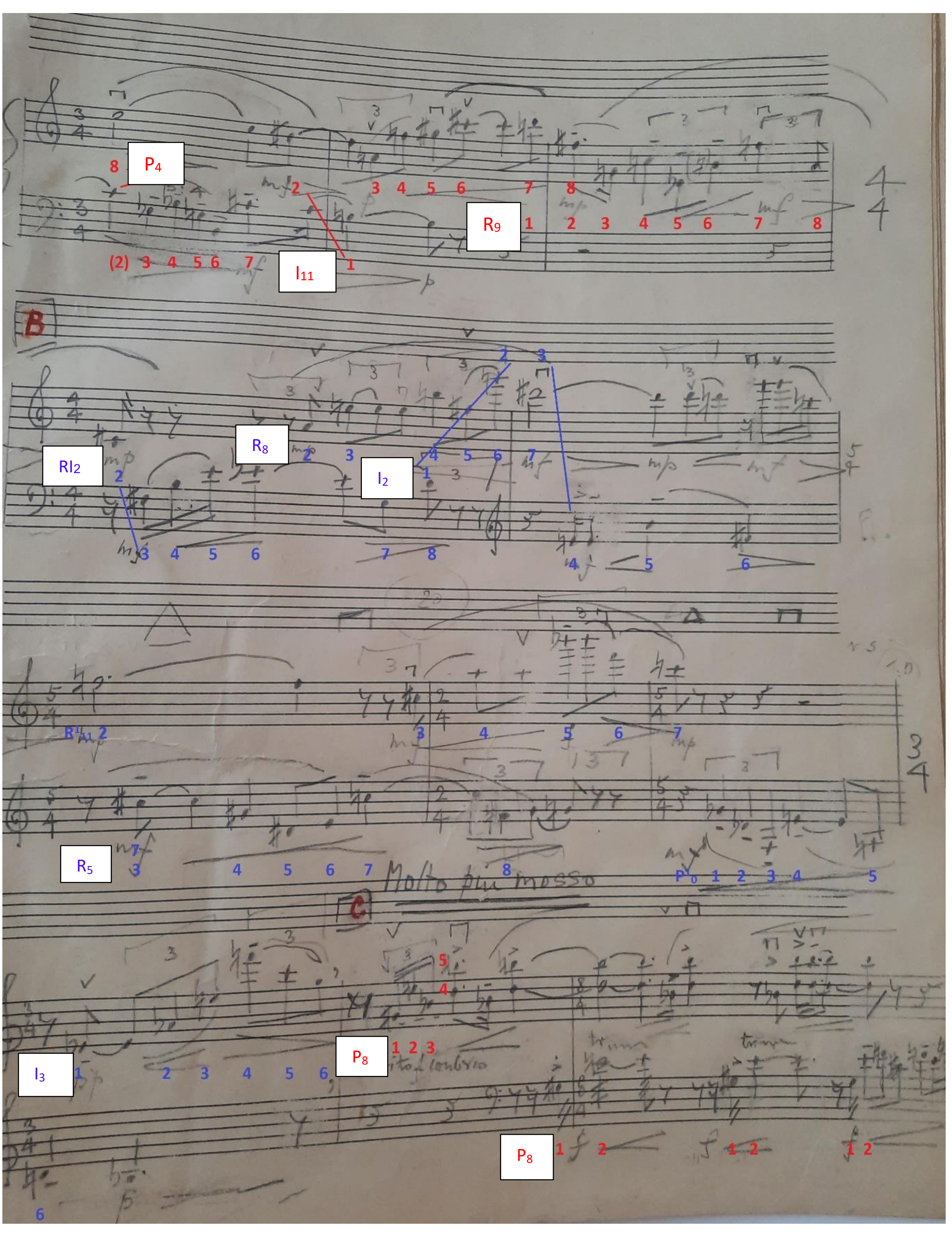

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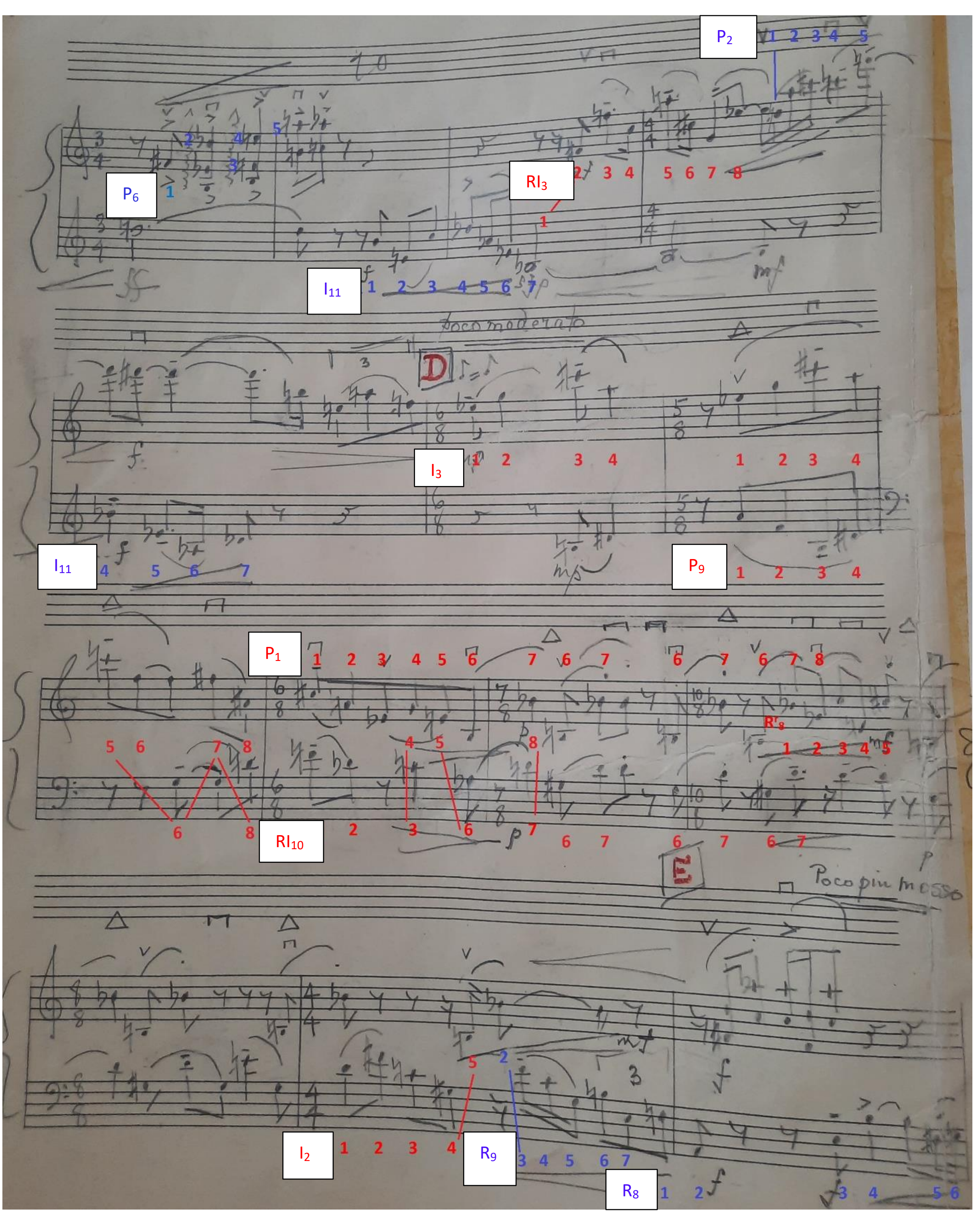

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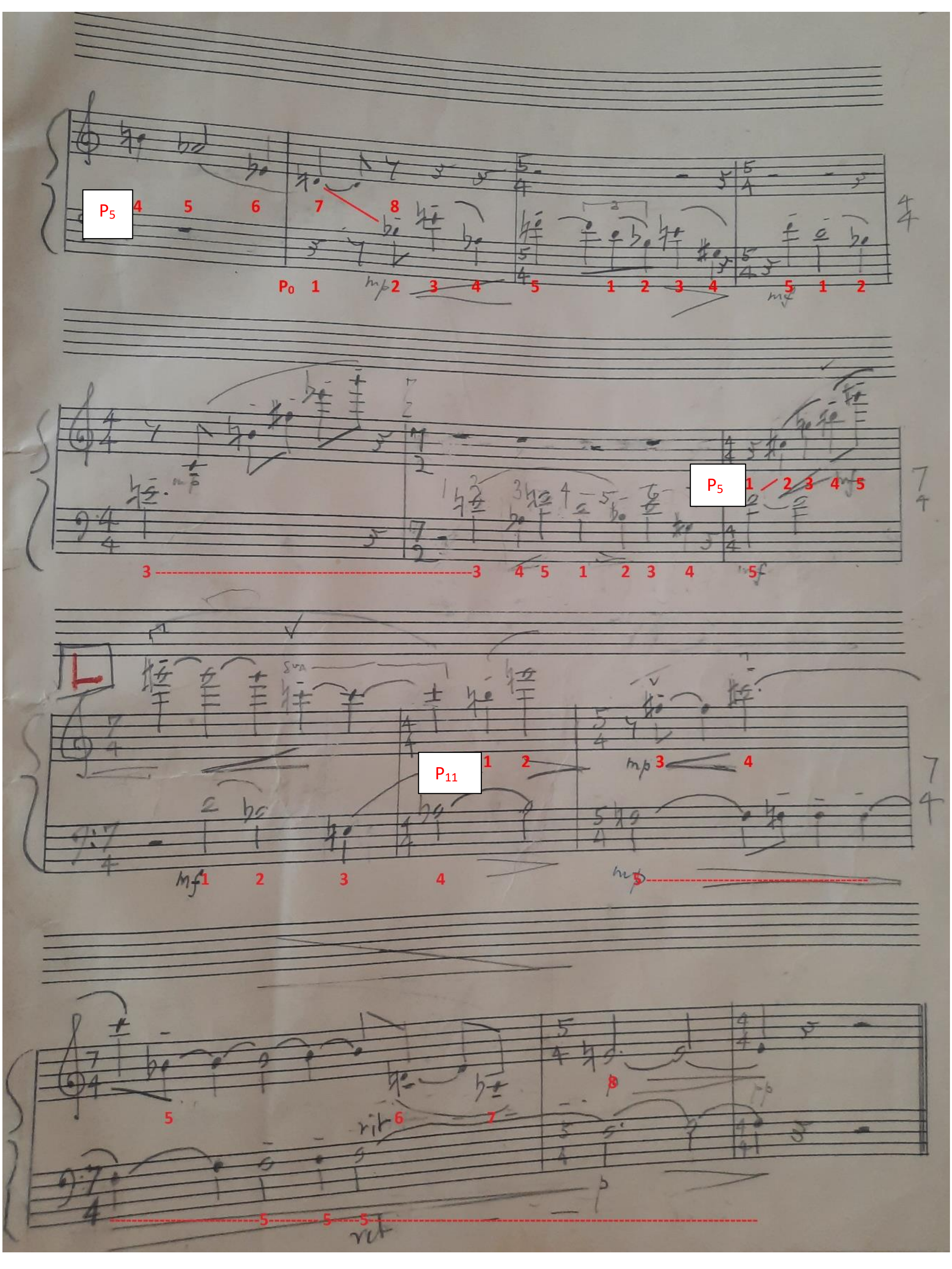
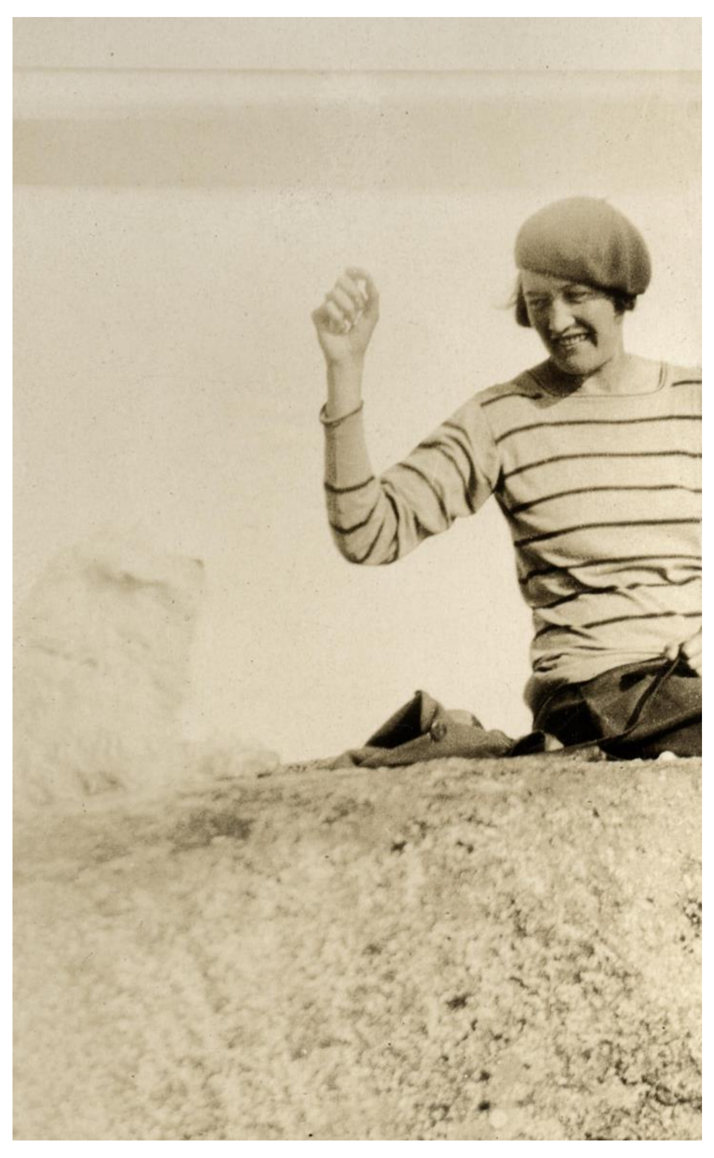


Appendix O: Photographs of the Composer Dorothy Gow by Courtesy of Ian Henghes

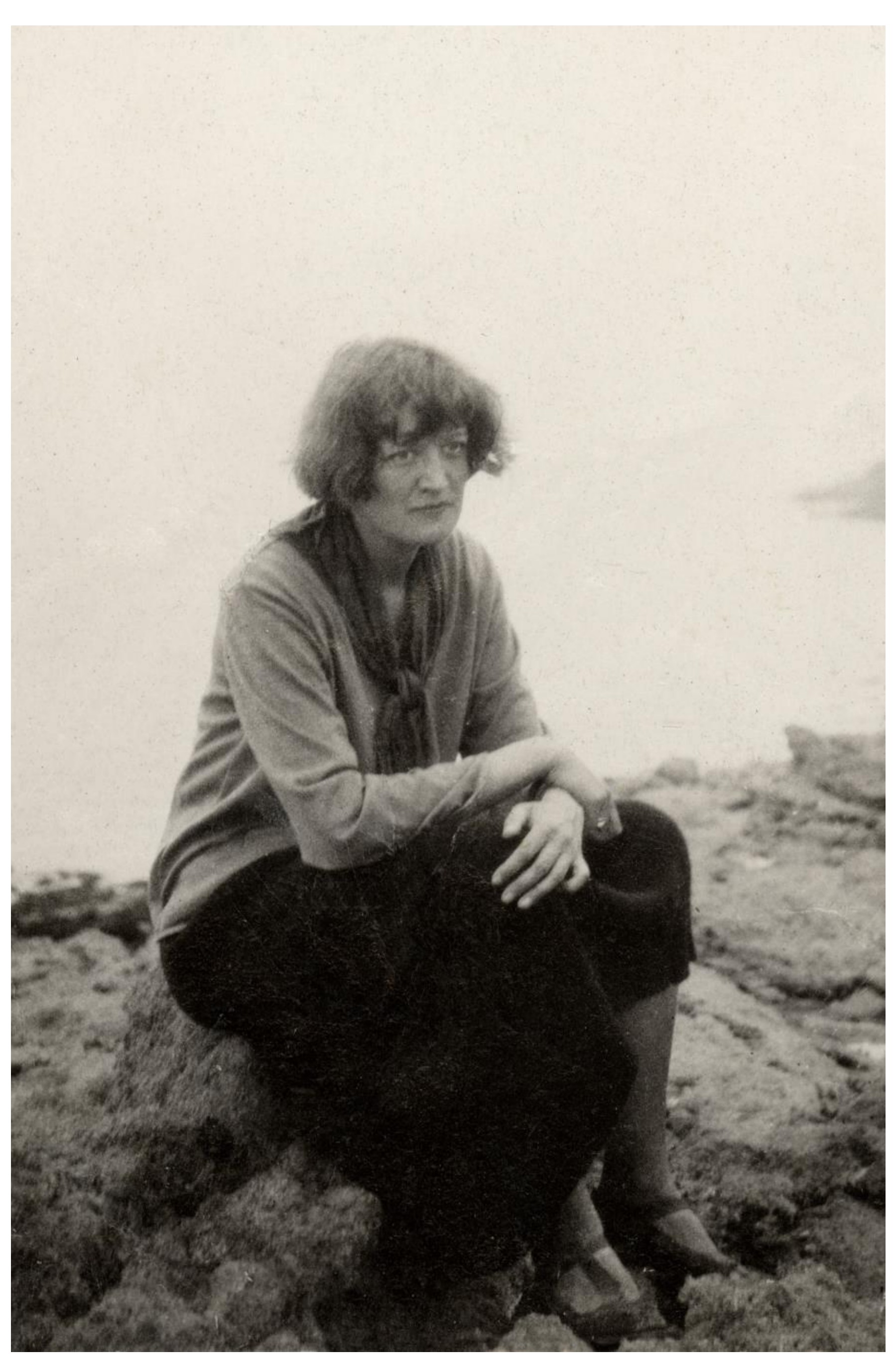
Dorothy (first from the left), William (her father) and Gladys (her sister) Gow

Dorothy Gow

Dorothy Gow



Dorothy Gow



Dorothy Gow

Dorothy Gow

Dorothy Gow

Dorothy Gow

Dorothy Gow

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