

**FROM THE LADDER TO THE MOUNTAIN:
ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S RELIGIOUS ODYSSEY**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in the Department of Music

University of Natal.

Durban, 1998

by

ROSELINE SHAPIRO

DECLARATION

I declare that unless otherwise stated this is my own, original work

-----signed

R. Shapiro

December 1998

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	v
ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
INTRODUCTION	vii
PROLOGUE.....	1
JEWISH IDENTITY IN VIENNA	
Notes.....	27
I. SCHOENBERG APPROACHING THE LADDER.....	30
SOURCES OF <i>DIE JAKOBSLEITER</i>	
Notes.....	60
II. <i>DIE JAKOBSLEITER</i>	63
Notes	91
III. THE PATH OF THE BIBLE.....	94
<i>DER BIBLISCHE WEG</i>	
Notes.....	122
IV. AT THE MOUNTAIN.....	124
<i>MOSES UND ARON</i>	
Notes.....	158
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	161

ABSTRACT

The study traces Arnold Schoenberg's spiritual journey as he moves from his oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*, through his nonmusical drama *Der biblische Weg* to the opera *Moses und Aron*. These works span the years from approximately 1915 to 1933, the period which coincides not only with Schoenberg's religious shift from Lutheranism to Judaism but also with the appearance of his early dodecaphonic works. It is argued that the works of this period, the religious shift and his conception of twelve-tone serialism are all deeply and inextricably connected. This study, with support from Schoenberg's writings, postulates that twelve tone serialism, the technique with which the name of Schoenberg is associated, was not an inevitable solution to the chromatic saturation of musical composition at the end of the nineteenth century, but that it was shaped by the composer's spiritual needs and by the fact that he lived in Europe during one of the most turbulent periods of her history.

The dissertation approaches the topic from the perspective of Schoenberg, the assimilated Jewish artist in late-Romantic Vienna, who moves through various stages of eclectic religious beliefs, arriving finally at an acceptance of the monotheistic concept of the Jewish God. Various correspondences emerge between Schoenberg's religion and his music: the artist/genius as prophet whose mission it is to elevate the people; the idea of progress and the artist's obligation to create new art; the God Idea and prayer as it relates to the musical Idea (the *Gedanke*) and ultimately the idea of One God, the Mosaic Law and the Twelve-tone Row.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is with great pleasure that I extend my thanks to a number of people who have most generously assisted me with my research. Firstly to Professor Christopher Ballantine and to Dr. David Smith of the Music Department. Professor Ballantine's academic acumen and his refined discernment assisted me greatly in formulating my own thoughts during the early stages of this thesis. Dr. Smith has been of much assistance throughout my work especially as regards theoretical aspects of Schoenberg's oeuvre. I thank him too for leading me to Professor James May of the College of Music, University of Cape Town. Professor May's remarkable ability in unearthing a hidden "row" in a Schoenberg work and his pleasure in doing so, have been an enriching experience for me. I thank him for this and for his help to me in locating material on Schoenberg.

Professor Alexander Goehr granted me a lengthy interview in Trinity Hall, Cambridge during the course of which he made suggestions which have had a direct influence on this work. I owe him my sincere gratitude.

To Rabbi Nathan Cardoza who graciously conversed with me in Jerusalem I extend my thanks for providing information about Jewish sources. I thank too, our own Rabbi Zekry of Durban for his willingness to answer questions at all times. In a brief conversation which I had with Professor Robert Wistrich in Cape Town in 1995, he commented on the surprising lacuna in the Jewish literature as regards Schoenberg. His remarks encouraged me to pursue my project and I thank him. I have received much helpful and courteous assistance from the Arnold Schoenberg Institute both in Los Angeles and in Vienna. My research would not have been possible without the information provided by the Institute. I discovered to my great surprise that a Swedenborg Information Centre exists in Westville close to Durban. The Reverend Lawson Smith of the centre has been exceedingly helpful in providing me with material on Swedenborg and Strindberg and I thank him.

I owe special thanks to Professor Lydia Goehr of Columbia University and Professor B. Kytzler of the University of Natal for their careful reading of my thesis and for their constructive suggestions and valuable criticism.

To Michael Nupen I extend my gratitude for his interest in my work. His remarkably broad perspective of twentieth century music and his willingness to share his knowledge have been an inspiration to me. I thank him too for introducing me to Professor Daniel Herwitz who supervised my thesis.

It is my most important privilege to extend my deep thanks to Professor Herwitz who arrived in Durban as if from heaven (actually from Los Angeles) with not only a wealth of academic expertise in areas which match my multi disciplinary topic, but also with a rare generosity of spirit, and boundless energy balanced with endless patience. I cannot thank him enough for his help and his encouragement.

The title of Ethan Haimo's *Schoenberg's Serial Odyssey* has provided an appealing suggestion for my own title. I acknowledge this with pleasure and thanks.

To my uncomplaining and ever supportive family I give my loving appreciation.

The financial assistance of the Centre for Science Development towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed in this thesis and conclusions arrived at are my own and not to be attributed to the Centre for Science Development.

ABBREVIATIONS

JASI	Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute.
Letters	<i>Arnold Schoenberg Letters</i> ed. Erwin Stein, trans. E. Wilkins & E. Kaiser
The Musical Idea	Schoenberg, A.1995 <i>The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation</i> ed. & trans. P. Carpenter and S. Neff.
S&I	<i>Style and Idea, Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg</i> ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black

INTRODUCTION

It was the destiny of Arnold Schoenberg to be born in 1874 in Vienna, the epicentre of one of the greatest catastrophes ever to befall Europe. His generation was witness to two shattering world wars, to political revolution in Russia, to severe economic recessions on a world scale, to the rise of Nazism and the ensuing threat of genocide and to the relocation and frequently dislocation of some of the best intellectual minds of Europe. As a Jew, Schoenberg was doubly vulnerable to these forces. Moreover, by the early 1900's Judaism itself had reached a point of crisis. The ideals of the 1848 revolution, were in a sense the extension of the 1789 revolution and both threatened Jewish orthodoxy which by the turn of the century was subject to pressures from within and from without. The period from the founding of Zionism in about 1897 leading up to the birth of the Jewish state in 1948 was filled with extreme tension for European Jewry and was a period which coincided closely with Schoenberg's own adult life.

"When the First World War began" wrote Schoenberg "I was proud to be called to arms and as a soldier I did my whole duty enthusiastically as a true believer in the house of Habsburg, in its wisdom of 800 years in the art of government and in the consistency of a monarch's lifetime, as compared with the short lifetime of every republic."¹ In 1923, that is less than ten years after the commencement of World War I, Schoenberg wrote to Wassily Kandisky "I have at last learnt the lesson that has been forced on me during this year, and I shall never forget it. It is that I am not a German, not a European, indeed scarcely even a human being (at least, the Europeans prefer the worst of their race to me), but I am a Jew." I believe that the radical shift in Schoenberg's ideology was to impact deeply on his creative life and indeed that his formulation of twelve tone serialism was closely linked to this change.

More than seventy-five years have passed since Schoenberg's first twelve tone works were published and about ninety years since the composer's early experiments in atonality and still Schoenberg occupies a problematic position in the history of music of the twentieth century.

Schoenberg is recognised as one of the most important composers of the twentieth century and yet unlike the case of contemporaries such as Richard Strauss, Bartok Stravinsky, and the older Mahler, only a handful of Schoenberg's works has found a place in the concert repertoire. Audience resistance which began with the first appearance of Schoenberg's works persists to this day. On the other hand there is surely not a young composer living in the second half of the twentieth century who has not studied Schoenberg's serial techniques, few who have not experimented with serialism and none who have not been influenced by atonality. Added to these far reaching effects of Schoenberg's influence in the field of music composition is the fact of his remarkable ability as a teacher--a skill which he exercised not only in Vienna and Berlin but also, as fate would have it, in the New World. There are no doubt many reasons for the curious dichotomy which exists between Schoenberg the figure who stands as an icon of the avant garde to present day composers and Schoenberg the producer of music to which audiences do not care to listen. I believe that one of the reasons for this is of profound importance and this has to do with what Schoenberg saw as his spiritual, one may say prophetic mission. He taught and practised compositional morality. The conductor Heinrich Jalowetz who had been one of Schoenberg's early students summed up his master's influence thus: "For anyone who has been his pupil, his name is no mere reminder of student days: it is one's artistic and human conscience."² Schoenberg confronted that which he saw as corrupt in Art with uncompromising audacity but in so doing he produced work which was not always to the public taste. His concept of composition was guided by a ruthless sense of his perception of truth. Nothing less would suffice and if audiences did not approve of what he produced, so be it. The result was to put Schoenberg and his supporters in a camp which stood on the opposite side of the concert going public and especially of the critics. Late nineteenth century intelligentsia approached art, and especially music, with a measure of awe. The Habsburg aristocracy had traditionally been associated with the manufacture of music in the widest sense. In a society which kept rulers and subjects well apart, connoisseurship in the art of music was the hallmark which linked the public with the aristocratic--or so the public liked to think. Schoenberg and those like him were seen as a danger to that which was regarded as sacrosanct.

It may be argued that in his attempt to tear away the pretense of Viennese society

Schoenberg, along with such figures as Karl Kraus and Adolf Loos, created a movement which was no less elitist than the one against which they had revolted. This may be so. Nevertheless the rift between avant garde music and the consumer grew ever wider and Schoenberg remained and remains an outsider. However, it was not in the nature of the man to succumb to either artistic or politically inspired pressures. Indeed the challenge itself was to become one of the energising force of his creative life. As much as he longed for public acclaim he was not prepared to sacrifice his ideals for the sake of his listeners. What started as a revolt against the emptiness of superfluous decoration grew into a passion for true expression based on ethical considerations. It is my contention that Schoenberg's belief that his art emanated from a transcendental source was the life-giving force of his work. It was this that inspired him to move away from traditional concepts of composition. For him a musical work was based on a *Gedanke*, an Idea which was associated with sacred Truth and later came to be linked with his concept of a monotheistic God. It was out of the Idea that the unity of the work was conceived; this notion had as a consequence the turning away from the tradition of building an entire work on the basis of a theme which was shaped and developed according to accepted tonal laws. The effects have been far-reaching indeed.

Schoenberg's Vienna was enveloped by a set of intellectual forces with historical roots in such movements as Romanticism, Symbolism, and Catholicism all of which were vividly coloured by the drama of a Baroque heritage. At the same time art was perceived to be the appropriate vehicle to convey progressive movements towards future. In tracing Schoenberg's path from *Die Jakobsleiter* to *Moses und Aron* through *Der biblische Weg* I am highlighting a musical philosophy based in Christianity and moving gradually towards the concept of what Schoenberg conceived as what it is to know the God of the Jews. This spiritual change was played out in times of extreme political turbulence. While tracing Schoenberg's religious path, I have thus also attempted to give an account of the position of the Jew and Judaism against this violent background. I believe that the convoluted path of Schoenberg's religious journey has deep implications not only for the understanding of his work but also for the far reaching consequences which are reflected in the revolution which has transformed classical music in the first half of the twentieth and which has I think been inadequately explained. Scholarship has been hampered by the fact that much of the material which has to do with Schoenberg's

spiritual odyssey was until recently not freely accessible. It was only in 1994 that the first complete German publication of *Der biblische Weg* accompanied by Moshe Lazar's English translation appeared in Volume seventeen of the *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*. The important compilation of Schoenberg's *Gedanke* manuscripts with the title *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique and Art of its Presentation* edited by Carpenter and Neff was published only in 1995. Both these works serve to throw light on what has hitherto been a blurred area.

While it is true that a vast amount of important work has been produced concerning the technical aspects of Schoenberg's compositions, the same is not the case as regards the thinking from which the innovations spring. The two religious/musical works which I have chosen to study reveal not only the movement in Schoenberg's theological development from Protestantism to Jewish monotheism but these same works simultaneously outline the shift from atonality to twelve tone serialism. Together with the nonmusical drama *Der biblische Weg* the oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter* and the opera *Moses und Aron* form a three-cornered structure which faithfully represent Schoenberg's religious evolution. Read in conjunction with his writings and letters the works serve to delineate an important shift in music. Moreover, in spanning the period from 1912 to 1933 the works are placed in an era of remarkable change in the structure of Europe.

It is a curious fact that Jewish scholarship has by and large neglected Arnold Schoenberg. One would have imagined that Jewish writers, generally only too keen to claim a Jewish genius, would have seized the opportunity of lauding Arnold Schoenberg who proclaimed his Judaism so boldly. This has not been the case. Instead Mahler, who embraced Catholicism with great devotion has been put forward as the Jewish composer of the century. One of the reasons for this perhaps lies in the fact that the song of the *shtetl* forces its way through Mahler's work while a Jewish "sound" is not discernible in the music of Schoenberg. Arnold Schoenberg the assimilated Vienna-born Jewish modern artist whose later life was guided by a single-minded adherence to the concept of Jewish monotheism is thus brushed aside with the explanation that his music is too difficult. Nevertheless on deeper scrutiny--and this is one of the motivating forces of my thesis-- although Schoenberg does not sing of the *shtetl*, Judaic

inflections enter abundantly into his works. For example the image of the artist as prophet is one which pervades Romantic aesthetics. In Schoenberg however German philosophic thinking takes on associations which are rooted in the Old Testament. Twelve tone composition comes to be associated with the Law. The association occurs not only textually, but is frequently, though often symbolically, expressed in the music itself. Schoenberg invested his notion of twelve tone serialism with spiritual overtones which derive from his religious convictions and which stem from his belief that inspiration emanates from a transcendental source. From the moment of the revelation of the embryonic six-tone motif in *Die Jakobsleiter* to the fully -fledged serialism of *Moses und Aron*, Schoenberg's creative impulse is invested with religious precepts. These are realised in the value he places on prayer, on atonement and on the ethical prohibition which has to do with the representation of an image. At the same time all are imbued with the spirit of the avant garde. The drama which enacts itself in the play between musical tonal language, the problems associated with representation in art and the spiritual regeneration in the composer's psyche, form an *idée fixe* in Schoenberg's oeuvre which has been inadequately explained. He developed a personal philosophy which is not always in accordance with accepted Jewish doctrine but which occupies an important space between his music his writings and his texts and acts as a cementing agent in a large, complex structure. The task of analysing the structure is one in which Jewish and music scholars have failed to collaborate.

Recent research into the infinitely rich and varied tapestry that is the culture of *fin de siècle* Vienna tends to view the Jewish artist and thinker as an integral part of the total scene. The perception on the whole has been that Viennese artists of Jewish descent were so thoroughly assimilated that they merge into the vast cultural ferment which overtook bourgeois rationalism in Vienna at the turn of the century and that Jewish artists have failed to make an essentially Jewish contribution. There is also the opposite view. Researchers in their eagerness to validate the position of Schoenberg the composer as Jew, perceive his entire oeuvre to be coloured by a predominantly Jewish light. Neither of these views reflects the true picture.

In Arnold Schoenberg is encapsulated the European artist in modernity, the avant garde

composer, the keeper, some may say destroyer, of the last vestiges of the European Classical tradition. His religious-ethical values which are derived from German Enlightenment and Romantic thinking--from Goethe and Schopenhauer to Dehmel and Stefan George--are nevertheless Jewish in a clear but distinctly modern sense. There is a theme in the movement from the ladder to the mountain in which Judaism becomes increasingly central and which recasts Jewish ethics to an aesthetics which is avant garde and which at once highlights the drama of Europe, the drama of music and the drama of Judaism. It is the purpose of this thesis to attempt to trace this path.

1. S&I: 505.
2. Quoted in W. Reich, 1968: 29.

PROLOGUE

JEWISH IDENTITY IN THE HABSBURG EMPIRE

Jews had been closely connected with the history of the Habsburg monarchy from the time of its inception in 1273 until its dissolution at the end of World War I in 1918.¹ Precluded by feudal tradition from agriculture-related occupations, but encouraged to fulfil certain tasks within the economy Jews, especially in the later middle ages, settled in little villages mostly earning their living as small tradesmen. Jewish communities existed in pockets in various parts of Eastern and central Europe but particularly in the area which was later to become the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Habsburg empire included not only Austria itself, but after 1526 Hungary, Bohemia and Moravia. Later some Italian territories were incorporated while Galicia and Bukovina were annexed after 1772 (Wistrich: 1989, 3). The dual state Austria-Hungary came into existence in 1867 under the ruler Franz Joseph I and reached its greatest size in 1914.

As a minority group Jews were generally perceived as outsiders, representing “the Other” on both ethnic and religious grounds. After the Counter Reformation the Habsburgs had become staunchly Catholic. Jews were not only on the opposite side of the predominant religion of the country but in addition they were placed on the counter side of Protestantism. However despite the marginal and insecure position held by the community as a whole, certain Jews were from time to time sufficiently important from an economic point of view to be allowed special privileges: these were the *hofbefreite Juden* (Court Jews). A state of vacillation from dependence to rejection is one which was to characterise the relationship of rulers to the Jewish community. At times there was co-existence in peace and relative prosperity, and at other times a realistic and justified fear of persecution.

EXPULSIONS OF JEWS FROM VIENNA

A Jewish community had existed in Vienna itself even before the Habsburg Empire. Records show that in 1204 the population was large enough to warrant the services of two rabbis (Ivar Oxaal 1987: 15). A series of Jewish expulsions from Vienna occurred at various stages during the reign of the Habsburg Monarchs. However, these were interspersed with acts which were

seen as conciliatory. One such act of “tolerance” (*Toleranzpatent*) was passed by Ferdinand II in 1624. He ordered that Jews be sent to an area outside the city walls and permitted to enter the city only during daylight hours. The area lay across the Donau canal off the River Danube and here Jews were permitted for private ownership of homes. This ghetto, for that in effect is what the walled location became, was known as *Unteren Werd* (lower island).

In 1669, as a result of a number of incidents in which Jews were thought to be implicated, the Habsburg ruler Leopold I appointed a commission to investigate the situation and it was decided to discontinue the existing policy of toleration. A year later a decree of expulsion of all the Jews of Vienna and lower Austria was passed. This was to be a most decisive and far-reaching expulsion. Jews fled to Bohemia, Moravia, Pressburg and the Esterhazy estates in Hungary. It was at that time that *Unteren Werd* was renamed Leopoldstadt in honour of the Emperor who passed the decree. It was to this site that the Schoenbergs like many other Jewish families gravitated in the nineteenth century. Here young Arnold was born on 13th September 1874 at No. 393 Obere Donaustrasse and it was in Leopoldstadt that he spent most of his youth.

It is important to note that after the great expulsion of 1669 extremely few Jews remained resident in Vienna -- Wistrich quotes official figures which estimate only 179 tolerated families on the eve of the 1848 Revolution (1989: 38). Maria Theresa continued and intensified the restrictive policies when she began her reign in 1740. However by the time that her son Joseph II came to the throne a new and powerful movement for change had made itself felt throughout Europe. For Jews in the Habsburg monarchy a new degree of emancipation was extended by the *Toleranzpatent* which Joseph II promulgated in 1782, the first of their kind to be passed in Europe.² In effect Jews were, for the first time, entitled to regard themselves as residents of the European country in which they lived. It was now possible for Jewish bankers, financiers and industrialists to assume the influential position which they were to hold for many decades. Prominent among the Jews of Josephinian Vienna were the family Arnstein who were generous supporters of the Arts, and the banking family Rothschild whose influence was to continue through many successive generations. Jews were permitted to learn trades, to involve themselves in agriculture, and to participate in commerce on an almost but not quite equal footing with their non-Jewish neighbours. They were encouraged to establish German language schools and to

make use of state schools and universities. In short, the Josephinian laws unlocked the doors of German culture: that German *Bildung* which was to become so irresistibly attractive to the Jews of *fin de siècle* Vienna.

But from the Jewish point of view there was an opposite side to these emancipatory laws for it was the beginning of what was to become a process of Jewish acculturation to the gentile culture. One of the later restrictions of the edict of 1782 was to abolish the Jewish traditional judicial control of their own communities. This meant that in 1784 communities were not permitted to organise their own synagogues nor their own communal institutions. Later still, Jews were ordered to change their surnames to those which sounded German, and to stop using Hebrew and Yiddish in commercial and public dealings. For a people who had for many centuries relied on their separatism for their very survival the Josephinian laws signified an erosion of age-old values and customs. The new laws were vehemently resisted by those inclined towards religious conservatism such as the ultra-orthodox of Galicia.³ Traditionally Judaism had relied on communal institutions not only for worship but for carrying out educational and social activities related to religious practise. The new "toleration" marked for many individuals the weakening of the sense of identity which had grown out of belonging to a group who had traditionally possessed exceptionally well-defined laws and customs. The blame for this can of course not be laid at the door of Joseph's decidedly progressive laws. However the process which was initiated by these laws was to continue through to Schoenberg's generation. Most of the Jews who felt themselves to be Christian in the 1930's could trace their ancestry back to a Jewish grandparent around the 1790's, a heritage for which they often paid with their lives. As the important Jewish thinker Gershom Scholem (1897-1982) comments (1978: 1):

The transition of our family from Orthodoxy at the beginning of the nineteenth century to almost total assimilation at the beginning of the twentieth was a matter of three generations--from my grandfather, through my father, to my own generation; in the third generation, assimilation was complete or so it seemed ⁴

A.J.P. Taylor has described 1848 as the year in which "Europe broke consciously with its past" (1991: 51). The cry was for change; most importantly change from the traditions of a deeply entrenched feudal working order. In a sense, the ideals of the 1848 revolution were a continuation of those which found expression in the French revolution of 1789--the rights of the individual, the

principles of so called enlightened liberalism, and the principle of equality were still, after almost a hundred years, the ideas for which the people of Europe were striving.⁵ In addition there was a newly-awakened sense of nationhood throughout Europe. The revolution which started in France in February 1848, soon gathered momentum and spread to Bohemia, Hungary, Austria and indeed, within a few months, to most of Europe. The rulers of the Habsburg Empire were among those who had to comply with the people's demands for freedom of worship and for equal constitutional rights.

Two especially far-reaching social changes occurred as a consequence of the revolution. Firstly, laws related to restriction of movement were to a large extent relaxed with the result that a great flow of movement passed into the cities. Secondly, a wave of intense nationalism manifested itself throughout Europe. This newly awakened nationalism evoked a good deal of strongly anti-Jewish feeling especially in the Austrian crown lands. These two factors, urbanisation and nationalism, resulted in a dramatically increased flow of Jews from the crown lands into Vienna. In 1848 attacks on Jews occurred in both Prague (the city in which Pauline Nachod was born in that same year) and Pressburg the city from which Samuel had departed to come to Vienna (O. Neighbour 1980: 701). Samuel Schönberg was born in Sczécésny in 1838 and arrived in Vienna in 1852 at the age of fourteen. There he married Pauline Nachod in 1870 (Stuckenschmidt 1977,16). Little is known about the reasons why these two young people moved from their respective home towns, but one may assume with reasonable safety that for the families of Samuel and Pauline as for thousands of others individuals and families, the threat of anti-Semitic persecution in the Austrian provinces on the one hand, and the pull of Viennese culture and economic opportunity on the other, were among the main reasons for the move.⁶

In Vienna the unrest began in March 1848, the year in which Emperor Franz Joseph began his sixty eight year rulership. The shape it took was the total rejection of Prince Metternich who was perceived to be the symbol of conservatism and anti-nationalism. Metternich was compelled to flee the country; Emperor Ferdinand was forced to abdicate and his successor Franz Joseph, who was generally regarded as having more liberal ideals, became the next Habsburg ruler. It was during his rule, in 1867 that the sprawling territories which made up the Habsburg crownlands, became the dual Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. In that same year Jews were granted civil,

political, and religious rights which in effect emancipated them totally from the old medieval restrictions. For many Jews, the ideals of the Revolution were in close agreement with their own hopes for a better future. Their efforts to achieve freedom were thus, to a great extent, inseparable from the emancipatory struggle of the larger community in which they lived.

FIN DE SIÈCLE VIENNA

In the early part of the twentieth century Austria represented a surface image of a sound political order. The Habsburg Empire had been in existence for seven centuries and in 1900 Franz Josef had been Emperor for fifty years. Arnold Schoenberg looking back towards the end of his life wrote: "When the First World War began, I was proud to be called to arms and as a soldier I did my whole duty enthusiastically as a true believer in the house of Habsburg, in its wisdom of 800 years in the art of government and in the consistency of a monarch's lifetime, as compared with the short lifetime of every republic." Emperor Franz Josef's life-style was ordered, disciplined and formal and his subjects were expected to behave likewise. He had a strict ethic of work, 8-10 hours a day mostly signing official papers, he slept on a narrow camp bed and kept a dignified but unimaginative and distinctly conservative profile. But violence was already in the air. In 1889 his son Rudolph shot both himself and his mistress in the royal hunting lodge at Mayerling, in 1898 his wife Empress Elisabeth was assassinated by an Italian anarchist and in 1914 Franz Ferdinand the heir presumptive was murdered with his wife Sophie at Sarajevo in 1914.⁷ The flourishing culture and sound political order of Austria was but a surface image. The intellectuals and artists presented a vastly different picture. In 1889 Freud published his *Interpretation of Dreams* and was about to uncover a world of subconscious impulses which would not only shock Viennese society but show the way to a loss of confidence into the prevailing notion of pure rationality. The novelist Robert Musil conveys the dualism of fin de siècle Viennese culture most vividly:

The century that had just gone to its grave had not exactly distinguished itself in its second half. It had been clever in technical and commercial matters and in research, but outside those focal points of its energy it had been quiet and treacherous as a swamp...And-it may or may not be relevant- the women of that time, who were as chaste as they were shy, had to wear clothes covering them from their ears to the ground, but at the same time had to display a swelling bosom and a voluptuous posterior (1988 Vol.I: 28).⁸

It was into this Vienna “quiet and treacherous as a swamp” that Schoenberg was born.

ETHNIC IDENTITY

Marsha Rozenblit is important among researchers who have looked into the demography of Jews of *fin de siècle* Vienna. Her work (1983) is valuable for the information which she has gathered from primary sources such as school, birth, marriage and conversion records of Jews living in Vienna between 1867 and 1914. An important finding is that, according to Rozenblit, the Jews living in Vienna at the end of the nineteenth century were either immigrants or the offspring of immigrants who had arrived in Vienna in the second half of the nineteenth century (1983: 2). The reasons which account for this condition are readily confirmed by the historical factors discussed above: especially relevant is the great expulsion of 1669. So far reaching was this expulsion that it is estimated that in the year 1848 only 179 Jewish tolerated families were residing in Vienna (Wistrich, 1989: 38). However, with the general tendency towards urbanisation which came as the aftermath of the 1848 revolution, and with the lifting of restrictions in 1867 Jews, especially those from the small towns of Eastern Europe, moved to Vienna in large numbers. The violence which followed the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 served to accelerate the flow of East European Jews into the Austrian capital. Wistrich (1992: x) estimates that in 1900 there were 147 000 Jews in Vienna (about 9% of the population) and Rozenblit finds that by World War I Vienna had a population of almost 200 000 Jews, the largest Jewish community in Western or central Europe (1983: 5). In addition Rozenblit finds that Vienna was the city where more Jews converted to Christianity than any other city in Europe while by comparison an extremely small number of conversions took place in other centres (1983: 132). In Moravia for example only 19 Jews abandoned their faith in 1890, in Prague virtually none, and even records for Berlin show far fewer Jewish conversions than those in Vienna. Moreover Viennese convertees were more likely to have been born in the city of Vienna itself than elsewhere (1983: 140). Rozenblit provides further statistics which show that for the years between 1870-1910 converts were twice as likely as Jews in general to have come from a group who were students or who had careers in the civil service or in the professions. Of the professionals many were actors or musicians (1983: 137). With samples taken again from the years 1870-1910 it was found that most converts were in their twenties and thirties and more than three quarters of both sexes were single. There were slightly more males than females in the convert group (1983: 136). Although Austria was

predominantly a Catholic state, only half of those who converted turned to Catholicism while a quarter joined the Evangelical Church, that is Lutheran or Reformed, while the remaining quarter chose *Konfessionslosigkeit* that is they preferred to remain without religious affiliation (Rozenblit, 1992:3). We know nothing of the reasons why Schoenberg converted to Lutheranism in 1894. However the case of Arnold Schoenberg fits optimally into each of Rozenblit's categories--a child of Jewish immigrant parents, converts to Lutheranism at the age of twenty seven as a single, male, musician, born in Vienna. The act would appear to be almost an inevitability. It is significant however that he did not chose the *Konfessionslos* (non-affiliated group), nor by his own admission, did he ever abandon religion.⁹

Ethnic identity for the general population of multinational Austria was not a simple matter.. The Habsburg domains comprised a group of provinces forming a sprawling web of multinationalism possessed of different cultures, religious beliefs and even language. For the Jewish population ethnicity was even more problematic. While Yiddish was, in the broad sense, the *lingua franca* of European Jewry, Habsburg Jews would speak the language of their particular province. For example Jews of Galicia would perhaps speak Polish and Ruthenian, Bukovina was multilingual, Jews of Silesia spoke German and Polish, Bohemian and Moravian Jews spoke Czech and German (Rozenblit in Wistrich 1992: 2). In general Yiddish was a language which was looked down upon especially when compared with German.¹⁰

The situation was further complicated by instances such as that encountered in the Bohemian countries where many Jews, while following traditional Jewish observance, had begun to feel themselves to be Czech nationals but were nevertheless drawn to the German culture and language. Ironically, in times of anti-German feeling and pro-Czech nationalism Jews would often be regarded by their host countries as German thus identifying them with the enemy. Identity for Austrians in general was problematic for there was no single Austrian nationality. For Jews who were often a minority within a minority identity was further clouded by layer upon layer of ethnic influences. The situation is accurately summed up in Mahler's oft quoted remark "I am thrice homeless, as a native of Bohemia in Austria, as an Austrian among Germans, and as a Jew throughout the world. Everywhere an intruder, never welcome." Hitler used his own terms of reference when describing his impressions of Vienna early in the twentieth century. He

writes that he felt sickened “by the conglomeration of races which the capital showed me, repelled by the whole mixture of Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, Ruthenians, Serbs and Croats, and everywhere the eternal mushroom (*Spaltpilz*) of humanity--Jews and more Jews.” (Ivar Oxaal in Oxaal, Pollak and Botz, 1987: 11)

RESPONSES TO MODERNITY

RELIGIOUS

In terms of religion, Jews of Europe responded to the forces of modernity in different ways¹¹. For the ultra orthodox there was little change: they remained steadfast to their age-old traditions. Removed to a large extent from movements of change through strict observance of their own laws and customs, they succeeded in creating their own world and their own frame of reference. For the strictly orthodox, perceiving themselves as a people in exile and sustained by their Messianic hopes for the future, their sense of identity stood on firm ground and was hardly brought into question.

For a second group the trend was towards assimilation by which is meant, in this instance, abandonment of the Jewish faith and integration with a Gentile group. A frequent reason for conversion was, as in the case of Mahler, towards the advancement of one's career. Another reason for conversion was for purposes of marriage. In a union between a Jew and non-Jew it was legally stipulated that one of the partners was compelled to convert to the religion of the other (Rozenblit, 1983: 136). Thus it often happened that a Jew underwent conversion in order to marry a partner of a different faith.

A certificate reproduced in the biographical work compiled by Schoenberg's daughter Nuria Nono Schoenberg shows that Arnold Schoenberg left the *israelitische Kultusgemeinde* on 21st March 1898, and was converted to the Protestant religion in the *Taufbuch der Dorotheer-Gemeinde* on 25th March 1898 that is at the age of twenty three. (Nuria Nono Schoenberg, 1992: 27). He thus clearly chose the assimilationist group.

A third trend has had far-reaching implications for Judaism and it is necessary to examine the dynamics of this group in some depth in order to obtain a realistic picture of the complex issues

surrounding Jewish identity in Schoenberg's Austria. Towards the end of the eighteenth century a movement which in many respects mirrored the ideals of the European Enlightenment began to make inroads into Jewish life. Known as the *Haskalah* (Hebrew term for enlightenment) the movement, in its inception looked back to the writings of Jewish medieval rational philosophers such as Maimonides and Sa'adia Ga'on. The *Haskalah* therefore, despite the fact that it was, in its modern form, essentially a revolt against tradition, was at the same based on ideals of rationality which had already taken root in a much earlier period of Jewish history. It was characteristic of the *Maskilim* (proponents of the *Haskalah*) that although they attempted to rid Jewish religion of its prejudices, they never abandoned their links with Judaism. In this they differed from the assimilationist group whose members usually cut themselves off totally from their inherited faith. Nevertheless, the *Haskalah* was a revolutionary movement which came into conflict with traditional Jewish thinking and especially with *Hasidism*, a religious movement with strong leanings towards mysticism and whose followers strenuously opposed the liberal doctrines of the *Haskalah*.¹²

In general, the *Haskalah* movement concerned itself with those changes which in essence represented accommodation to the demands of modernity. With the introduction of the new emancipatory laws, Jews tended to develop closer contact with the Gentile communities among whom they were living. Refined language, that most sensitive vehicle of the expression of rational thought, was a particularly important issue. Instead of Yiddish (and Hebrew for religious study), it became necessary for Jews to master local languages. In addition style of dress and manners which would conform to those of their Gentile neighbours needed to be learnt. They would need to be educated in the crafts and in agriculture as well as in the Sciences. Development in transportation, industry and commerce demanded a parallel development in skills to cope with these areas. The perception of Exile which had been the lifeblood of Jewish existence in the diaspora appeared, to the *Maskilim*, to be of diminishing importance. Instead, the diasporic place of domicile, and this was especially true in Berlin and Vienna, was now the focus of existence. To be good citizens and to integrate into society was the overall aim. In short the movement represented a person-centred rather than a God-centred existence which, although resisted by the majority, aroused deep-seated feelings of agitation in the very fabric of Jewish life.

The Family Mendelssohn

Much of the inspiration for the *Haskalah* as well as for the later off-shoot, the Jewish Reform movement, came from Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), grandfather of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.¹³ The movement represented for many Jews, especially in Germany and Austria, an attempt to adjust to prevailing conditions while at the same time retaining their inherent Judaism. Moses Mendelssohn, influenced by Immanuel Kant and friend of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, asserted that since Judaism is based on rational principles and relatively free of dogma, it was perfectly possible for the Jew to integrate into the civic structure of the state without a change of religious belief. To do this it would be necessary only to transfer religion as the popular slogan would have it "from the public to the private sphere". The maxim was "Be a Jew at home and a man (*mensch*) in society".¹⁴ In the early 1780's Mendelssohn, in collaboration with a few followers, translated the Pentateuch into German with a Hebrew commentary. The German translation was transliterated phonetically into Hebrew characters. Mendelssohn himself an observant Jew, claimed that this was done in order to bring German culture to young Jews. To the orthodox it was perceived as an attempt to destroy Judaism by diverting the youth.¹⁵ It was surely not coincidental that the German language, held in such high esteem by Jew and Gentile, should have been the issue which aroused such violent criticism of Mendelssohn.

The genealogy of the Mendelssohn family reflects issues which were, in many ways paradigmatic of the life of the newly emancipated Jew, and would continue to be relevant until Schoenberg's generation. Abraham Mendelssohn (1776-1835), the son of Moses, and father of Felix and Fanny, wrote a letter in about 1820 to his daughter Fanny upon her confirmation to the Lutheran Church:

Some thousands of years ago the Jewish form was the reigning one, then the heathen form, and now it is the Christian. We, your mother and I, were born and brought up by our parents as Jews, and without being obliged to change the form of our religion have been able to follow the divine in us and in our conscience have educated you and your brothers and sister in the Christian faith, because it is the creed of most civilized people, and contains nothing that can lead you away from what is good, and much that guides you to love, obedience, tolerance, and resignation, even if it offered nothing but the example of the founder, understood by so few, and followed by still fewer.¹⁶

The conversion was to Abraham a natural progression from a Judaic past towards a Protestant

future, made possible by the advantages of living in a rational and enlightened present. Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) was converted to Lutheranism in 1816, when was seven years old¹⁷.

The Mendelssohn narrative continues in the figure of Moses' grandson. Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) from a late-twentieth-century perspective is a composer who accurately reflects many positive aspects of early Romanticism -- the multi-talented, genius composer/performer, who looks back to music of the past, who reflects the popular and the fanciful, and who sees music as an expression of feeling which goes beyond language. Wagner in *Das Judentum in der Musik*, presents an opposite view. Analysing the reasons for his hatred of the Jewish artist, Wagner writes "All that offered itself to our gaze, in the enquiry into our antipathy against the Jewish nature.....all these are intensified to a positively tragic conflict in the nature, life and art-career of the early-taken Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy"¹⁸ It is not the purpose of this study to analyse Wagner's well-known invective; suffice it to say that Mendelssohn represents the embodiment of both the enthusiastic desire of the newly emancipated and converted Jew to enter German culture, and the need of the native inheritors of that culture to guard and protect themselves from what was seen as alien intrusion. Funkenstein sums up well the conflict which was aroused by the confrontation of the forces of assimilation and integration "Two very powerful impulses converged to generate the confusion: one was the almost religious ideology of national homogeneity and loyalty which characterize the nascent national state, the other was the likewise almost religious eagerness of Jews not only to gain civil rights, but to participate creatively in German or French society and be accepted in it" (1993: 222-3).

Although Berlin was the original centre and the model for the *Haskalah* movement, Vienna by the 1860's had taken up the ideals which received religious representation in what came to be known as the Jewish Reform movement (also known by the names Liberal or Progressive). Under the Rabbi Mannheimer from Copenhagen and the Moravian born Rabbi Adolf Jellinek, the religious movement in Vienna prospered. Congregants, while not forsaking their Jewish religious loyalties were confident of protection under the enlightened constitution, and linked themselves unconditionally to German culture and to German nationalism. (Wistrich in Katz, 1987: 520).

It was not only Judaism which showed a decline of traditional allegiance to the faith. There was also a corresponding weakening of Christian religious boundaries in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century. There had, in the past, been one crucial and implicit condition inherent in transition from Judaism to Christianity-- the convert was compelled to accept that the Messiah of whom the Jewish prophets foretold, was indeed Jesus of Nazareth. With the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment this condition tended to lose potency. Enlightened Gentiles were inclined to view religion through the eyes of the rationalist, accepting such concepts as the notion that God was to be found in nature rather than in the dogmas of the Church. The Jewish convert, even the unconvinced one, was thus more easily accepted into Christian fold. From the Jewish point of view, the newly acquired emancipation proved to be a most attractive alternative to the restrictions of life in the Ghetto.

SECULAR RESPONSES

In general the search for individual identity, so characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, led away from religion. The philosophy of Nietzsche, Darwin's theory of natural selection, Freud's exploration into the Unconscious, all these provoked disfavour in both Jewish and Christian religious circles.¹⁹ Religion was to an extent superseded by the philosophy of humanism while communal worship tended to decline with the growth of a popular interest in mythology and in the psychic and supernatural. Moreover, the liberal culture from which Austria emerged in the 1890's favoured a search towards the inner self rather than formal religious observance.

Liberalism and its Opponents

Jews were particularly attracted to the culture of Liberalism which was characteristically pro-German, anti Catholic-Church, pro-Monarchy, well-educated, and middle class.²⁰ However, the party lacked real strength and three movements in particular (Schorske's "Austrian Trio") presented a serious challenge to Liberalism. By the 1880's Georg von Schönerer and his Pan-German party had begun to displace the authority of the Liberals. In 1897 Lueger, despite suffering initial opposition, became mayor of Vienna and his party the Christian Socialists ruled Vienna for the next ten years. Both the Pan-Germans and Christian nationals had come to power on a violently antisemitic platform. By the late 1890's Zionism presented a third and powerful

force which reacted to the demise of Liberalism. This secular movement presented not only a protection against heightened antisemitism, but was also a vehicle for the prevailing feelings of Jewish nationalism. The dream of a homeland in the Palestine of the Bible became a powerful image especially as it developed under the leadership of Theodor Herzl²¹.

Weak and short-lived though the Liberal culture was, it stimulated a dedication to the arts which was both intense and long-lasting. Schorske puts forward plausible reasons for this. The Austrian bourgeoisie had long attempted to draw close to the aristocracy. These efforts had on the whole led to failure. In the late 1860's the liberals came to power and they neither had the strength to destroy the aristocracy nor were they accepted by them. Through art however, especially the performing arts, it was possible at least to emulate the aristocratic families such as Esterhazy, Lobkowitz and Rasoumovsky all of whom had behind them a long history of artistic receptivity, especially to the applied and performing arts. Consequently, the theatre, music and architecture, were to attain a status of extraordinary adulation in the society and actors, artists and critics held the potential to wield real influence, even political influence--a situation which was to continue throughout Schoenberg's life.

Failure to enter into genuinely aristocratic circles resulted, according to Schorske's theory, in a further phenomenon. The inherent weakness in bourgeois society evoked a strong filial sense of devotion to the royalty whose privacy could not be penetrated. At the same time there existed a deep psychological dependance on the paternal figure of Emperor Franz Joseph. The situation led to what Schorske terms a "collective oedipal revolt" which, in what was becoming a decaying society, led to an intense inner search on a personal level. This translated itself into a desire on the part of the artist to express the self in a way which corresponded as closely as possible with his/her feelings--a trend which would later lead to the Expressionist movement.

Response in the World of Music

The musical scene was, naturally, not impervious to these developments. As was the way in Austria, national politics soon overflowed into the politics of music. Following with those who adhered to the Wagnerian tradition was Bruckner whose name became linked in the 1880's to anti-liberal, Catholic, *unbildung*. Brahms on the other hand who held anti-Catholic sentiments,

supported Liberalism, and was perceived to be a member of the intellectual elite (Margaret Notley: 1993) . As a composer who had a great interest in the Classical past, as one whose compositional technique hinged on logic and the working out of motivic cells Brahms clearly was viewed by the liberals as worthy heir to the liberalistic manifestation of a post-enlightenment faith in the rational mind and the intellect (paradoxically conservative ideals). Brahms was thus seen as an intellectual artist, a liberal, and a composer who was best suited to the writing of Chamber music, which was traditionally the intellectual genre directed to the select few as opposed to the symphony which was thought to be more expressive, more direct and with appeal to a larger audience.

THE YOUNG SCHOENBERG'S CONVERSION

Little is known about Arnold Schoenberg's early religious background. According to H.H. Stuckenschmidt Schoenberg's mother, born Pauline Nachod, came from a Jewish family who had lived in Prague for many generations (1977: 16). Many of the male members of the Nachod family had been cantors in the well known Altneuschul in Prague a post which would demand that the incumbent adhere to the strict laws of Jewish orthodoxy. Stuckenschmidt suggests that Pauline maintained the principles which she would have acquired from her pious family (1977: 18); Lucy Davidowitz claims that in conversation with Gertrude Schoenberg in California in 1966 she had learnt that Jewish holidays were observed in the Schoenberg home before the death of father Samuel (1977: 38). He was however considered by his brother-in-law Fritz Nachod to be an "idealistic free thinker", a term which would seem to suggest that Samuel held no strong religious affiliations. Whatever the case, there is no evidence to prove that young Arnold was especially attached to his Judaism in his early years nor that he was in any way observant.

Samuel Schönberg, Arnold's father, was born in Szescseny ,Pressburg ²², on 20th September 1838 and had come to Vienna when he was about fourteen years old and later married Pauline Nachod. Arnold, the second child was born four years later. Stuckenschmidt states, and quotes from a primary source, that the birth of the child Arnold is recorded in the register of the Viennese Jewish Religious Community and that the circumcision took place, in accordance with Jewish Law, one week later (1977: 16) However no mention is made in the literature of a bar-mitzvah ceremony which is traditional for a Jewish boy on reaching the age of thirteen, nor of any tuition in the

Hebrew studies which would prepare the boy for this occasion. Samuel died on New Year's Eve 1890/91 when Arnold was sixteen.

Adorno, commenting on the fact that Schoenberg's parents do not appear to have been strongly tied to Jewish orthodoxy, suggests that Arnold, as a descendant of Bratislava Jews who lived in the Jewish quarter, Leopoldstadt, and who were not fully emancipated, was not without what Adorno terms "that subterranean mystical tradition" which he suggests is also to be found also in Kraus, Kafka and Mahler (1992: 232). Certainly there is nothing to suggest that Schoenberg had experience of formal Judaic learning.

There is clear evidence that on 21 March 1898 at the age twenty three Arnold Schoenberg formally left the Viennese Jewish community. On 25 March 1898 he was baptised in the *Evangelische Dorotheerkirche* Vienna, and his birth records were transferred to that Church. Walter Pieau is named in the documentation as the godfather and the name Walter is added to Schoenberg's own name. The record in the church book appears thus: Arnold Franz Walter Schoenberg, Vienna II, Leopoldgasse 9. Baptism 25 March 1898: Priest Alfred Formey, Godfather Walter Pieau, Opera singer, Vienna I, Bauernmarkt 3.²³ Schoenberg's loyalty towards Christianity clearly persisted, at least outwardly, through both his first and second marriages ceremonies. His first marriage, to Mathilde Zemlinsky took place on 18 October 1901 and is recorded in the *Traungsbuch* of the Dorotheerkirche, the same church in which Arnold had received baptism some three and a half years previously (White 1985: 54).²⁴ Mathilde had been born into a Jewish family, her father Adolf von Zemlinsky having been secretary to the Sephardic Jewish Community in Vienna and the author of a history of this community which was published in 1888 to commemorate the founding of a new synagogue (JASI XVII, Vols.1&2: 37). Her funeral took place in the *neue evangelischen Friedhof*, Vienna on 18th October 1923. Schoenberg's second marriage was to Gertrude Kolisch when he was fifty. The marriage certificate, (23 August 1924), shows the marriage to have taken place in the Evangelical Church, Mödling. Gertrude too was born into a Jewish family but was baptized as Roman Catholic one month after her birth (Nuria Nono Schoenberg 1992: 229). The extent of the drift away from the origins of the couple is illustrated by the fact that Arnold was asked by the Lutheran pastor who was to perform the marriage, to provide a dispensation from the bride's Catholic pastor to enable

her to marry a Lutheran. The Jewish origins of both bride and groom were thus entirely disregarded as the marriage ceremony was concerned.

Much speculation has taken place as to why it was that Schoenberg decided to abandon the faith into which he was born. Stuckenschmidt dismisses the change of religion briefly, saying that Schoenberg was influenced by his friend, Walter Piau who was a Protestant and seems to have influenced him (1974: 34). Alexander Ringer suggests that Schoenberg was untutored in Jewish values and customs and thus looked elsewhere "to quench his spiritual thirst" (1990:7). Ringer, in support of this assertion quotes the comparable experiences of Jakob Wassermann, a German-Jewish writer and Arthur Schnitzler the Jewish Viennese playwright and author. While Ringer may be correct in assuming that Schoenberg had little education in Jewish matters, the comparisons chosen by him in order to support his theory are mis-placed. In assessing the degree of Schoenberg's religious background neither the condition of Wassermann nor Schnitzler is of any relevance. Wassermann was more German than Austrian. Schnitzler, the well-educated favoured son of a well-established Viennese doctor, by his own admission, mixed in "solid Jewish bourgeois circles" (1930: 146). He describes in his autobiography *My Youth in Vienna* (1930) a life free of financial burden, filled, it would seem with flirtatious encounters and coffee house meetings: the very antithesis of the life of the serious young Schoenberg whose father died young leaving the family in great financial need, a condition which was to plague Schoenberg for most of his life. Moreover to suggest, as Ringer does, that he "had forsaken Judaism because, virtually untutored in Jewish values, he looked for other vessels to quench his spiritual thirst" is to reduce the highly complex nature of Jewish conversion to a single entity which would, if taken seriously, preclude further all further discussion.

Pamela White's *Schoenberg and the God-idea* (1985) is a study which demands the greatest respect for its academic thoroughness (1985). White explains Schoenberg's conversion in terms of what she perceives to be the findings of modern-day developmental psychology (1985: 52-55). Seen through these developmental studies says White, Schoenberg's move from Judaism to Lutheranism represents a shift of affiliation from an adolescent stage of development centred in the home, to that of a young adult eager to identify with his peers outside the home. She claims that the conversion "was not a radical step--whether viewed positively or negatively--into a new

phase or stage of faith development” (1985: 54). This study will argue that White's assertions are over-simplified and that several aspects remain unexplained. Schoenberg was one of a large number of young Jewish artists and intellectuals who followed the path of conversion. Did all these converts pass through the same normal developmental phase, while those who remained true to their faith did not? And why was the trend so strikingly prevalent in Vienna and not for example in Warsaw?

It is likely that all the above explanations for Schoenberg's conversion to Lutheranism contain elements of the truth. He probably *was* influenced by Pieau and by the worker's group; it is true that there is no evidence that he received a Jewish or Hebrew education; and it is true that he did, as a young adult, identify with a non-Jewishly-aligned group. But all these explanations are too simplistic to hold the answers to a most complex phenomenon as the work of Sander Gilman (1986) and the case of Weininger (Steven Beller 1989: 221-236) demonstrate.

In the final analysis little is known as yet of the reasons for Schoenberg's decision to abandon the religion which was later to become so important to him. In 1936, reminiscing about his compositional concerns during the years 1897-1898 (about the time of his conversion) Schoenberg says “Being then only twenty-three years of age I was to catch fire easily”²⁵. This, for the present, reveals as much of the story as we are likely to obtain: the lively, impetuous, young Schoenberg chose to abandon his religion in favour of one which would give him entree into the exciting world of the Viennese intelligentsia and in so doing he was following the path taken by a vast number of his co-religionists. It was Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) the German-Jewish poet, who made the famous remark : “The baptismal certificate is the ticket of admission to European culture”...(Mendes Flohr & Reinhartz, 1995: 259). Schoenberg, in 1934 imparts a startling confidence to Peter Gradenwitz “I have never been convinced by Protestantism; but I had, like most of the artists in my time, a Catholic period” (JASI XVII, Vols 1&2: 456, translation: p.110).

However Schoenberg's conversion was not a matter which he was able to toss off without further thought—apart from other considerations, the forces of history did not allow this . A repeated preoccupation with the subjects of religious atonement (*Kol Nidre*), forgiveness (*De Profundis*),

and the power of prayer (from *Die Jakobsleiter* onwards) comes through many of the later works. So strong is this preoccupation that one is persuaded that it may well be the reaction of an individual who wished to atone for the abandonment of his inherited religion. Certainly the idea of atonement was one of the important forces responsible for shaping his later music.

German Culture and Jewish Assimilation.

For first generation Viennese Jewish intellectuals German Culture was the symbol of their highest aspirations. Entry into this culture (and by culture was meant the expanded culture of refinement of expression in the German language, manners, dress etc.) would validate their faith in integration and indeed in humanity. The extract from Ludwig Boerne's *Briefe aus Paris* (1832) expresses it well:

I know how to value the undeserved fortune of being a German and also a Jew, thus being able to strive for all virtues of a German without having to share any of his faults. Yes, because I was born a slave, I love freedom more than you do, Yes, because I have learnt all about servitude, I understand more about freedom than you do. Yes, because I was born to no fatherland, I yearn for a fatherland more fervently than you...I have built the house of my freedom on strong foundations; do as I have done, do not content yourselves with putting new tiles on the roof of the dilapidated building of your state.²⁶

Boerne reveals something of the complex dynamic between Jew, the stranger in a strange land, and his German host.

Jonathan Sachs (1991) draws a parallel between the Marrano Jews of Spain and the assimilated Jews of modern Europe²⁷. During the time between 14th to 16th century a large number of Jews in Spain and Portugal although forced to convert to Christianity, nevertheless retained their Jewish affiliations in secret. These were known as Marrano Jews. These forced converts were, explains Sachs “caught in a double bind”. The Jews saw them as betrayers, while to the Christians they were secret heretics, thus doubly alienated. Spinoza (1632-1677), excommunicated by the Jewish community in 1656 is a later example of this split in identity. Sachs sees Marx, Durkheim, Freud, Kafka, Wittgenstein, and Levi-Strauss as modern Marranos “caught between a past from which they believed they had escaped and a present to which they had not yet secured admission” (1991). Max Nordau had expressed a similar idea in 1897 at the first Zionist congress “The new Marranos leave Judaism in rage and bitterness, but in their inner most heart...they carry

with them into Christianity their personal humiliation”(JASI XVII, Nos.1&2 :123 n.39). There are obvious differences between Marranos and twentieth century marginal Jews: the Marranos, while remaining secretly true to their faith, concealed their Judaism in order to avoid persecution whereas the intention of the assimilationists was to reject the inherited faith. Nevertheless, both shared a stifled awareness of their Judaism. In many cases the double identity, possibly due to the compensatory psychic mechanism as noted above with reference to Boerne, produced an extraordinary degree of creativity. These brothers in non-faith (*Unglaubensgenossen* as Freud termed his relationship to Heine) played a fundamental role in building the culture of modern Europe (Yovel II, 1989:163) . Certainly, for those in the Vienna circle around Schoenberg in about 1900 those personalities of “mixed” Jewish identity appeared to exude creative energy of almost unprecedented force.

THE SCHOENBERG CIRCLE

Culturally, Vienna at the turn of the century presents a picture of artistic and scientific ferment which has seldom been matched. Schoenberg was one of a remarkable group of artists and thinkers who lived in Vienna at the turn of the century many of whom initiated far-reaching changes into their own field. The circle though large was a closely interlinked one, with frequent cross fertilization between disciplines. Among the older generation Mahler (1860-1911) held a special place in Schoenberg's consciousness. “Gustav Mahler was a saint” declared Schoenberg in his memoriam to Mahler (S&I, 447-448). From Mahler's side he showed the greatest concern for the younger composer's welfare as well as respect for Schoenberg's music although he claimed not to understand it.

Alexander von Zemlinsky (1872-1942) early friend , and later brother-in-law, was a talented composer and Schoenberg's first and only teacher. Alexander and Mathilde, later to be Schoenberg's wife, were the children of the secretary and the author of a book about the Sephardic Jewish community of Vienna (Beller, 1989: 25).

Karl Kraus (1874-1936), possibly the most influential figure of the Schoenberg circle, was editor and often sole contributor to the satirical journal *Die Fackel*,. Nine hundred and twenty two issues of this influential paper appeared between 1899 and 1936. Anti-Zionist, pro-assimilationist

and highly critical of the Jewish religion, Kraus wrote in 1909 "It is my religion to believe that the manometer is at 99. Gases from the world brain-sewer swarm everywhere; culture can no longer breathe, and in the end a dead humanity lies beside its creation, whose discovery had cost so much spirit that no more is left over to help".²⁸ For Kraus precise, though subtle use of the German language was an all-consuming passion which assumed the proportions of a moral responsibility. Corruption of language, and this was applied also to the broader sense of language as a vehicle of all artistic expression, amounted to serious dishonesty. The intention was characterised by the conviction that the critical and precise use of language could lead to an unexploited source of spirituality. Schoenberg's admiration for Kraus may be gauged by the inscription which he wrote in the copy of his *Harmonielehre* which he presented to Karl Kraus "I have learned more from you, perhaps, than a man should learn, if he wants to remain independent"(Hahl-Koch, 1984: 178)

Curiously, there is no evidence that Schoenberg had any contact with either Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) or Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951). There were however peripheral connections to Freud: Herbert Graf, who later directed Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, was the subject of Freud's "Little Hans" and his father Max Graf, a musicologist, represented a common link since he was known to Schoenberg, as well as being a member of Freud's Wednesday Meetings. There is no evidence of the existence of any Wittgenstein works in Schoenberg's library nor even of any peripheral contact between the two (Pamela White, 1984: 45). However there exists in Wittgenstein's concerns with language ideas which stand close to those of Kraus and others in the Schoenberg circle. For example Wittgenstein writes in the preface to his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*:

...the aim of the book is to draw a limit to thought, or rather--not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts: for in order to be able to draw a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides of the limit thinkable (i.e. we should have to think what cannot be thought).

It will therefore only be in language that the limit can be drawn, and what lies on the other side of the limit will simply be nonsense.²⁹

Otto Weininger (1880-1903) another member of the circle, had a surprisingly large number of admirers including Schoenberg who in his preface to the first edition of *Harmonielehre* (1911)

cites Weininger as “one of those who have thought earnestly”. Though Jewish, Weininger was vehemently anti-Semitic as well as being strongly misogynist. His many anti-Semitic views such as the conviction that Jews lack creative ability -- some of which had previously been put forward by Wagner and others -- were generally prevalent in Vienna in Weininger’s time. The issues addressed by him clearly reflect the weak self esteem and gradual break-down of identity among Jewish intellectuals.

But the circle was by no means only Jewish. Indeed its very character depended not only on the confrontation between Jew and non-Jew but also on the friendship and like-mindedness of artists in a conservative and often hostile society. Adolf Loos (1879-1933) avant garde architect was a close and life-long friend to Schoenberg. Loos's strong rejection of superfluous ornament was expressed in his essay entitled “Ornament and Crime”. Like Schoenberg he acknowledged his debt to the past, claiming that it was the new spirit that mattered and not new forms. The violent controversy which erupted over Loos's building on the Michaelerplatz was not unlike the public reaction to Schoenberg's Second string quartet.

The paintings of Kokoschka (1886-1980) too provoked stormy protest. Looking for the inner quality of his subjects he endeavoured to reproduce the true essence especially of the subjects of his portraits. In *My Life* the artist remembers, “Most of my sitters were Jews. They felt less secure than the rest of the Viennese Establishment, and were consequently more open to the new and more sensitive to the tensions and pressures that accompanied the decay of the old order.” (Timms, 1986: 6). Of the reasons for the bond between the artists of Schoenberg’s circle Kokoschka said “It probably was because we all were on the edge of society... We didn’t belong. So we were like a disease you know. Don’t touch” (Joan Allen Smith, 1986: 33).³⁰

Michael Steinberg analyses the position of the Jew in the Austrian- Baroque culture through a continuum which is defined by avant garde, revolutionary at the one end and conservative on the other (1992). The spectrum which Steinberg conceives, describes the problem under discussion concisely: “It [the problem of the Jew in the Austrian catholic Baroque] was one dimension in the over determined dialectic of Jew/Catholic, outsider/insider, silence/expressivity, austerity/decoration, fragmentation/totality.” Interdependent, and constantly shifting and

merging, the continuum could be applied appropriately to Schoenberg as well as to many of his circle who judged themselves and were judged by the religious, ethnic, artistic, ethical and aesthetic norms of the times.

There is however one overriding passion which remains fixed for all those of the Schoenberg circle: a search for Truth and a need to find a new language with which to express that Truth as far as it was possible in the “gay apocalypse” that was *fin-de-siècle* Vienna. The quest was for pure inner-expression devoid of ornamentation and artificiality. Karl Linke, a composition-student of Schoenberg at the Akademie der Musik und darstellende Kunst around 1910, remembers showing Schoenberg a song that he had composed: “Didn’t you add this figure afterwards, to clothe a harmonic skeleton?” asked Schoenberg, and then, using a Loosian metaphor, “Rather the way people stick facades onto houses?” Linke then quotes the master’s advice “...accompany the song simply harmonically. It will look primitive, but it will be more genuine. Because what you have here is decoration...But music must not decorate, it must simply be true.” (W. Reich, 1968: 28).

ORNAMENT

In his search for simple truth without ornament lies buried a complex issue which was to be with Schoenberg all his creative life and which was to assume greater importance as his religious fervour increased. The problem was articulated by Herman Broch in his 1911 essay *Ornament, or the Case of Loos* and continued in his 1912 *Notes to a Systematic Aesthetic* (Steinberg, M. P., 1984: 8).³¹ Both Broch’s essays were in response to Loos’ essay *Ornament and Crime* of 1908. “Ornament”, says Broch with reference to Loos’s rejection of ornament as decadent and dishonest, “was the musical expression of the breed and the spirit of *all* art, quintessence of culture, symbol of life, clearer and terser than all reason.” It is ornament, claims Broch, that is the predominant characteristic of style--style and culture are inseparable. Taking into account the ethos of neo-Romantic German art with its emphasis on symbolism and style, it is not difficult to understand Broch’s assertions. The absence of ornament, argues Broch, would mean a corresponding absence of artistic expression and a cultural vacuum.

Alan Lessem in a 1974 essay discusses the problem of ornament as it relates to Schoenberg. It

is clear says Lessem that ornamentation was for the artists in the Schoenberg group, a form of intellectual dishonesty--Kraus, the journalist, referred to this particularly in the language of the *feuilletonistes*, Loos in architecture and Schoenberg in music. But, and this is where the tension lies explains Lessem, aesthetics since the time of Hegel had thought that reality, in order to become art, needed some sort of mediation. In Lessem's opinion Expressionism was the manifestation as well as the solution to the problem (1974: 430).

It will be argued in this study that for Schoenberg this dilemma went well beyond his Expressionist phase, indeed it remained with him until the last years of his life. The *einzigster, ewiger, allgegenwärtiger, unsichtbarer, und unvorstellbarer Gott* of *Moses und Aron* was a later manifestation of the concept which had originated much earlier and which had to do with the notion that ornamentation--later expanded to also include the notion of representation--has the potential to corrupt art.

The search for expression stripped of superfluous decoration as it was initiated by the circle around Kraus, Loos and Schoenberg, resulted in a lively polemic about whether or not art is able to express anything but itself. The concept was widely and enthusiastically taken up by artists and intellectuals in Vienna of the 1910's. The question of representation which followed on from this was by no means confined to the Schoenberg "inner circle" but extended to Wittgenstein, Hoffmannsthal, Mach and many others. However for Schoenberg, the presentation of an Idea in a style which was to be entirely free of representational image presented a huge challenge, a challenge which was to become close to insurmountable when it became linked to the presentation of the God Idea.

It is perhaps not surprising, although it would seem so at first glance, that this very same problem confronted the ancient Jewish sages. Judaism is after all concerned with worship of an ineffable being who communicates in a way which is abstracted to such a degree that it cannot be understood without at least a minimum of embellishment.

Rabbi Cardozo tells of a kabbalistic belief which illustrates the concept (1995:119-150). There is not one Torah but two. The first is the Primordial Torah (*Torah Kedumah*). The second is the

Pentateuch as it was received by Moses on Mount Sinai. The Primordial Torah is incomprehensible to humans; it reflects the essence of God and is beyond human understanding. The Torah of Moses on the other hand is to an extent comprehensible and may be termed the Human Torah. There is a midrash (Jerusalem Talmud, *Shekalim* 6:1) which presents a discourse in allegorical terms: "The Torah that God gave to Moses was given to him as white fire, engraved by black fire. It is fire mixed with fire, cut from fire, and given from fire." The interpretation of this midrash is this: the white fire corresponds to the Primordial Torah while the black fire is the Human Torah. The white fire in its unadulterated form is hidden to us, the sight of it would blind the intellect just as looking into pure sunlight would blind the eye.³² When the light is viewed through a tinted lens however, that is once the black fire mediates, one is able to glean some meaning from what was previously undecipherable. The process is comparable to the two types of speech which are encountered in humans says Rabbi Cardozo. Creative monologue is a mode in which it is not necessary to shape actual words since the intention is a creative one within the individual. If however the aim is to communicate, either in dialogue or perhaps as a teacher to a class, the thoughts will of necessity have to be formulated or even changed so as to achieve understanding. Schoenberg in an interview in 1937 describes an almost exact process "I see the work as a whole first, then I compose the details. In working them out, I always lose something. This cannot be avoided. There is always some loss when we materialise" (Stuckenschmidt, 1977: 419).³³

A close analogy exists between this image and Schoenberg's *Gedanke* philosophy as it was to unfold in his journey towards serialism and towards his concept of one God. The Idea (that is the Law, the Torah, the "White Fire") as it was revealed to the Moses of *Moses und Aron* could not be assimilated by the people. It required the mediation of Aron, (the "Black Fire"), the one who could speak the human language and who could in turn understand the language of the people. And herein lies the paradox for the Kabbalists as well as for Schoenberg. The Kabbalistic belief is that the Torah is both concealed and revealed. The same is true of art. A certain amount of covering, that is ornament, is required to reveal the inner essence. On the other hand ornament sullies the purity of the vision.

Although the parallel is striking there is no evidence to suggest that Schoenberg was conversant

with Kabbalistic thought--he almost certainly was not. However, a conclusion is inescapable--those who dare to take on the awesome task of attempting to represent the unrepresentable are compelled to face either defeat or a compromise. Judaism accepts the compromise of the black fire--that which covers and yet allows comprehension.

The serious difficulty of representation is perhaps conveyed best by Schoenberg himself in an apparently humorous though deeply serious letter written in about 1934 (Letters: 158). The letter was in reply to a letter from the Music Supervisor of the National Broadcasting Company who had written the following "Will you please give me *your* definition of music--not just your appreciation of music-making nor your reactions to it, but *what music* (in the abstract) *means to you*." Schoenberg's reply, written after he had been in America for about a year, is in his own English.

Music is a simultaneous and a successive-ness of tones and tone- combinations, which are so organised that its impression on the ear is agreeable, and its impression on the intelligence is comprehensible, and that these impressions have the power to influence occult parts of our soul and of our sentimental spheres and that this influence makes us live in a dreamland of fulfilled desires, or in a dreamed hell of...etc., etc.,...

What is water?

H₂O; and we can drink it; and can wash us by it; and it is transparent; and has no Colour; and we can use it to swim and to ship; and it drives mills...etc., etc.

I know a nice and touching story:

A blind man asks his guide:

'How looks milk?'

The Guide answered:

'Milk looks white.'

The Blind Man:

'What's that "white"? Mention a thing which is white!'

The Guide:

'A swan. It is perfect white, and it has a long white and bent neck.'

The Blind Man:

'...A bent neck? How is that?'

The Guide, imitating with his arm the form of a swan's neck, lets the blind man feel the form of his arm.

The Blind Man (flowing softly with his hand along the arm of the guide):

'Now I know how looks milk.'

Yours very sincerely,

Arnold Schoenberg

The letter is a revealing one, the meaning of which is in Schoenberg's view clearly self-

explanatory since he concludes without offering any explanations. In effect Schoenberg is saying that it is as impossible to describe music as it is to describe water and to describe either is as futile as trying to describe "how looks milk" to a blind man. The issue here is not what music is able to convey but rather the impossibility of complete sensual perception--audial, tactual, and visual.

Schoenberg's difficulties with representing an Idea are by no means peculiar to him alone. Wittgenstein speaks of his inability to describe Time when he says that he knows what Time is until someone asks him. The midrashic allegory of the impossibility of comprehending the primordial Torah, the Blind man's inability to perceive milk, Wittgenstein's inability to describe time, the people's inability to comprehend the Moses Idea --all these coming from wholly disparate directions point to a similar indescribable abstract entity.

It will be argued in this study that Schoenberg is the archetypal Jewish/Protestant artist. He exhibited in his personality and his work the salient features of European modernism as well as the conflicts of religious affiliation. It will be further postulated that the crisis of identity was a mainspring of his psychic energy and that the transformation of his perception of self was in no small way responsible for the shaping of his musical productivity.

NOTES TO PROLOGUE

1. I acknowledge with appreciation the information I have received from Robert Wistrich (1990) *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*.
2. It was nine years later, in 1791 that the National Assembly of France passed a resolution giving Jews extended civic rights.
3. The province of Galicia had been annexed from Poland in 1772, and with the annexation came a quarter of a million Jews whom Joseph included in his doctrine of productivisation. These Ostjuden not only resisted the progressive laws, but their traditional clothing and behaviour produced a reaction of embarrassment among those Jews who considered themselves to be more enlightened.
4. Scholem spent his young life in Germany but speaks of a situation which was as true for him as it was for many other young Jews in Europe in the early part of the twentieth century. He himself escaped the holocaust by going leaving Europe in 1923 in order to live in Jerusalem.
5. The period between the Napoleonic wars and the March revolution (1815-1830) is known by various names. The Restaurationzeit (restoration), the Vormärz (pre-March, that is before the revolution of March 1848), or the Biedermeier period, the name taken from a fictional character, Gottlieb Biedermeier a schoolmaster who appeared as the hero in a series of satirical articles from *Fliegende Blätter* (1855-7). Biedermeier epitomized the smug middle-class citizen and the name Biedermeier is applied to the art and social outlook of the period 1815-1848 (Alice Hanson, 1985: 1-2).
6. Pressburg (now Bratislava) was the Slovak capital. In 1918 it became part of Czechoslovakia. Prior to 1918 it had been under Hungarian rule and part of the Habsburg empire. It was for this reason that Arnold Schoenberg inherited Hungarian nationality which was later converted to Czech (Oliver Neighbour, in *New Groves* 1980, "Schoenberg").
7. This latter event was the first spark in what turned out to be World War I.
8. From the novel *The Man Without Qualities*. The first volume of *The Man Without Qualities* was published in 1930, the second volume in 1932 and the third which was never completed was published after Musil's death in 1943.
9. In a letter to Marya Freund dated 30th December 1922 Schoenberg speaks of the fact that he may have caused religious offence with certain sections of the text of *Pierrot lunaire*. "Such a possibility never before crossed my mind" he writes "and nothing was ever further from me in all my life than any such intention, since I have never at any time in my life been anti-religious, indeed I have never really been un-religious either" (Letters: No. 56).
10. George Clare, in *Last Waltz in Vienna*, tells how he received a slap from his father for using the Yiddish word "Tate" (father) instead of "Daddy" or "Papa" when addressing his

father. Yiddish was considered an inferior language (1980, 85).

11. Modernity in European Jewish terms refers, for the purposes of this study, to the period from about the 1806 to about 1914.
12. *Hasidism* is a Jewish religious movement with strong emphasis on mysticism. The movement had its roots in Poland and the Ukraine in the eighteenth century and spread to many parts of Eastern Europe. It is active in Israel and America to this day. (Mendes-Flohr & Reinhartz 1995: 286).
13. It should be noted that it was not Moses Mendelssohn's intention to found a movement to oppose Jewish orthodoxy.
14. Heinrich Jaques, a staunch liberal, used the word in the late 1850's in order to suggest that all humans are capable of improvement and that the disadvantaged should be given the opportunity *um erst Menschen zu werden* (Beller, 1989: 136). The word was used especially with regard to "humanising" the Ostjuden who poured into Vienna in the late 1850's and has come to mean a functional human being.
15. Yiddish which is essentially a dialect of German is written with Hebrew characters. In this sense Mendelssohn was building on an already accepted model. The reaction from the ultra-orthodox against any innovation was extreme. The Rabbi Moses Sofer known as *Hatam Sofer* (1762-1839), who lived in Pressburg the hometown of Samuel Schoenberg, was typical of the new breed of militantly orthodox leaders. His well-known slogan was *hadash asur min Ha'Torah*, whatever is new falls under the category of biblical prohibition (Katz, 1987: 7)
16. Letter written to Fanny Mendelssohn in Mendes-Flohr & Reinhartz, 1995: 257-258.
17. The assimilation of the Mendelssohn family is much the same as that of Gershom Scholem's family quoted above. For both the process took only three generations. However, while Abraham Mendelssohn speaks with confidence and hope, Scholem's observation, in an interview published in 1975 reveals, disillusionment and cynicism. Scholem was painfully aware of the disappointment of the emancipation dream. By the 1930's the chasm which lay between legal emancipation and social and cultural assimilation was blatantly apparent and the role it had played in the tragedy of Europe only too obvious.
18. In *Richard Wagner's Prose Works* ed. and trans. W.A. Ellis 1897 p. {check pages}
19. Darwin's *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* was published in 1859, Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* in 1885, Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900.
20. See Schorske (1980) especially Chapter III "Politics in a New Key".
21. Zionism will be discussed more fully in connection with *Der biblische Weg* in Chapter III.

22. Pressburg, now Bratislava lies 56 kilometers east of Vienna. Was ruled by Hungary before 1918 and from 1918 to 1939 served as the capital of the Czechoslovakian province of Slovakia.
- 23.. The information is given in Stuckenschmidt (1974: 34) and confirmed by Pamela White (1985: 53, 313 n15).
24. Pamela White records that this information is from the archives of the Evangelische Dorotheerkirche (1985: 314, n18)
25. Quoted in Bailey 1984 from Arnold Schoenberg, "Introduction to My Four Quartets," program notes for performances by the Juilliard Quartet at Times Hall, New York, January-February 1950; quoted in Ursula Rauchhaupt ed. *Schoenberg, Webern, Berg: Die Streichquartette: Eine Dokumentation* (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft, 1971 p37)
26. Quoted in Mendes-Flohr & Reinhartz (1995: 260) Ludwig Boerne(1786-1837) was a German Jew who converted to Lutheranism. This letter reflects his struggle for the cause of freedom of which he felt Jewish emancipation was a part.
27. See also Moshe Lazar JASI Vol. XVII Nos. 1&2 (pp.14-23)
28. In an article entitled "*Apocalypse*" in a 1909 issue of *Die Fackel* (see Michael P. Steinberg, 1984:7)
29. From *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Routledge & Kegan Paul,1974: 3)
30. Stukenschmidt says that Schoenberg had the complete works of Kandinsky, Kokoschka, Weininger and Karl Kraus in his library.
31. Hermann Broch (1886-1951) was a Jewish Viennese novelist who had converted to Christianity in 1908. Michael P. Steinberg has edited translated and written an introduction to Broch's essay *Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit* It is published as *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and his Time: The European Imagination 1860-1920*. (1984).
32. Plato's image of the cave from which man emerges only to be dazzled by the light, bears a partial resemblance to the mystic image. However the Platonic image is not concerned with concealment which in the kabbalistic interpretation, is essential to the revelation.
33. Schoenberg in his Franz Liszt essay of 1911 (S&I: 442) writes about "what every artist knows as the 'the undissolved residue', the difference between his expressive urge and his powers of depiction."

CHAPTER I

SCHOENBERG APPROACHING THE LADDER:

SOURCES OF *DIE JAKOBSLEITER*

Between 1897 and 1906, in the early flowering of his career, Schoenberg composed or wrote sketches for at least sixteen works based on poetry written by Dehmel (Frisch, 1986: 138). In 1899, the year of *Verklärte Nacht*, his interest in Dehmel appeared to be especially intense--so intense that Frisch, who has researched Schoenberg's early tonal works most assiduously, speaks of 1899 as Schoenberg's *Dehmeljahr* (1993: 83). By Schoenberg's own admission Dehmel's poetry was an important influence in his own musical development, to the extent of being partly responsible for his early quest for a new language. "Your poems" he wrote to Dehmel in 1912 "had a decisive influence on my development as a composer. They were what first made me try to find a new tone in the lyrical mood" (Letters: No. 11). Lessem suggests that the youthful Schoenberg may also have come to an understanding of Nietzsche's concept of "will" as relating to a personal struggle, through his reading of Dehmel (Lessem, 1979: 299, n.34). The suggestion is plausible--suffering and struggle as part of the development towards ultimate good is the underlying theme of Dehmel's *Zwei Menschen* and, as we shall see later, is also the central focus of *Die Jakobsleiter*.

It is therefore not surprising that when Schoenberg first entertained the idea of writing an oratorio he thought of Dehmel as librettist. On 13 December 1912 Schoenberg wrote to Dehmel (Letters: No. 11) with a request for a text for an oratorio:

For a long time I have been wanting to write an oratorio on the following subject: modern man, having passed through materialism, socialism, and anarchy and, despite having been an atheist, still having in him some residue of ancient faith (in the form of superstition), wrestles with God (see also Strindberg's 'Jacob Wrestling') and finally succeeds in finding God and becoming religious. Learning to pray!

Schoenberg's brief to Dehmel was wide open: "It should be as free as if there had never been any question of its being set to music. For a work by Dehmel is something that I--being in such profound sympathy with every word--can set to music as it stands" continued Schoenberg. But

Dehmel demurred, and Schoenberg accepted the refusal without resistance. The magic which had existed between Schoenberg and Dehmel had vanished. It was clear that the two had moved too far apart to collaborate in a common venture. In the end Schoenberg wrote the libretto for *Die Jakobsleiter* himself. It is pertinent to this study to examine the nature of the change in Schoenberg.

The years between 1908 and 1912 were exceptionally creative ones for Schoenberg. He had completed amongst other works, the String Quartet No. 2, the George Songs, *Die glückliche Hand*, the two sets of Piano Pieces Op. 11 and Op. 19, Five orchestral Pieces Op. 16, *Erwartung*, *Herzgewächse* and *Pierrot Lunaire* in these four years. On a personal level however, the period was fraught with tension and humiliation on various fronts. As far as audience acceptance of his work was concerned, it seemed that as his compositional techniques became more progressive so the audience reaction became more hostile. The first performance of the Second String Quartet by the Rosé Quartet on 21st December 1908 was greeted with violent and vociferous dissatisfaction by audience and critics alike. In later years Schoenberg, who was by then well accustomed to unfavourable receptions, claimed that one of the worst audience reactions that he had ever experienced was accorded to the first performance of the Second Quartet. Richard Batka (Reich, 1971: 36) writing for his Prague newspaper reported thus:

A violent clash of factions took place when Rosé and his colleagues and Mrs. Gutheil-Schroder performed a new quartet by the ultraviolet musical secessionist Arnold Schoenberg. Even during the course of the various movements there were hisses and laughter. Suddenly the music critic Karpath stood up and shouted "Stop it! That's enough!" His colleague Specht, on the other hand, shouted "Quiet! Go on playing!"¹

The "ultraviolet musical secessionist" attempted to retaliate in a strongly-worded letter to Ludwig Karpath which he had hoped to have printed in Kraus' *Die Fackel*.² Kraus refused to print the letter and warned Schoenberg not to enter into a personal argument with a critic. With his customary incisive language Kraus advised: "I would not recommend naming the full names of the culprit[?]. One could write a book about a nonentity, but to address oneself directly to such a nonentity, no matter how briefly, dignifies him with greatness" (J.A. Smith, 1986: 67). But the abuse persisted. Lona Truding, a student of Schoenberg when interviewed in 1973 remembered: "I know from my own experience that we had sometimes to get Schoenberg out of a concert hall

by a back entrance and had to shield him with our very bodies against all the things which were thrown at him" (J.A Smith 1986: 69-70). "I had the feeling" wrote Schoenberg much later "as if I had fallen into an ocean of boiling water, and not knowing how to swim or to get out in another manner, I tried with my legs and arms as best I could" Letters: No.214).

To add to his already stressed condition Schoenberg was faced with the trauma of the near breakdown of his marriage in 1908 and of the complex web of circumstances associated with the Gerstl affair.³ To make matters worse the family was dogged by monetary problems. Financial hardship was to be his destiny for the greater part of his life but so difficult was the situation in 1910 that he was obliged to suffer the indignity of requesting a loan from Mahler in order to pay the rent for his home. In 1911 Berg organised an appeal on Schoenberg's behalf without his knowledge (Neighbour, 1980: 702-3).

In his pedagogic career too Schoenberg faced humiliation. He had in 1910 been offered a professorship at the Imperial-Royal Academy of Vienna. This unleashed an antisemitic reaction especially from political quarters and the offer was withdrawn. Schoenberg in dire financial straits, wrote to the President of the Academy suggesting a possible solution. The letter which surely cost him his personal pride suggested, or rather pleaded, that he be appointed *Privatdozent*: this would mean that he could teach without being appointed to the permanent staff. (Letters: p20 and Nos. 5&6) Although the proposal was approved (he taught at the Academy from winter 1910 to summer of 1911) the sought after post was never granted.⁴

By 1912 the bitterness associated with the memory of Vienna had not yet left him. In June of that year Schoenberg now resident in Germany, was once more offered a position at the Academy in Vienna. His response to the offer exposes the pain that was still with him after two years. "I would not come to Vienna even if you doubled the salary." he wrote to Karl Wiener, President of the Academy. "My main reason is: for the present I could not live in Vienna. I have not yet got over the things done to me there, I am not yet reconciled". (Letters: No. 9).⁵

LEARNING HOW TO PRAY

It is not surprising that Schoenberg, burdened by the accumulation of cares which emanated from all directions, should have turned to the idea of "learning how to pray." His search however had moved in new directions. Dehmel's ideas were no longer compatible with his own and Schoenberg decided to write his own libretto for what was to become *Die Jakobsleiter*.

In a sense, Schoenberg's quest for religious meaning albeit in a diffuse way, had started a long time ago. The concept of a love so pure that it is capable of vanquishing sexual guilt was already implicit in *Verklärte Nacht*. *Friede auf Erden*, the *a capella* chorus of 1907 is written in a contrapuntal style and reflects a spirit of deep reverence. The "seismographic shock" of *Erwartung* to use Adorno's term, reveals Schoenberg, the arch Expressionist, searching for coherence and truth in a fragmented environment-- the Woman's last cry *Ich suchte* expresses not only the spirit of the work but reflects also Schoenberg's own spiritual search. In both works the symbols of the dark forest, the wandering path, the guilt-ridden woman are indicative of intense spiritual reflection albeit of an expressionist nature. The Stefan George poems *Litanei* and *Entrückung* which Schoenberg used for the vocal movements of the Second String Quartet convey further and more overt religious expression "*Ein tret'ich wieder, Herr! In dein Haus... (Litanei)*"

SYMBOLISM

The dividing line between religion and art in the late nineteenth century in the German speaking countries was at best a tenuous one. Wagner's concept of art had placed the artist and especially the musician/artist, dangerously close to the redemptive figure of prophet and priest. Furthermore the influential Wagnerian concept of myth and mystical transcendence was undoubtedly a factor of which all composers of the time took cognisance. An anxiety about the possible collapse or at least corrosion of rationalism hovered over intellectual thinkers. Art, it was felt could not only counteract this force but also contribute to the morality of the human-being. From this position the sacred mission of the artist in society is but a short step. Many of these views were commonly accepted by artists all over Europe and Schoenberg was no exception.

Song Opus 20

In 1911, that is the year before *Pierrot Lunaire* was published, Schoenberg had written a short but significant song for soprano, celeste, harmonium and harp, *Herzgewächse* Opus 20. This was to mark the beginning of a new phase in Schoenberg's religious evolution. The poem which he set for this work, *Feuillage du Coeur*, is part of Maeterlinck's 1889 collection *Serres Chaudes* and reflects the poet's early interest in mysticism, an interest which he shared with many nineteenth century artists. Both the orchestration and the subject of mystical prayer, foreshadow Schoenberg's treatment of "The Soul" in *Die Jakobsleiter*. The flute-writing bears noteworthy similarity to the closing bars of Mahler's 9th Symphony where the fading sound of the high flute is marked *schwebend* just as the high flute for the dying soul in *Die Jakobsleiter*. This suggests not only the possibility of a possible model for Schoenberg's *Die Seele* but suggests too that both Mahler and Schoenberg used this instrumentation and style to represent transcendence.

Songs Opus 22

During the period in which Schoenberg was occupied with the Op. 22 Songs, that is the time immediately preceding and just beginning World War I, he clearly identified with quasi-religious sentiment which was in any case around at the time. However, his religious affiliation, at least as far as one is able to judge so personal a matter, was in no way connected to Judaism. Sixten Ringbom makes a telling point:

Implicit in the Christian conception of art is the principle that what can be represented at all, can be represented figuratively, that is, as a narrative or symbolical image. However deep the religious conviction, it is not likely to lead to anything but figurative representations as long as the artist is working within a conventionally Christian frame of reference.⁶

While Christianity, by its very nature builds on a symbolic image, Judaism, with its insistence on an abstract deity and its prohibition against representation of the graven image, is only minimally concerned with representation. Clearly Schoenberg at the time of writing the Op. 22 songs, had in his art not yet reached the point where there was a conscious point of delineation between the two traditions regarding representation.

The origin of mysticism in Jewish religious thinking is generally traced back to the prophetic visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Forms of Jewish mysticism have however changed over the centuries flowing through the ascetic and contemplative sects of medieval Spain, the Hassidic movements of Europe and through to the body of mystical teaching which has come to be known as the Kabbalah. The movements vary greatly but all are concerned with a desire for an intense communion with God. At the same time all of the above preclude any possibility of total union with God who is the wholly other-- the Great Nothing, the Absolute One-ness.

Christianity, on the other hand, and especially Christian mysticism, is deeply concerned with total union with the Lord--that is with the concept of *unio mystica*. The Eucharistic worship of the Christ figure and the symbolic acts of worship associated with it, imply nothing less than total absorption of the body of Christ into the self and the self into Christ. Christ's teaching is expressed thus in the Book of John "Abide in Me, and I in you... He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John XV: 4,5) and "That they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me." (John XVII: 21).⁷

Naturally, this basic difference in dogma has repercussions in the mode of representation of the Deity. In the representation of the ineffable, Judaism is concerned with providing just sufficient covering to facilitate understanding, the "black fire" of the allegory described in Chapter I. Direct reproduction of the Deity is most strenuously forbidden, to the extent that even a pantheistic doctrine such as that espoused by Spinoza is unacceptable to rabbinic Judaism. Christian worship on the other hand is often accompanied by images and objects which abound in symbolic meaning, the more so since these images have been enriched through the visual arts which, over time, have produced symbols which evoke immediate recognition. This is particularly true of Catholicism and especially so from the perspective of the artist in late-Romantic, Baroque-orientated Vienna.

By the end of the nineteenth century the tendency towards the use of representation through symbols and through nature had reverberated throughout the wider spectrum of the arts, but especially in poetry. The work of the group of poets known as Symbolists or Decadents, though partly secular, absorbed the essence of Christian mysticism. In France the early exponents of the

movement were Baudelaire, Verlaine and Mallarmé. The later generation of symbolists were inspired especially by Baudelaire for whom the communion of nature with the self stood at the root of the activities of the movement. The movement spread throughout Europe: Rilke, writing in German (though born in Prague); Balzac in France; Stefan George the German-born representative; Yeats and Dowson in England and the playwright Strindberg from Sweden-- all were inspired by mystic sources.

One of the important ideals of Symbolism was the search for Ideal Beauty which, it was thought, could be reached through Art rather than through the cold reality of science. There is, it was asserted, a world beyond the senses and in the search for the mysteries of spiritual existence Symbolism resembled the mysticism of religion without however being confined by the practice of religious observance pertaining to any particular sect.

It is surely not a coincidence that it is the poetry of Maeterlinck, Dowson, Rilke and George, all exponents of the Symbolist movement, which Schoenberg chose to set to music in the years of his own religious search, that is in the years immediately prior to his twelve tone works. Nor is it surprising that many symbolist ideas are reflected in *Die Jakobsleiter*, also of this period. In order however to understand more fully the influence of the symbolist poets on Schoenberg, one needs to delve rather more deeply for not only the Symbolists but also Schoenberg himself was inspired in many instances by the mystic writings of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772).⁸

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

The writings of Swedenborg achieved remarkable appeal years after his death--explained perhaps by his convincing claims of visions of Christ and communication with angels. The universe and everything in it, maintained Swedenborg, is created out of divine Love by means of divine Wisdom. This Divine Love and Wisdom form an indivisible union. There is in all created things a likeness to this union--that is a "correspondence" between the spiritual and the material:

The whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world, not only the natural world in general, but also in particular. Whatever, therefore, in the natural world exists from the spiritual, is said to be its correspondent.By the natural world is meant whatever is under the sun, and receives from it its heat and light; and all things which thence subsist belong to that world. But the spiritual world is heaven, and the things belonging to that world are those which are in the heavens. Since man is a heaven and also a world, in least

form after the image of the greatest, therefore in him there is a spiritual world and a natural world... Whatsoever, therefore, in this natural world, that is, in his body, its senses, and actions, exists from its spiritual world, that is, from his mind and its understanding and will, is called a correspondent.⁹

Thus for Swedenborg there is not only a correspondence between heaven and “whatever is under the sun” but also between the human spirit, (which corresponds to heaven), and the human body (which corresponds to nature). To the symbolist poets the Swedenborgian concept came to signify the fit that exists between all natural things and human emotions. Balzac whose novel *Seraphita* as we shall see below, was much admired by Schoenberg, was greatly influenced by Swedenborg. The Rilke, George and Dowson poems which Schoenberg chose to set to music, emanate from the Swedenborgian-derived Symbolist background. For Schoenberg, who always was captivated by the concept of totality and unity it was in all probability the idea of the Oneness which is central to Swedenborgian correspondence which held special appeal: “Divine Love and Wisdom proceed from the Lord in union. There is a certain likeness of this union in every created thing (Swedenborg, 1912: 2).

The Symbolist movement despite the non-denominational or supra-denominational stance of its representatives was from the outset based on Christian dogma¹⁰. From its roots in the Christian teachings of Swedenborg and in its absorption of the concept of *correspondance* the movement was built on Christian principles. As Christ merges with the self so the spiritual in all things merges with the earthly--a concept easily applied to the arts and enthusiastically taken up by artists and particularly writers.

The concept of *correspondance* would appear to have found expression not only in Schoenberg's compositions during the gestation period of the Op.22 songs and *Die Jakobsleiter*, but also in a diary which coincided with the preliminary stages and onset of World War I. In his *Kriegswolkentagebuch* (War-Clouds Diary) started on 24th September 1914 he writes:

Many people like myself today, will have tried to interpret the events of war by the sky, since finally the belief in higher powers and also in God has returned. Unfortunately only now the thought occurred to me to put down my impression in writing. But I will do so from now on and hope to find some coincidence[es] once more accurate reports are available, since so far a number of war events could be premonitioned by the "mood" of th sky.

Repeatedly I noticed that “golden glitter,” “victory-wind”, “a deep blue sky”, “bloody clouds” (at sunset) always preceded victorious German events.

Likewise, heavy deterioration of the weather with storm and rain, deep black clouds of eery impression anticipated bad turns at the Austro-Russian front.¹¹

The entry bears similarities to Swedenborg's writings in *The Divine Providence* (1912: 203-204):

all wars, even those relating solely to worldly affairs, represent in heaven the states of the Church, and are correspondences....Similar things are represented by wars at the present day wherever they are waged; for all events in the natural world correspond to spiritual events in the spiritual world...Successes, also, and lucky strokes in war, are commonly called the fortune of war; but this is the divine Providence, which is especially operative in the plans and preparations of the general, even though he then and afterwards ascribes the whole to his own sagacity.

Two additional points emerge from the War-Clouds diary extract quoted above. The first is Schoenberg's insistence on the belief in “higher powers”, the return to God. He avoids using the subjective “I” or “my” but rather “many people like myself.” At the same time the words which he underlines (“belief in higher powers” and “return to God”) signifies his religious stance in September 1914. It would take another eight years for Schoenberg to state unequivocally, as he did in his 20 July 1922 letter to Kandinsky, “religion. This was my one and only support during those [eight] years--here let this be said for the first time.” (Letters: No. 42).

The second point which stands out sharply in the extract above is Schoenberg's fierce patriotism and loyalty to the German cause. Speaking later of his time in the army Schoenberg spoke of the enemy within Austria as well as outside, but in 1914, before his call-up it would appear that he held no resentments which may have detracted from his identification with German interests in the war effort. It was perhaps this misplaced loyalty which made the effect of the ultimate rejection doubly painful.

The Opus 22 songs and what was eventually to become *Jakobsleiter* are the only major works to appear between *Pierrot Lunaire* of 1912 and the Five piano pieces Op. 23 of 1920--a remarkably barren period for Schoenberg.¹² Not that he was inactive during these years. Apart

from the great energy expended in organising the affairs of the Society for Private Musical Performance¹³ the signs of the fermentation which were to burst forth within the decade are already apparent in the song-settings. In particular there are in these songs instances of cell motifs which foreshadow the serial technique.¹⁴ Nevertheless the compositionally silent years indicate the anticipation of a watershed period; the works which emerge after these years would suggest that it had been a time of intense religious, mystic contemplation.

The set of four Orchestral Songs, Op.22 comprise the following;

Seraphita by Ernest Dowson.

Alle, welche dich suchen and *Mach mich zum Wächter deiner Weiten* both from Rilke's *Stundenbuch*

Vorgefühl by Rilke from his *Buch der Bilder*

While working on the completion of *Die glückliche Hand* Schoenberg set the poem *Seraphita* the first of the Opus 22 songs from a poem by Ernest Dowson, with translation from the English by Stefan George. Dowson (1867-1900), although a representative of the English group of poets known as the "Decadents" was much influenced by French Symbolism, and especially by Verlaine.¹⁵ Ironically, this "mystic" poem is not what it seems. It is thought that when Dowson writes "Come not before me now, O visionary face!" he is in fact alluding to the daughter of a restaurateur with whom he was in love at the time. (Lessem 1979:171 & Bailey, 1984: 81).

The work of the translator Stefan George was well known to Schoenberg who had set his poems for his Op. 15 Song cycle *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*.

In the two months from 30 November 1913 to 1 January 1914 Schoenberg set two poems from Rilke's *Stundenbuch* as part of the set Op. 22. In the first of these *Alle, welche dich suchen*, the poet writes of the elusiveness of God, the very issue which was to preoccupy Schoenberg so extensively in the coming decade and beyond. Rilke speaks of the difficulties inherent in the concept of an unnameable God --to name him is to betray him, and yet by not naming him one acquiesces, as Adorno expresses it, in one's own impotence (Adorno, 1992: 226).

The German lyric poet Rilke 1875-1926 was, like Dowson, a representative of the symbolist movement. According to Stuckenschmidt Schoenberg had nine volumes of Rilke's works in his

library in 1913 (1977: 183) The *Stundenbuch* of 1905, from which *Alle welche dich* and *Mach mich zum Wächter deiner Weiten* are taken, is a book of prayer-like poems in which the poet expresses his longing for a mystic union with God. The winter of 1900 was a time of crisis for Rilke and Schoenberg responded readily to the sentiments expressed in the poems. The poem *Vorgefühl* (Presentiment) from Rilke's *Buch der Bilder* was not set until the summer of 1916 during the difficult days of World War I. It reflects the deep loneliness and despair of both poet and composer: *Und werfe mich ab und bin ganz allein In dem grossen Sturm.* (and cast myself away, and am all alone in the great storm.)

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER: AN EARLY INFLUENCE

In "My Evolution" written in 1949 (S&I: 79) Schoenberg writes that his interest in philosophy was stimulated by Oskar Adler who was a talented musician as well as a scientist. Adler was Schoenberg's boyhood friend and it is possible that it was Oskar who first introduced the young Arnold to Schopenhauer. It is well known that Mahler was an ardent, if at times ambivalent, admirer of Schopenhauer, and Mahler and Schoenberg would certainly have made their views known to each other on this topic. In addition, Wagner, an important influence for both Mahler and Schoenberg, was a strong adherent of Schopenhauer.

It would appear that Schoenberg's early concepts of the Idea and of Representation, both of which were to evolve in a manner so significant to his personal and musical development, originated in Schopenhaurian philosophy.

Schopenhauer, following on from Kant, understood the World to consist of two entities which although separate are closely linked. To the one, the phenomenal aspect, he gives the name "the World as Representation".¹⁶ Here he postulates that the world is known to us through the representation of objects which are structured by the senses to create meaningful perception. All representation however is driven from within by the Will, the thing-in-itself, the noumenal aspect. It is the Will which renders the object "perceivable". Allan Janik quotes Schopenhauer in a passage which sums up the philosopher's approach to Representation and Will:

Phenomenon means representation and nothing more. All representation, be it of whatever kind it may, all *object* is *phenomenon*. But only the *will* is *thing in itself*; as such

it is not representation at all, but *toto genere* different therefrom. It is that of which all representation, all objects, are the phenomenon., the visibility, the *objectivity*. It is the inmost essence, the kernel, of every blinding acting force of nature, and also in the deliberate conduct of man, and the great difference between the two concerns only the degree of the manifestation, not the inner nature of what is manifested.¹⁷

Understanding is for Schopenhauer the system which connects representations to knowledge and which unifies space and time, a concept which was to become increasingly important to Schoenberg.

Schopenhauer devotes much discussion to the special place of Art in his view of the world. Art can exist outside the relationship of objects. Of all the Arts, none is so well apprehended as Music which does not copy Ideas but is “a copy of the Will itself”. “For this reason” asserts Schopenhauer, “the effect of music is so very much more powerful and penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these others speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence.”

The Platonic Ideas are the adequate objectification of will. To excite or suggest the knowledge of these by means of the Representation of particular things (for works of art are themselves always Representation of particular things) is the end of all other arts, which can be attained by a corresponding change in the knowing subject. Thus all these arts objectify the will indirectly only by means of the Ideas; and since our world is nothing but the manifestation of the Ideas in multiplicity, through their entrance into the principle of individuality, music also, since it passes over the Ideas, is entirely independent of the phenomenal world, ignores it altogether, could to a certain extent exist if there was no world at all, which cannot be said of the other arts. Music is as direct an objectification and copy of the whole will as the world itself, nay even as the Ideas, whose multiplied manifestation constitutes the world of individual things. Music is thus by no means like the other arts, the copy of the Ideas, but the copy of the Will itself, whose objectivity the Ideas are. This is why the effect of music is so much more powerful and penetrating than that of the other arts, for they speak only of shadows, but it speaks of the thing itself.¹⁸

Schopenhauer deals with issues which were to preoccupy Schoenberg greatly in the first two decades of the twentieth century. “Art” writes Schoenberg in the 1911 edition of *Harmonielehre* (p.31) “does not merely present events or objects which create an impression. It presents the impression itself. Art's highest achievement is concerned with the presentation of inner nature.” The concept of Jacob's ladder clearly approximates to Schopenhauer's concept of the ascending

structure of the World while the esteem with which Schopenhauer's values Art and Music in particular would surely be received favourably not only by Schoenberg but by early twentieth century artists in general. "What kind of knowledge is it that considers what continues to exist outside and independently of all relations, but which alone is really essential to the world, the true content of its phenomena, that which is subject to no change, and is therefore known with equal truth for all time in a word the *Ideas* that are the immediate and adequate objectivity of the thing-in-itself, of the will?" asks Schopenhauer. "It is *art*, the work of genius".

Objects, according to Schopenhauer's view, occur in levels of complexity: first the natural forces of nature, then, moving upwards, through rocks, plants, animals and ultimately man. The world, asserts Schopenhauer with characteristic pessimism, is a place which maintains itself through "a chain of torturing deaths" and where creatures devour each other for the sake of the survival of the species. "The capacity to feel pain increases with knowledge, and therefore reaches its highest degree in man, a degree is the higher, the more intelligent the man" (Peter Franklin, 1985: 5). The idea of the nobility of suffering which was to occupy Schoenberg's thinking in his later years was no doubt a reflection of Schopenhauerian thought, though of course this notion has an intrinsically Christian basis.

GUSTAV MAHLER

A hierarchical view of the world is also clearly reflected in Mahler's intended plan for his 3rd Symphony. The plan was drawn up in 1895 at least twenty years before Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter*. The title which first suggested itself to Mahler was borrowed from Nietzsche's *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* and the movements as they were initially conceived (though later changed and finally discarded) were to represent "stages of being". (Derryck Cooke 1980: 62).

In a letter to Natalie Bauer-Lechner Mahler speaks of the various movements of this work. The original titles provide a vivid indication of Mahler's intentions. They are as follows:

- I Pan awakens; Summer marches in
- II What the meadow flowers tell me
- III What the creatures of the forest tell me
- IV What the night tells me
- V What the morning bells tell me

VI What love tells me

Of the 6th movement Mahler wrote to his friend and confidante Anna von Mildenburg "I could almost call the movement 'what God tells me'. And truly in the sense that God can only be understood as love."

A striking difference between Mahler's 3rd Symphony and Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter* lies in the approach to the concept of the ascent. For Mahler the upward progression is cosmic, involving all of nature; the higher the level the more sublime. The concept perhaps owes something to Kant and Schopenhauer but is in the main of a religious nature--indeed it is in a sense reminiscent of the stages of Creation. However the religious connotations are clearly of a pantheistic kind. For Schoenberg on the other hand, the ascent up the ladder relates to the human being or rather to the soul of the human being and more especially to its struggle towards transcendence. The more spiritual the soul the higher the level on the ladder--an image strikingly close to Schopenhauer's view. The search is for God and the purpose is for communication with God--"learning to pray". The work manifests none of the rather uncharacteristic optimism of Mahler's 3rd Symphony, nor a preoccupation with the afterlife which Mahler exhibits in many of his other works, but rather an examination of the ethical level of the soul after it has left the body.

However despite the differences between Mahler's 3rd Symphony and *Die Jakobsleiter* that part of Mahler's idea which concerns itself with an ascending hierarchy is repeated in Schoenberg's oratorio. It is likely that the emulation was deliberate. Schoenberg shows his familiarity with the work in a letter written to Mahler on 20th December 1909 (Letters: No. 262) that is some six years before *Die Jakobsleiter*. "...for this impression, that of the Seventh and previously that of the third:" he writes to Mahler "these are *lasting* impressions." There is moreover a further pointer to the possibility that Mahler's influence was one of the inspirational sources for *Die Jakobsleiter*. Natalie Bauer-Lechner writes in her diary in September/October 1896: "...when Mahler's thoughts were roving farther afield to the creative impulse in general, he said, 'A magnificent symbol of the creator is Jacob wrestling with God until he blesses him. If the Jews had been responsible for nothing but this image, they would still inevitably have grown to be a formidable people--God similarly withholds his blessing from me. I can only extort it from Him in my terrible struggles to bring my works into being.'" Egon Wellesz tells of an incident which

corroborates Bauer-Lechner's reminiscences: Wellesz was present at a rehearsal at which Mahler was conducting his own 2nd Symphony. After the *Urlicht* he told the orchestra with unusual solemnity that the symphony symbolized Jacob's struggle with the angel (Wellesz, 1965: first page).

Significantly, the original title for the grand symphony which Schoenberg had intended to write was in fact "Jacob Wrestling." One can only speculate as to why it was that the image of Jacob wrestling should have been an appealing one to Schoenberg and Mahler.¹⁹ It is possible that for the artist coming from symbolist-infused Vienna the idea of a victorious encounter with a strange force was reflective of his own position as a struggling artist who would ultimately succeed. The lonely struggle of biblical Jacob would appeal to the Romantic artist "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day" (Genesis XXXII:25). Moreover for the once-Jewish Mahler and Schoenberg, the anthropomorphic vision ("I have seen God face to face" XXXII:31) reminiscent of Christ though not Christ provides a comfortable alternative to the purely Christian image.

Eli Wiesel the contemporary Jewish writer and teacher, suggests a modern interpretation of the biblical episode. The adversary is Jacob's other self, the confrontation is between Jacob the fugitive and Jacob the dreamer. A few hours before meeting his estranged brother Esau, Jacob is filled with doubts about his own capability. Alone and at night he wrestles with his fears and finally vanquishes the mysterious adversary. "Man's true victory" says Wiesel the holocaust survivor, "is the one he achieves over himself" (1976: 124).²⁰ Schoenberg may have harboured a similar notion..

Schoenberg, in his 1912 letter to Dehmelt sets out the sequence of his thinking as regards libretto for *Die Jakobsleiter*. His original idea was to write the words for *Die Jakobsleiter* himself. Then, he explains, he thought of adapting Strindberg's *Jacob Wrestling* and later, when he decided to invest the work with "positive religious belief", he turned to Balzac's *Seraphita*. The implication is that the Strindberg work was not in keeping with his idea of positive religious belief but that *Seraphita* was. But all the while he could not "shake off the idea of 'Modern Man's Prayer'" and it was then that he decided to enlist Dehmelt's help. The issue which Schoenberg stressed was, as he wrote in the Dehmelt letter, that "those who wrestle with God in the Bible also

express themselves as men of their own time.” Ultimately, as we now know, Schoenberg returned to his original idea--to write the libretto himself. However the sources which he rejected throw added light on his thinking.

AUGUST STRINDBERG

Strindberg's popularity in Germany and Austria especially in the second decade of the twentieth century is well documented. It is estimated that between 1913-15 twenty four Strindberg plays received one thousand and thirty five performances in sixty two cities (J.M. Christensen, 1979: 9). Elias Canetti in *The Tongue Set Free* (the first part of his autobiographical trilogy) describes the intense interest with which his mother read Strindberg's plays.²¹ Schoenberg and members of his circle, especially Berg, make frequent mention of the dramatist. Stuckenschmidt reports that in 1913 Schoenberg had twenty eight Strindberg's works in his library (1977: 183). In an unpublished letter written to Jake Johnson in Sweden dated 30 June 1951 Schoenberg wrote that he had read all the Strindberg works which had been translated into German many times and “this has made me one of his greatest adherents” (John Crawford, 1974:583 n5).

There is little doubt that the most specific and most overtly acknowledged inspiration for Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter* comes from Strindberg and from Balzac's *Seraphita*. Strindberg it would seem was no less drawn to *Seraphita* than Schoenberg. Stuckenschmidt describes how on Palm Sunday in 1896 Strindberg found a copy of Balzac's *Seraphita* and how from that time on he came to be preoccupied with the work (1977: 234). In September of that year Strindberg read an edition of Swedenborg, (whose influence on Balzac is prominently proclaimed in *Seraphita*) and this confirmed his interest. The following year 1897, inspired by Eugène Delacroix' picture of *Jacob wrestling with the Angel*, he wrote the fragment *Wrestling Jacob* (also translated as *Jacob Wrestles*), for his collection *Legends*. Schoenberg's interest in Swedenborg was probably stimulated indirectly through Strindberg and Balzac; clearly the line which runs from Swedenborg to Balzac to Strindberg to Schoenberg is strong indeed and moves from one to the other with remarkable fluidity.²²

Strindberg wrote *Wrestling Jacob* while sojourning in Paris in 1897-1898. It tells of his religious struggle during this time and is a curious blend of allegory and autobiography. Clearly the image of Jacob's struggle with an opponent whom he names the Unknown, lies at the foundation of the

work.²³ Isolated and alone and the victim of a series of persecutions, some of which would appear to be perceived rather than real, Strindberg struggles with his earthly torments. He turns towards Catholicism but his religious ardour continuously vacillates and indeed even the Delacroix picture of Jacob wrestling with the angel arouses irreligious ideas in him. Equating himself with Job he reasons, questions, demands explanations and at times receives a measure of comfort. In a note at the end of the work, however he writes that the author has attempted to give a symbolic description of a religious struggle which, "like all religious crises, has ended in a chaos."

One could easily imagine why Schoenberg identified so personally with Strindberg's religious questioning. The artist's anguish in his search for religious meaning was a familiar one to him. But for the all-or-nothing Schoenberg personality, Strindberg's doubts were too manifold and too unresolved. For Schoenberg, as for Balzac, a commitment to prayer seemed an appropriate answer to the problem and this is absent in the Strindberg work. It is surely the prominence of the act of prayer which makes *Seraphita* a suitable model for Schoenberg's oratorio.

SERAPHITA

Balzac's *Seraphita*, written between 1833 and 1835, is considered to be one of the important occult novels of Western literature. Written in an altogether more devout vein than the Strindberg work, it tells of the purity and faith of the androgynous creature Seraphitus-Seraphita who suffers profound pain with super-human resignation, and finally is rewarded with union with God-- "The worlds heard him and acknowledged him; he became one with them as God is, and took possession of the infinite" (p.176).²⁴

Swedenborgian philosophy permeates the novel and is inextricably intertwined with the fabric of the work. The novel *Seraphita* had interested Schoenberg for at least four months before his letter to Dehmel of 12th December 1912. In a letter to Kandinsky, who was frequently the recipient of Schoenberg's most intimate thoughts, dated 19 August 1912 Schoenberg writes:

...remarkable for me as a preparatory study for another work, which I now wish to begin: Balzac's *Seraphita*. Do you know it? Perhaps the most glorious work in existence...Not so much as theater, at least not in the old sense. In any case, not 'dramatic'. But rather: oratorio that becomes visible and audible. Philosophy, religion that are perceived with the artistic sense. (Hahl-Koch: 1984, 54)

It is known from the Webern-Berg correspondence that Schoenberg had occupied himself in the summer of 1912 with plans for a highly ambitious stage presentation to be spread over three performances, of a work based on Balzac's *Seraphita*. Later he changed his idea of a stage work to that of a symphony, but apparently abandoned the idea (Bailey, 1984: 81-82).

Ultimately, although Schoenberg adapted neither the Strindberg nor the Balzac works in their entirety, elements of both are present: the anguished struggle of Strindberg, the faith in prayer of Balzac. In addition the work contains important elements of Swedenborgian thinking. While it is ultimately the ladder which is the binding image and the title for the work, the idea of wrestling with an unknown adversary is ever present. The Jacob's ladder holds, in addition to the image of angels ascending and descending, the promise of lineage "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said: I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed" (Genesis XXVIII:12, 13) and furthermore the reassurance "And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee back into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Genesis XXVIII:15). When Schoenberg wrote to Kandinsky in 1922 he felt quite sure of the source to which he owed his strength "Even though without any organisational fetters--religion. This was my one and only support during those years--here let this be said for the first time" (Letters: No. 42)

KANDINSKY AND THEOSOPHY

Mystic influences made themselves felt in many and varied shapes in late-Romantic Europe. It was noted in Chapter I that as a reaction to materialism and in a culture in which organised religion was declining, artists displayed a tendency towards interest in psychic phenomena, and in the occult and the mystical. Schoenberg, struggling on many fronts, proved to be a susceptible subject to some of the prevailing movements, among them Theosophy.

Theosophy as practised in the late 19th and early 20th century was founded in New York in 1875 by Russian born Helena Blavatsky in conjunction with Henry Olcott. Proponents of Theosophy believe in an eternal truth which can only be perceived by the initiated through esoteric practises

involving meditation and often accompanied by occult phenomena. It is in this way that entry into the inner being of man and nature may become possible. Rudolf Steiner an Austrian born follower of the movement, later broke away to form a doctrine which he called Anthroposophy, the science of the spirit. His theories on education (the Waldorf/Steiner schools) and medicine have had a strong following. Swedenborg may be seen to be a forerunner of Theosophical doctrine.

Wörner suggests that Schoenberg may have used Steiner's mystery plays as inspiration for *Jakobsleiter*. This may be so. However, there is no direct evidence that Schoenberg was influenced by Mme. Blavatsky of the Theosophical Society as Kandinsky was, nor by Rudolph Steiner's Theosophy, nor have any records of works by Mme Blavatsky or Steiner been found in Schoenberg's library.²⁵ Indeed, it would appear that Schoenberg viewed at least some Theosophist ideas with a certain amount of skepticism as may be deduced from a paragraph which he wrote at the end of the final copy of *Die Jakobsleiter* (Christenese, 1997: 55):

It seems that the Theosophists don't like this ending [final prayer]. But they overlook the fact that this work was written only because of the end. That was my starting point. I only want to show that: beginning in grave doubt, becoming more and more confident, elevated(!), having a presentiment of a higher worship. What they want is not clear to me. I have started with God! They don't appear to have done that; but I don't know what they believe, only what I believe.

Perhaps what they believe is correct? But I can't represent that, but only what I believe.

This revelation of Schoenberg's God-centered intention is so direct and so powerful that one is inclined to dismiss all ideas of Theosophical orientation in the work. This would be a mistake for *Die Jakobsleiter* reflects ideas remarkably close to Kandinsky's Theosophical thinking.

Ringbom in *The Sounding Cosmos* provides abundant evidence to show that Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) though not officially a member of the Theosophic Society, had deep knowledge of Theosophic doctrine and espoused theories which are a direct reflection of Theosophic thinking. Schoenberg met Kandinsky in about 1909 (the exact date appears to be unknown). Hahl Koch points to a remarkable parallel between the development of artist and musician: Kandinsky's *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* was published in the same year as Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre*; Kandinsky's "anarchistic period" coincided with Schoenberg's atonal period; Kandinsky's concept of 'inner necessity' correspond closely with Schoenberg's "inner compulsion" and many more

such points of contact. Perhaps the most important point of similarity lies in the spiritual meaning which both creators invest in art. When a viewer is able to see the inner spirit of a painting, claims Kandinsky, he will be able to appreciate absolute art. Realism in art for Kandinsky came to be equated with the material. The aim of the artist is to express true inner feeling devoid of superfluity (Ringbom, 1970: 177). This is remarkably close to Schoenberg's concept of music which he too felt should reflect inner meaning. Kandinsky's aims link naturally to Schoenberg's notions of the prohibition of representation and the denial of the use of ornament. Dissonance in a sense corresponds to abstract art, weakening of melodic emphasis may be likened to loss of realism in art. Kandinsky from his side aimed to make painting as independent of nature as was music. The relationship, while it lasted, was clearly an extremely close one--they shared similar ideas and significantly, it was to Kandinsky that Schoenberg wrote his most intimate thoughts and to Kandinsky that Schoenberg wrote in 1922, a letter which has come to be a manifesto of Schoenberg's response to anti-Semitism (see below). The break-up between the two came, significantly, on the issue of Schoenberg's suspicion of Kandinsky's involvement in a situation which had antisemitic overtones.²⁶

Kandinsky's fascination with the relationship between Art and Music, is reflected in his use of musical images to describe typically theosophist ideas. He writes in *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* "The sound of colours is so definite that it would be hard to find anyone who would try to express yellow in the bass notes, or dark lake in the treble" (1977: 25). Or again "to harmonize the whole is the task of art" (1977: 3) and "Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand which plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul" (1977: 25). The above Kandinsky quotations are clearly comparable to Gabriel's utterance in *Die Jakobsleiter* (Line 197): "one who resembles One far higher, as the distant overtone the fundamental; while others, deeper, almost fundamental themselves, are further removed from Him, as bright rock crystal is further from diamond than carbon."

The Kandinsky image which corresponds most closely to Schoenberg's ladder is found in the

former's concept of the triangle which in turn corresponds to the theosophical doctrine of "the seven planes of nature" as visualised by Steiner, Leadbeater and Besant. According to Theosophical thinking, the lowest of these planes consists of the coarsest and most dense matter, the two highest contain matter so fine that not even Theosophists have knowledge of them except to know of their existence. Each successive plane is of a more delicate hue, proceeding according to "higher octaves of colour" (Ringbom, 1970: 80). Kandinsky's acute-angled triangle, represents the structure of spiritual life to which art belongs. It moves forwards and upwards and at the apex stands only one man (like Beethoven) though artists occur in every segment. The one who can see beyond the segment is a prophet to the others (Kandinsky 1977: 7).

THE PROPOSED PROGRAM SYMPHONY

Around 1912-1914 Schoenberg occupied himself with a plan for a large program symphony for soloists, mixed chorus and orchestra. Conceived on a grand scale, and closely linked to programmatic notions of post-romanticism it shares something with Mahler's texted symphonies, especially with the philosophically based Nos. 2 and 8 and with No. 3 discussed above in which the composer represents the progression of earthly creation from earthbound to spiritual.

The proposed layout of the work reveals Schoenberg at a transitional stage as he looks back to the past and forward to the future--*Rückschau, Blick in die Zukunft* (Bailey, 1984: 85). The central movements are concerned with the attractions of the earthly world. A number of movements of the symphony were to be based on texts which were taken from various sources: Dehmel's *Schöne wilde Welt*, Tagore's *Gitanjali*, and various Biblical verses.²⁷ For the libretto of what was at one stage to be the third movement of the symphony, Schoenberg wrote the text which he entitled *Totentanz der Prinzipien* (Death-dance of Principles).²⁸ It is clear from his own texts, as well as from his choice of texts written by others that he was deeply preoccupied with spiritual matters at this time and that the work, although never completed, served a cathartic purpose—"I must write this music! For this is something I have to say" he wrote to Dehmel (Letters, No.11). Equally clear is the fact that Schoenberg's religious thinking was in no way bound to one particular doctrine. Theosophy, Anthroposophy reincarnation, Swedenborgian

mysticism, Christianity, Symbolism, post Romantic attitudes to art and religion--all are present at different points and are coloured by Schoenberg's own religious/philosophical ideas. Strindberg wrote at the beginning of *Legends*, (the work of which *Jacob Wrestles* forms a part): "I split myself in two...my inner self preserves the seeds of a creedless religion". There is in this work a marked interest in prayer and an overall sense of profound religious contemplation, albeit of a "creedless", nature. It would appear that Schoenberg's belief at the time was that true religious faith lies beyond the dogma of a conventional religious group--nothing could be more Swedenborgian.

Berthold Viertel once observed: "*Die Jakobsleiter* looks like the catechism of a new religion. Of Schoenberg's religion" (Armitage, 1937: 165). Schoenberg, it will be remembered, was brought up in a home in which a firm tradition of religious observance was absent (see Chapter I). Although there may well have been an element of religious faith in the home, there would appear to have been no childhood memory of either Jewish or Christian organised religious practise on which to draw. Furthermore there is no evidence that his affiliation to Lutheranism was accompanied by a strong commitment to organised worship. In his search for spiritual meaning in the face of acute anguish, and in the absence of an already existing structure, Schoenberg in a sense "invented" his own religion. But there can be no doubting the deeply religious sensibility of the work. Its very *raison d'être* was to teach modern man to pray.

In the musical sense, *Die Jakobsleiter* was for Schoenberg, ever the autodidact, the summation and expansion of all that he himself had done before: his experimental advances into Expressionism, atonality and an embryonic form of serialism all find a place in *Die Jakobsleiter*. The compositional techniques are entirely individual reflecting little influence from the important musical figures around him such as Debussy, Stravinsky, Hindemith--nor even Wagner whom he had once so admired. However the same is not true as far as philosophical-theological issues are concerned. In composing the text for *Die Jakobsleiter* Schoenberg groped for models in many directions, and indeed found and used material from a large number of sources.

IMAGES IN *DIE JAKOBSLEITER* ²⁹

The Ladder

The symbol of the ladder as a bond between heaven and earth is an ancient one. Apart from the biblical narrative of Jacob's dream to which Schoenberg's title makes reference, the idea is to be found in ancient Islamic literature where the story known as the *mi'raj* tells of Muhammad's ascension to the seventh heaven by means of a beautiful ladder.³⁰ Arthur Lovejoy (1960) provides a wide perspective of the idea of the ladder of spiritual ascent, a notion which was to occupy Western thought for a considerable period. Mahler's 3rd symphony discussed above is a reflection of this idea.

Schoenberg as we have noted, was initially strongly attracted by the story of Jacob Wrestling. However, after much thought and correspondence with Dehmelt it was not the aspect of Jacob wrestling which Schoenberg chose as the title of his work but rather the ladder-image in the dream which, according to the biblical sequence, occurred before the wrestling. The story of Jacob's dream (Genesis XXVIII) has both allegorical and prophetic meanings; these and the image of the ladder itself lent themselves admirably to his religious/ethical requirements of the time. But perhaps it was also the promise of unshakable solidarity of the Lord with Jacob which attracted Schoenberg.

It is possible too that the source for the title of Schoenberg's oratorio was influenced by a descriptive passage in Balzac's *Seraphita*. The extract from Chapter 5 of *Seraphita* conveys admirably the striving upwards which we have encountered so frequently in Romantic aesthetics and with which Schoenberg was deeply concerned:

Man never ceases to move, to go on, to grow as a vegetable grows, till the day when the axe falls. If this floodlike force, this mounting pressure of bitter waters, hinders all progress, it also no doubt, is a warning of death. None but the loftier spirits open to faith can discern Jacob's mystical stair.³¹

Angels

The figure of the Angel abounds in Symbolist writing. Rilke, George, Strindberg and Balzac all write of angels. Walter Benjamin's preoccupation with angels is described by Gershom Scholem

in his essay *Walter Benjamin and his Angel* (Scholem, 1978: 198-236). Particularly prominent in German romantic literature are the archangels.³² In Biblical sources angels appear in both the New and Old Testaments. The angel Gabriel is the messenger who appears in Daniel's vision in the apocryphal Book of Daniel, in the New Testament Gabriel is the bearer of the news of the birth of John the Baptist and of Jesus (Luke I:19,26).

In the *Prologue in Heaven* in Goethe's *Faust* (which shows clear similarities to the Prologue from Job Chapter I-II) the three archangels Raphael Gabriel and Michael represent the Heavenly Hosts.

Father Uriel symbolically blind, appears in Strindberg's *Road to Damascus III*. In *Die Jakobsleiter*, Gabriel is given so to speak the lead role. The function of the angels in Balzac's *Seraphita* corresponds strikingly to Schoenberg's Gabriel: "On, on! Often in a celestial vision the angels descend and wrap you in song. Then you must see them soar back to the hive without a tear, without a murmur. To murmur would be to fail". (*Seraphita*, 165). "You must go on. Do not ask what lies in front or behind" says Schoenberg's Gabriel. It will be seen later that these same works *Faust*, *Road to Damascus* and *Seraphita* were linked in Schoenberg's mind for another reason—they, like *Die Jakobsleiter* renounce the unity of space and time.

Significant as a possible model for *Die Jakobsleiter* though one which has been overlooked, is Haydn's *Creation* first performed in 1798. The oratorio is set in heaven, the first scene is entitled "The Representation of the Chaos", important parts are taken by the archangels Raphael, Uriel and Gabriel—the similarities to the opening of Schoenberg's oratorio (and to the literary works discussed above) are obvious. Schoenberg's admiration for the classical masters is well-known and it is conceivable and in accordance with his nature that he should have elected to build a progressive work on a traditional classical model.

DIE JAKOBSLEITER AND "THE UNITY OF MUSICAL SPACE"

At about the same time that Schoenberg was creating his own eclectic religious meditations, that is around 1914, another "invention" was beginning to occupy him and this had to do with tonality. In a quite remarkable fashion, this new musical idea seems to have found its place alongside his religious contemplations. *Die Jakobsleiter* was at one point, planned to be the last movement of the large Symphony mentioned above, while the second movement was to be a Scherzo. It is of this Symphony and its proposed Scherzo that Schoenberg, in an oft-quoted letter to Nicolas

Slonimsky written on 3rd June 1937, wrote:

The method of composing with twelve tones had many 'first steps'. The first step happened about December 1914 or at the beginning of 1915, when I sketched a symphony, the last part of which later became *Jacob's ladder*, but which has never been continued. The Scherzo of this symphony was based on a theme which consisted of twelve tones.³³

The incipient tone row and the quasi-religious ideas running through the symphony, thus became linked together in the same work. Neither the symphony nor the oratorio were destined for completion but remained locked as it were in Schoenberg's 1914 self, the essence to be used at a later stage. For the moment however, the religious and the musical, were left to ferment side by side.³⁴

Swedenborgian doctrine of *correspondance* and its reverberations through late Romantic arts has been discussed above. The impact of Swedenborg's work on Schoenberg himself, particularly through Balzac's *Seraphita* was considerable. Swedenborg's claim to the privilege of direct communication with angels is reflected in some of the titles of his books, for example *Heaven and its Wonders and Hell: From Things Heard and Seen*. In this work he describes the condition of angels in heaven in great detail--their dwelling places, their clothing, their "Societies", their employment, and, of crucial importance to this study, their concept of time and space of which he says:

Although all things in heaven have their successions and progressions as in the world, still the angels have no notion or idea of time and space, and so completely destitute are they of such idea that they do not even know what time and space are.³⁵

The concept of time and space is so central to Schoenberg's formulation of the dodecaphonic system that it merits deeper investigation.

In 1941 in his essay *Composition with Twelve Tones*, that is after serialism had been a technique which had been publically proclaimed almost twenty years earlier, Schoenberg still looked back to its origins in Swedenborg's heaven: "*The unity of musical space demands an absolute unitary perception*. In this space, as in Swedenborg's heaven (described in Balzac's *Seraphita*) there is no absolute down, no right or left, forward or backward." Schoenberg links this statement to a previous one in the same essay in which he refers to a law which he had formulated (the upper-case

letters appear in the original): "THE TWO-OR-MORE-DIMENSIONAL SPACE IN WHICH MUSICAL IDEAS ARE PRESENTED IS A UNIT." He then goes on to make the link to the twelve tone set more explicit: "The elements of a musical idea are partly incorporated in the horizontal plane as successive sounds, and partly in the vertical plane as simultaneous sounds..And this explains why...a basic set of twelve tones can be used in either dimension, as a whole or in parts" (S&I: 220).

Schoenberg, in the same essay, takes great pains to draw the parallel between our (that is ordinary human) perception of material space and space as perceived by a "creator":

To the imaginative mind and creative faculty, relations in the material sphere are as independent from directions or planes as material objects are, in their sphere, to our perceptive faculties. Just as our mind always recognizes, for instance, a knife, a bottle or a watch, regardless of its position, and can reproduce it in the imagination in every possible position, even so a musical creator's mind can operate subconsciously with a row of tones, regardless of their direction, regardless of the way in which a mirror might show mutual relation, which remain a given quality(S&I :223)³⁶

Schoenberg had already incorporated the concept into the opening bars of *Die Jakobsleiter*, both in the text and the music. Gabriel's opening declamation, "Whether to right or left, forward or back, uphill or down, one must go on...", is reflected in the music by a row the first six notes of which move horizontally --C# D F E G# G. The next six notes occur vertically in a chord, C E b B B b F# A.. The two dimensions are presented as if a "unitary perception" and the two together, significantly, form a 12 note row in which all the notes of the chromatic scale are used. (see example Example 1 in Chapter II). From this point it was but a short step towards the flash of creative insight (which of course derived from earlier contrapuntal techniques) that led Schoenberg to expand the idea to include transposition, retrograde and inverse movement.

Arnold Schoenberg's Twelve Tone Law "emerged" from heaven as described by Swedenborg, which was reflected by Balzac in *Seraphita* and was taken up by Schoenberg in his works of around 1915.

In his 1940 essay *Art and the Moving Pictures*, Schoenberg writes of his early hopes for the art

of movie making and of his bitter disappointment at the poor standard of what had in fact been produced: "I had dreamed of a dramatization of Balzac's *Seraphita*, or Strindberg's *To Damascus*, or the second part of Goethe's *Faust*, or even Wagner's *Parsifal*.. All of these works, by renouncing the law of 'unity of space and time' would have found the solution to realization in sound pictures" (S&I :154). An examination of these works which "renounce the law of 'unity of space and time'" shed important light on *Die Jakobsleiter* and show them to be curiously interlinked not only with each other but also with *Die Jakobsleiter*.

Despite the concerns with modernity all four of the dramatic works mentioned by Schoenberg above are set in the form of the medieval play while the novel *Seraphita* is an occult mystic novel. All in the Schoenbergian sense "renounce the law of unity of space and time": the dramas vacillate between a no-place in heaven and earth; the time is a no-time. Gurnemanz articulates the thought explicitly when he says to *Parsifal* towards the end of Act I, "You see my son, time changes here to space". In the last chapter of *Seraphita* Balzac writes "But the Spirit was in the infinite, and they did not know that in the infinite time and space are not...they were divided from him by gulfs though apparently so near"(p.169).

It should be noted however that Schoenberg's idea of the renunciation of space and time as he puts it, differs from the above mentioned works, and especially from *Parsifal* in an important sense. Whereas the concept of time in *Parsifal* is slowed down to a point where time becomes space, Schoenberg's idea of time is to move on--*man hat weiterzugehen, ohne zu fragen, was vor oder hinter einem liegt*. The injunction to "go on", to move up the ladder irrespective of the hardships encountered, is, in the opening bars of *Die Jakobsleiter*, linked to the Law of the Row. The spiritual-ethical injunction announced by the archangel Gabriel corresponds to Schoenberg's early announcement of a musical-ethical injunction as regards the Tone Row and both have to go on. The act of composition of the music which accompanies this injunction is in a sense Schoenberg's ascent up the ladder and occurs in time.

Strindberg, in his own preface to his *Dream Play*, describes a setting which is as true for *To Damascus* as it is for the other works here under discussion and he too speaks about the

renunciation of time and space. In addition he invests his drama with qualities of which dreams are made.

In this dream play the author has, as in his former dream play, *To Damascus*, attempted to imitate the inconsequent transparently logical shape of a dream. Everything can happen, everything is possible and probable. Time and space do not exist; on an insignificant basis of reality the imagination spins, weaving new patterns; a mixture of memories, experiences, free fancies, incongruities and improvisations. The characters split, double, multiply, evaporate, condense, disperse, assemble.³⁷

The idea of the multiple personality abound in all these works, a practise which is reminiscent of the mask plays in medieval theatre. Kundry, the wild woman in *Parsifal* is also the seductress who operates on a different plane, Seraphita the androgynous daughter becomes an angel, The Fool and The Beggar in *To Damascus* are reflections of fears within Strindberg himself, Gretchen is Margaret, is Mary Magdalene. Similar traits are reflected in *Die Jakobsleiter*. Like the dramas discussed above, it is set as a medieval morality play.³⁸ The issue of time and space is confronted by Schoenberg at the outset, textually as well as musically--time and space are one. The souls which float in and out of the diaphanous ambience which is never named, are in all probability aspects of Schoenberg himself: reflections on what he might have been (a doubter), fears of what he may become (indifferent), his perceptions of what he is (the chosen one). The very title of Schoenberg's work, deriving as it does from Jacob's Dream, suggests a dream-state.

Remarkable in all the works enumerated by Schoenberg is the centrality of the theme of suffering. In this they bear a likeness to each other and to *Die Jakobsleiter*. It is not however suffering per se that is the main issue but rather suffering which is accompanied by striving for progress and for spiritual improvement. Suffering becomes a prerequisite for salvation which can only be achieved by passing through the various stations of human anguish.³⁹ Wilfrid asks *Seraphita* "Then you were in pain again yesterday?" Seraphita replies "That is nothing. Such pain makes me glad; it is indispensable to escape from life" (p.108). In similar vein The Stranger, the main protagonist in the trilogy, *To Damascus* moves through countless vicissitudes, each one a new experience in the struggle. In the second Act of Part I the Lady tells the Stranger that she is not ready to die "I feel I still have something to do here. I may not have suffered sufficiently yet" (Act II, SC1, 164).

As the title *To Damascus* suggests a parallel is drawn with the biblical Paul and his journey to

Damascus. Conversion to faith is an important theme: the Stranger's periods of spiritual blindness fluctuate with moments of illumination but it is really suffering which makes conversion possible. Parsifal's search for the holy Grail is fraught with pain and with agony. Faust's suffering is of special significance. His salvation is reached through the reconciliation with *das ewig-weibliche*. This is reflected in all the other dramatic works: Parsifal's redemption comes through Kundry, Strindberg's *The Stranger* receives help through the Lady who he sometimes calls Eve, the masculine feminine Seraphita (or animus-anima in Jungian terms) becomes one with the infinite. Schoenberg reflects the idea at the end of *Die Jakobsleiter* where the image of the high soprano voice named *Die Seele*, soars wordlessly towards transcendence.

Mahler's thinking which is reflected in his choice of text for his Eighth Symphony also follows the Faustian pattern. The large scale symphony which he composed in 1906, is a work which Mahler himself considered to be his greatest. Donald Mitchell points out the special significance of Mahler's decision to juxtapose the hymn *Veni creator spiritus* with text from the final scene from Faust, and especially the culminating chorus mysticus *Alles Vergängliche*. The opening hymn to the creative spirit and the culminating hymn to the ever womanly have a place in the same work; Eros is the source of creative energy, the generative power. Clearly Schoenberg associated Mahler's creative genius with a mystery with which he himself identifies. In the "Gustav Mahler" essay Schoenberg writes "It seems as if something might be imparted to us in the Tenth [Mahler's Tenth Symphony] which we ought not yet to know, for which we are not ready" (S&I: 270)

Schoenberg's attachment to the Faustian image is made explicit in *Theory of Harmony*. In one of the many asides in that work he writes:

... I do believe in the new; I believe it is that *Good* and that *Beauty* toward which we strive with our innermost being, just as involuntarily and persistently as we strive towards the *future*. There must be somewhere in our future a *magnificent fulfilment* as yet hidden from us, since all our striving forever pins its hopes on it. Perhaps that future is an advanced stage in the development of our species, at which that yearning will be fulfilled which today gives us no peace. Perhaps it is just death; but perhaps it is also the certainty of a higher life after death. The future brings the new, and that is why we so often and so justifiably identify the new with the beautiful and the good. (HL: 239)

Transcendental space then is the point from whence Schoenberg's new ideas on tonality emanate and new art is the point towards which art strives. Progress and the future of art move inexorably

towards infinity, in a time and space beyond "our" time and space.

Inherent and common to all the works mentioned above-- Mahler's 8th Symphony, *Faust*, *Seraphita*, *To Damascus*, as well as *Die Jakobsleiter*, is the deeply Christian message of salvation. Humans, since the fall of Adam are sinful, they suffer as a consequence and they are redeemed through a spirit which is outside the physical sphere. In all of the works discussed above, salvation comes not directly through Christ but through a non-specific spirit somehow related to the intuitive and artistic--or to put it in Goethe's terms, through the eternally feminine. This is the image which was sharply etched on the mind of the German-speaking creative artist around the end of the nineteenth century.

The goal to which all the souls aspire is perhaps best conveyed by a passage towards the end of *Seraphita* during which Seraphita/Seraphitus achieves sublime transcendence(436)

"The Spirit knocked at the sacred gate.

'What wilt thou?' asked a choir, whose voice rang through all the worlds. 'To go to God'
'Hast thou conquered?'

'I have conquered the flesh by abstinence; I have vanquished false speech by silence; I have vanquished false knowledge by humility; I have vanquished pride by charity; I have vanquished the earth by love; I have paid my tribute of suffering; I am purified by burning for the faith; I have striven for life by prayer; I wait adoring, and I am resigned'.

At first the Spirit thinks it has been rejected but then "On a sudden, the trumpets sounded for the victory of the angel in the last test; their music filled space, like a sound met by an echo."

For Schoenberg Seraphita's line "I have striven for life by prayer" was of extreme importance. This will be discussed more fully in the following chapters but it is clear even at this stage, that his idea of prayer was an extremely individual one and that neither Dehmel's notions nor any of the other writers whose work Schoenberg had considered, exactly matched his own. The role of prayer was to become increasingly important as time went by.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. The extract is quoted in W. Reich 1971:36.
2. The letter to Ludwig Karpath which appeared in *Die Fackel* Nos. 272-273 February 1909, is discussed in Bauer 1986: 35.
3. Mathilde (Schoenberg's first wife) had become involved in a romantic liaison with the artist Richard Gerstl. She left Schoenberg and the two children to live with Gerstl for some weeks but was persuaded (probably by Webern) to return. Some time later Gerstl committed suicide in his studio.
4. Detailed information about Schoenberg's application for a post at the Vienna Academy is to be found in Bauer, 1986: 38 and Reich, 1971: 58-61.
5. In 1939 Schoenberg wrote lyrics to the well-known "Wien Wien nur du allein". Botstein (in Wistrich, 1992: 164) quotes from these: "you deserve to be despised by all... you will never be free from guilt... you have been branded for eternity for falsity and hypocrisy."
6. Ringbom, *The Sounding Cosmos*, 1970, 23
7. Biblical extracts from *The New Open Bible* King James Version, 1990.
8. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1722) born in Sweden was in his early years a scientist of considerable note. In 1744 he claimed to have first vision of Christ and soon after that he decided to occupy himself wholly with religious matters. He explains evil through lurid descriptions of demonic creatures who live in societies as do the angels. Swedenborg's "doctrine of correspondences" has influenced many, among them Blake, Goethe, Balzac Yeats and Baudelaire whose famous poem *Correspondances* has come to be something of an icon for Symbolism.
9. In Swedenborg 1899, 50 -51. First published in Latin in 1758.
10. The term "supra-denominational" is used by Malcolm MacDonald in *Schoenberg* (1976) to describe Schoenberg's rather unspecific religious concerns at this time.
11. A discussion of Schoenberg's *Kriegswolkentagebuch* is to be found in Christensen J.M., 1979:pp. 44-47 and Paul A Pisk "War-Clouds Diary" in JASI Vol.IX, No1, 1986 pp.53-77.
12. *Die glückliche Hand* which was completed in 1913, had been started in 1908.
13. The society was founded in November 1918. Its function was to act as a platform for composers to have their compositions performed as well as affording invited audiences (usually pupils and friends) the opportunity to become familiar with the works. See Reich, 1971: Chapter 6 for a description of this important society.
14. See Schoenberg's own "An Analysis of Arnold Schoenberg's Four Orchestral Songs Op. 22" in the booklet to the set of records *The Music of Arnold Schoenberg* Vol. III,

Columbia M2S 709.

15. Yeats had founded the Rhymers Club in 1891--a meeting of poets who included Ernest Dowson, met in an upstairs room of *The Old Ceshire Cheese*, a pub in Fleet Street London.
16. Schopenhauer's most influential work is *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*.
17. From Janik and Toulmin's *Wittgenstein's Vienna* 1963, p. 154.
18. In Pamela White, 1984: 46-47.
19. The image also appealed to Strindberg who wrote an autobiographical work entitled *Jacob Wrestling*. Strindberg speaks in this work of the painter Delacroix whose depiction of Jacob wrestling with the angel so inspired Strindberg. The Delacroix picture is currently held at the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge Mass.
20. In an analysis of the passage the important 12th century biblical commentator Rashi gives an interpretation which is startlingly psychoanalytical in character. The Hebrew word וַיִּאָבֵק va-ye'vek, "wrestled" says Rashi, has nuances of twining, of knotting around one another, and of being tied together. The encounter was one of great intimacy. (Gottlieb Zornberg, 1995:234)
21. Elias Canetti writes of his mother: "She was kneeling on her chair, her elbows on the table, her head propped on her right fist, the tall stack of yellow Strindberg volumes in front of her.. At every birthday and Christmas, a volume was added; that was what she wanted from us." (*The Tongue Set Free*, New York: The Seabury Press , 1979)
22. The highly complex and volatile personality which was Strindberg did not always remain faithful to his love of Swedenborg. "I have abandoned Swedenborg's Christianity" he writes in *Wrestling Jacob* "because it was ugly, revengeful, petty slavish..." (Strindberg, 1912: 234). In the same work (p. 232) he writes " I do not like the way in which both Dante and Swedenborg send their enemies and friends to hell, while they themselves scale the heights."
23. The Unknown is also one of the protagonists in Strindberg's trilogy *Road to Damascus*.
24. It is at this time of ecstatic union that Seraphita is referred to as "he".
25. Wörner surveys the possible Steiner influences in his article *Musik zwischen Theologie und Weltanschauung* published in *Schweizerische Musikzeitung* (1965, Nos. 5/6). The suggestion is discussed in Ringbom, 1970: 226 and in Reich, 1971: 109.
26. In conversation with Alexander Goehr I was told that according to Mrs. Kandinsky her husband was devastated by Schoenberg's suspicion which he considered to be unfounded.
27. The Rabindranath Tagore poems from Gitanjali are Nos. 86, 88, 92 and 100. Stuckenschmidt comments on Schoenberg's note to the fifth movement, which reads "No.

100, I plunge into the sea” (1977:237). No. 100 says Stuckenschmidt “is a verse which comes neither in the hundredth psalm nor in any other one”. The verse in fact come from Gitanjali No. 100. This is one of the many examples of careless scholarship found in the Stuckenschmidt biography of Schoenberg, another is the frequently incorrectly paginated index entries. This Stuckenschmidt book is one of the few sources of biographical information, much of which is extremely valuable and certainly most extensive.

28. Along with the text of *Die Jakobsleiter*, the text of *Totentanz der Prinzipien* was published in 1926 by Universal edition. The volume included as well, the libretto of *Die glückliche Hand*, and *Requiem* written on the death of Mathilde Schoenberg. All were written by Schoenberg himself. The text of *Totentanz* as well as many of the other texts for Schoenberg's proposed symphony may be found in Bailey 1984.
29. I gratefully acknowledge information gained from Jean Christenesen's doctoral thesis (1979) and Alan Lessem (1979) throughout the present discussion of *Die Jakobsleiter*.
30. A. Altmann “The Ladder of Ascension” in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion* 1967 presented to Gershom G. Scholem pp.1-32.
31. *Seraphita* p.142. I am grateful to have this passage pointed out in Dika Newlin ,1994.
32. The four archangels of the Old Testament are Gabriel,Raphael, Michael and Uriel.
33. From Stuckenschmidt 1977:422. Stuckenschmidt says that Schoenberg was mistaken about the date. The 12-tone theme in question was written down on 27 May 1914.
34. According to a letter by Berg written to Erwin Stein the text of *Die Jakobsleiter* was read by the actor Wilhelm Klitsch in May 1921 at a matinée of the Society for Private Musical Performance (Reich 123). Schoenberg must clearly have regarded the text as an artistic work in its own right, suitable for performance independent of music. His supporters appeared to have approved of his decision. Webern wrote “The last speech of Gabriel is the solution of everything.”
35. Swedenborg, [1931] p.89.no.162.
36. The source of Gabriel's opening speech is often attributed erroneously to Balzac. It is in fact derived from Swedenborg as Schoenberg indicates in S&I: 223.
37. Evidence of Schoenberg's interest in the *Dream Play* is reflected in his letter to Berg dated 3 October 1912 Schoenberg, in which he warns “Just see that you don't take the *Dream Plays* away from me, for I'm considering them myself” (*The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, 1987: 117).
38. This would reinforce Karl Wörner's idea discussed in his article *Musik zwischen Theologie und Welatanschauung* (*Schweizerische Musikzeitung* 1965 Nos.5/6), namely that Schoenberg possibly received inspiration from Rudolph Steiner's mystery plays.
39. Hence the name “station-drama” used particularly in regard to *To Damascus*.

CHAPTER II

DIE JAKOBSLEITER¹

As early as the spring of 1911, that is even before the publication of *Pierrot Lunaire*, Schoenberg spoke to Berg about the possibility of setting Strindberg's *Jacob Wrestling* to music (Stuckenschmidt, 1977: 235). On 13th December 1912 Schoenberg wrote to Dehmelt requesting help with the libretto for his proposed oratorio and again mentions *Jacob Wrestling* as a starting point as well as *Seraphita*, "but" says Schoenberg, "I could never shake off the thought of 'modern Man's Prayer', and I often thought: If only Dehmelt..." (Letters: No. 11). The first draft of the text, written by Schoenberg, himself is dated 18th January 1915 (Rufer, 1962: 120). Eleven months later Schoenberg was called to the army and ten months after that, in October 1916 he was released. Interruptions notwithstanding, the complete text was ready by May 1917. It was at about this time that *Die Jakobsleiter* was probably came to be regarded by Schoenberg as an independent work, separated from the large symphony of which it was to have been a part.

In contrast to the speed and fluency with which the text for *Die Jakobsleiter* was written, the composition of the music did not flow so readily. In the three months 19th June to 19th September 1917, Schoenberg worked on and almost completed the music of Part I of *Die Jakobsleiter*. After this first flush of white-hot creative energy--he had in the three months composed up to m.603--he was called up again and wrote across the measure set to Gabriel's last words in Part I: "19.9.1917/ *einrücken zum Militär!*". He was finally discharged three months later. He worked on the music of *Die Jakobsleiter* in December of that year and again in 1918, 1921, 1922 and as late as 1944 but he was never able to gather up the thread sufficiently well to complete the music of his oratorio. Schoenberg and his family had moved back to Vienna from Berlin in September 1915, but it was not until April 1918, after a series of moves that the family settled in Mödling. Times were exceedingly difficult in wartime Vienna. Emperor Franz Josef died in November 1917, and the Habsburg empire stood on the verge of collapse leaving previously staunch supporters to face a crumbling edifice. Internationally too there were signs of turmoil: the United States had entered the war in April

1917 and the Russian revolution was staged in March of that same year. Food and fuel were in short supply and Schoenberg's finances were strained to the utmost.

In 1933 Schoenberg fled from Europe, first to Paris and then to America where he was to spend the rest of his life. From America, in a letter to Alma Mahler dated 23rd January 1936 (Stuckenschmidt, 1977: 412) he writes about the reasons why it would be important to him to receive a commission for a proposed film score "it would mean at last being able to finish in my lifetime at least those compositions and theoretical works that I have already begun, even if not beginning any more new things. And for that I should gladly have sacrificed my life and even my reputation". On 22nd January 1945, writing of *Die Jakobsleiter* and *Moses und Aron* he said: "my life task would be fulfilled only fragmentarily if I failed to complete at least those two largest of my musical ...works (Letters: No.200).

But it was not to be. In June 1951, shortly before his death, Schoenberg wrote to his former pupil Karl Rankl asking him to prepare the score of the work: "It seems likely that I must face not ever being able to finish composing 'Die Jakobsleiter'.... there is no chance at all of my still being able to write out the score" (Letters: No. 259). Rankl declined but Winfried Zillig, at Mrs. Schoenberg's request, completed the score to Part I after the composer's death. Zillig writes that it was not necessary to add a single note to the score. His task lay entirely in working out the orchestration. The present extant version, prepared by Zillig, is thus the text and music of Part I of *Die Jakobsleiter* (Reich, 1971: 106-107). It was first performed on 16th June 1961.²

THE STRUCTURE

There is no plot and no time-sequence in *Die Jakobsleiter*; place is ambiguous and, apart from God (who appears only in Part II) and Gabriel, the protagonists are not specific but rather named according to their attributes, for example Malcontents, One Who is Rebellious etc. The drama is reminiscent of the medieval miracle-play and, like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and Strindberg's *To Damascus*, takes the form of the station drama moving from point to point each "station" representing a variant of the human condition.

Formally, the work divides into three parts. The first begins with a 10 measure orchestral introduction after which souls begin to come before Gabriel, first as large choruses and then as individuals. Gabriel responds and urges them forward. A second section is set in heaven. Gabriel, "He Who is Dying" and "The Soul" as well as choruses for high voices take part in this section. The third section comprises an orchestral interlude which was to have acted as the bridge to Part II of the work of which however Schoenberg completed only the text.

Musically the work fuses the traditional with the progressive. Conventional forms and techniques appropriate to the oratorio genre such as arias, recitative and the large contrapuntal choral opening are here combined with sections which are reminiscent of the earlier so-called atonal works. Especially important as an innovative technique is the embryonic tone row.

Form is partly governed by text. A quasi recapitulatory section occurs in the text at the end of Part II and in this section the words of the opening chorus are repeated, but this time addressed to God. Thus whereas the opening chorus declaims "The intolerable pressure...the heavy burden" the closing section becomes "Lord God in heaven, free me from the unbearable pressure...Lord, take from me the heavy burden." In short, man has learnt how to pray.

The centrality of prayer is continued in the words of the culminating three part chorus of Part II. This chorus would appear to be a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer and acts as a kind of coda, ending with "amen."³

The experience of death is the fulcrum on which the work revolves. Those souls who are part of the material world are on this side of death, those in the spiritual world are on the other side. The "protagonists" are 46 souls although only 13 are represented in Part I (12 plus Gabriel). In Part I they exist mainly in the transitional condition preparatory to death. Urged onwards by Gabriel, they are constantly, though often reluctantly, on the move--complaining, questioning, expressing suffering and each articulating their own attitude to life.

THE "PROTAGONISTS"

Gabriel is undoubtedly the "hero" of the drama. Like Schoenberg's subsequent heroes, Max Aruns and Moses, Gabriel is the undoubted leader—morally strong and constantly encouraging the people to elevate themselves. The instrumental introduction leads at once to the archangel Gabriel's important declamation concerning space: "Whether to right or left, forward or back, uphill or down, one must go on, without asking what lies ahead" (see above for relation to Swedenborg). Christensen makes the point that in Schoenberg's early sketches for the work, Gabriel is referred to as *Der Antreiber* and it is this characteristic of one who chases others ever-onward, which typifies the archangel Gabriel. In the opening declamation as well as in most subsequent appearances Gabriel sings in *Sprechstimme*. The exception is in the response to The Chosen One --here Gabriel uses a singing voice.⁴ The use of *Sprechstimme* for the character who carries the ethical message shows obvious similarity to the part of Moses in *Moses und Aron* which is also almost entirely composed for *Sprechstimme*.

Gabriel clearly voices much of Schoenberg's philosophy at the time of writing *Die Jakobsleiter* and many of these ideas are expressed in the archangel's long speech towards the end of Part II, particularly the idea of Oneness which was to become so important to the composer in later years. In his text *Totentanz der Principien* Schoenberg had shown his habit of setting out semi-philosophical issues in the form of antonyms. In the plan for the fifth movement of that work he writes of "the unification of a sober, sceptical rational attitude with belief" and in the same movement he asserts *Im Einfachsten steckt das Mystische*—"The mystical is present in the most simple." At the same time through these opposites emerges the idea of unity as in the following from *Totentanz der Principien*:⁵

...in the strong impression of pain and pleasure... the paleness and flatness now dissolving into colours and forms; one calls this unification...Now it sings; each sings something different thinking that it sings the same thing; and in fact, sounds in one dimension together (surprised) in another diverse...It has countless dimensions and each one is perceivable...And all disappear to some place where they could be found.

So too Gabriel's important speech in *Der Jakobsleiter* is couched in terms which often become clear through being held up against an opposite idea to which it is linked; for example

Gabriel speaks of how “the finite brought about the infinite”. “love” is juxtaposed with “hate”, “joy” with “suffering”, “pleasure” with “deprivation” and so on. The most basic of all the antitheses is that which denotes the differentiation between the material and the spiritual. The spirit says Gabriel, pressed between the two infinities space and time, has divided itself into “a thousand particles” each of which are subject to the will. But there is a memory of the source of all origin and it is through prayer that the confused delusions may once again be unified with the whole. The spiritual although separated from the material, is continuously striving to return to the whole--these are the fundamental concepts as expounded by Gabriel.⁶ In *Die Jakobsleiter* the means by which the motion towards the goal is reached is through re-incarnation. Evil is measured against the level of guilt of the individual and “worked off” on earth.

After Gabriel's opening words the two choirs divide into several groups, proclaiming simultaneously their intense feelings of pain and anguish as well as some of their hopes and joys. The orchestral counterpoint is extremely dense, voice parts are fragmented, and often overlap one with the other. The choirs at this point represent what might correspond to the crowd scene, or perhaps the rabble, in a more conventional dramatic work. From this seemingly chaotic beginning, the choral section divides off into what are now more easily discernable groups consisting of Malcontents (*Unzufriedene*), Doubters (*Zweifeln*) and Rejoicers (*Jubeln*).

Next follow two more groups, The Indifferent and The Quietly Resigned. The titles now prefixed by the definite article (*Die Gleichgültigen*, *Die Sanftergebenen*) are invested with greater specificity. Their position on the ladder is close to the base but they appear to be oblivious of this. Their unawareness of the lowly quality of their existence is vividly and colloquially summed up by the words *O--wie schön lebt sich's doch im Dreck*--the image is intensified by Schoenberg's characteristic use of the antonyms, *schön* and *dreck*. Lessem (1979: 189) remarks on Schoenberg's extensive use of the interval of the major 3rd in the theme which accompanies these words (mm.158-160), and suggests that the major third denotes here a state of sin and of falling away from God. The same interval has, tellingly, been used extensively in the opening phrase of the chorus of the Malcontents, Doubters and

Rejoicers at the words "*Keinanfang und kein Ende*", mm. 98-103.

A short orchestral interlude, in which the *O wie schön* motif appears in stretto and ultimately augmentation (mm 161-168), leads to a higher level. Gabriel in a quieter mood expresses pleasure at the sensation of the rarified air (*Ah! die Luft is weiter rein*).

The choral groups are left behind and now comes the first individual, One Who is Called (*Ein Berufener*)--a solo tenor whose lyricism is reminiscent of Aron's voice part in *Moses und Aron*. He confesses to having sacrificed all in his search for beauty and his correspondingly beautiful aria is especially important for the clue that it provides to Schoenberg's attitude to tonality. The *Berufener* theme (mm 181-206) bears a resemblance to the *O wie schön* melody for he too is unconsciously lying in the muck.

It is surely not accidental that the one who has dedicated his life to beauty is assigned the only quasi-tonal section of the work. The aria abounds in consonant thirds (for example m. 197), the orchestral section from m. 191-194 forms a conventional sequence and cadences in G major at m.194 and the interval which characterises the melody line is the consonant interval of a major 6th (mm. 205, 206, 214, 234, 235). Schoenberg is here linking tonal music to the hedonistic quest for beauty, and this is confirmed in Gabriel's response in which he accuses *Ein Berufener*, "... you are self-satisfied: your idol grants you fulfilment before you...have tasted the torments of longing....Heathen, you have beheld nothing." The implication is surely that at this time of Schoenberg's experiments with tonality, music which is drawn to a tonal centre is associated with the quest for beauty and with the need for speedy gratification of desire. On the other hand atonality and the Row have begun to take on an ethical meaning by representing the prolongation of the struggle in order to achieve purity of spirit and ultimately transcendence.

In contrast to the flowing lyricism of One Who is Called, One who is Rebellious recites in short, brittle tones and *Sprechstimme*. He voices his conflict between obeying commandments on the one hand and the need to listen to the inner voice of instinct on the other. In an important note made by Schoenberg in connection with One Who is Rebellious (*sketch JTS*

*B*₁, 8a.) Schoenberg, with obvious reference to Nietzsche, writes: *Der Aufrührische lehnt sich gegen die Gebote auf / z.T vom Standpunkt der Übermenschen* -- The One Who is Rebellious rejects the commandments partly from the point of view of the superman. (Christensen, 1979: 49 n.90). It is Schoenberg's rebellious character who is the one who questions the Judeo-Christian tradition and accepts the Nietzschean philosophy of the superman.

The One Who is Rebellious continues his questioning by protesting that it "cannot be the same god who points us one way through impulses and the other through commandments!" He further questions the "God of Commandments" who allows the "wolves to prosper" and yet is powerless "when he yields his sheep to torment and persecution".

Schoenberg's views, as expressed by One Who is Rebellious, focus on that which is instinctive (such as artistic impulses) as opposed to that which is learnt and/or inherited (Commandments). This rather obscure text is, somewhat surprisingly, made more clear by turning to Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* (p. 416) where in one of his many philosophical digressions he writes:⁷

For alongside [the knowledge of] what is right and what is wrong, alongside the inherited experiences and observations of our ancestors, alongside that which we owe to their and our past, there is an instinct, perhaps a faculty that is only now being developed; a knowledge of the future; perhaps also other faculties which man will one day possess, but which at present he can only sense and yearn for but cannot translate into action. The artist's creative activity is instinctive. Consciousness has little influence on it. He feels as if what he does were dictated to him. As if he did it only according to the will of some power within him, whose laws he does not know. He feels only the instinctual compulsion, which he must obey.

It would seem then that Schoenberg felt himself to be possessed by a vague, and not altogether understood instinct which compelled him, and indeed artists in general, towards creative progress. This Faustian notion discussed in the previous chapter, was to retain its importance for Schoenberg, as we shall see in the chapter which follows.

From One Who is Rebellious the souls proceed forward although it would seem not always directly upwards but rather as Goethe's Faust, through advance and retreat, and in

accordance with the ascending and descending angels of the biblical image. One who is Struggling, the one who in all probability corresponds to the Wrestling Jacob (alias the wrestling Arnold?) is next on the ladder. To him Gabriel says, “the more occasions are capable of making you unhappy, the more sensitive you prove to be, the nearer you are.” The view that suffering is a prerequisite to being blessed like Jacob, was a conviction that was to be with Schoenberg throughout the work and indeed for all his life.

In similar auto-biographical vein, and clearly of great import, are the words of He Who is Chosen, (*Der Auserwählte*). Gabriel who now for the first time sings rather than speaks, urges him to come closer, for although he is still on the middle level he “is a likeness and possesses radiance.” This is the misunderstood, humiliated artist/prophet who is of the people but above them “their best is mine, as is their worst.”⁸ His melody, significantly begins with the row (see Example 6 below)

The Monk who follows charges himself with the sin of having put himself in a situation where he was not exposed to temptation and therefore never put to the test, “had I known happiness I should not have been able to resist it”. Nevertheless he occupies an elevated place on the ladder.

Finally comes *Der Sterbende* (He Who is Dying), a part scored for a “*einer hohen Frauenstimme in tiefer Lage gesprochen*” no doubt reflecting the androgynous nature of Seraphita/Seraphitus. It is through He Who is Dying that Schoenberg expounds his views of re-incarnation: “I have been hounded through many worlds; that I have survived a thousand lives, each worse than the last, and suffered a thousand deaths, each more liberating than the previous”. In a passage of great beauty (m.562-), *Der Sterbende* coming close to transcendence breathes an ethereal, long drawn out “Oh” (Schoenberg’s instruction is *Halb schmerzlich, halb freudig erstaunt*). Lessem (1979: 194-5) makes insightful recognition of the important passage which leads up to this climax. *Der Sterbende* having told of the gradual release from earthly pain, wafts free as air onto the words *Und er fliegt...ich fliege...* At this point (m.555), the row in the oboe part is permuted to 2 1 3 5 4 6, an order which reveals two major thirds (C#-E# and G#-E) thus merging the interval which, as we have

seen, symbolises the materiality of life, with the row itself which represents transcendence. The *ppppp* accompaniment in the strings and the *ppp* of the celeste and clarinet add to the infinitely light moment which anticipates transfiguration. With an ecstatic exclamation *Weiter...Weiter*--that injunction to go forward which was always present for Schoenberg--The Dying Soul has reached the point where it becomes united with its deity. It is the row which has served as the vehicle of transcendence.

From an initial representation of utter chaos, the work has moved figuratively and musically ever-upwards with characters become progressively more clearly defined, arriving ultimately through many layers of souls to the experience of Death and ultimately to The Soul itself, now accompanied by a choir of high female voices, a mixed choir and orchestra in which celeste, harp and solo violin take part. These traditionally "heavenly instruments", predominate in a wordless soaring melody of exquisite beauty. The passage is no doubt inspired by the closing section of *Seraphita* in which Balzac writes "in the same moment that Seraphita revealed her true nature her thoughts were no longer imprisoned by human speech." A long orchestral interlude marks the end of Part I and the end of the section which Schoenberg was able to set to music.

A character entitled "A God" appears for the first time in Part II to address The Chosen One (Fifth Voice) saying that he is equidistant from the highest and the lowest on the ladder but that he possesses an added dimension, for he is "the imperfect perfection, and often also: the perfected imperfection." Like Gabriel, A God speaks of the need for Oneness and for the Chosen One to become "one piece". Whereas characters on the lower levels were characterised by division it is now homogeneity which predominates. As always, the idea of Unity holds a place of importance in Schoenberg's thinking and appears to be associated with the highest levels of spirituality.

THE STYLE

Die Jakobsleiter Schoenberg is a compendium of much that had come before. This religious "catechism" as Viertel has described it, is invested with symphonic dimensions and crafted together by means of earlier modes of composition with which Schoenberg had experimented

in his so-called atonal and expressionist periods. Reich remarks that Schoenberg himself had commented that the style of *Die Jakobsleiter* matched that of *Erwartung* and *Die glückliche Hand* (Reich, 1971: 107). In addition, and of great importance is his use of the six-note row which will be discussed below.

The original orchestration was for a huge orchestral force: 10 piccolos, 10 flutes, 10 oboes, 10 cor anglais, 18 clarinets, 6 bass-clarinets, 10 bassoons, 10 contra-bassoons, 12 horns, 10 trumpets, 8 trombones, 4-6 bass tubas, 8 harps, celeste, percussion, 50 violins, 30 violas, 30 cellos, and 30 double-basses (Reich, 1971: 105). In 1921 a list of instruments was pasted into the manuscript showing that Schoenberg required only half of what he originally demanded and a note written by the composer in 1944 shows a further reduction which resulted in an orchestra of four flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns (plus a tenor horn); three trumpets and trombones, tuba, percussion and strings. It is according to this 1944 version that Zillig has largely based his own orchestration for Schoenberg's unfinished score.

Remarkably progressive and foreshadowing stereophonic sound equipment are Schoenberg's instructions in the 1944 note for microphones and speakers which are to function from different directions. Moreover there are instructions for four off-stage orchestras placed in several different positions and varying levels. As we have noted, the element of space held deep meaning for Schoenberg at the time that he was working on *Die Jakobsleiter*. The arrangement of the orchestra so as to achieve the required spatial effects and to reflect upward movement was no doubt an important part of the composer's vision for *Die Jakobsleiter*. (Reich 106 and Zillig in *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol.25).

Despite the large orchestral forces, instruments are often arranged in small groups creating varying chamber-like effects -- to achieve this both instruments and voices are frequently exploited in their outer ranges. *Klangfarbe*, as in the Five Pieces for Orchestra Op. 16, are revealed in the oratorio which are based on elements of timbre and not necessarily on the parameters of harmony or melody. Fluctuating time-signatures, stereophonic sound effects, symbolic sound patterns all contribute to the expression of what is a fundamental premise of the work--the transformation from earthly to heavenly. A remarkable compositional feat is the

vocalise for high soprano at the end of Part I. In this wonderfully ethereal passage the soul is reflected moving upward towards ultimate spirituality

Sprechstimme alternates with sensual lyricism sometimes, as with Gabriel, in the same role. Reich makes the point that whereas in *Pierrot Lunaire* the speaking voice is given great freedom varying with the individual inclination of the singer, in *Jakobsleiter* the speaking chorus conforms to the orchestral part and therefore has a fixed pitch thus giving performance a religious and oratorio like expressiveness (Reich, 1971: 109)

In addition to all these already exploited compositional devices, Schoenberg used a technique which was still in a rudimentary shape--the six-note motif which here begins to function like a tone row.

THE SIX-NOTE ROW

Tracing the path of serialism in 1949 in his essay *My Evolution* Schoenberg (1952: 525) writes the following and provides his own examples (my Example 1)

Time for a change had arrived. In 1915 I had sketched a symphony, the theme of the Scherzo of which accidentally consisted of twelve tones. Only two years later a further step was taken. I had planned to build all the main themes of my unfinished oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*, out of the six tones of this row.

Example 1.



The 6 note row in this early stage of development is already used in many ways.⁹ At the very outset C# D F E G# G, acts as an ostinato bass (Example 2)¹⁰. At the second measure, by a vertical addition of one note, the 6 note motif has been expanded to 7 and so it proceeds adding one tone at every measure, until at the 6th measure, C E♭ B B♭ F# A have been added

and thus all 12 notes of the chromatic scale are present. The technique of twelve-tone composition is thus on the way to being validated by showing that “the two or more dimensional space in which musical ideas are presented is a unit” (Example 2)

Example 2

Musical score for Example 2, showing two systems of piano music. The first system has measures 1, 2, and 3. The second system has measures 4, 5, and 6. Dynamics include ff, sf, and f. Measure 6 features triplets in the right hand.

Nor is this the only occasion where a 12 tone row occurs. Another almost complete 12 tone row appears for example at m.643 (Example 3) where the tones of the second 6 note motif $E\flat G\flat B\flat B E A$ are followed by a chord which contains all but one of the tones of the original 6-tone row in the order $D F C\sharp E G\sharp$ with only $G\flat$ absent (Example 3). These two chords even at this early stage come close to Schoenberg’s vision of 12 tone composition—“the succession of tones ...whose comprehensibility as a musical idea is independent of whether its components are made audible one after the other or more or less simultaneously”¹¹

Example 3

Musical score for Example 3, showing measures 642 and 643. Measure 643 includes a "Harmontium" section with a "rit." marking and a "p" dynamic. Measure 642 also has a "p" dynamic. The score includes various musical notations like notes, rests, and slurs.

The 6 note motif occurs at various points and in various forms sometimes in the original such as in the bass clarinet and cello parts at mm. 23 (Example 4).

Example 4

Frequently the order of the tones in the row are changed. It is in such a permuted form that the row appears in the bass clarinet and contra basson parts at mm. 84-87 (Example 5).

Example 5

The row does not appear only in orchestral parts but occurs also in voice parts such as the permuted row which is the opening declamation of He Who is Chosen (360-361). It is significant that the one who is on an elevated rung of the ladder and who, we are told by Berg, bears marked resemblance to Schoenberg himself, should open with a row (Example 6)

Example 6

A permuted row occurs also in the wordless high soprano melody of *The Soul* at mm.565-569 (Example 7).

Example 7

The musical score for Example 7 consists of two staves. The top staff is for the high soprano (Die Seele) and the bottom staff is for the vocal line (Gabriel). The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating G major. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 70$ and the time signature is 6/8. The soprano melody is marked with a 6/8 time signature and a tempo of ca. 70. The vocal line is marked with a piano (pp) dynamic. The lyrics are "Nahst du wie - - der dem Licht?". The soprano melody is marked with a 6/8 time signature and a tempo of ca. 70. The vocal line is marked with a piano (pp) dynamic. The lyrics are "Nahst du wie - - der dem Licht?".

Christensen estimates that in the 142 measures of the choral opening alone there are 33 figures derived from the six-tone row (1979: 369). However, despite the importance of the row, it does not at this stage act as a basic set which is used serially and which is capable of retrograde and inverse movement. To quote Schoenberg himself "I had not yet discovered all the technical tools that furnish such abundance of variety as is necessary for expansive forms." (1952: 526) The row had not grown sufficiently to achieve the function of a building-brick out of which an entire work could be built: the fluidity of the motif precluded the possibility of adherence to a fixed Law.

It is true that Schoenberg had already used a six-note motif in the piano piece Op.11 No.1 written in 1909. In *Die Jakobsleiter* it becomes clear that the row has become more than a compositional device and even at this early stage, taken on more than one meaning. Emanating as it did from Swedenborgian heaven--that transcendent area devoid of space and time--the row represents the ethical struggle towards purity. On earth, and for those who strive for this goal of purity through art, the struggle is represented by a delayed attainment of Beauty. The sensuous melody, the consonant harmony are a too-facile means of reaching the artistic summit. For The One Who is Called, the use of the consonant major third and the G major cadence is textually coupled with the self-indulgent. In the preface to the 1911 edition of *Harmonielehre* Schoenberg writes "Comfort, with all its implications, intrudes even into the world of ideas and makes us far more content than we should ever be....we can see most distinctly what the prerequisite of comfort is: superficiality." The search must continue

further, ever upward into unexplored, often dangerous territory, to be saved ultimately by the intuitive-- *Das Ewigweibliche zieht uns hinan!*.

The text suggests that the row is linked to progress towards transcendence. This same principle is taken up in the work as a whole: from the primeval chaos of those at the bottom of the ladder--those suffering, striving, faltering souls-- the movement is ever upward and beyond. This is Schoenberg's dictum for himself, for *Die Jakobsleiter* and for *The Row*. And with this idea we are at once brought back to the source-works which provided much of the inspiration for *Die Jakobsleiter*--*Seraphita*, *Parsifal*, the *To Damascus* and most importantly, Goethe's *Faust*. All are concerned, as is *Die Jakobsleiter*, with three principles: the representation of the transcendental, the long, hard journey towards redemption, and ultimately that ephemeral quality which, as is the case with *Faust*, lures the spirit on. In *Die Jakobsleiter* Schoenberg shows himself to be a true bearer of the spirit of late Romanticism.

SCHOENBERG'S RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS AT THE TIME OF *DIE JAKOBSLEITER*.

Since it is the purpose of this study to trace the moving path of Schoenberg's religion, it is necessary to examine his perspective on various religious issues related to *Die Jakobsleiter*. Schoenberg was on the whole extremely reticent about details of his personal faith. One of the rare occasions on which he divulged his thoughts, Schoenberg, writing to Kandinsky on 20 July 1922, explains the great support which he had received from his religious commitment (Letters: No.42):

When one's been used, where one's own work was concerned, to clearing away all obstacles often by means of one immense intellectual effort and in those 8 years found oneself constantly faced with new obstacles against which all thinking, all power of invention, all energy, all ideas, proved helpless, for a man for whom ideas have been everything it means nothing less than the total collapse of things, unless he has come to find support, in ever increasing measure, in belief in something higher beyond. You would, I think, see what I mean best from my libretto "Jacob's Ladder" (an oratorio): what I mean is--even though without any organisational fetters--religion. This was my one and only support during those years--here let this be said for the first time.¹²

It is noteworthy that despite the plethora of religious allusions from various sources in his oratorio, Schoenberg chose the old Testament image of Jacob's Ladder to hold the work

together. In general the ambience in which he lived did not favour interest in religion and the old Testament as a source of inspiration was largely disregarded by avant garde artists. This however is not to say that Viennese artists' interest in biblical topics was entirely unknown. A curious parallel exists between Schoenberg and the Austrian playwright Richard Beer Hofmann. Born in 1866, Beer Hofmann abandoned Judaism as a young man. He returned to his inherited faith at the end of the 1890's and proclaimed his reconversion artistically with a drama entitled *Jakobs Traum*. The work occupied him from 1909 to 1915 and represents the first part of an uncompleted biblical trilogy (Wistrich, 1989: 633). Beer Hofmann had adapted Goethe's *Faust* in 1932 and his inclusion of the archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel into *Jakobs Traum* was but one instance in which the Faustian influence made itself felt. Hugo von Hofmannsthal in particular was most disapproving of Beer-Hofmann's choice of subject and accused him of exploiting nationalist themes. It would seem that Beer Hofmann had a need to return to his roots when faced with a modern crisis of war and anti-Semitism. Like Schoenberg Beer Hofmann spent the last years of his life in America.

It is true that Schoenberg's concern with the narrative of Jacob points towards an interest in and possible identification with the patriarchal figures of the Old Testament. Moreover the moral-ethical tone of the *Die Jakobsleiter* rather than the pantheistic view of creation such as that exemplified in Mahler's 3rd Symphony or the aesthetic concerns of Wagner and his followers, points perhaps to an incipient interest in Jewish ethics. However, there is no real evidence to show that he was at this time, (about the time of World War I) in any way committed to Judaism. Indeed there is clearly a conflict between his perception of the Old Testament God and the Jewish perception. Gabriel in his long speech (Part II) exclaims, "The Eternal One, our God, is no jealous god, who seeks revenge, but a god who considers your imperfection, one to whom your short-comings are known, who knows that you must fail and that your path is a long one." In actual fact the Old Testament perception is that God is indeed a jealous God for the reference is to idol worship: "Observe thou that which I command thee this day" says the Lord to Moses in Exodus XXXIV:11 and continues in 12-14 "Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land wither thou goest...ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god; for the Lord, whose name is Jealous is a Jealous God". There is

no possibility of misunderstanding this description of the Old Testament God. On the other hand, the tolerant God who "knows that you must fail and that your path is a long one" is a Christian God.¹³

The Program Symphony

An examination of the text of the proposed Program Symphony supports our perception of Schoenberg's religious leanings. *Totentanz der Prinzipien* which was to have constituted the opening section of the second part of the Program Symphony, is a somewhat confusing account of a restless soul and the experience of death (see Chapter I). The text foreshadows much of what was to come a few years later in *Die Jakobsleiter*, especially the concept of spirituality versus materiality. A powerful image in *Totentanz*, is that of the presence of an overwhelming but imageless force: *Es ist vielleicht überwältigend, aber man hat kein Bild* (it is perhaps overwhelming, but one has no image).

The various biblical extracts which Schoenberg chose for the proposed Program Symphony are a particularly revealing source of information as regards his religious stance. Extracts are from both the Old and the New Testaments, the Old Testament passages being taken from the Prophets and Psalms.¹⁴ Those from the Prophets deal predominantly with issues which emphasise the need for true faith as opposed to empty ritual. For example, in the passage which Schoenberg marked from Isaiah, the Prophet admonishes the children of Israel for fasting instead of sharing their food with the poor; the passage from Jeremiah warns against false sacrifice and idolatry. The passages which are taken from The New Testament are from Paul's Letter to the Romans and deal with a similar message though seen from the Christian viewpoint; Paul warns of the futility of following the Law if it is not accompanied by the true faith in the spirit of Christ for it is, writes Paul, only through this that redemption is possible.

Schoenberg's choice of biblical Psalms 22 and 88 throws further light on his strained mental condition. Psalm 22 opens with the well known words which Christ was to repeat on the cross "My God, my God, why hast thou abandoned me?" The Psalmist of Psalm 88 echoes the words of anguish "Lord God, my saviour, I cry out all day, and at night I come before you. Hear my prayer; listen to my cry for help!"¹⁵

Schoenberg's psychological frame of mind at this time is not difficult to assess. From the evidence it would appear that his prevailing feeling was one of extreme despair from which he struggled to find some relief through religion. The last section of *Totentanz der Prinzipien* is entitled *The Belief of the Disillusioned Man*. These feelings are reflected all over texts for the Program Symphony. The melancholic overtones resound in his own text, in the biblical texts, and also in the extracts from Tagore's *Gitanjali*, all of which have to do with different aspects of death. The Dehmel poems are a curious blend of earthly, romantic love and a search for transcendental meaning. An overall view of the religious tone of these extracts would lead one to believe that Schoenberg's leaning was towards an acceptance of a powerful spirit which leans towards the teachings of Christ.

PRAYER

We have noted that compositionally the period immediately preceding *Die Jakobsleiter* was a barren one for Schoenberg and that the oratorio, while bringing together much of what had come before also pointed to new areas of composition, especially as regards the manipulation of tones in a six-note motif. With the contemplation of *Die Jakobsleiter* a corresponding development had taken place in the religious sphere. The impetus for composing the oratorio had come from an entirely new source-- the idea of prayer.

By its very nature prayer implies communication with a God-figure. Implicit in the prayer-idea is the notion that there is a God and that there is at least the hope if not the conviction that the human supplication or praise or cry for support will, to whatever degree, receive a response. This God-centred form of worship is notably absent from the "creedless" religions which had been occupying Schoenberg for the past decade. True there is no reference to a God of any kind in Part I of *Die Jakobsleiter* and only a brief reference in Part II, and no mention of Christ anywhere in the entire work. But Schoenberg insists that prayer was the *raison d'être* of the work and that God was the starting point.¹⁶ The reason why God is mentioned only at the end of the work is surely that he wished to point out that unity with God occurs only when "modern man" has learnt to pray.

The source for many of the references to prayer in *Die Jakobsleiter* is the New testament. For

example the phrase with which Gabriel's speech ends "Knock, and the door will be opened" is derived from Matthew Chapter 7:7 ("Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and the door will be opened to you") Christensen claims that the prayer to be sung by three choirs, with which the oratorio ends ("Lord God in Heaven hear our plea") paraphrases the "Our father in heaven" prayer uttered by Jesus in his prayer on the Mount (Matthew 6:9-15)¹⁷, and convincingly points out further parallels between Schoenberg's text and those of Luke and Matthew (60f.). Ringer is justifiably taken to task by Christensen (1979: 60 n.115) for too enthusiastically equating Schoenberg's ideas with those of the Old Testament prophets in his *Arnold Schoenberg and the Prophetic Image in Music* (JASI I, 1 pp. 26-38). She provides more than enough evidence to prove that there is a deeply Christian basis for Schoenberg's ideas--a view-point which would be wholeheartedly supported by the findings of the present study. However Christensen in her assessment does not take into account the dynamic nature of Schoenberg's beliefs. It is true that there is a strong emphasis on the New Testament and the teachings of Christ in *Die Jakobsleiter*, but it will be seen that his ideas undergo a great change in the coming years. For Schoenberg the question of religious affiliation was not a static affair but rather one which required constant re-examination and inner searching.

It is difficult to know precisely what Schoenberg understood by prayer. In the chapter of *Seraphita* entitled *The Road to Heaven* Seraphita (p.163) says:

Prayer is the fair and radiant daughter of all the human virtues, the arch connecting heaven and earth, the sweet companion that is alike the lion and dove; and prayer will give you the key of heaven...The universe belongs to him who will, who can, who knows how to pray....neither material worship, which has its symbols, nor spiritual worship, which has its formulas, but worship of the divine order. We do not then say prayers; prayer lights up within us, and is a faculty which acts of itself.

Since Schoenberg confessed to holding the Balzac work in the highest esteem, it is likely that he, like Seraphita, saw prayer as the key to transcendence, "the arch connecting heaven and earth". Furthermore it would appear that he did not view prayer in the light of formal worship. One would guess then that prayer was for Schoenberg, at the time of composing *Die*

Jakobsleiter, a highly personalised mode of communication with a deity which is perceived as a source from which the human soul emanates and to which it returns. The spiral of return is the subject matter with which *Die Jakobsleiter* concerns itself.

SIN

Strindberg's autobiographical *Jacob Wrestles*, the one-time model for Schoenberg's oratorio is much concerned with the problem of sin and punishment. "If I am rebellious in thoughts, words or writing, or approach improper subjects, I hear a deep bass note as though it came from an organ or from the trunk of an elephant when he trumpets and is angry" writes Strindberg (1912: 242). While this mode of expression is typically Strindbergian, Schoenberg too is concerned with sin and punishment. Gabriel, after the Monk's speech says "sins are punishments that cleanse." Human sin as the reason for delayed union with the ineffable is a central concept in *Die Jakobsleiter*

The One Who is Struggling (*Ein Ringender*) complains that despite the fact that he has followed the commandments to the best of his ability, he was not given the understanding to comprehend unwritten laws. He gives expression to this thought not only in his sung aria in Part I but also voices a similar idea in Part II: his point is thus clearly an important one for Schoenberg. During the course of his argument he refers to Luke Chapter 18 saying "I know the commandments" and, quoting directly from Luke 18: 20-21, he says "All these have I kept from my youth up". The parable from which the quotation comes tells of a wealthy Jew who asks Jesus what he must do to achieve eternal life. Jesus tells him to follow the commandments. The man replies "Ever since I was young, I have obeyed all the commandments". Jesus tells him that there is one more thing to do and that is to give all his riches to the poor, for "It is much harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle" (Luke 18:25). *Ein Ringender*, (One Who is Struggling/Jacob Wrestling/ August Strindberg/Arnold Schoenberg) declares that he has indeed kept the commandments from his youth and moreover "What was mine to give--it was not much, but yet the best of me--I have always given". But, continues *Ein Ringender* "I sadly lacked the guidance of the Word...Why was no instinct given us to sense unspoken laws, no eyes to see, no ear to hear?" This is an impassioned confession in *Sprechstimme*

supported by Gabriel who urges him to come nearer to He Who is Chosen who is there to guide him, and “who resembles One far higher, as the distant overtone the fundamental; while others, deeper, almost fundamental themselves, are further removed from Him as bright rock crystal is further from diamond than carbon”.

The words of *Ein Ringender* touch on several points which are central to this study. Though based on Christian belief, the section which speaks of the overtones as they relate to the fundamental clearly alludes to Theosophic concepts. Moreover the passage would appear to contain an element of Schoenberg’s own search for moral codes. However, by no stretch of imagination (and as much as Ringer would like to claim otherwise), can Schoenberg’s philosophy at this point be seen to be governed by Judaic belief. On the contrary. Although One Who is Struggling bursts out with “I know the commandments” he also asks “But how can I avoid new sin?” It is on this very point that Christianity turns away from Judaism. Jewish Law is perceived to demand obedience to commandments without giving thought to spiritual salvation from sin. An old and popular anti-Semitic image dating from the middle ages depicts the Jew as blind, refusing to see that Christ is indeed the saviour. *Ein Ringender* makes this point when he demands “Why was no instinct given us to sense unspoken laws, no eye to see, no ear to hear?” *Ein Ringender* is struggling with a crucial point of conflict between Schoenberg’s adopted and inherited religion.

The concept of sin in Judaism differs from that in Christianity. The sinner according to Judaism is one who violates the Covenant with God. The boundaries are clearly delineated. There is no question of innate depravity which is the result of the sins of Adam and Eve and there is therefore no great emphasis in the Torah on salvation. When Schoenberg poses the question via *Der Ringender* “why was no instinct given us to sense unspoken laws?” he is voicing an inherently Christian view of sin.

Viewed as a whole Schoenberg’s concept of Sin in *Die Jakobsleiter* is one of ethics and morality rather than avoidance of crime. No mention is made of murder or theft nor of sexual crimes among the souls in *Die Jakobsleiter*. Doubt, discontent, indifference, the thoughtless search for beauty, the mindless adherence to laws, the search for happiness without pain:

these are the sins of the protagonists of *Die Jakobsleiter*.

SUFFERING

In what appears to be a letter of consolation to his sister in law Mitzi Seligmann (Gertrude's sister) Schoenberg writes:

The Lord always looks for people whom he allows to suffer! People who are less worthy who cannot bear it and will not be able to find improvement through it, are spared everything unpleasant! So be proud! One is chosen to suffer! If people are allowed to make themselves comfortable this is done at the cost of a higher blessedness!¹⁸

The subject of suffering has been encountered many times in this study. Suffering as an important aspect of post romantic aesthetics has been discussed above. Goethe's *Faust*, Balzac's *Seraphita*, Strindberg's *To Damascus*, Wagner's *Parsifal* all bear testimony to this. Suffering for people who are "able to find improvement through it" as Schoenberg says in his letter to sister in law is a theme which runs through Christianity. Schoenberg moralises suffering which he sees not only as a prerequisite for reaching transcendence but also as a quality which is necessary for the artist. Looking back in 1948 he wrote "I was not destined to continue in the manner of *Transfigured Night* or *Gurrelieder* or even *Pelleas and Melisande*. The supreme Commander had ordered me on a harder road" (S&I: 109)

WHY DID SCHOENBERG NOT COMPLETE *DIE JAKOBSLEITER*

Many reasons have been given as to why Schoenberg did not complete his oratorio. The war interrupted the course of the work and the aftermath of war made it extremely difficult to resume a programme of composing. Zillig suggests that a return to earlier-conceived work was difficult because in the interim he had developed new techniques. Christensen suggests that it had been a step in the "unplotted future". Furthermore times demanded that he devote himself to teaching and in addition he was preoccupied with the organisation involved in the Society for Private Musical Performance. All are no doubt true.

But there are biographical details which have been overlooked. Christensen suggests that the reading of *Die Jakobsleiter* at the Society for Private Musical Performance by Wilhelm

Klitsch on 22nd May 1921 may have stimulated Schoenberg into returning to the work in June 1921. She then adds that this work was interrupted because he had to change his vacation site but fails however to comment on the significance of the change in vacation site (1979: 29). It was in fact this incident which turned out to be a turning point in Schoenberg's life.

Schoenberg had planned to spend the summer of 1921 with his family in the village of Mattsee in the Salzkammergut--there, according to Berg, he had intended to complete *Die Jakobsleiter*.¹⁹ However soon after their arrival, the Schoenberg family were asked either to provide proof that they were not Jewish or to leave. Schoenberg refused to deny his origins and the family left the village.

In 1934 Schoenberg, writing on stationary from the Ansonia Hotel New York, wrote to Rabbi Stephen Wise of two experiences which as he put it "shook me awake" (quoted in and translated by Ringer, 1990: 153):

In 1916, when I was an Austrian soldier who had joined the military with enthusiasm, I suddenly realised that the war was being conducted not merely against enemies from abroad but at least as vigorously against those at home. And the latter comprised, besides all others interested in liberal and socialist causes, the Jews. A few years later I had a nice experience in the Salzkammergut, not far from Salzburg: I was possibly one of the first Jews in Central Europe to become the victim of an actual expulsion.

Jost Hermand refers to two further incidents, both traumatic, which acted as factors which propelled Schoenberg's into acceptance of his inborn religion (Hermand, 1997).

On 15 April 1923 Kandisky suggested that Schoenberg join him to work at the *Bauhaus* in Weimar.²⁰ Acting on information provided by Alma Mahler who suggested the existence of antisemitic sentiments at the *Bauhaus*, Schoenberg declined the offer. It was this incident which prompted Schoenberg's now well-known letter written to Kandinsky dated 20 April 1923 (Letters: No.63):

If I had received your letter a year ago I should have let all my principles go hang, should have renounced the prospect of at last being free to compose, and should have plunged headlong into the adventure....But it cannot be.

For I have at last learnt the lesson that has been forced upon me during this year, and I shall not ever forget it. It is that I am not a German, not a European, indeed perhaps scarcely even a human being (at least, the Europeans prefer the worst of their race to me), but I am a Jew.

On 4th May Schoenberg wrote another and much longer letter to Kandinsky in which he expressed his feelings on antisemitism in extremely powerful, passionate language (Letters: No.64). These two letters to Kandinsky show with perfect clarity that in 1923 Schoenberg's sense of his Jewish identity was in no doubt whatsoever.

Jost Hermand refers to yet a further well-known incident. In January 1926 Schoenberg with his family moved to Berlin in order for him to take up a position at the Prussian Academy of the Arts. However his appointment had been preceded by virulent antisemitic opposition to his appointment, especially by Dr Alfred Heuss a musical scholar of some standing and editor of the important *Zeitschrift für Musik* who wrote a long article voicing his antagonistic opinions in his newspaper of October 1925.²¹ This no doubt affected Schoenberg deeply. Nevertheless, he spent the next seven years at the Academy. On 1st March 1933 the government's intention to remove Jews from the Prussian Academy of Arts was announced. Schoenberg treated this as a dismissal and the family left Berlin for Paris in May of that year. There Schoenberg decided to formally reconvert to Judaism and in October they departed for America.²²

It would seem natural to expect that after these years of humiliation and destruction of his most cherished loyalties, it was no longer possible to turn back to the religious beliefs which were important at the time of writing *Die Jakobsleiter*—beliefs which although supra-denominational were based on essentially Protestant traditions. After the traumatic antisemitic experiences of the 1920's on the one hand, and faced with the severely circumscribed beliefs of Judaism on the other, he would surely have felt himself unable to conceptualise in music the theories of theosophy, reincarnation, symbolism, etc. on which *Die Jakobsleiter* was based. No doubt the interruptions of war, the army, and his own technical advances in composition were all initially responsible for his inability to pick up the threads of his oratorio. However after 1921 a different set of factors were brought to bear on his life: prepared by his

experiences in the army, confronted with the undeniable reality of his Jewishness, and given his uncompromising nature, it became quite impossible to pursue his original religious concerns. It will be remembered that only Part I of *Die Jakobsleiter* was set to music, that is the part that deals mainly with the souls preparatory to the reality of death. The text of Part II concerns itself almost entirely with the souls after death—those who have left material considerations behind them and have reached a new level of spirituality. “You will forget your origins and the way you have trod; and each of you will feel again as if you were the first man; as if all which you experience was created for you and happened for the first time” says Gabriel at the beginning of Part II. How could he go on to complete a work which was in some sense dedicated to the forgetting of his origins? Moreover, how is the composer whose ethos is governed by the Jewish imperative which forbids representation to write music for a text which concretizes the spirituality of souls in transcendence?

This in my opinion is the main reason why the work was never completed and why he turned instead to *Der Biblische Weg* in 1927 and to *Moses und Aron* from 1930--works which are unequivocal in their Jewish orientation.

It was also in the summer of 1921 that Schoenberg made his famous remark to Josef Rufer concerning the technique of twelve tone composition. “I have made a discovery thanks to which the supremacy of German music is ensured for the next hundred years” (Reich, 1971: 130). Schoenberg it would appear had regained his spirit to “go on” as the angel Gabriel commands and this he did with new determination. It is noteworthy however that after 1933 he no longer signed his name Schönberg as he had always done, but changed the spelling to Schoenberg. He had left Germany and Austria behind him and was making a new start both personally and as a musician.

In Part II of *Die Jakobsleiter* the Fifth Voice makes a confession which Berg confirmed was of an autobiographical nature (Reich, 1971: 102):

I know that I will see them, these walls, and nothing but them, and shall run my head against them, shall hardly be able to avert my gaze from them, shall destroy myself in profitless battles, losing super-earthly joy and brightness and faith, love and hope, and

you my God will again not hear me; I shall again believe I have to stand alone; thrown back solely on myself, deserted and betrayed.

The feeling of hopelessness is clear. Compare this with Schoenberg's letter from Paris in 1933 (Stuckenschmidt, 1977: 541) in which the imagery is similar but the state of mind quite different:

I will start a movement which will unite Jews again in one people...as a people chosen by God ...singled out to maintain an idea, the idea of the unrepresentable God. We need for this a man who is willing and fit to run his head against a wall...I have decided, lacking a better person, to begin for the moment. We all know that I have run against walls and can see that I have not perished thereby.

Clearly Schoenberg's return to his faith provided him with renewed energy and belief in himself. "The idea of leading a movement to unite the Jews was of course an unrealistic one, but it is couched in the language of a fighter rather than that of a disillusioned man."²³

CONVERSION

William James belongs to that school of Psychologists of the early twentieth century who did serious investigation into what he terms "conversion" by which he means a religious awakening or re-awakening.²⁴ For James in the context of the series of ten Gifford lectures which he delivered in Edinburgh in 1901-1902 religion is defined as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine." This definition functions well as a measure for Schoenberg's perception of religion.

James' terms of reference are not entirely relevant to our study. Firstly his subjects are Christian and James deals almost exclusively with the Christian aspect of conversion in terms of receiving grace. Schoenberg's religious shift on the other hand was of a different kind--from Judaism to Christianity to Judaism. Secondly James uses such terms as "self-surrender", "voluntary" and "involuntary"(1912: 206) in a way which appears to be outmoded to the post-Freudian reader. Nevertheless it is my belief that the psychological process which James describes remains valid despite its religious perspective and its terminology.

In discussing the phenomenon of Conversion James makes a distinction between the gradual and the sudden (the latter in the manner of Paul). One would imagine that Schoenberg falls into the category of the former but it will be seen that as well as this gradual build-up it is possible to pin-point a “moment of recognition.”

James speaks of the process of conversion as a dual phase. Firstly the need to remove oneself from the present which is often perceived as a “sinful” existence and secondly, and this is usually the stronger, the desire to move towards a new and distant ideal. To achieve the second goal there is a moment of total surrender of the self to a power outside the self and this moment leads to an altered psychic state in the human subject: “what is attained is often an altogether new level of spiritual vitality, a relatively heroic level, in which impossible things have become possible, and new energies and endurances are shown. The personality is changed, the man *is* born anew...”²⁵

Curiously, Martin Buber the Jewish philosopher comes to a similar conclusion:

What is....the primal phenomenon of what we call revelation? It is man's emerging from the moment of the supreme encounter, being no longer the same as when entering into it. The moment of encounter is not a "living experience" that stirs in the receptive soul and blissfully rounds itself out: something happens to man. At times it is like feeling a breath and at times like a wrestling match; no matter: something happens.²⁶

It would seem that the element of revelation did not occur in Schoenberg's early conversion to Lutheranism; it was an act which, in the context of the social milieu in which he lived, was regarded as almost-normal. The reconversion was of quite a different nature. His path to reconversion was, it is true, a gradual one spanning roughly the period of the diffuse religious preoccupation of *Die Jakobsleiter* around 1914, to the Mattsee incident of 1921, but that last straw as it were proved to be the turning point.

From the fall of 1921 until the writing of *Der biblische Weg* the composer occupied himself diligently and most prolifically, with his early twelve-tone works. The first serial piece was the Prelude of the Suite for Piano Op. 25 composed in 1921. Looking back on those early days

of serial writing Schoenberg, in a letter to Nicholas Slonimsky of 3 June 1937, writes of the Suite Op. 25. "Here I became suddenly conscious of the real meaning of my aim: unity and regularity, which unconsciously had led me all this way" (Reich, 1971: 131). It was also his search for unity which was one of the factors which led him to the Jewish concept of monotheism.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. I acknowledge with appreciation that I have drawn on Jean Christensen's dissertation *Arnold Schoenberg's Oratorio Die Jakobsleiter* (1979) and Alan Lessem's *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg* (1979).
2. Extracts from *Die Jakobsleiter* are taken from the Piano reduction score which was arranged by Winfried Zillig, published by Belmont. The recording which I have used throughout is on the Sony label, conductor Boulez with the BBC singers and Symphony orchestra. discussion.
3. Dika Newlin provides a footnote in her article *Arnold Schoenberg in His Religious Works* (1968: 210 n.4) in which she furnishes information by E. Werner who suggests that this chorus is paraphrased from two prayers from the Day of Atonement Service: *סלח נא* (*slach na*) and *אבינו מלכנו* (*avinu malkainu*). I would argue that this is unlikely since Schoenberg had little direct interest in matters relating to Jewish observance at the time of writing *Die Jakobsleiter*.
4. *Sprechstimme* a half spoken half sung technique used first by Schoenberg in *Gurrelieder* and extensively in *Pierrot Lunaire*.
5. In the text of *Totentanz der Principien* in Bailey, 1984 on pp.98-99.
6. There would appear to be some similarity between Theosophist ideas and Kabbalistic belief. According to especially the Lurianic stream of Kabbalah, the vessels of creation which have received light from primordial space, have been shattered into an infinite number of splinters. The secret purpose of existence is to restore these to the original order, that is to make whole that which has been broken. This is known as *תיקון*--the principle of Tikkun (discussed extensively in Scholem: 1961 and 1969) The opening of Schoenberg's *Kol Nidre* makes reference to this belief ("The Kabbalah tells a legend...Out of space a flame burst out. God crushed that flame to atoms"). He thus must have been aware of this belief at least in 1938 at the time of writing that work.
7. The 1978 translation of *Harmonielehre* used here is based on Schoenberg's 1921 (published 1922) edition. Roy Carter comments that Schoenberg himself had made only few changes from the first 1911 edition. The passage cited here is taken from the last chapter in the book which says Carter contained only a few minor revisions. The ideas presented in the excerpt therefore had not changed between 1911 and 1921.
8. Willi Reich contends that The Chosen One bears an extreme likeness to Schoenberg. This is demonstrated not only in the speech of The Chosen One but also confirmed in a note by Berg (Reich, 1971: 100).

9. Ringer points to the importance of the number 6. It represents the number of days of Creation as well as being of great significance in early Christian literature. In addition, the fact that $1+2+3$ equals 6, makes 6 the perfect number (Ringer, 1990: 181). It is likely that the number 6 suited the religious nature of the work. And of course 6 represents half the number of notes in the chromatic scale.
10. Lessem refers to the appearance of a 6-note theme in a sketchbook marked with the inscription "started beginning July 1917". The motif had apparently originally been intended as a theme for violin solo for an orchestral work. This theme, D-C#-E-F-G-A \flat , is used in its original form at m. 604, at the start of the orchestral interlude in *Die Jakobsleiter* and Lessem uses this order (1979: 185). In the introduction of the work (mm.0-7) however the order of the row is C#-D-F-E-G#-G. It is this order, as it occurs at its initial announcement which will be used in this study.
11. Written in an essay in 1923 and quoted in Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff (1995: 14)
12. Schoenberg's relationship with Kandinsky was at this time extremely close, as the tone of the letter indicates. His rift with Kandinsky was to occur in the following year (see below).
13. Moshe Lazar, commenting on Schoenberg's reference to a "jealous god" in *Die Jakobsleiter*, fails, like Ringer, to accept Schoenberg's non-Jewish stance at the time of writing that work. Indeed Lazar goes so far as to imply that Schoenberg's quotation from Matthew Chapter VII "Knock: and the door will be opened" is not a phrase which is alien to the "ancient Hebrew texts of the prophets"—a somewhat reckless assumption (see JASI XVII, Nos 1&2, p. 132 n.113).
14. See Bailey 1984: 85 f. for the layout of the Program Symphony and for some information about Schoenberg's sources. (1984, 96) The bible to which Schoenberg makes reference in his notes was his own *Die Bibel oder die ganze heilige Schrift des Alten und Neuen Testament, nach der deutschen Übersetzung D. Martin Luthers* (Berlin: Britische und Ausländische Bibelgesellschaft, 1907) see Bailey 1984: p. 97 and p.178 n.47.
15. Schoenberg's *De profundis*, the setting for Psalm 130 which he composed some thirty-six years later also opens with a cry for help "From the depths of my despair I call to you Lord." It is however surmised that at that time (1950), Schoenberg was begging for forgiveness for his act of abandoning his inherited faith. The Psalm 130 is traditionally one which is recited by Jews in times of crisis.
16. See Schoenberg's letter written to the Theosophists quoted in Christensen, 1979:55 and discussed in the previous chapter.

But they overlook the fact that this work was written only because of the end. That was my starting point. I only want to show that: beginning in grave doubt, becoming more and more confident, elevated(!), having a presentiment of a higher worship.... I have started with God!

17. Dika Newlin 1968, p.210n.16 writes that according to Professor E. Werner this prayer is a paraphrase of two prayers recited on the Jewish Day of Atonement: אָבִינוּ מַלְכָּנוּ (*Avinu Malkainu*) and סִלַּח נָא (*Slach Na*). I consider this to be unlikely (see Chapter III below.)
18. The letter was probably written in 1929 from Monte Carlo. (Stuckenschmidt, 1977: 342)
19. Berg in *Letters to his Wife* (p.287) writes on 22 June 1921 "Schoenberg is in fine form. He's working at his book on harmony and means to stay at Mattsee till *Jacob's Ladder* is finished." (The work on his book on harmony refers to the revision of the 1911 edition of *Harmonielehre*).
20. The *Bauhaus* was an important school of design in Weimar founded in 1919 by Walter Gropius, Alma Mahler's second husband.
21. Ringer, 1990: 56-7 and Appendix A for a translation of Heuss' article.
22. Schoenberg resided in Berlin on three occasions. From 1901-1903 when he worked at the *Überbrettel* and taught at the Stern Conservatory; from 1911-1915 also at the Stern Conservatory; and for the last time, from 1926-1933 when he taught at the Prussian Academy of Arts.
23. Of course we know that Schoenberg's life in America was not an easy one. His optimism was perhaps not justified but at that time it served him well.
24. James does not use the term "conversion" as it is used in this study, that is as the shift from one set of religious beliefs to another.
25. William James 1902 p.241.
26. Martin Buber *I and Thou* p. 158.

CHAPTER III

THE PATH OF THE BIBLE

On 24th May 1933 Schoenberg wrote to the stage director Max Reinhardt in the hopes of interesting him in producing his play *Der biblische Weg* (Lazar, 1994: 95):

The situation of Jewry imposes the duty on everyone able to do so, to engage all his efforts in working for the survival of our nation...I have been thinking about this for about fourteen years and in 1924 had already made a decision to write a play for the inauguration of an open-air propaganda campaign.

This was not the only occasion on which Schoenberg so precisely marked the date of his re-identification with the Jewish people. In August 1933 he wrote to Anton Webern telling him of his decision to remove himself "from all that tied me to the Occident". He once again added that he had experienced fourteen years of preparation for this event (Reich, 1971:189).¹ One could thus safely infer that by 1920, or at the latest 1921, there was at least a glimmer of the kind of thinking which would ultimately lead him to Judaism. On the cover of a new sketchbook started in 1922 and dated "31/V" Schoenberg wrote the words "*mit Gott*" suggesting that his return to religion was a serious and determined step. His earliest truly serial works, the Opus 23 piano Pieces, were written around 1920-23. It is a central tenet of this study that it was no coincidence that Schoenberg's return to his inherited faith and his first serial works should have found expression at around the same time.

*DER BIBLISCHE WEG*²

The action of the play revolves around the hero, Max Aruns who has taken on the task of unifying a diverse group of diaspora Jews who are at the time living in an unsympathetic environment in Europe. His hope is to lead them to a new country known as New Palestine (Neupalästina) in the country of Ammongaea. The personality of Max Aruns combines the qualities of a leader who is imbued with the idea of monotheism (Moses) with those of the diplomat who negotiates with international leaders and encourages and admonishes the people, particularly the youth (Aron). Revealing an extremely sensitive understanding of the various groups within modern Jewry--one which remains pertinent to this day--Schoenberg distinguishes between Pacifists, Orthodox,

Socialists, Capitalists, Zionists, Academics and so on, all of whom voice reasons for their support as well as their objections to the project. The opening scenes are set in the 1920's against the background of a sports club in Europe where young Jews are encouraged to develop themselves physically so as to be equipped for the great task which lies ahead. Acts II and III are set in New Palestine and deal with the conspiracies and counter conspiracies which represent the interaction between those attempting to save and those attempting to overthrow the leader Aruns. Finally, he is betrayed and murdered. However a new leader Guido has the ability to take over and to save "the Idea" which is, as he exclaims in his closing speech, "to grasp the concept of the one and only, eternal, and unimaginable God" (p.327). This is the Idea which resounds forcefully throughout the work and is to become fundamental to the opera *Moses und Aron*.

Written between 1926-27 the play is remarkable as a work which reflects the early recognition of the danger to the survival of European Jewry, and more especially remarkable since it was written by one of the great composers of the century. Schoenberg is by no means unaware of the difficulties inherent in moving a diverse group of people out of Europe--difficulties which stem from the people themselves as much as from those outside--and yet, according to the play, move they must. In reflecting a sharp awareness of these things in his own real world and in an almost uncanny recognition of what the future would bring to that world, *Der biblische Weg* proves to be an important document. However Schoenberg's intention was to write a propaganda play (see n.1) and as such it was a dismal failure. The play was never performed and indeed was never published in the original German until 1994 when it appeared with English translation and extremely thorough notes by Moshe Lazar in the *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*, that is sixty-seven years after it was written.³

Schoenberg has described the drama as "a very up to date treatment (written 1926-27) of the story of how the Jews became a people".⁴ The description at once highlights the essential strength and inherent weakness in the work; it is a contemporary socio-political play superimposed on a biblical sub-text and the two do not always exist comfortably together. Moreover a certain confusion arises out of the characters whose unusual names are clearly invented by and hold special meaning for Schoenberg, but which are perplexing to the reader. Thus we have the similar-sounding Tamlan, Gadman, Golban father and Golban son, and the

unusual-sounding Kolbiëf, Pinxar, Setouras and Asseino.⁵ Some are supporters of Max Aruns, some are enemies, or enemies pretending to be supporters; the result is that, despite the simplicity of the plot, the identities of the characters and what they stand for are often difficult to unravel. However, for the researcher who is interested in Schoenberg's ideas, and for the student of Jewish Studies, the work is a treasure trove of information providing a rich and multi-layered picture of concepts and events. To follow is an examination of those strata and sub-strata which would seem to be relevant to Schoenberg's religious affiliations.

At the very foundation of *Die biblische Weg* lies the biblical story from Exodus: the children of Israel, threatened with persecution at the hands of the Egyptians, are led out of their country of bondage by Moses. After a sojourn of forty years in the desert they reach the Promised Land. However Moses is not blessed with the realisation of his dream to settle in the New Land--that privilege is reserved for Joshua, the new leader. The plot of Schoenberg's play runs in a parallel path--"the biblical path". Aruns views the sojourn in New Palestine as a political necessity prior to entering the Promised Land; Asseino, the voice of the uncompromising biblical prophet believes that the goal should be none other than Jerusalem. The code name for the secret project by means of which the plan is to be implemented is "Trumpets of Jericho"⁶ As the play progresses it becomes clear that Max Aruns is a combination of Moses and Aaron; Guido is Joshua, and the ultimate goal for all is physical and spiritual freedom.

Schoenberg's intention in *Der biblische Weg* is clearly dedicated towards his newly found identification with Judaism. His aim is to highlight the plight of the Jews, to alert them to a potential danger and to stimulate them into positive action. Unlike *Die Jakobsleiter* of a decade earlier, Christianity is not a subject with which Schoenberg has to grapple for he has already come to the decision that he is Jewish. Nevertheless the Christ story emerges at various points of the work. The character who betrays Aruns is clearly based on Judas Iscariot while the murder of Max Aruns is carried out by the local mob who rush forward shouting "Where is the Commander-in Chief? The leader? The prophet? The King of the Jews?" Aruns is beaten to death, and while dying he cries out "Lord...accept my blood as expiation." The scene vividly evokes Chapter 27 of the Gospel of Matthew in which the Jewish mob is identified with the perpetrators of the crucifixion of Christ. And again, after Aruns' death, Kolbiëf cries out (p.321) "Oh Lord,

my God, have you abandoned us, now that you have taken this man away from us?" in words which closely emulates Christ's words on the cross. Schoenberg's apparent disregard for the inappropriateness of this imagery in a Jewish propaganda play would emphasise his as yet unstable religious convictions. The complex system of Jewish-Christian identification and connections remain as yet unresolved.

ZIONISM

A layer of meaning in the play which derives directly from events pertaining to Zionism and the Zionist movement is essential to the understanding of the work. Although the idea of "a return to Zion" had been with Jews in their thoughts and prayers for thousands of years and although various Jewish leaders earlier in the nineteenth century felt that the time to create a Jewish settlement in Palestine had arrived, it was Theodor Herzl who founded the World Zionist Organisation (the first Congress was held in 1897) in response to what he saw as the *Judennot*, that is the distressed condition of the Jews as a result of antisemitism. Herzl (1860-1904) though born in Budapest lived the greater part of his life in Vienna. Initially an assimilated Jew, he became aware of the danger of antisemitism while acting as a journalist in Paris for *Die Neue Freie Presse* at the time of the Dreyfus case and thenceforward devoted his life to what he saw as the only possible solution for the Jews-- mass exodus out of Europe.

After a visit to Russia in 1903, where he witnessed the serious plight of Jews in the wake of the Kishinev pogrom, Herzl felt that matters were sufficiently urgent to justify serious consideration of an offer made to the Jews by the British Government, of an autonomous territory in Uganda.⁷ He put forward the proposal to the Sixth Zionist Congress in 1903 suggesting that Uganda be accepted at least as a temporary refuge. The proposal was greeted with violent protest and was finally defeated at the seventh Zionist Congress in 1905. In *Der biblische Weg* the territory known as Ammongaea, also called New Palestine, clearly reflects Herzl's Uganda project. Herzl travelled widely in order to negotiate with various leaders; among these was the Sultan of Turkey, possibly the model for Kaphira, Emperor of Ammongaea in *Der biblische Weg*. Opposition to Herzl's projects came from many different Jewish groups each with their own reason for withholding support for the Zionist leader. Thus for example the ultra-orthodox based their return to the Holy Land on Messianic conditions which had clearly not yet materialized; the

Capitalists were not always forthcoming with financial assistance since many did not believe that the danger was immanent nor did they wish to leave their financially productive existence; the Intelligentsia were loath to exchange their intellectual activities for life in a semi-desert country. Herzl not only attempted to deal with these objections but also took upon himself a punishing schedule of travel in order to negotiate with international leaders (as did Max Aruns). He died in 1904 at the age of forty-four after a bout of pneumonia complicated by a heart ailment generally believed to have been caused by overwork. Ringer suggests that Vladimir Jabotinsky may have been the model for Schoenberg's Max Aruns and bearing in mind that revisionist Zionist leader's militant style this is highly likely (1990: 60). Nevertheless, the similarity of the character Max Aruns to Theodor Herzl is too marked to be a coincidence.

The person of Max Nordau (1849-1923), an early supporter of Herzl, might well have had a part-influence on Schoenberg in his conception of the character of Max Aruns and almost certainly of the concept of the youth club. Nordau, a physician and novelist, together with Max Mandelstam an ophthalmologist and fellow Zionist supporter, were both present at the second Zionist Congress in June 1902.⁸ It was here that the two medically trained Zionists proposed the formation of a movement whose aim it was to promote physical fitness among Jewish Youth, influenced no doubt by the German youth clubs which were popular in the first decades of the twentieth century. Nordau's famous exhortation was "We must think of creating once again a Jewry of muscles. Once again! For history is our witness that such a Jewry had once existed" The idea of muscle-Jews (*Muskeljuden*) became a popular image and symbol of a new type of physical Jew (Mendes-Flohr & Reinhartz, 1995: 547).⁹ Max Aruns echoes a similar idea in a speech to the members of his Sports Club:

Dear Young Friends!

... You possess the strength which in a few generations will be the strength of our entire people. Your vigour and health will regenerate that which is old and decayed in the trunk of Israel. You alone are capable of successfully reforming our nation, of transforming a nation of scholars, artists, merchants and money-changers into a healthy and strong nation, dedicated to leading a life worthy of a nation to whom God has granted a homeland¹⁰

Of course for all its intention to appeal to Jewish national pride, one hears in the words of both Nordau and Schoenberg distinct echoes of the rhetoric of the times in which the German notion

of the master-race was so powerfully proclaimed.

Lazar draws attention to the fact that one finds no mention of important Jewish milestone events in Schoenberg's pre-1920 writings. Thus for example there is no mention of Theodore Herzl's influential manifesto *Der Judenstaat* (published in Vienna in 1896), nor of the first Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897, nor of the proposed Uganda project in 1903; nor of the German born Nordau, or Russian born Jabotinsky. Yet *Der biblische Weg* reflects the author's knowledge of all these. Moreover in order to have grasped the sense of approaching disaster with such piercingly sharp accuracy he must have possessed at least a modicum of political awareness. However, there is no mention of the Dreyfus Affaire, knowledge of which reverberated throughout Europe, nor of the rise of Christian Socialism, nor of the problems resulting from the influx of Ostjuden into Vienna.¹¹ Lazar puts forward a possible explanation for this. Schoenberg up to the time of his acknowledgement of his Jewishness in the early 1920's, had felt himself entirely impervious to these events. He was after all not a Jew. He had served in the army, he had devoted his life to German art and was moreover of the lineage of the great Classical masters. It was only after the Mattsee incident suggests Lazar, when the fact of his Jewish origins hit home with great force, that he began to identify with the experiences of the Jews around him and then found it necessary to express his perception (Lazar, 1994: 49).

SCHOENBERG AND MODERNITY

Many of the essential problems which Schoenberg confronts in *Der biblische Weg* are those very issues which have been discussed in Chapter I of this study, namely the problem of the Jew in Modernity. Max Aruns expresses some of these problems in a prolonged outburst in which he addresses the people. In this speech he reflects all the pent up passion of Arnold Schoenberg the assimilated Jew (Act I, Stage Set II, Scene10)--the humiliation, the need to regain national pride and self respect and the ardent hope that a return to the ancient faith will redeem the situation. Aruns goes so far as to suggest that the people should pursue their national dream in favour of more intellectual ambitions (p.235):

Today, for the sake of your people you sacrifice all your past striving for those intellectual pursuits that have been useful in the Diaspora. And today, through your strength you proclaim that you are ready to serve a knowledge superior to common human wisdom:

that you want to enable your people to *live* its concept of God to the end, to *dream* it to the end!

This is indeed a strong statement from Schoenberg for whom matters of the intellect stood exceedingly high.

While there is no doubt about Schoenberg's ardent support of Jewish ideals, the language on occasion reflects a confused interpretation of Jewish observance and even at times exploits antisemitic rhetoric. The opening of Act I, Stage Set 2, Sc.10 (p.229f.) clearly makes reference to the eve of the Jewish festival of Passover during which the youngest child asks four questions the first of which is "Why is this night different from other nights?" and the last of which is "why do we sit upright on other nights but recline on this night?" The festival is dedicated, as Aruns accurately suggests, to remembrance and gratitude to the Lord who delivered the people from slavery. According to Jewish practise it is obligatory for each successive generation to remember this time during the eight days of Passover but especially during the Passover meal (*Seder*) which is in fact dedicated to the celebration of freedom. It is the sense of freedom which makes this night different from other nights. Schoenberg, through Aruns, subverts the idea by saying "Why do we all stand to-day? Why did we all rise? Why don't we remain sitting on the ground, humiliated, as on all other days before?" It would seem that he overlooks the point that the reclining position on Passover is a reminder that Jews are no longer slaves. It is not, as Aruns suggests, a sign of humiliation but the very opposite, a symbol of the appreciation of freedom.¹²

Similarly Schoenberg's language is tainted with expressions which were only too common in the antisemitic jargon of the day. In the same scene Aruns cries "Brothers! Do you still know those humble, downtrodden, frail, little Jew-boys (*Jüdlein*)--**Hep-Hep!**--who looked around intimidated whenever they found themselves among people not of our own who were nonetheless considered presumptuous and branded as "impertinent Jews" (*freche Juden*) whenever they dared to make a move or even dared to refuse to swallow any insult."¹³ This is surely the language which is familiar to the 1920's Jew, even the Jew who imagines himself to be assimilated.

One of the central themes in *Der biblische Weg* is that the downfall of Aruns is largely due to

his faith in Pinxar's mechanical invention-- faith in the machine rather than in the invisible God, faith in the forces of modernity rather than in the age-old belief of the Fathers. "*Der Mensch ist ein Augentier*" says Kolbiëf (p.207). The fact that humans have a need to see in order to believe corresponds, for Schoenberg, to the biblical fact that Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it and for this he was punished. For, as Asseino admonishes, he put "trust in material reality" instead of having "faith in the spirit" (p.307). The biblical passage seems to have caused Schoenberg some consternation when he came to writing *Moses und Aron* but the concept is clearly interpreted here--we need faith not miracles.¹⁴ "What could a God mean to us, a God whom we could understand whom we could represent in an image, whom we could influence?" asks Arons of the people Israel. He continues "We do not need miracles. Persecution and contempt have strengthened us, have built our tenacity and stamina, nourished and fortified our bodies...We are an ancient people" (p.233). For Schoenberg in the artistic sense, the need to witness irrefutable proof is the negation of belief in a totality. In his essay on Gustav Mahler (S&I: 449) he writes:

Man is petty. We do not believe enough in the whole thing, in the great thing, but demand irrefutable details....We believe that we understand what is natural; but the miracle is extremely natural, and the natural is extremely miraculous...We analyse because we are not satisfied with comprehending the nature, effect and function of a totality as a totality, and when we are not able to put together again exactly what we have taken apart, we begin to do injustice to that capacity which gave us the whole together with its spirit, and we lose faith in our finest ability--the ability to receive a total impression.

In a manuscript written in 1934 Schoenberg voices his resentment towards the public adulation of the performer and again expresses his feelings about miracles. "...today [performers] stand higher than creators; they were put there not by themselves but by the favour of a public that believes that music comes from reproducers, just as miracles are attributed to the priest, not to God"(The Musical Idea: 292-3). The statement draws a revealing parallel between the divine and the human creator. Contrary to what is sometimes believed says Schoenberg, the miracle comes not from the priest but from God the Creator; a piece of music comes not from the performer but from the composer, the human creator-- the two run parallel to each other.

No. 2 of *Six Pieces for Male Chorus* Op.35, composed by Schoenberg between 9 March and 16 June 1930 is entitled *Das Gesetz* (The Law) and reveals Schoenberg's notion of the connection

between Law and Miracle. The fact that things turn out to be different to the regular is not, according to Schoenberg's text, a miracle. On the contrary the fact that some things remain consistent is where the real meaning of miracle lies. "That there is a law which all things obey the way you follow your Lord, a law which is master of all things the way your Lord is your master: This is what you should recognize as a miracle!" The piece contains much polyphony, especially canon, a device which traditionally symbolises Law and obedience. It is at the same time serial in conception--the work follows the Law which must be obeyed at all times irrespective of compositional style.

The invisible God figure hovers over the entire play and the notion of the incompatibility between the ineffable and the expression of it, which was to reach full expression in *Moses und Aron*, begins to take shape in *Der biblische Weg*. Aruns dies as punishment for two misdeeds: one of these is for wanting to be both Moses and Aron and the second for relying on a machine rather than on God. The two ideas in fact form one concept. The part of Aruns that is Aron is represented by his openness to change, his willingness to adapt to the times and to advances in technology--"Do not constrain us to live according to laws which were valid five thousand years ago" he begs Asseino (p.305). His reliance on the miracle-machine is proof of his lack of true faith. It is also an over-belief in the tenets which modernity held so dear. On the other hand that part of Aruns' personality which is Moses, expresses a single-minded adherence to monotheism; his Idea is pure, his faith is absolute, it allows no compromise "not every individual can grasp our concept of God, nor recognize that all that happens derives from a Supreme Being, whose laws we can sense and acknowledge, but about whose essence we must not enquire"(p. 233). The two cannot merge without loss of integrity. This is the age-old conflict--the same conflict responsible for the rift between the Reform Judaism and Orthodox movements discussed in Chapter I and indeed, further back in history, between Christianity and Judaism. The "Moses" faction who hold on to the Idea, cannot reconcile themselves with the "Aron" faction who in Asseino's words "understood the art of interpreting God's words in contemporary terms" (p. 303). This was no doubt the deep tension within Schoenberg himself--not only religiously but also in his creative life. The tension between the progressive and the traditionalist, the avant garde serial composer who considered himself the disciple of Bach Beethoven and Brahms, the assimilated, emancipated Jew who wished to return to the strict ethics of the Old Testament.

In 1934 Schoenberg wrote an impassioned personal document which opens with the words *Jeder junge Jude* (Every young Jew). The document is an extraordinarily frank analysis of the situation of the young assimilated Jew in Europe and Moshe Lazar is to be congratulated for having brought it to light (JASI Vol. XVII Appendix F). The article has great value as a personal analysis of a Jewish artist's confrontation with modern forces and in addition it explains much of what appears in *Der biblische Weg*.¹⁵

Every young Jew of his generation, explains Schoenberg, was faced with two options. The first was to attempt to minimize differences between Jew and Gentile in every possible way--appearance, language, religion, marriage to a gentile spouse. In short, to assimilate as thoroughly as circumstances would allow. At the same time there was a need to compensate for these differences by attempting to excel at one's chosen task, whether in art, academics, commerce or science. But paradoxically this had the effect of making one more and not less conspicuous. Many young Jews attempted to choose both options at once but the price was inordinately high, for the results were nothing but humiliation, degradation, rejection and shame--shame for having deserted the age-old Messianic belief.

Schoenberg mentions Messianism several times during the course of *Jeder junge Jude*. "For the Western Jews and for the westernised Eastern Jews the movement for assimilation became a substitute for the Messiah-belief" he writes (Lazar, 1994: 42). The Messiah-belief in turn became for Schoenberg equated with The Idea--a concept which will be discussed in some detail below. In a draft copy of *Der biblische Weg* written in 1926 Schoenberg gives the following stage directions concerning the crowds on the stage who witness Aruns' death (Lazar, 1994: 65):

...the stage is full of enthusiastic people who celebrate the Messiah-Idea: the Idea that shall liberate the Jews; the Idea that is [itself] the Messiah, and which has made them into a chosen nation; the Idea of the invisible, unimaginable, One and Only, indivisible, omnipotent, eternal God, which no other than the Jewish nation can conceive.

Prior to analysing the significance of Messianism to Schoenberg, it is necessary to examine briefly the highly complex concept of Messianism in Judaism.

A fluid and often mysterious message of hope and consolation for Israel dates back to the biblical

prophets. The concept changes according to the needs of the times but always contains the promise of redemption, the fulfillment of which is however constantly deferred. The Messiah at certain periods of the history of the Jews, was envisaged as a vague figure emerging from the kingdom of David, the son of Jesse. At other times the idea was entirely separated from a figure-head and seen rather as an epoch--the term used by the Classical prophets for this utopian era was simply "the end of days". At least two aspects remain constant throughout the historical development of Messianism: one is the fact that it was seen as a liberation from suffering and the second that it was to be a time when God would be recognized as King of all the Universe "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah XI: 9).

For Christianity the situation is of course diametrically opposite; there is no question of waiting for an abstract Messiah since spiritual redemption has already taken place in Christ. Schoenberg, in expressing himself on Messianism in the above passages, has allied himself wholeheartedly to Judaism. By equating Messianism with the idea of universal monotheism he is reaching the core of the Messianic ideal as viewed by normative Judaism. By linking his Idea to the Messianic-Idea he is separating himself decisively from Christianity.

When Schoenberg writes that "assimilation became a substitute for the Messiah-belief" he writes from the perspective of *Jeder junge Jude*, of a young Jew living in Vienna at the turn of the century. Messianism is in essence a liberating force directed towards a yearned-for state of utopia. For the young Jew, assimilation was similarly, a liberating step into modernity, into the world of German *bildung* discussed in Chapter I--an attractive substitute for the God-Idea in a secular environment.

The Messianic idea is not confined to orthodox Jewry. Nor was Schoenberg alone in his Messianic vision at that time. Max Aruns' recognition of the need to improve the character of the Jew in modernity in order to gain access to the Promised Land was a figurative concept echoed by many others. We have already noted the Faustian concept of the attainment of perfection through suffering; a dream of an improved existence was also the utopian condition envisaged by Theodor Herzl; Walter Benjamin weaves a sophisticated vision of Messianism into

his writings. One might also go so far as to say that the visions of a utopian future of Messianic dimensions was the driving force behind the personality of Karl Marx. All these different streams are directed to the need for improvement in the face of the forces of modernism.

Some of the themes of *Der biblische Weg* are already familiar to us from *Die Jakobsleiter* and elsewhere; here they have come to be viewed through a Judaic lens. Thus whereas the concept of suffering which derived from the late Romantic model is linked to the afterlife "the great artist must somehow be punished in his lifetime for the honour which he will enjoy later"¹⁶, suffering in *Der biblische Weg* is metamorphosed into suffering for the Messianic Idea. Aruns in his long speech to the "People of Israel" explains (p. 231):

These cowardly Jews who had the courage to accept being ridiculed as "cowards" as long as they could remain Jews, who made every sacrifice, suffered every persecution, put up with every curse and every wounding of their pride, because none of them for a moment ever ceased to feel that we had been chosen for such suffering...that we must suffer because we were chosen to maintain the Messianic Idea throughout the ages; the strict, unadulterated relentless Idea: that there is only one, eternal, invisible, and unimaginable God.

This is indeed the fundamental message of *Der biblische Weg*. It was also destined to become a central issue some six years later in the *Moses und Aron*.

Closely linked to the concept of suffering is Schoenberg's notion of chosenness, a concept which was already prominent in *Die Jakobsleiter* and here becomes part of his newly discovered Messianic belief. As Schoenberg's letter of consolation to his sister-in-law (quoted above) implies, individuals are chosen to suffer: chosenness and suffering are in a sense linked.¹⁷ The concept develops further when suffering is seen as a condition which is common to both Judaism and the artistic genius. "Does not courage ask us to face the full truth and acknowledge that, enjoying the glory of God's favour, we must endure the consequences, suffer for this privilege as the genius must suffer?" (Schoenberg, 1990: 233). And in that sentence a further and important association is made: just as Jews are the chosen race, so the genius is the chosen individual. Both have to suffer for the privilege. This leads onto a further idea: "we must suffer because we were chosen to maintain the Messianic Idea throughout the ages; the strict unadulterated, relentless Idea: that there is only one eternal, invisible God" says Aruns (p.231). And so another link is

added to the chain. Not only must we (the Jews) suffer because we have been chosen says Schoenberg, but we have been chosen and have survived in order to perpetuate the concept of one God “if we are not chosen to preserve the Idea, there remains no other valid reason why we should continue to exist” he writes in *Jeder junge Jude*. As the genius is chosen to be the medium through which his art is communicated, so the Jewish people have been chosen to bring this God Idea to the world. It is for this reason that they exist.

THE IDEA

A body of Schoenberg's writings which runs alongside his work on *Der biblische Weg* and *Moses und Aron* is known as the *Gedanke* manuscripts. We need to turn to this valuable source of information not only as an explanation of theoretical concepts, but also to assist in understanding his play and his opera.

Although preoccupied with a notion of a “musical idea” from about 1915, the first *Gedanke* manuscript is dated August 19th 1923 that is to say around the time of his early dodecaphonic works and coinciding with his first two essays on dodecaphony “Twelve-Tone Composition” and “Hauer's Theories” both of 1923. It is also at about this time that he was thinking of *Der biblische Weg* and *Moses und Aron*. The last *Gedanke* manuscript is dated October 1936. The period in which these manuscripts were written, and the documentation of his thoughts at that crucial time is important for the understanding of Schoenberg's idea behind the Idea.

In general terms the *Gedanke* manuscripts represent Schoenberg's efforts to explain his continuous efforts to unify the theory of composition. His overriding concept is that the various aspects of a musical work form an organic whole and the *Gedanke* manuscripts represent an attempt at explaining his understanding of the various aspects involved in his theory. In editing the book *Arnold Schoenberg: The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation*, Carpenter and Neff have produced a fine compilation of Schoenberg's writings on his *Gedanke* in both German and English. It is noteworthy however that nowhere in this publication--neither in the impressive commentary nor in the body of the book-- is mention made of Schoenberg's God-Idea or of his Messiah Idea. The reason is probably a simple one: Schoenberg himself does not mention the God idea in the *Gedanke* manuscripts which is after

all a body of theoretical writings. Yet we have noted above that Schoenberg himself equates the concept of religious Messianism with his concept of the Idea when for example he speaks of “the Idea that is itself the Messiah...the Idea of the invisible, unimaginable, One and Only, indivisible, omnipotent, eternal God...” It is my intention to show that if one looks deeply into the *Gedanke* manuscripts in association with other writings a somewhat different emerges to the one which is presented if one reads the Carpenter/Neff compilation in isolation.

Schoenberg’s line of reasoning is not always easy to follow in his *Gedanke* manuscripts: his writings on this topic are often sketchy and in note form and moreover the concepts undergo changes from time to time. His own difficulties with the various concepts in his *Gedanke* are reflected in a note written in 1929: “The question as to what a musical idea is has never been answered up till now--if indeed, it has ever been asked.” Later he wrote, “I thought that I would be able to state this clearly today, I had it so clearly in my mind. But I must wait. Perhaps though I shall come to it yet” In 1940 he wrote a note next to this entry, “I have dealt with all these questions much better later on” but he does not elaborate (see discussion in Goehr, 1977 especially p. 94). In general in these writings he uses the word *Gedanke* to denote the idea which lies at the root of a musical work or, in a wider sense, at the root of any creation. Charlotte Cross (1980) draws attention to the extremely wide range of meanings in Schoenberg’s concept of “Idea” which may carry the meaning of the English words “thought”, “notion”, “design”, “purpose”, or “plan”. That part of the Idea which corresponds to the English “inspiration” is usually conveyed by the German “*Einfall*.”

Schoenberg in line with nineteenth century Western philosophy viewed the art-work as an organic entity corresponding to the laws of human logic. The Idea for him, as it relates to a piece of music, is the totality of a piece, “the means by which balance is restored” (S&I: 122). Driven initially by “inner necessity”, a concept which, it will be remembered, he shared with Kandinsky in the first decade of the century, the Idea carries within itself all the possibilities which may unfold during the course of the work. In 1931 he wrote “whatever happens in a piece of music is nothing but the endless reshaping of a basic shape...all the shapes appearing in a piece of music are *foreseen* in the theme” (The Musical Idea: 354). Schoenberg uses various sharply vivid images to describe the concept of totality inherent in the Idea. In 1911 he writes “the form and

articulation manifested by the notes corresponds to the inner nature of the idea and its movement, as ridges and hollows of our bodies are determined by the position of internal organs" (HL: 289).

In 1947 he writes: "In an apple tree's blossoms, even the bud, the whole future apple is present in all its details--they have only to mature, to grow, to become the apple, the apple tree, and its power of reproduction. Similarly, a real composer's musical conception, like the physical, is one single act, comprising the totality of the product"(S&I:165).

In another analogy drawn from nature he writes:

To symbolize the construction of a musical form perhaps one ought to think of a human body that is whole and centrally controlled, that puts forth a certain number of limbs by means of which it is capable of exercising its vital functions (Musical Idea: 121).

In about 1930 he writes using the image of two opposing forces as illustrated by a pair of pliers to convey his meaning "The tool itself may fall into disuse, but the idea behind it can never become obsolete. And therein lies the difference between a mere style and a real idea. *An idea can never perish*" (S&I: 123). Styles on the other hand are constantly changing and here we note the meaning of Schoenberg's now famous duality of Style and Idea--Styles change, the Idea is eternal. In his *Harmonielehre* (1911) Schoenberg, ever the traditionalist, advises that students should learn the laws of tonality but that they should also be made to understand that these are susceptible to change, for every living thing changes. He reminds the student, "Life and death are both equally present in the embryo" (HL: 29). What has happened to the tonality of the once prominent church modes he asks? And how integrally are our major and minor connected to true nature since they relate after all to a tempered system. It is we who need the laws. Order, he says, is not demanded by the object, but by the subject. "What we claim to perceive as laws [defining order and clarity] may perhaps only be laws governing our perception, without therefore being the laws a work of art must obey."

Whatever the imagery two fundamental issues remain constant: the Idea is a totality and the totality is governed by a force outside itself--a force which has religious connotations.

Schoenberg uses various terms in his *Gedanke* an understanding of which help to clarify his

writings and indeed his intentions in his compositions. It should be remembered that the title which he gave to what are presently termed his *Gedanke* manuscripts was *Der musikalische Gedanke und die Logik, Technik, und Kunst seiner Darstellung*.

Coherence (*Zusammenhang*) according to Schoenberg, works closely with comprehensibility in the attainment of understanding. Since everything derives and develops from a basic source--an Idea-- it stands to reason that a composition which is constructed according to this source will comply with the laws of musical coherence. Furthermore if a piece is clearly organized the demands of logic will be satisfied. "In music" he writes "there is no form without logic, there is no logic without unity" (S&I: 244).

Comprehensibility (*Fasslichkeit*)

We have already learnt of Schoenberg's views on beauty from his treatment of One Who is Called in *Die Jakobsleiter*. Single-minded search for beauty is not an end in itself. To One Who is Called, who sacrificed all for beauty, Gabriel exclaimed "your idol gives you easy satisfaction ...Heathen, you have beheld nothing." In his 1941 essay *Composition with Twelve Tones* quoted above Schoenberg explains further. The satisfaction derived from an Idea which is clearly understood by the listener is the primary aim "artistic value demands comprehensibility, not only for intellectual but also for emotional satisfaction" (S&I 215). Beauty as a criterion is linked to comprehensibility. "The relaxation which a satisfied listener experiences when he can follow an idea, its development, and the reason for such a development is closely related, psychologically speaking, to a feeling of beauty" (S&I 215). Comprehensibility, logic, coherence possess an ethical significance which is not the case in the expression of sheer beauty. "The most beautiful tone is often only the result of superficiality joined with sentimentality" writes Schoenberg (Aphorisms II, 8)

Presentation (*Darstellung*) too works towards comprehensibility: a work is to be performed with that kind of articulation which is necessary to make the Idea comprehensible. Since all is a totality and everything emanates from the Idea, the Logic of the work is assured from the outset and as Schoenberg says confidently referring to a passage from his *Kammersymphonie* "a logical mind is altogether incapable of writing something incoherent, even though it has not been at all

conscious of its meaning but only followed its instinct" (The Musical Idea: 263). Carrying forward the idea of the unconscious instinct Schoenberg writes "A plum tree does not need to decide what fruit it will bear; plums become plums by themselves."

Since all the above terms relate in some way to the Idea--that is to the whole, the totality, and ultimately, the One--they all carry at least a shadow of religious meaning. However, two terms in particular in the *Gedanke* manuscripts have overt religious connotations since they appear in Schoenberg's thinking to emanate from a divine source--these are Compulsion and Inspiration.

Compulsion

Schoenberg believed that the true artist/genius acts on an inner compulsion. He does not choose to write in a certain way, for he can do it no other way.¹⁸ "I believe art is born of 'I must' not 'I can'... He [the artist] has no say in the matter, it is nothing to do with what he wants" (S&I: 365). In connection with Bach's *Art of the Fugue* and other masterpieces he writes "These are miracles which no human brain can produce. The artist is only the mouthpiece of a power which dictates what to do" (S&I: 396).

Webern, in summing up Schoenberg's form in his *Orchestral Pieces* Op.16, quotes the following from Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* (see Reich, 1971: 52):

In composing, my decisions are guided solely by what I sense: my sense of form. This it is that tells me what I must write, everything else is ruled out. Each chord I introduce is the result of a compulsion; a compulsion exerted by my need for expression, but perhaps also the compulsion exerted by a remorseless, if unconscious, logic in the harmonic construction. I am firmly convinced that such logic is present, even here; to at least the same degree as in harmony's existing built up areas. And I can offer proof of this: namely, that modification of my inspiration, made because of the kind of external, formal second thoughts that all too often beset one's wide-awake conscious mind, have usually spoiled the original inspiration. To me this proves that the idea was compulsive, that the harmonies set down there are components of the idea, and that one may not alter anything about them.

The fact of Schoenberg's possession of an inner vision of a composition before composing it, was confirmed by others. During the course of an interview, Rudolf Kolisch his brother in-law, colleague and friend says of Schoenberg's work process (JASI, 1984: Vol. VIII, No.1, p.77) "Ja, that is a fabulous phenomenon. It was as with only very few composers. An act of

composition, originating and being completed in his imagination. What he did then was the act of writing it down... The over 1,200 bars of the 1st String Quartet were composed in 6 weeks, for instance.”

Inspiration

The moment, that creative instant in which the vision is received is what Schoenberg calls Inspiration (*Einfall*). At that moment the artist conceives the work as a whole, but although the recognition is instantaneous there is an after-memory. “Inspiration is a lightning-like appearance of extraordinary duration, which dissipates slowly and ends only a long time after it has fulfilled its purpose” (The Musical Idea: 375). He adds details in a 1946 essay “Whether much or little labour is necessary depends on circumstances about which we have no control. Only one thing is certain, at least to me: without inspiration *neither* could be accomplished” (S&I: 67).

Schoenberg’s belief that the gift of creation is in some way connected to an outside force of a divine nature is evident in his essays on composers whom he admires. In a discussion of form in the Andante of Mahler’s 6th Symphony he writes “This is not the *tour de force* of a ‘technician’-- a master would not bring it off, if he made up his mind to do it in advance. These are inspirations which escape the control of consciousness, and formulates solutions without noticing that a problem has confronted him” (S&I: 462). In his essay on Liszt he goes further, and indeed he would appear to be identifying much of himself when he writes (S&I: 442):

He [Liszt] was in contact with his instinctive life, was in touch with the primal force of his personality, and so he possessed the capacity to believe. He believed in himself, he believed in One Who was greater than himself, he believed in progress, in culture, in beauty, in morality, in humanity. And he believed in God! And all this faith arises from no other cause than the powerful instinct of a man who wishes to raise others, too, to the heights of goodness that he feels in himself. Such a man is a prophet.

The artist as prophet--a concept which had reached its fullest expression in the high Romantic cult connected to Wagner--was a view which persisted into the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and one which Schoenberg shared with many thinkers of his time. As late as 1946, and despite circumstances which might have caused him to think otherwise, he writes “My personal feeling is that music conveys a prophetic message revealing a higher form of life towards which mankind evolves” (S&I: 136). This sense of mission, of being chosen for the task of improving

mankind through art, was as we have noted, a primary driving force for Schoenberg. He believed that certain people are chosen, indeed born to fulfil a special task. Only certain individuals however are endowed with the qualities necessary for fulfilling or for that matter for appreciating great art--“anyone not born for mental exertion is as little capable of producing an idea ...as an apple tree of producing a plum. One bears the fruits for which he is predestined” (The Musical Idea: 151).

It is the genius who is chosen to carry a special message and in this he resembles the prophet. It is not only for this very purpose that he has been chosen to exist but it is for this that he is prepared to die. In 1946 he writes: “From the lives of truly great men it can be deduced that the urge for creation responds to an instinctive feeling of living in order to deliver a message to mankind” (S&I: 135). In the essay significantly entitled “A Self-analysis” written in 1948 Schoenberg speaks of the horror with which people view the composer of atonality and particularly of twelve tone music and clearly referring to himself he goes on to say “it is the musicologist’s duty to guide the audience in order to procure a fair evaluation of one who has the courage to risk his life for an idea” (S&I: 76-77).

A parallel concept finds its way into *Der biblische Weg*. According to Schoenberg, the Jewish people, like the prophet and the genius, have been chosen for the express purpose of preserving a message, no matter the cost. Aruns faced with a premonition of disaster says:

We Jews are a nation of martyrs, but we have a tenacious hold on life, because we have to preserve it for our Idea. And we have always known how to die for it. We Jews would no longer be alive had we not risked our life for it, had we feared to die for it. (Act III, sc.4, p.313)

Both artist and Jew have a task to perform and that is to preserve the Idea. Both are ready to die for it. And this says Schoenberg is the reason for survival.

The Idea has thus taken on many different layers of meaning all of which stem from the God Idea, that force which moves the human soul towards transcendence and progress. The Idea is at once the very nucleus of a musical conception and it is also the Messianic Idea. The artist has been

chosen to realise the Idea and the Jewish people have been chosen to deliver a universal message.

RELIGIOUS CONVICTION

Most writers on Schoenberg have been aware of a connection between his religious beliefs and his music; a few have even acknowledged the special link between his religious beliefs and dodecaphony. Among the latter Botstein makes an important statement: "Schoenberg's decisive search for a musical language adequate to his conception of the aesthetic and ethical obligations of the modern artist took place simultaneously with changes in his religious beliefs" (Botstein, 1992: 164). However in a short essay such as that written by Botstein, expansion of this notion is clearly not appropriate. Pamela White in *Moses and the God Idea* writes of Schoenberg's religious affiliations, especially in the opera *Moses und Aron*. Dika Newlin (1968: 205) writes: "I am convinced that Schoenberg's religious and philosophical ideas are inextricably interwoven with the genesis of the technical innovations with which his name is unforgettably associated"¹⁹ Wörner writes that Schoenberg's theological beliefs influenced his idea and formulation of the twelve-note principle. However, the crucial connection between Schoenberg's *Gedanke*, his music, especially twelve-tone-music and his God-Idea are nowhere given their full due.

There is for Schoenberg always an underlying religious component, an element in composition which is akin to that of creation--and creation is linked to progress. "Every composer is obliged to invent, to invent new things, to present new tone relations for discussion and to work out their consequences" (The Musical Idea: 371). Indeed the art of composition is in a sense a simulacrum of the act of creation. The "vision of something which has not existed before this vision" is common to both the Lord's act of creating light and the composer's power to realise his vision (S&I: 215). But, concedes Schoenberg, there is a difference. Whereas Divine creation occurs immediately--"There was Light' at once and in its ultimate perfection"--human creators on the other hand, even geniuses, and even "if they are granted a vision, must travel the long path between vision and accomplishment."

As early as 1917, at about the time that he was working on *Die Jakobsleiter*, Schoenberg propounded his views on the inborn God-given ability to create. In a prospectus which he drafted for a Composition Seminar which was published on 1st September 1917 he writes "One learns

perfectly only those things for which one has an aptitude. Then, no particular pedagogic discipline is needed: a model, provoking emulation, suffices; one learns whatever one was created for, without knowing how; one learns as much as one's inborn aptitudes allow" (Reich, 1971: 110). A note written from Southern California some seventeen years later shows that Schoenberg had still not changed his mind regarding the primacy of inborn aptitude in the process of creativity. Asked whether he thought that separation from the homeland had effected his work he replied in his own newly acquired English: "If immigration has changed me--I am not aware of it. Maybe I would have written more when remaining in Europe, but I think: nothing comes out, what was not in. And two times two equals four in every climate" (Reich, 1971: 230).²⁰

On a few occasions in his writings Schoenberg makes explicit mention of God, of an authority higher than himself, the source of his inspiration. We have seen that he mentions God in his essay on Liszt of 1911. In an essay of 1927 entitled "Italian National Music" written in a sharply caustic style reminiscent of Karl Kraus and in a manner which tends to conceal the seriousness of the issue, Schoenberg writes "Italian national music, which to-day is openly written on higher orders (whereas I, in my reactionary way, stick to writing mine on orders from The Most High)--this Italian national music sacrifices the requirements of a snobdom of uncomplicatedness, which in no way differs from the snobdom that preceded it..." (S&I: 175). In 1941, writing of his method of twelve tone composition Schoenberg writes of Beethoven's perhaps unconscious contrapuntal treatment of the *Muss es sein* motif in his Op. 135 String Quartet and remarks "From my own experience I know that it can also be a subconsciously received gift from the Supreme Commander" and continues to substantiate this with proof of his own creative process during the composition of his *Kammersymphonie* (S&I: 222). In "On Revient Toujours" (1948) he writes "I was not destined to continue in the manner of *Transfigured Night* or *Gurrelieder* or even *Pelleas and Melisande*. The Supreme Commander had ordered me on a harder road." (S&I: 109).

And now, in *Der biblische Weg*, it becomes clear that it is not only that Schoenberg is convinced that he takes his orders from The Most High in his act of composing music, but also that the Idea is that which lies at the root of the survival of the Jewish people who were at the time of Schoenberg's writing of *Der biblische Weg*, threatened with grave danger. Guido (Joshua, the

new leader) in his closing speech declares (p.327) “The Jewish nation lives out an Idea: the belief in the one and only, immortal eternal and unimaginable God” and in the German *Das jüdische Volk lebt einem Gedanken: Dem Glauben an einem einzigen, unsterblichen, ewigen, unvorstellbaren Gott*. *Gedanke* refers both to the aesthetic and the theological.

Moreover since the Idea is the God-Idea, it also embraces the prohibition which is to do with representation. Asseino, the priest mourning Aruns’ death in the last scene of the play, makes this link perfectly clear (*Der biblische Weg*:325-327. The bold print and italics are present in Lazar’s copy).

And now I understand fully why you, beloved friend, like Moses and Aron, could not enter the promised land.

The Idea (*Der Gedanke*), conceived in bliss, born in pain, reared in hardship, resists any material realization, in the same way that God does not tolerate any **representation** of Himself. Whoever dedicates himself to the Idea must either renounce the attempt to materialise it, or be content with a reality which he would not want to experience. Therefore whoever is compelled to live out an Idea inevitably becomes its martyr...therefore he himself may never enter the Promised land.

The Idea, which in the *Gedanke* manuscripts is applied to composition, is now informed by the prohibition against representation, and has, in an extremely strict sense therefore come to be associated with God. It would seem that for Schoenberg even the formulation of the thought of a Promised Land was not in keeping with the severity of the Idea. Moreover it anticipates, before *Moses und Aron* was even written, the possibility that the composer, like Moses, would not be able to complete that work for as Asseino says, the Idea can never be realised by the one who has dedicated himself to it “he himself may never enter the Promised Land.” In a deep and complex way it is possible that Schoenberg did not wish to complete his two important religious works--it would have been for him “unreligious” to do so. He is the martyr whose Idea “resists material realization.”

In 1931 a German psychologist Julius Bahle sent a questionnaire to several artists concerning the nature of the creative process. In answer to the question “What are the most important phases in the composition of a song?” Schoenberg, in his description of the first stage of composition, responded as follows: “Unnameable sense of a sounding and moving space, of a form with

characteristic relationships; of moving masses whose shape is unnameable and not amenable to comparison.”²¹ The key words in the passage--sounding, moving, space, unnameable--are already familiar to us in Schoenberg's writings and may particularly be linked to *Die Jakobsleiter*. From Schoenberg's description above it would also appear that relationships in space are crucial to the Idea.

The question of relationship lies at the heart of the understanding of the Idea as it applies to dodecaphony. Schoenberg writes in 1934 “An idea is the establishment of relations between things or parts between which no relation existed before that establishment” (The Musical Idea: 422) and, also in 1934 “An idea is the production of a relation between things that would otherwise have no relation. Therefore an idea is always new”(The Musical Idea: 15-16). It will be remembered that Schoenberg's own term for the twelve-tone composition was “Method of Composing with Twelve Tones Which are Related Only with One Another” (S&I: 218). Implicit then within Schoenberg's concept of the idea is the element of creation—the existence of something which was not there before. Further, it is especially within the constantly changing relationships between tones that the renewal of the idea occurs.

In privileging the concept of relationships Schoenberg also dismisses the traditional relevance of the consonance-dissonance polarity (S&I: 208):

in twelve-tone composition one need not ask after the more or less dissonant character of a sound-combination, since the combination as such (ignoring whether its effect creates a mood or not) is entirely outside the discussion as an element in the process of composition. This combination will not develop, or, better, it is not *it* that develops, but the relationship of the twelve tones to each other develops, on the basis of a particular prescribed order (motive), determined by the inspiration (the idea!)

And now the picture becomes more clear. The order of the row is determined by inspiration. We know (because Schoenberg has told us on numerous occasions) that inspiration emanates from a divine source. The relationship between the twelve tones develops according to the genius of its author. It may do so in an infinite number of ways, but always in accordance with a single order to which it owes obedience—the Higher Authority, The Row. The idea of “the relationship of the twelve tones to each other” is invested with a seriously religious dimension.

Not only does twelve tone composition fulfil his need to find a new and comprehensive tonal language but in its "Oneness" it also complies with his religious beliefs. It is not for nothing that the first word in *Moses und Aron* (that opera which is built on a single tone row) is *Einziger*.

It is important to bear in mind Schoenberg's opinion--and indeed one which is generally accepted-- that the real division in Western art is between counterpoint and harmony (S&I: 207f), between the horizontal and the vertical. In an essay written in 1934 he explains the difference between the homophonic and contrapuntal (The Musical Idea 110- 111 and 137). In homophonic music images arise through "developing variation" (*Entwickelnde Variation*) which affects the main voice; contrapuntal music on the other hand proceeds along shifting images and by a process of "unfolding" (*Abwicklung*). Of course there is a conflict inherent in the concept of viewing as a whole an art form which is built on a temporal component, one which unfolds in time. Schoenberg, speaking of articulation, describes the difficulty: "although we think an idea at once, as a whole we cannot say it all at once, only little by little: we arrange the different components in succession.(HL: 289)" He compares the process to the working method of an architect "he must first invent his house as a whole, because he cannot possibly begin to lay brick on brick, to join room to room, without a plan." (The Musical Idea: 151). Twelve tone composition does not need to make these distinctions for not only does this method of composition meet the demands of a comprehensive language which unfolds in time but, by unifying the horizontal and the vertical, the criterion of an integrated totality in space is also satisfactorily met. "The main advantage of this method of composing with twelve tones is its unifying effect" he writes in "Twelve-Tone Composition" (S&I: 244). The following passage written in 1923 (S&I: 208) illustrates how all Schoenberg's criteria, spiritual (inspiration/idea) as well as artistic (musical idea) are met in dodecaphony:

The relationship of the twelve notes to each other develops on the basis of a particular prescribed order (motive), determined by the inspiration (idea!)...In twelve tone composition the matter under discussion is in fact the succession of tones mentioned, whose comprehensibility as a musical idea is independent of whether its components are made audible one after the other or more or less simultaneously.

We may add that since inspiration emanates from a divine source (which is in the above extract equated with the idea), the entire structure is as it were governed by a religious force.

David Bach, Schoenberg's boyhood friend wrote an essay about *Der biblische Weg*. In the essay he refers to the poem *Du sollst nicht, du musst* from the Op.27 pieces and writes: "This poem is a profession of faith. A confession that professes art and religion in one, since both spring from one root and culminate in one crown...The play *The Biblical Way* provides access to the mysterious realm of this religion" (Reich, 1971: 159). If one keeps the *Gedanke* manuscripts in mind while reading *Der biblische Weg*, one sees that the concept behind the *Gedanke* and that concept which lies behind the monotheistic Idea of the Jewish people are to Schoenberg one and the same thing and indeed Schoenberg refers to them by the same word-- Idea. He speaks moreover of *messianischen Gedanken* as well as *Der musikalische Gedanke*. For as his friend David Bach suggested, for Schoenberg art and religion are one. Both emanate from God, both are entrusted to an agent who is chosen as bearer of the Idea and what is more, those who bear this awesome duty are also ready to die for it. This is the rationale which allows Schoenberg to shift from the concept of himself as artist to his vision of Judaism with apparent ease. It is the Idea, the *Gedanke* which is the common link.

The parallel which Schoenberg draws between God the Creator on the one hand and the artist as creator on the other may appear to be excessively arrogant. However it should be viewed within the context of the thinking of the period. Firstly, as has been discussed above, Schoenberg drew on the tradition of Goethe which perceived the work of Art to be the product of the voice in the mind of the artist; that unconscious voice which is the inspiration of all art. Secondly and no less important in the history of western thinking is the Platonic tradition in which the integrity of the Idea is identified with its approximation to a higher, abstract spiritual form which is ultimately Christian and divine. The work of art, in so much as it approximates to a divine inspiration, therefore in effect repeats divine creation within itself.

The nationalistic covering with which Schoenberg invests the Idea especially in *Der biblische Weg* is given legitimacy through its association with the artistic/ethical. Conversely the aesthetic theory of the *Gedanke* is given an aura of the holy by dint of its divine origins. However in a technical sense, and this will become more clear in the following chapter, he is never the less forced to confront the problem of finding the means to represent these abstract concepts in composition--and this leads us back to the Schopenhaurian/ Kant notion of representation.

Oneness, Unity, Totality, Unitary Perception, the Absolute--these are terms constantly found in Schoenberg's writings. He pursued the ideal of Unity in his art and in his religion with a passion. In his well known letter to Slonimsky describing the evolution of twelve-tone composition he writes "After that [1915] I was always occupied with the aim to base the structure of my music *consciously* on a unifying idea, which not only produced all the other ideas but regulated also their accompaniment and the chords, the '*harmonies*'²² (The Musical Idea: 427 n.1). "The main advantage of this method of composing with twelve tones is its unifying effect" he writes in 1941 (S&I: 244) His Twelve tone music was nothing less than an attempt to realize in his art the concept of unity; it appropriately, represented a unitary perception of both harmony and counterpoint: of that which can be sounded together and those sounds which are made audible one after the other. Thus the idea of Unity contained in his religious beliefs was matched by the single row on which a piece is built.

In some ways Schoenberg's views on art simply reflected aesthetic perceptions commonly held in Europe during the nineteenth century. Furthermore the habit of putting into writing one's thoughts and theories on music was not peculiar to Schoenberg; indeed it was a habit which was to become increasingly popular in the twentieth century and had surely to do with an awareness of the approaching crisis in Europe and the concomitant rupture in common practise music. Nor was Schoenberg the only theorist/composer to approach musical composition from the viewpoint of an integrated organic totality. Heinrich Schenker (1868-1935) one of the foremost theoreticians of the time, though coming from a vastly different direction, also approached the totality of a piece of music through the relationship between the horizontal and the vertical and the ensuing implications of simultaneity and successiveness. Schenker's interpretation of tonal music through progressive degrees of stratification is moreover clearly an attempt to interpret an organic structure by means of a spatial perspective. As with Schoenberg the musical process which is made possible by the underlying space is also in Schenker's case invested with a transcendental character. This process, again in a manner close to that of Schoenberg's, is underlined by the description of musical concepts through imagery borrowed from human biology. "We should get used to seeing tones as creatures," says Schenker. "We should learn to assume in them biological urges as they characterize living beings" (1954: 6). Schenker follows the Kantian idea that when art appears as beautiful it is seen as if nature.²³ For Schenker who bases

his theories on tonality (he speaks of “the scalestep’s yearning for the tonic”), tones group themselves as if by natural law. Schoenberg of course disagrees with Schenker’s firm position in tonality but for both Schenker and Schoenberg the composer functions as a creator, the formal and theoretical become superimposed one above the other, and moreover there is an inner necessity which goes beyond the Laws formulated by man and this moves into the sphere of inspiration.

Neither was it unusual for a composer to regard himself as a medium through which a higher message was to be delivered. Mahler in 1896 writes of his 3rd Symphony: “Imagine such a *great work*, in which the *whole world* is mirrored--one is, so to speak, no more than an instrument on which the universe plays, I tell you in some places it strikes even me as uncanny; it seems I hadn’t written it at all...” (P. Franklin, 1991: 12). These notions are not unique to the art of music but are again an outcome of late Romantic aesthetics. The romantic aspect of Schoenberg’s thinking has been discussed above. The concept of inspiration coming from an external source clearly relates to the Goethian concept of the eternally feminine; the notion that music as an art which is the expression of the will which cannot be represented, may be traced to Goethe through Schopenhauer; the sense that music in particular seems to carry with it the notion of necessity, of compulsion, of “urges” as Schenker puts it may be seen through a reading of Kantian aesthetics.

Yet a deep chasm separates the spirituality of Schoenberg with that of Schenker, or Mahler or with that of his own disciples Webern and Berg—it is his passion for a particular kind of Oneness. Within Schoenberg’s concept of Oneness lies embedded the Idea of his single-minded sense of Monotheism. He divulged his deep religious convictions on only a few occasions, in general his Jewish affiliations were private, verging on the mystic. True he did not conceal his loyalties when writing *Der biblische Weg* but that was in 1927 when the need for action to support European Jewry acted as an almost compulsive motivating force. In the decade preceding *Der biblische Weg*--the years in which the idea of dodecaphony was fermenting-- Schoenberg, like many of his Jewish compatriots wore the mask of the Marrano Jew of medieval Spain, the Jew who is deeply aware of his identity but who finds it necessary to keep his feelings under cover.

The Idea for Schoenberg was, as we have seen, a concept which consists of layer upon layer of meaning. He moves in and out of a constantly shifting scheme in which concepts resonate with each other, sometimes oppose each other while at the same time informing each other in a multi-layered collage. However a certain pattern emerges and we find that Schoenberg is in fact through the unifying idea of *Gedanke* working within a limited frame-work. The Idea is the “ur-essence” of all things: it is the core of a composition, in *Die Jakobsleiter* the God-Idea is implicit in his approach to prayer; from *Der biblische Weg* onwards the Idea of God is linked to the Jewish God Idea. The Idea is not only adapted to “modern man” as in *Die Jakobsleiter*, but is also capable of finding its way into avant garde music. We have noted that at the heart of composition lies the Idea. For Schoenberg the Idea is related to the divine and the act of composition runs parallel to divine creation. Within the act of composing lies the concept of progress-- for Art means new Art.

I would like to put forward the claim that from the early 1920's Schoenberg's concept of a divine power from which the totality of a compositional Idea emanates, was deeply and secretly linked to the Idea of the absolute, incorporeal, Oneness of God. The responsibility of preserving the idea of this Oneness rests with the Jewish people just as the pursuit of elevated artistic goals rests with the artist. The Law of Unitary perception (dodecaphony) was one such divinely inspired artistic goal. After about 1920 the concept of the preservation of the Idea of the Jewish people was the image which motivated Schoenberg both as artist and Jew.

At the time of writing *Der biblische Weg* Schoenberg invested the Idea with its wider meaning-- a political/national intention became superimposed on the religious/aesthetic. But Schoenberg was clearly beginning to think about his next work, *Moses und Aron*. Towards the end of the final scene of *Der biblische Weg* Guido says: “We must all learn to grasp the concept of the one and only, eternal, and unimaginable God” *Wir müssen alle den Gedanken vom einzigen, ewigen, unvorstellbaren Gott denken lernen*. And so the end of *Der biblische Weg* is the beginning of *Moses und Aron*.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Further confirmation of the date of *Der biblische Weg* exists in a letter quoted by Moshe Lazar from Schoenberg to Franz Werfel written probably after 1933 in which he says "You know that I want to dedicate myself to the rescue of the Jewish people...[S]ince about 1921 I considered the project of writing a drama as a propaganda vehicle for my ideas. I first realized this project in 1926-27 with the play "The Biblical Way" and later in "Moses and Aron", my unfinished opera..."(Lazar, 1994: 111). The work was conceived purely as a drama and not intended to be set to music though Schoenberg did have plans for musical interludes between acts.
2. My quotations from *Der biblische Weg*, the page numbers, translations etc. refer always to Moshe Lazar's publication of that work in German with his English translation in the JASI Vol. XVII, Nos. 1&2, 1994, pp. 162-329.
3. *Der biblische Weg* was printed in an Italian translation by Emilio Castellani in 1967 (Herbert Lindenberger, 1989 : 69n. 5). I am personally indebted to Lazar's work (even though I do not always agree with him) which has been published in JASI XVII Vols. 1&2.
4. Letter to Dr. Jakob Klatzkin May 26 1933 (Letters: No. 153)
5. Moshe Lazar (1994: 74-86) provides some intriguing suggestions as to the interpretations of the names of the protagonists in the play.
6. The German *Posaunen* for trumpets which Schoenberg uses in *Der biblische Weg* is in fact a mistranslation of the Hebrew "shofar" (שופר) which is the word which occurs in the corresponding biblical passage (see next chapter).
7. Kishinev, the capital of what was formerly Bessarabia (now Moldova) was the scene of a violent pogrom carried out against the Jewish inhabitants during Easter 1903. The Jews were accused, amongst other things, of killing a Christian child and using the blood for their Passover ritual (Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz, 1995: 409).
8. An assassination attempt was made on the life of Max Nordau by a young anti-Ugandist named Luban. One wonders if the names of the characters Galman or Golban were derived from the name Luban.
9. The Bar Kochba gymnastic club (named after the Jewish hero who led the revolt against Hadrian in the year 132) was formed in Berlin in 1898 in response to Nordau's call. The formation of similar clubs soon followed in Vienna as well as in various parts of Europe. It is possible that the name "Max" for the hero of *Der biblische Weg* Max Aruns was inspired by the two Maxes, Max Nordau and Max Mandelstamm.
10. From Act I Scene 10 p. 233 of *Der biblische Weg*

11. In his letter of May 1923 to Kandinsky however Schoenberg makes mention of "that man Hitler" (Letters, No.64).
12. I am grateful to Dr. Miriam Maltz for pointing out the reflection of antisemitic language in Schoenberg's writing.
13. The so called Hep! Hep! riots against Jews took place initially in Germany in 1819 but the cry subsequently became an anti-Jewish slogan. It is thought to have originated with the Crusaders from the phrase *Hierosolyma est perdita*--Jerusalem is lost. (The bold type and italics of the words "Hep-Hep" occur in Lazar's English translation but not in his reproduction of Schoenberg's original German.)
14. See Schoenberg's letter to Walter Eidlitz (Letters: 151).
15. Schoenberg's views on the failure of assimilation are clearly articulated in his "Four Point Program for Jewry" in which he writes "Assimilation was never successful with us, and when many of us were ready to assimilate, persecution arose to preserve the nation, as if it were a tool of God to stimulate us when we were in danger of forgetting our inherited belief" (Ringer, 1990: 232).
16. From Schoenberg's essay "Gustav Mahler" (S&I: 462).
17. The letter is from Schoenberg to his wife's sister Mitzi Seligman in which he suggests that only people who are worthy of it are chosen to suffer (see Chapter II, n.19 above)
18. See *New Music: My Music* (S&I: 99-105)
19. This article written in 1968, differs considerably from Newlin's *Bruckner Mahler Schoenberg* first published in 1947. In the 1977 preface to the revised edition of this work referring to the earlier edition she writes "I set much greater store by the religious element in both Mahler and Schoenberg."
20. This was Schoenberg's own perception but of course it is highly unlikely that he would have written works such as *A Survivor from Warsaw*, *Kol Nidre* not to mention *Moses und Aron* if circumstances and location had been different.
21. See Reich, 1971 Appendix 1 for a reproduction of the letter and Schoenberg's reply.
22. Schoenberg the dramatist wrote from the very same perspective as regards *Der biblische Weg*: "From a good Idea, everything flows spontaneously." "This" according to Schoenberg "is the framing thesis of the play" (Lazar in JASI XVII, Vol. 1&2: 113).
23. For an assessment of Kant in relation to Schoenberg see Patricia Carpenter, 1984.

CHAPTER IV

AT THE MOUNTAIN¹

MOSES UND ARON

Let it be noted that Schoenberg was not the only artist of Jewish origin who conceptualised Moses as a liberator of the Jewish people. Heine, Kafka and Chagal, too were among those who looked to the figure of Moses for re-assurance in an increasingly anti Semitic and hostile world. In 1933 Walter Eidlitz with whom Schoenberg corresponded, had sent Schoenberg his book *Der Berg in der Wüste* which deals with Moses as hero (Letters: No.172); in about 1934 Kurt Weill composed a vast biblical drama *Der Weg der Verheissung (The Eternal Road)*. The work deals with themes remarkably close to *Moses und Aron* as well as to *Der biblische Weg* as its title implies. In 1933, that is at almost precisely the same time as Schoenberg was working on *Moses und Aron*, Freud wrote a work which was ultimately entitled *Moses and Monotheism*. It should be born in mind that the prevailing ethos of pre-Nazi Germany was hardly sympathetic to works of this type. In choosing to ignore this, these artists decisively denied their work not only any chance of commercial success in the German speaking countries but in addition the probable wrath of public and critics. The works reflect an attempt, to come to terms with the circumstances which were moving forward so inexorably. For Schoenberg his opera became the vehicle not only as he said for an instrument of propaganda but also an expression of his own ethical beliefs.² The result is a work in which religion and art are closely allied.

Both *Der Biblische Weg* and the opera *Moses und Aron* deal with heroes who are concerned with liberating the people. Furthermore, there is sufficient evidence to support the theory, without going into the popular discussion about Schoenberg's perception of himself as Moses, that the figures of Max Aruns and Moses both reflect Schoenberg's own preoccupation with the plight of European Jewry and his personal desire to involve himself in their liberation through his art and as a political leader.³ In the event we know that although Schoenberg continued to show deep concern for his fellow Jews in Europe and made efforts to help a great number of individuals in his personal capacity, he nevertheless abandoned the idea of devoting his life to saving the Jewish people and turned to what he knew he did best--he wrote the opera *Moses und Aron*.

The earliest known mention of the work is March 1926. Acts I and II of the opera were completed by March 1932 though Act III remains incomplete. In 1933 Schoenberg wrote to Berg of *Moses und Aron*, “of which you have known since 1928, but which dates from at least five years earlier” (Letters: No.156).⁴ He goes on also to speak of “my drama ‘Der biblische Weg’ which was also conceived in 1922 or ‘23 at the latest.” That is to say, Schoenberg himself located the conception of both works around the time of his religious crisis, and his first serial compositions.

In the closing lines of *Der biblische Weg* Guido, the counterpart of the biblical Joshua, declares to the assembly “*Wir haben ein Ziel mehr: Wir müssen alle den Gedanken vom einzigen, ewigen, unvorstellbaren Gott denken lernen*”. This is clearly the forerunner of Moses’ first utterance in the opera *Moses und Aron*. In Moses’ opening declamation the number of epithets is increased from three to five, the two negative attributes serving to expand the accumulative rhythmic impact of the declamation-- “*einzigster, ewiger, allgegenwärtiger, unsichtbarer, und unvorstellbarer Gott*”.

The ancient Hebrew prayer known as the *Amidah* (עמידה) forms the central core of Jewish worship. Also known as the *Shemoneh Esrei* it is recited three times a day, silently and in a statutory position as if standing before the Lord. Of ancient origin the early basis of the prayer is thought to have been composed by the 120 Men of the Great Assembly in the fifth century B.C.E. An examination of the opening of this prayer in the German-Hebrew prayer book reveals a most remarkable resemblance to Moses’ opening words in *Moses und Aron*. The German translation in the prayer book reads thus: “*Gelobt seist du, Ewiger, unser Gott und Gott unserer Väter, Gott Abrahams, Isaaks und Jakobs, allmächtiger, grosser, gewaltiger und erhabener, höchster Gott...*”⁵ Apart from the similarity in the use of accumulative epithets and in the “-er” endings, Moses’ second utterance in the Opera “*Gott meiner Väter, Gott Abrahams, Isaaks und Jakobs, der du ihren Gedanken in mir wiedererweckt hast...*” provides additional support to the suspicion that Schoenberg used the ancient prayer to form the basis of Moses’ opening declamations.

It is usual in Jewish writings and liturgy to address the Unnameable Lord by such substitutive names as The Holy One Blessed He or The Name, or by the proper names which are derived from

God's attributes such as The Eternal, The Omnipotent, The Omniscient. It is by the latter, the attributes, that the Lord is named in the first part of the *Amidah* as well as in *Moses und Aron*.⁶ The word *Ewiger* is a frequently used substitute for the Hebrew "Adonai" (Lord), for example *Ewiger! öffne Du meine Lippen, damit mein Mund dein Lob verkünde*-- the words of meditation which introduce the *Amidah*-- is the translation for אֲדֹנֵי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ⁷

Michael Cherlin (1986: 214-215) throws important light on the opening bars of *Moses und Aron*. The first syllable of each of the first three, that is the positive attributes, moves from the relatively high front vowel in "*einzig*" through the e- of "*ewiger*" to the low back vowel of "*allgegenwärtig*". The thrice repeated "un" then leads directly onto the single syllable O in "Gott" which is bound by two strong consonants. This O contrasts strikingly with the open, unbound O with which the opera began. While the opening O, sung by 6 solo voices, is suggestive of the God-idea, the attributes uttered by Moses are couched in human speech. Moses' inability to articulate or to communicate the divine, is thus immediately exposed. Cherlin's analysis in addition explains why Schoenberg's subtle artistic needs required him to modify the German translation of the *Amidah*.

It is worthy of note that God is not named by attributes in the relevant biblical narrative of the Calling of Moses. Exodus Chapter III:2 relates that the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses out of the bush which burned and was not consumed. He turned to look at the bush and the narrative continues (Verses 4-6):

And when the Lord saw that he [Moses] turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said Moses, Moses. And he said Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thy standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

The question arises as to how Schoenberg arrived at the list of attributes if they do not appear in the biblical source. A likely answer is that the inspiration came from the prayer-book.

Much scholarly discussion, into which we will not enter, exists as to why God is mentioned four times in the biblical verse Chapter III: 6 "God of thy father, the God of Abraham the God

of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” In the *Amidah* however the repetitions are elided becoming simply *Gott unserer Väter, Gott Abrahams, Isaaks und Jakobs*. Apart from using the word *meiner* (referring to Moses) instead of *unserer* (which in the *Amidah* refers to the congregation), Schoenberg follows the *Amidah* version exactly.

The words *Gott meiner Väter, Gott Abrahams, Isaaks und Jakobs, der du ihren Gedanken in mir wiederweckt hast* implies Moses’, perhaps Schoenberg’s, recall of an idea which had been long forgotten and the image of which is expressed by the word *Gedanken*, a word which we know had special significance for Schoenberg, usually with associations of the divine. It is of note that in *A Survivor from Warsaw* of 1947 Schoenberg writes in language similarly indicative of a memory of a prayer known at a time long past. In that work the reference is to the other important Jewish prayer, the *Shema* “I remember only the grandiose moment when they all started to sing, as if prearranged, the old prayer they had neglected for so many years—the forgotten creed”.⁸ This would lead one to believe that Schoenberg had been familiar with both the *Shema* and the *Amidah* in his youth. Stuckenschmidt tells us that Schoenberg’s mother Pauline, born Nachod, was a member of a family who had produced many generations of cantors for the well-known synagogue, the *Altneuschul* in Prague (1977: 16). It would be highly likely that a woman who had herself been born into an observant family would teach her children the two most important prayers, prayers which are customarily taught to every child in an observant Jewish home the *Shema* and the *Amidah*.

Evidence that Schoenberg was familiar with the Hebrew prayer-book (*siddur*) exists in an undated and incomplete composition entitled “Who is like unto Thee, O Lord?” (Complete works Reihe B, Band 19, Chorwerke II). The line is from the Song of Moses (Exodus XV:11). Schoenberg himself writes the Hebrew transliteration, *Mi Chomó-cho Bo-Ay-lím Adonóy?* on his work-sheet.⁹ This is the *מי כמוכה* prayer which forms the introduction to what is known as “The Prayer of Redemption”, a prayer which links the end of the *Shema* to the beginning of the *Amidah* and speaks of God’s deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. Schoenberg then continues the text with several lines from biblical sources all of which deal with the idea of salvation and redemption. In the final line of the text he once more returns to the Hebrew prayer, a line which overtly expresses redemption--*Bo-rúch a-tó a-do-*

nóy gó-ál yis-ro-él גאל ישראל יי ברוך אתה (Blessed art thou O Lord, Who redeemed Israel) This is the last line of the Hebrew Mi Chomó-cho blessing. The first and last lines of Schoenberg's composition are thus taken directly from the prayer-book.¹⁰ Both the Mi Chomó-cho blessing and Schoenberg's composition (see Complete works *ibid.* p145), quote extensively from the Song of Moses in Exodus Chapter XV, a chapter with which Schoenberg would surely have been familiar in his preparation for *Moses und Aron*. Judging from the choice of text and from Schoenberg's use of English, as well as from sketches for the tone row, it would appear that the above work belonged to a period somewhat later than *Moses und Aron*. All deal with themes which occupied Schoenberg extensively in the early 1930's-- those which deal with persecution retribution and redemption..

The *Amidah* prayer has a basic tri-partite structure: it is divided into three sections the first and last of which are in turn divided into three blessings respectively. The "threeness" is emphasised by the opening words of praise which is for the God of the three patriarchs and their descendants. Schoenberg's score too reflects an underlying three-fold structure. The very first sounds to be heard in the opera come from the 6 solo voices who sing in a wordless, *ppp* "O". which Wörner aptly names God as an Idea (1963: 55). The chords which are outlined in this opening (mm.1-2) each comprise three voices and have a time value of three crotchets. Moses' first declamation climaxes, like the corresponding verse in the *Amidah* itself, on pronouncement of the three Fathers *Gott meiner Väter, Gott Abrahms, Isaaks, und Jakobs*. The three positive attributes of God contain three+ three+ six syllables. Moses' *Sprechstimme* follows the same three-based rhythmic pattern with rests to signify the divisions. The opening twelve note row in the Calling of Moses scene is divided into groups of three: AB♭E DE♭D♭ GFF♯ G♯BC --that is the tones of the basic set.

In Schoenberg's Calling-of-Moses scene the well-known *Amidah* prayer has been transformed into a chant which recalls a stark, atavistic allusion to the ancient forefathers while the *Sprechstimme* creates a sense of the rhythm of prayer. Moses' *Sprechstimme* used for the first time in this prayer-like opening conveys the strict, devout fervour which as we shall see is the antithesis of the idolatrous, the popular elements which are depicted later in the work.

PRAYER

While biblical sources for Schoenberg's religious works have been well researched, the importance of prayer, and in particular Jewish prayer, has been largely overlooked.¹¹ Many of Schoenberg's religious works which follow *Moses und Aron* are settings of the Jewish liturgy in the original Hebrew. *Kol Nidre* of 1938 is based on the Hebrew Day of Atonement prayer; *A Survivor from Warsaw* of 1947 embodies the important Hebrew prayer *Shema Yisroel*; Schoenberg's setting of Psalm 130, entitled *De Profundis* (Opus 50b) is set to the original Hebrew text (ממקדים). The incomplete "Who is like unto thee" mentioned above refers to the Hebrew words as written in the prayer book. In addition several works are based on a religious source without actually quoting directly from the liturgy: *Genesis Prelude* Op. 44 (1945) which was part of a project to which other composers were also invited to contribute (Reich, 1971: 215); two works which Schoenberg composed to celebrate the rebirth of the state of Israel in 1948--the *a capella* work *Dreimal tausend Jahre* based on a German poem by D.D. Runes (1949), and *Israel Exists Again* for large orchestra and set to his own text of which he managed to complete only 55 bars. In 1950, the year before his death, Schoenberg worked on, but never completed a work consisting of sixteen pieces originally entitled *Modern Psalms* which will be discussed later in this chapter. The later title of these are indicative of Schoenberg's preoccupation at the time: *Psalmen, Gebete und andere Gespräche mit und über Gott*. These works constitute what amounts to a personal meditation on prayer.

In opening his opera with a declamation of monotheism Schoenberg makes an unambiguous statement about the return to his inherited faith and about his identification with his ancestors. This in a sense gives the official stamp to his return to Judaism. According to Jewish law it is not obligatory (and it is indeed unusual) to undergo the process of reconversion such as that upon which Schoenberg insisted on 24 July 1933 in the *Union Libérale Israélite* synagogue in Paris. Apart from some very exceptional circumstances of apostasy--and a simple conversion to Christianity does not constitute one of these--a person who is born into the Jewish faith remains Jewish for the rest of life. For Schoenberg the opening words of *Moses und Aron* correspond to the official certificate of "Re-entry into the community of Israel".¹² The words constitute a bold and public announcement of his return to his faith. Some twenty years earlier, at a time when he had begun to plan what was later to become his oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*, he had written to Dehmelt (Letters: No.11):

For a long time I have been wanting to write an oratorio on the following subject: modern man, having passed through materialism, socialism, and anarchy and, despite having been an atheist, still having in him some residue of ancient faith (in the form of superstition) wrestles with God (see also Strindberg's 'Jacob Wrestling') and finally succeeds in finding God and becoming religious. Learning to pray!

There has been much speculation as to whether this passage represents an autobiographical résumé of Schoenberg's affiliations up to that point. From the point of view of this study the important issue is that becoming religious meant for Schoenberg at that time "learning to pray" and once having set that pattern--no doubt encouraged by Balzac's *Seraphita* in which prayer is all-important--most of his religious compositions from that time forward contain prayer as a central issue. Gabriel's long closing speech in *Die Jakobsleiter* dwells on prayer coupled with the concept of totality an idea which had long occupied Schoenberg:

Lord, let us cease to exist, become part of the whole!
Release us from our individuality!
Take away the feelings which make us self-centered!
Let us again become a whole, with that whole whose parts we now are!
Lord, receive us mercifully.

Dika Newlin mentions a suggestion from Werner that the final prayer in *Die Jakobsleiter* arranged for three choruses, Chorus from the Depths, Main Chorus and Chorus from on High, derives from a combination of the Hebrew prayers *Avinu Malkainu* and *Slach Na* (see Chapter II n.3, above). These prayers are recited especially on Fast Days. Christensen on the other hand suggests that this is a paraphrase of the Lord's prayer. This is not the place for entering into an investigation of whether the Lord's prayer was perhaps derived from the ancient Hebrew liturgy: suffice it to say that the Jewish-Christian boundaries in *Die Jakobsleiter* are problematic for the researcher as indeed they were for Schoenberg himself in that transition work.

We have noted in Chapter II that the allegorical concept of *Die Jakobsleiter* bears resemblance to such works as Goethe's *Faust*, Mahler's Third Symphony and Strindberg's *Road to Damascus*. These works all reflect the theme of human progress, and the creative forces which underpin the path of ascent. The views expressed in these works are entirely in keeping with late Romantic thinking. Schoenberg however, had already at that time added a dimension which was not altogether in line with the prevailing ethos and that was the element of religion

in a more defined sense and more especially of prayer. *Die Jakobsleiter*, as an allegorical fantasy, carries within it the sentiments which reveal the aspirations and accompanying uncertainties of his condition both as marginal Jew, marginal Protestant and as progressive artist. As has been noted, the prayers though fundamentally Protestant in tone, deal with an eclectic variety of religious beliefs. A comparison of the closing lines of the oratorio and those of the opera reveal significant differences.

The closing Chorus in Part II of *Die Jakobsleiter* sings from “from on high” (Schoenberg’s own instruction) with the words:

Their connection with him [the Eternal One] awakens by magnetism the streams of the spirit through induction:

the spirit grows stronger, the more often they stream,
the stream grows with every prayer:

A moment of heavenly glory grant’s God’s mercy to the prayer

Lord God in heaven, Hears your plea, Understands your sins, Has mercy on you...

Sends you eternal love and blessedness.

Moses’ last words in the incomplete Third Act of *Moses und Aron* are to the people:

Whensoever you went forth amongst the people and employed those gifts—which you were chosen to possess so that you could fight for the divine idea—whensoever you employed those gifts for false and negative ends, that you might rival and share the lowly pleasures of strange peoples,...then as a result of that misuse you were hurled back into the wasteland.

(Moses words are at that point interrupted as Aron falls down dead. Moses then continues)

But even in the wasteland you shall be victorious and achieve the goal: unity with God..

Both passages express a yearning for divine mercy. The first extract is typical of the closing prayer of an oratorio; in the second, prayer is implicit in the “fight for the divine idea.” The *Jakobsleiter* extract expresses not only the Christian notion of forgiveness, eternal love and blessedness, but in addition the rather poetic, Theosophic imagery of magnetism which awakens “the streams of the spirit”. In the *Moses und Aron* extract the longing for union with God contains no mention of sin or forgiveness. Rather it is a proclamation of faith, an expression of the harsh, relentless struggle against idolatry in its wider sense and the ultimate promise of redemption.

In the last year of his life, more than thirty five years after he had written to Dehmel requesting a libretto which would help teach modern man to pray, the ailing Schoenberg, still mindful of

adapting to contemporary “modern” issues, began work on his series of *Modern Psalms*. In the first one of these he writes:

When I say ‘God’, I know that I am speaking of the One, Almighty, Omniscient and Inconceivable God, of whom I neither can nor may make an image for myself. On whom I neither may nor can make any claim, Who will fulfill my most ardent prayer or not heed it. And yet I pray, as all living things pray for mercy and wonders; fulfilment. Yet I pray, for I do not wish to lose the blissful feeling of oneness, of union with God.

Life had taken its toll; he had experienced persecution on an ethnic, personal, and professional level, he had been exiled from his country of birth, experienced domestic upheavals, suffered ill-health and continuous financial difficulties—“and yet I pray.”

ART AND PRAYER

The opera *Moses und Aron* serves to delineate two paths. Firstly, the shift which occurred in Schoenberg’s religious attitudes which moved from baptised, assimilated Jew to reconverted staunch upholder of the Monotheistic faith. Secondly the path which runs in close parallel and is indeed linked to the first trajectory, that is the late nineteenth century artist who evolves from a concern with the integrity of expressiveness who carries this through to the emancipation of dissonance and ultimately is the founder of Serialism a technique which found perhaps its most perfect expression in *Moses und Aron*. The opera stands as a substantiation of Schoenberg’s idea that the divine nature of God, prayer and the Law were deeply connected in his mind with the divine nature of the creation of his music.

Schoenberg had already portrayed his newly-found religious beliefs in *Der biblische Weg*. That work stands as a validation of the obligation which is incumbent on the Jewish people, namely that they have been designated to deliver the monotheistic idea and it is for this purpose that they must survive. In this sense the play serves a non-musical, didactic purpose the intention of which is to alert and to bring together a diasporic people. In *Moses und Aron* Schoenberg’s ethical-religious intentions are expressed in the parameters of both music and text—one cannot exist without the other and prayer is part of both. The presence of prayer in the text is clear; the implied presence of the divine in the tone row makes this presence equally clear in the music.

Adorno has remarked of Schoenberg's expressive language "Its secret model is that of revealing the Name" (1992: 233). This is especially true in *Moses und Aron*. Schoenberg, through Moses, approaches the sublime in music and in prayer and in both he faces the accompanying uncertainty, the possible unpleasure. He confronts the mysterious Nothing with awe and fear, for as Moses says in Act III of *Moses und Aron* "The almighty one (and he retains that quality forever) is not obliged to do anything...he is bound neither by the transgressor's deeds, nor by the prayers of the good, nor by the offerings of the penitent." And yet one hopes; prayer acknowledges the possibility that the uncertainty, the moment of dread will be averted—"even in the wasteland you shall be victorious and achieve unity with God." says Moses in Act III of *Moses und Aron*. The sense of purity with which Schoenberg imbued serialism, the privileging of truth over beauty, the acceptance of pain in the pursuit of the Absolute-- all these have their correspondence in religion. He saw himself as the uncompromising and often unrecognized, lonely pioneer/teacher who through God's gift was leading the music of his fathers into a new, unknown world, but at the same time a world filled with meaningful possibilities.

MOSES UND ARON AND THE GEDANKE

In *Moses und Aron* many of the thoughts which had occupied Schoenberg for many years are brought together as part of the mammoth artistic/religious project. Those same issues which are encountered in the *Gedanke* manuscripts and in *Der biblische Weg* and earlier are now, in the opera, brought in as part of the conflict which is ever present not only between the personalities of Moses and Aron but also between Moses and the people and, through Moses, between God and the people.

The notion of Totality, always important to Schoenberg is here moved onto an uncompromisingly religious level. In Act I:4 the people express their difficulty in accepting the idea of the invisible God. They long to make material sacrifice as they had done in the past. Moses, nearing the point of exasperation cries out "He wants not a part, for everything's wanted." Aron, try as he will cannot convince Moses that "no folk can grasp more than just a partial image, the perceivable part of the whole idea." For Moses, the giving of gold and gifts signifies partial dedication. The invisible God does not ask this of the people. He demands

unlimited devotion. Moses accepts the challenge and cries out "My love is for my idea. I live just for it." (Act II:5). The Idea represents Totality in the musical and in the religious sense.

The Faustian ideal of redemption through suffering is given its most explicit expression yet, by the Voice from the Burning Bush--that is by the word of God: "...they [the people of Israel] will undergo all hardships that have, in millennia, ever come to be conceived." The Voice then continues in a Messianic tone reminiscent of the prophet Isaiah. "And this I promise to you: I shall conduct you forward, to where, with the eternal Oneness, you'll be a model to every nation."

Within the first few seconds of the opera we are made aware of Schoenberg's attitude to the notion of compulsion, which was for him part and parcel of any spiritual task. From the divine voice comes the instruction to Moses who is reluctant to take on the task but is compelled to do so by a divine force: "You have seen your kindred enslaved, the truth you have known, so you can do nothing else: therefore you must set you folk free." (Act I:1). A similar attitude which stems from Schoenberg's highly developed sense of duty is highlighted in the text (Schoenberg's own) of *Unentrinnbar*, the first of the Opus 27 pieces of 1925:

Brave are those who perform deeds which surpass their courage.
They have but the strength to conceive of their tasks and the strength of character to
find it impossible to refuse.¹³

One is reminded of Schoenberg's own story told in a letter of thanks to those who had sent birthday greetings to him on the occasion of his 75th birthday in 1949 "Once in the army, I was asked if I was really the composer A.S. 'Somebody had to be' I said 'and nobody else wanted to, so I took it on, myself'" (Letters: No. 261).

The sense of duty was to remain with him. Schoenberg was, from about 1922, preoccupied with the idea that Moses was chosen to liberate the people--an idea which found its way into *Moses und Aron* and *Der biblische Weg*. It would seem that traumatised by the events preceding his departure from Europe and impelled by the urgency of the political situation, Schoenberg had for a time felt it his duty to become a leader of the Jewish people. He seriously

contemplated the notion that he, Arnold Schoenberg, was obliged to take on the task of leading Jews out of Europe. In a letter to Webern dated August 4 1933 he writes (Reich, 1971: 189):

And now, as from a week ago, I have also returned officially to the Jewish religious community; indeed, we do not differ in the matter of religion (my *Moses and Aron* will show this), though we do when it comes to my views on the need for the church to adapt itself to the demand of the modern way of life. It is my intention to take an active part in endeavours of this kind. I regard that as more important than my art, and am determined--if I am suited to such activities--to do nothing in future but work for the Jewish national cause. I have begun already...¹⁴

It is not clear whether Schoenberg contemplated the effect that the dispersal of artists from Europe would have on music itself and whether in fact he saw himself as the one who was to take the New Music out of Europe. In the event, as we know, the flood of artists and thinkers who fled Europe did indeed provoke a re-alignment of cultural and scientific focal points throughout the world. The rich concentration of cultural ferment in the Vienna which we discussed in the Prologue to this study, was dispersed to various countries and especially to America, with results which are effective to this day. Milton Babbitt, in his Celebrative Speech made at the Arnold Schoenberg Centennial Celebration on September 13, 1974 describes the change (JASI Vol.I, p.1):

in but a few short but surely not sweet convulsive years, suddenly and summarily the global course of contemporary musical development was transported and diverted from the European continent to our own, and our role was transformed from that of our wandering predecessors, who abroad had been innocent spectators and visiting aliens, to that of participants, hosts and--at least by propinquity--colleagues...

For Schoenberg the years of crisis were not endured without cost. Two tensions in particular emerged as a result of his fractured existence. One was the disillusionment in that very shrine to which he had offered his life's work and most loyal allegiance--that is to German *Bildung*. It was after all the discovery of twelve tone music which was laid at the altar of German music whose supremacy it was to ensure. The second was that in writing a work which is directed towards the Jewish God, Schoenberg was forced to confront a duality-- what it is to know the Jewish God and abide by that which cannot be represented; at the same time to conceptualise this unrepresentable being in his art. In a sense the two forces worked side by side. As the disappointment in German culture increased so Schoenberg turned with ever more decisive step towards his God, and as he became more preoccupied with his communication with his God so

the problem of Representation in Art became more urgent.

REPRESENTATION

It is true that Jewish thinkers have dwelt on a problem not dissimilar to the one which plagued Schoenberg. Steven Swarzschild for example introduces his essay "Speech and Silence Before God" by citing the paradox which exists in the Jewish prayer which declares "His Name is elevated above all praises and blessings" (from Nehemiah 9:5) and the prayer continues "Praised is the Lord who is ultimately praised forever and ever." To reach for both simultaneously—to proclaim the One who is beyond praise and yet praise Him--says Swarzschild is an ideal which can only be achieved messianically (1972: 99) However this existential question is not lingered over. The Judaic belief is that the observance of the Laws constitutes an act of worship, as does the act of prayer--both are carried out in service of God. Art too is part and parcel of religion and music in particular is, from biblical times forward, perceived as a form of worship. In *Moses und Aron* Schoenberg proposes to unite Art and Religion but for him there was no question of reliance on the experience of Rabbinic Judaism which for thousands of years has learnt how to reconcile this very dilemma. Schoenberg, whose preference was for "religion without organisational fetters", did not have recourse to the support of Jewish traditional observance. In his religion as in his music he was the autodidact.

Schoenberg's preoccupation with the Jewish prohibition against representation had already manifested itself in the *Four Pieces for Mixed Chorus opus 27* composed at the end of 1925 (see n.12 of this chapter). For the first two of these songs Schoenberg wrote his own text. The seriousness of the text combined with the purity of the *a-capella* singing as well as the strict serial composition together go to make up an important declaration of faith. Addressed to the Chosen One (a figure who is familiar to us from *Die Jakobsleiter*) the text reads:

You should not make yourself an image!
For an image limits,
Reduces, grasps,
That which should remain unlimited and unimaginable.

An image warrants a name:
You can only take it from below;
You should not revere the Lower!

You must believe in the spirit!

Immediate, unfeeling
 And unselfish
 You must, Elected, must if you want to remain chosen!

The question of representation, or rather the impossibility of representation in music, is perhaps the central theme of the opera. In the early stage of Schoenberg's creative life his concern with representation was focused on artistic values of a moral and ethical nature. In *Moses und Aron* the problem of representation takes on added meanings and added tensions. Emerging from his interest in Schopenhaurian philosophy and supported by the opinions of Kraus, Loos and Kandinsky the drive was towards truth of expression devoid of outer ornament, and towards the production of art which was free of image. Music, according to Schopenhaurian thought was, of all the arts, the most direct form of expression and one which equates most readily with the Idea itself. In a milieu in which Art was elevated almost to a level of worship this was an acceptable premise.

D. Albright makes the pertinent observation "The second commandment forbids the worship of images; but there is another, subtler idolatry that it does not mention, the worship of the imagination"(1981: 7). So strict was the prohibition which Schoenberg imposed on himself that he appeared to object to the worship of the imagination--even the formulation of the thought of the Promised Land was a too-close-approximation of an image. In the third act of the opera Moses accuses Aron in the most severe terms "You then desired actually, physically, to tread with your feet upon unreal land where milk and honey flowed." He continues further in a series of antitheses--a style which Schoenberg used to couch serious philosophical thoughts in his proposed Program Symphony and in *Die Jakobsleiter*. "You have betrayed God to the gods, the idea to images, this chosen folk to others, the extraordinary to the commonplace" (Act III). The Image is here the evil antithesis of the Idea. Conversely therefore, the Idea the *Gedanke*, is the conceptual embodiment of that which cannot be an image, that is God. Alexander Goehr has expressed this opinion when he cites the words of Schoenberg's Moses at the moment of smashing the tablets--"Inconceivable God! Inexpressible, all-pervasive Idea." At this juncture, as Goehr points out, Moses seems to equate the Idea with God (1985: 59).

Representation and idolatry are in a sense part of the same concept. The prohibition against

representation is a safeguard against the representation of false idols—the true God of course is unrepresentable. Idolatry as it is depicted in the Golden calf scene, refers to idolatry not only in its spiritual sense but refers also to musical idolatry—falsity of ornament, the illusionary shadows cast by tonal harmony, the self-indulgence implied by the consonant interval, the seductiveness of melody. As we have seen the search for mere beauty was never for Schoenberg the ultimate goal. On the contrary in *Structural Functions of Harmony* completed in 1946 he writes “Beauty, an undefined concept, is quite useless as a basis for aesthetic discrimination, and so is sentiment. Such a *Gefühlsaesthetik* would lead us back to the inadequacy of an obsolete aesthetic which compared sounds to the movement of the stars, and deduced virtues and vices from tone combinations” (Reich, 1971: 217). With this he dismisses the ethos of *correspondance* which was important to him when writing his “War-Clouds Diary” at the time of World War I (see Chapter I above). But something further is implied by this dismissal. It is the implication that an amorphous concept of beauty as a yardstick of aesthetic evaluation is a false one. Beauty is neither the essence, nor the Idea of a work but it rather resembles the shapeless, molten gold of the calf which gleams brightly but which is powerless. Beauty is in a sense a false idol. The Row on the other hand represents the purity of the Idea and all which that entails. It is incumbent upon the artist to reconcile the principles of that which is at once austere but which remains unmediated by the softening element of “beauty” which would help to render it accessible. The drama, if not the tragedy of modernity is that without beauty the inexpressible remains just that: inexpressible and hence incapable of spiritualising a people.

SCHOENBERG’S JUDAISM

A number of issues discussed in connection with *Der biblische Weg* reflect that Schoenberg’s vision of Judaism at times reveals a somewhat blurred image of his own Jewish identity. Schoenberg’s respect for Christianity and admiration of Christ were to remain with him all his life. In No. 9 of *Modern Psalms* which he wrote in 1950, that is seventeen years after his re-conversion to Judaism, Schoenberg writes of the tragedy of Jewish history which has misunderstood Christ. He writes of Jesus as “undoubtedly the purest, most innocent, most selfless, most idealistic being who ever walked this earth; His will, His entire thought and aims were directed toward men’s salvation, in that he leads them to the true belief in the Sole, Eternal, All-powerful One.” (Reich, 1971: 234 and White, 1985: 55). At the same time one

notices that Schoenberg is careful to refer to Jesus as a “being who...walked this earth.” The notion of incorporeality, invisibility, inconceivability so vital to his concept of a deity, is absent.

The Conservative Revolutionary

Nor are the inner conflicts and uncertainties of the assimilated Jew entirely wiped out by the act of re-conversion. The German title of Reich’s biography of Schoenberg is well chosen: “*Schönberg oder Der Konservative Revolutionär*”. It is possible that Schoenberg’s revolutionary stance had its roots in a response to a commonly held view, and one extremely prevalent in anti-Semitic writings; that is that Jews are capable neither of originality nor of truly creative production but are able only to reproduce the work of others. Schoenberg refers to the Jewish acceptance, indeed over-acceptance of this view in the “Mailam Lecture” of 1935 (S&I 504) “The latter [the Jews], deprived of their racial self-confidence, doubted a Jew’s creative capacity more than the Aryans did”. The Jewish lack of creative ability was a view held *inter alia* by Wagner, and Weininger both of whose writings were well known to and at one time admired by Schoenberg. The psychologist Carl Jung leaves us in no doubt about his own opinions when he writes in a 1934 essay “The Jew as a relative nomad has never created, and presumably will never create, a cultural form of his own, for all his instincts and talents are dependent on a more or less civilised host people.”¹⁵ It was perhaps Schoenberg’s underlying determination (whether conscious or not) to disprove this theory which stimulated his revolutionary approach to his art. His dictum “Art means New Art” (S&I 115) was one which acted as a powerful driving force throughout his career.

In paradoxical fashion, the converse of this is also true. Schoenberg, in affiliating himself with tradition and perceiving himself to be in the line of masters of the past was, as the assimilated Jew, attempting to secure his position in the world of German *Kultur*. In placing himself in the position of cultural heir to Bach Beethoven and Brahms he was defending himself against his critics who thought otherwise.

Of course, this is not to say that these are the only reasons for Schoenberg’s stance as an evolutionary-revolutionary. He had as has been discussed in Chapter I above, in his early years been part of a group of vibrant young Viennese artists who held similar views. Nevertheless it is here argued that the very fact of Schoenberg’s early insecurity of identity led him on to

what remained a complicated tension between tradition and innovation. Areas of ambivalence are to be found within the fabric of *Moses und Aron* as we shall see.

GOLDEN CALF MUSIC

One of the conditions which Schoenberg appeared to have set for himself when he decided to ally himself with monotheism was an attempt to return to what he saw as his oriental roots. With his decision to embrace Judaism came a corresponding decision to separate himself from all that tied him to his previous affiliations; for him that meant removing himself not only from Europe but from Western culture. It should be borne in mind that the prevailing tendency in Germany and Austria was, broadly speaking, to divide society into Insiders who stem from German stock and Outsiders who do not-- that is those from the Occident and those from the Orient. Jews naturally belonged to the latter. Schoenberg in accepting his Eastern identity was underlining his commitment to Judaism and at the same time, attempting to draw strength from the fact. A letter to Klatzkin dated June 13 1933 makes this intention clear: "We Jews must become a nation again and should only be tied together according to our true essence. But our essence is not Western; the latter is only an external adapted one. We must return to our origins, to the source of our strength" (Lazar, 1994: 125 n.63). On August 4th of the same year he writes to Webern adopting a more personal tone and here he acknowledges the difference between himself and his Gentile colleague, pupil and friend "You are right that it is difficult to remain inactive at this time. In any case the reasons for activity are different for me than for you.... I have definitely separated myself from whatever binds me to the Occident. I have decided for a long time to become a Jew..." (Stuckenschmidt, 1977: 370). Whether he in fact found this separation possible is doubtful indeed. Webern sent the above letter to Berg who responded to it on August 26th "He has shaken me deeply. Even if I regard his departure from the Occident *humanly* possible (I don't believe it, or at least I don't regard his turning to the *Orient* as possible) there remains for me the unshakeable fact of his musical works, for which there is only one description: German" (Stuckenschmidt, 1977: 370). It would appear that Berg's scepticism was justified for despite Schoenberg's rational decision to remove himself from Western culture he found it impossible to do so. It is significant that his later so called "Jewish" works (*Kol Nidre*, *Survivor from Warsaw*, *De profundis*) derive directly from liturgical Hebrew sources and not from Oriental melodic or folk influences.

We have mentioned in Chapter I the condition of the Marrano Jews of Spain who under the threat of persecution, donned the mask of Christianity but who secretly remained faithful to the religion of their birth. A great deal of work has been done on more recent manifestations of a similar phenomenon--that is the complex psychological mechanism which accompanies the attempted assimilation of a minority group who desire entry into what appears to them to be a sought-after powerful majority. Both Frantz Fanon (1986) who based his findings on Africans in the Congo and Sander Gilman (1986) whose research concerns Jews analyse the psychological means by which the outsider takes onto itself the derogatory gaze of the reference group as a condition of assimilation and the corresponding splitting off of part of the self in order to achieve this. For Schoenberg the vulgarised gaze of his German-speaking host was recognized with ruthless clarity at the time of his reconversion (1933). In April 1923 he had written to Kandinsky "I have finally understood and will never again forget. Namely that I am not a German, not a European, hardly even a human being, (at least the Europeans prefer the worst of their race to me), rather that I am a Jew..." (Letters: 91) The effects of the self-perception of Otherness however lie deep and Schoenberg was apparently not able to eradicate totally the code which had been so assiduously put in place. It is particularly in the music of the Golden Calf Scene, that his ambivalence is clearly illustrated. The work of Gilman shows that the two stereotypes, Africans and Jews who stemmed from the exotic Other were, to the European mind, freely interchangeable. Similarly, African music, Jazz, Eastern European, that is Jewish culture, were all inter related by their common association with the exotic. The jazz elements and emphasised rhythmic expression in the Golden calf scene, reflects Schoenberg's association of "Jewish music" with what were regarded as typically African traits in music

Of course Berg's assessment expressed in his letter quoted above, is correct: there is only one description for Schoenberg's musical works and that is German. Schoenberg seems to have been little interested in musics beyond art-music of the German tradition. Neither music of other countries, nor dance music nor even folk music of Austria/ Germany held much appeal for him: this lack of interest extended to Jewish folk music. He makes himself abundantly clear when he declares: "...no poet, no philosopher and no musician whose thinking occurs in the highest sphere would degenerate into vulgarity in order to comply with a slogan such as 'Art for All'. Because if it is art, it is not for all, and if it is for all, it is not art" (S&I: 124).

His letter to Klatzkin written on 19 July 1938 gives an accurate idea of his feelings towards Jewish music in general. "...the Jews have never shown any interest in my music. And now into the bargain, in Palestine they are out to develop, artificially, an authentically Jewish kind of music, which rejects what I have achieved" (Letters: No. 178). E Randol Schoenberg quotes a letter from Schoenberg to Albert Einstein written in about 1925 "To my knowledge there is no Jewish music--art music--at this time..." (1987) And yet despite this Schoenberg makes reference to what he perceives to be Jewish music in the Golden calf scene.

Charlotte de Vries Robbé, in an unpublished dissertation (1995: Chapter 3) presents an insightful analysis of the means by which Schoenberg imbued the Golden Calf scene with what was perceived to be a popular notion of Jewish music.¹⁶ The general atmosphere of the scene is not unlike that of a typical musical of the period. There is much repetition and we know that Schoenberg considered repetition to be especially related to folk-music;¹⁷ the use of ostinato, pedal point, unison writing,¹⁸ readily comprehensible harmonies, glissandi, sharply syncopated rhythms-- all are compatible with what is accepted as "popular" but which are generally out of character for, and indeed regarded with disdain by Schoenberg. Moreover the extensive use of percussion instruments, especially tambourine and xylophone, as well as occasional melismatic writing¹⁹ all point to a deliberate allusion to oriental music.

In the Golden Calf scene Schoenberg deliberately chose to use compositional techniques which he normally shunned. Writing to Webern of the Golden Calf scene in September 1931 he says: "You know I'm not at all keen on the dance. In general its expressiveness is on a level no higher than that of the crudest programme music; and the petrified mechanical quality of its 'beauty' is something I can't stand" (Letters: No. 129). And yet the entire Golden Calf scene is imbued with the spirit of wild dancing.

The clue to the reason why Schoenberg used these uncharacteristic devices is given, as De Vries Robbé explains, in his writing for the trombone which occupies a prominent place in the scene. Accompanied by the horn, an important fanfare of trombones occurs at the start of Golden calf scene (Act II, mm. 320-327). Trombones are used subsequently at various important points in the scene such as at mm. 497-501 where the instrument is important in an unaccompanied off-stage solo and at mm. 872-873 in a particularly vivid glissandi passage.

De Vries Robbé points out that the use of trombone to denote Jewish music was not confined to Schoenberg: Richard Strauss for example makes similar use of the instrument in the “Dance of the Seven Veils” scene in *Salomé*. Indeed the use of the trombone was a readily accepted cliché used for the very purpose of denoting “Jewish music”. De Vries Robbé goes on to point out that Exodus XIX: 16 in the version of the Lutheran Bible which Schoenberg used as a source for *Moses und Aron* reads as follows: *Als nun der dritte Tag kam, und Morgen war, da erhob sich ein Donnern und Blitzen und eine dichte Wolke auf dem Berge, und ein Ton einer sehr starken Posaune; das ganze Volk aber, das im Lager war, erschrak.* (And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the shofar exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled).²⁰

In *Der biblische Weg* Schoenberg speaks of “*Posaunen von Jericho*”, the code-name for the invention which was to liberate the Jews (p. 200). This is in conflict with the original Hebrew. In both Exodus XIX:16 and Joshua VI:20 the word שופר (shofar) or plural שופרות (Shofarot) occurs and not “hatsotsrah” חצוצרה (Hatsotsrah) as the German word “Posaune” would imply. “Posaune” (trombone) is thus the erroneous translation for the Hebrew word שופר (shofar), the ram’s horn which is the primitive instrument closely associated with ancient Jewish ritual and which harks back to the Binding of Isaac and the sacrifice of the ram which in the biblical narrative leads to the ultimate blessing and promise of continuity which God gave to Abraham. The use of trombone and to an extent the horn are, in the context of the Golden calf scene a symbol of the shofar which is in turn the ancient symbol for the Jewish people and the Lord’s covenant and promise of continuity.

Schoenberg’s use of a popular idiom, his allusion to orientalism, and his use of the trombone and horn are clearly intended to evoke a symbol of the Jewish people-- to that as-yet-nomadic multitude who had not yet received the Torah and who in their ignorance are in danger of losing the gift of divine grace.²¹ “The scene with the Golden calf” he wrote to Eidlitz on 15 March 1933 “signifies a sacrifice made by the masses, trying to break loose from a soulless belief” (Letters: No.151). The biblical image of the Golden calf is the ultimate symbol of the transgression of the second commandment “Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness, of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the

earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.” It is in the depiction of this unruly mob that the devices associated with popular music are used. In composing music intended to create an effect of the banal but which is itself highly sophisticated Schoenberg shows his own conflicts as a Jewish artist.

Schoenberg clearly drew a parallel between those biblical Jews and his own contemporaneous Jewish compatriots who through their loss of faith are threatened with destruction. This is revealed in a comparison of his choice of language in the biblically based *Moses und Aron* and the 1920's based *Der biblische Weg*. Aron in Act I Sc.2 of *Moses und Aron* says: *Nur ein allmächtiger Gott konnte solch ein schwaches, gedemütigtes Volk auserwählen*” (Only an almighty God could select a people so weak and so downtrodden). Arons in his long speech in Act I Sc.10, 230 of *Der biblische Weg* asks *Kennt ihr noch die kleinen, gedrückten, schwächlichen Jüdlein*” and later he speaks of *dieser gedemühtigten verachteten, kleinen Jüdlein* and the fact that it is they, or rather as Schoenberg puts it “we” who have been chosen (*wir auserwählt sind*). For Schoenberg the four thousand years have telescoped into a single condition of humiliation and corresponding chosenness. But these Jews are not a people of whom Schoenberg is proud. They are weak downtrodden and godless. Schoenberg's music is composed to match. It is Aaron who says “I love this humble folk. I live just for them and want to sustain them” (Act II, Sc. 5). Moses on the other hand responds with the very words which we have heard him utter in connection with his composition-- “My love is for my idea. I live just for it”. It is decidedly not for their holiness that these biblical Jews who are, for Schoenberg, equated with twentieth century European Jews, considered worthy of redemption. On the contrary he sees in the latter the same qualities as the mass of godless Oriental riff-raff for whom he composed music which he had normally considered to be beneath him. But they are worthy of salvation because it is they who have been chosen to carry forward the Idea--the idea of One God.

The intensely dramatic conflict of the opera is played out in the first instance in the relationship between God, Moses and the people for, as Schoenberg wrote to Eidlitz in 1933 (Letters: no.151) “The elements in this tremendous subject that I myself have placed in the foreground are: the idea of the inconceivable God, of the Chosen people and of the leader of the people.” The layer upon layer of emotion in the text are reflected in innumerable ways in

both music and text. Among the most obvious are the different styles of the main protagonists. God's voice is heard only indirectly. In a 1934 entry in a *Gedanke* manuscript he writes "The lyric, or singable, character is the result of a loose construction intimately related to that of popular music" (The Musical Idea: 382). Significantly music composed for Aron is lyrical and singable in contrast to Moses' *sprechstimme* which, naturally, is not. The two characters are remarkably true to their biblical counterparts. Elie Wiesel, commenting on the biblical text, produces a character description of Moses and Aaron which would coincide almost identically with Schoenberg's operatic version "Aaron represents the external aspects of leadership, all that is visible and tangible: form, style, and protocol. Moses on the other hand, personifies the substance of authority: an inner power that remains secret and inviolate".

Perhaps the most telling of the parameters in the entire opera is the tone row, for in it is concealed a wealth of symbolic meaning. In *Moses und Aron* Schoenberg has achieved the highest degree of sophistication in the manipulation of the Twelve tone row. The fluctuating permutations of the six-note row of *Die Jakobsleiter* have been replaced by the now well-known principles resulting in what Schoenberg termed "infinite variation." To follow are some of the basic outlines of the row in *Moses und Aron*.²²

The basic set

Example 1



Its inversion

Example 2



The retrograde

Example 3



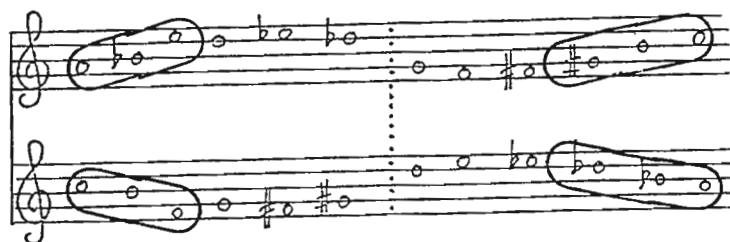
The retrograde inversion

Example 4



One of the properties of the row is the fact that the series forms a combinatorial pair with its inversion starting a third higher:

Example 5



The 6 solo voices open the work (mm.1-3) with a symmetrical four-chord structure which Wörner (1963: 55) appropriately names God as an Idea. The first and second chords are derived from the first and last three-note groups of the series; the fourth and third from the first and last three-note group of the inversion of the original series (See Example 5). The symbol of God the Idea occurs even before the first appearance of the basic row which announces Moses, and indeed it is from these four chords that the whole work unfolds.

Example 6



The Eternal God symbol appears throughout the work and is represented by a hexachord derived from notes 4-6 and 7-9 of the basic series. The Eternal God symbol occurs at Act I mm.11-14 in canon, a technique which further emphasises its eternal character.

Example 7



Both the God as Idea and God the Eternal motifs appear during various points of the work. However the God as Idea in its original symmetrical perfection never appears again.

The first horizontal announcement of the row in its basic form ushers in Moses' opening words "einziger, ewiger, allgegenwärtiger, unsichtbarer, und unvorstellbarer Gott" The prayer is linked to the Row.

Example 8

Aron's first words to his brother occurs in a transposed row in Act I, m. 124. Example 9

The fragmented row in Act II m. 828 is symbolic of the lawless destruction in the Golden calf scene.

Example 10

The way in which the row is used verifies many issues which have been discussed above. In general, the further from God the freer the row which is presented with greatest clarity when God's presence is acknowledged. However when the people become involved in idolatry, when the orgy reaches a climax and as killings and destruction occupy the stage so the series becomes correspondingly obscured--often by those very devices of folk-like melodies ostinati and pedals mentioned above. At the climax of the orgiastic cruelty, the butchers according to Schoenberg's stage instructions slaughter the animals and throw the raw meat to the crowd who then devour it. The orchestral accompaniment at the beginning of this scene is a

perfectly tonal melody in G \flat major and is scored for mandolins, harp, piano, celeste and xylophones, all of which exploit their percussive capabilities to the full (Act II mm. 372-374). Schoenberg opens the scherzo section of the Golden Calf scene (Act II mm.606-823) with a tempo indication of *Wiegendes Tanztempo*. This swaying dance tempo accompanies scenes of wild drunkenness and leads to the outbreak of fighting amongst the revellers. The dance which Schoenberg had said he so hated is used here to brilliant effect but in a way which subverts its aesthetic value. The Row takes on the role of ultimate authority. It is a concealed Unity with infinite possibilities, which knows no space or time. It is of significance that all the religious works from 1923 onwards are built on a tone row. Schoenberg underpins his religious works with dodecaphony thus reinforcing the association between God, the Law and the Row.

OPERA

In a letter to Webern dated "29.3.26", in what is thought to be the earliest reference related to *Moses und Aron*, Schoenberg writes "*An dem Text zu der neuen Kantate: 'Moses am brennenden Dornbusch' habe ich jetzt lange nicht weiter gearbeitet*" (White, 1985: 8). A nineteen page manuscript written at various times during the month of October 1928, is entitled "*Moses und Aron: ein Oratorium*"²³. However by April 10th 1930 Schoenberg appears to have changed his mind about both the cantata and the oratorio, for he writes to Berg ..." what I'm going to write now I still don't know. What I'd like best is an opera....perhaps I shall do '*Moses and Aaron*.' " (Letters: No. 113).

One would imagine that Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*, the work which Adorno refers to as "sacred fragment"²⁴, dealing as it does with religious subject matter and deeply imbued with the spirit of prayer, would find its spirituality appropriately contained in an oratorio. *Moses und Aron* is after all, the depiction of a biblical narrative and in a deeper sense an exhortation to sweep away the idols of humankind. There is no hint of eroticism between the protagonists, and no important female character role in the entire piece. What sensuousness there is serves to elevate its antithesis,-- that which is not of the senses, the imageless. Musically too, the polyphonic density of the work is more reminiscent of early oratorio than of opera. And yet Schoenberg chose the genre of opera.

Referring to the Golden calf scene Schoenberg wrote on March 15 1933 to Walter Eidlitz (the italics are Schoenberg's own): "In the treatment of this scene which actually represents the very core of my thought, I went pretty much to the limit, and this too is probably where my piece is most *operatic*; as indeed it must be" (Letters p.172) . Herbert Lindberger commenting on this, remarks that though the Golden calf scene is initially more accessible, it is ironically, the music of Moses which achieves sublime heights. "As a result," he writes "one could call *Moses und Aron* a kind of anti-opera, one that utilizes 'operatic' elements in order to undercut them and to assert the triumph of a higher spiritual force" (1989: 65)

The work that has been done up to this point in this study, and especially the analysis of *Der biblische Weg*, would lead one to believe that the "very core" of thought which Schoenberg presents in the Golden calf scene is the horror and indeed danger inherent in idolatrous behaviour, and this was as true for the biblical past as it was for Schoenberg's present. The glitzy effects which Schoenberg creates do, as Lindberger suggests, serve to highlight the purity and severity of Moses' *Sprechstimme*. It is clear from Schoenberg's remarks that it is the very glitz which he regards as a salient characteristic of operatic writing and Lindberger is right, Schoenberg is emphasising his belief by degrading its opposite and perhaps in so doing is subverting the status of opera.

ADORNO

Adorno sees more into it when he writes: "The pathos (*Das Pathos*) which swirls through the entire work and which vividly proclaims what its true goal would like to be had its sources in the expressive needs of Schoenberg's own past" (Adorno, 1992: 231). He sees in Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* evidence of personal pain. It is possible, suggests Adorno, (who to some extent has himself shared this past) that it is the deeply intense subjectivity of the underlying material which made the choice of oratorio an inappropriate genre for Schoenberg's project (1992: 231) In choosing the operatic medium the composer has been able to shift the intensity of his own imagination onto "the protagonists and antagonists" (*die Spieler und Gegenspieler*) as Adorno puts it. It is thus in the interaction between Moses and Aron that the objectivity of the work as a whole is realised and this is why says Adorno "the most sensuous of all musical forms has been used for a project devoid of sensuousness". In this way the subjectivity is objectified. "It piles up everything which speaks of suffering as if it

were made of stone" (1992: 237)

This is clearly a viewpoint worthy of careful consideration. Schoenberg has invested Moses, the strong patriarchal archetype, with that authority which has no regard for human frailty. He is the model, inaccessible and remote, but nevertheless possessing the power to inspire the people. The purpose of the opera was, as was *Der biblische Weg*, to strengthen and encourage the "Volk" and to highlight the danger of their position. (It will be remembered that Schoenberg in writing the opera diverted from his original intention which was to devote himself to his people) To directly reveal the underlying suffering would be to defeat the purpose and not in keeping with the personality of the composer. The pathos was in any case too painful for overt expression.

It is necessary to examine more carefully the perspective from which Adorno speaks. The displacement of Schoenberg's subjectivity onto the persona of the opera would be more accurately understood as the repression of a set of forces which in its raw state is overwhelming to the subject. The tension however which the repression generates gathers potency as it returns in its displaced form. In his *Moses and Monotheism* Freud describes this same mechanism as it relates to the circumstances of how Moses came to be a religious leader.

A tradition that was based only on communication could not lead to the compulsive character that attaches to religious phenomena. It would be listened to, judged, and perhaps dismissed like any other piece of information from outside; it would never attain the privilege of being liberated from the constraint of logical thought. It must have undergone the fate of being repressed, the condition of lingering in the unconscious, before it is able to display such powerful effects on its return, to bring the masses under its spell.²⁵

Certainly many of Schoenberg's conflicts of identity as well as those to do with himself as an artist are concealed in *Moses und Aron*. It should be borne in mind that the work was contemplated at a time of painful rejection by and later exile from the country of his birth. His choice of subject implies not only the return to his faith which we have discussed above, but by implication it is an expression of disillusionment with the process of religious assimilation the purpose of which was to secure the Jew a firm place in German society and Culture.²⁶ By boldly acknowledging his Jewish roots in anti-Semitic Europe, Schoenberg strikes deep for in

a sense he speaks for the Jew in the 1930's who is living proof of the failure of the forces of Emancipation. Only one generation back Schoenberg's parents had moved to Vienna from the outlying lands of the Habsburg empire. It was at that time generally anticipated that there was to be civil freedom for all in an enlightened Europe.

Of course Adorno is right--the deep-seated conflict in the text and music of *Moses und Aron* is dramatised at a level which bears all the pathos of Schoenberg's past--a European past in which he produced music which was understood by some and at the same time condemned by many, a Europe where he was despised as a Jew while at the moment of composing *Moses und Aron* he was most ardently desirous of being known as a Jew, a past of considered rationality which was being overtaken by seemingly senseless barbarism.

MOSES .

The Exodus account of Moses' liberation of his people is well known, and indeed it is on this same story that Schoenberg based *Der biblische Weg*. Nevertheless, the outlines are worth repeating for the sake of the obvious parallels which they present. Moses was born at that very moment in history when persecution of the Hebrews in a strange land had reached so serious a point that the baby Moses had to be hidden in the bulrushes lest he be drowned in accordance with Pharaoh's decree.(Exodus Chapter I). This man Moses--for he is thus referred to in the bible and at no point described as anything but mortal-- was chosen by the Lord to lead "a mixed multitude" out of Egypt to embark on a journey which would culminate in the divine revelation on Mount Sinai. Although not permitted to enter the promised land Moses is perceived by Jews as the prophet, teacher, founder and liberator of the people, and the one who received the Divine Law (the Torah or Five Books of Moses). It is the Moses thus perceived who has carried forward the idea of monotheism up to this very day and whose image, according to Judaic belief, will continue to do so into the future.

It is not difficult to imagine why the biblical narrative with Moses as hero was a focal point for many troubled Jewish artists and thinkers who contemplated their own ancient national identity in a ruptured twentieth century Europe by looking backward to the original time of persecution and to the strong leader of that time. It is surely not a co-incidence that Freud and Schoenberg both having spent most of their lives in Vienna should both have formulated their conception

of the Moses story in the mid 1930's. A cursory examination of Freud's Moses serves to highlight certain aspects of Schoenberg's Moses.

FREUD'S MOSES

Though ambivalent about his Judaism Freud steadfastly resisted the lure of assimilation, nevertheless his *Moses and Monotheism* radically opposes Jewish and indeed Christian beliefs. In February 1935 he wrote to Arnold Zweig "I see a cloud of disaster passing over the world, even over my little world" (E.L.Freud, 1970: 91) and more specifically "Faced with the new persecutions, one asks oneself again how the Jews have come to be what they are and why they have attracted this undying hatred. I soon discovered the formula: Moses created the Jews. So I gave my work the title: *The Man Moses, a historical novel*" (Freud E.L. 1970: 101). Freud, with vast manipulative skill, recreates the biblical story to match his own theory. Moses, says Freud, was an Egyptian child born into an aristocratic Egyptian family. This Moses presented to the people a religion which he took over from Akenathen an Egyptian king who came to the throne in about 1375 B.C. The people, unable to tolerate the highly spiritualised Mosaic religion, rose up against their hero Moses, murdered him, and abandoned his religion. About a century later the descendants of these people, though still retaining a repressed memory and guilt associated with the killing of the primal father, took on a new religion and a new God while still clinging to the monotheistic basis of the earlier religion.

Freud though inventing his own Moses in so extravagant a manner, works within a framework of ethical values not unlike those of Schoenberg. Carl Jung who does not always write of Freud in a complimentary manner writes of him thus on one occasion "Like an Old Testament prophet, he undertook to overthrow false gods, to rip the veils away from a mass of dishonesties and hypocrisies, mercilessly exposing the rottenness of the contemporary psyche" (1983:192). Like Schoenberg the intention was to expose, ruthlessly if necessary, the truth as he perceived it.²⁷ Moreover through contemplating his own national past through the figure of "Moses the Man" Freud creates a vehicle for some important analytical theories which he here applies to a people.

SCHOENBERG'S MOSES

Where Freud analyses and recreates the story of Moses and the Jewish people Schoenberg

makes it into art. It has been noted above that for Schoenberg the biblical children of Israel and the Jews of modern Europe have, at a certain level been telescoped into a single image. Moses the courageous patriarchal diasporic figure who lead his people out of bondage was no doubt a source of inspiration for Schoenberg himself in his efforts to elevate and finally extricate European Jewry from what he so clearly foresaw as being a perilous situation. But there was a price to pay-- Moses had made certain exacting demands on the people as a condition of liberation. The as yet nomadic "mixed multitude" had not only to unify themselves as a people but in addition, as part of the covenant with God, it was incumbent upon them to spiritualise themselves. Schoenberg in *Der biblische Weg* clearly expounds his attitude towards the two interdependent stages of redemption of European Jewry--Guido the new leader declares, "We want to feel *secure* as a nation. We want to be certain that no one can force us to do anything; that no one can hinder us from doing anything ... We have one more goal: we must all learn to grasp the concept of the one and only God "(327) In Act III of *Moses und Aron* the words expressing the inseparable duality are given to Moses himself "To serve, to serve the divine idea (*dem Gottesgedanken*) is the purpose of the freedom for which this folk has been chosen." Liberation and spirituality are two parts of the same totality. Where Freud has analysed the biblical narrative and re-invented the relationship of Moses and the people to match his conclusions, Schoenberg, entrusts his Moses with the task of raising the political liberation of the people to the level of spirituality. At the same time the composer has taken onto himself characteristics of the Mosaic figure and spiritualised the role of music in the task of modernity.

In using the operatic medium to reflect the deeper meaning of twentieth century music Schoenberg was of course following a long tradition. Soren Kierkegaard makes a deep point about the history of opera: it is within the nature of operatic writing that not only does the music animate the text but the text then, impelled by the music, reflects back onto the nature of the music itself. Kierkegaard's views on the sublimely seductive quality of *Don Giovanni*, speaks of this kind of reciprocal duality in that opera. It is, he claims not only that the hero Don Giovanni is the seducer but his behaviour parallels the seductive nature of the music. The theme of the seducer is, allegorically, about the music itself.²⁸

THE NEW MUSIC

Schoenberg's concept of the fundamental nature of the New Music is deeply written into *Moses und Aron*.²⁹ Below the surface of the opera lie a number of profound observations about the character of twentieth century music and about Schoenberg's position as composer of this music. Important among these is the inaccessibility and unpopularity of modern music.

By contrasting "his" music with the degraded, popular Golden calf music, Schoenberg acknowledges that music which is "Mosaic", which is imageless and governed by laws of spirituality, is un-popular. Like the abstract quality of monotheism itself New Music requires a commitment the sense of which is not easily communicated, nevertheless it is only that which has the power to lead the people towards true spirituality.

Freud in his *Moses und Monotheism* has disregarded Aaron. Aaron as a persona is entirely superfluous to his concept of the leader and of the people and moreover has no place in the formulation of his analytical theories. Schoenberg's Aron on the other hand is crucial and his presence says much about the underlying character of the music. Difficult, inaccessible music requires the assistance of an Aron to give the abstract a shape and to assist in transmission. Aron conforms to the kabbalistic image mentioned in Chapter I. He is the black fire which makes the white fire comprehensible. At the same time for Schoenberg the one who is the go-between, who makes the lofty accessible, is also the one who sullies the purity of the idea. The figure of Moses represents the opposite; Schoenberg writes to Eidlitz "My Moses more resembles-- of course only in outward aspect--Michelangelo's. He is not human at all" (Letters: 172). It is Aron's lyrical tenor which is able to placate the people and it is his presence which illuminates the problematic nature of avant garde music. If the composer concedes to popular taste the integrity of the music will suffer. If however the composer attempts to follow the almost super-human aspirations of Moses, the music will not be understood. While Schoenberg envisions his tone row with perfect clarity and Moses receives the Pentateuch with total comprehension it is not possible to convey the Idea of these to the Volk. Both Moses and Schoenberg are in a sense artists who possess the gift of vision. It is the very vision which places them in a position of marginality.

During the course of this study two models have been built up of the spiritual notion of art. One is art as a form of prayer, the other is art as a form of creation. It is tempting to view, in an allegorical sense, the character of Moses in the dual role of the figure who combines the spiritual notion of the quest for the sublime (that is in prayer), with the one who replicates the act of creation. Moses, one would imagine, is ideally equipped to fulfil such a task-- to substantiate the Idea, and to transmit it to the people. In fact as we know, Moses is unable to carry out this duty for, as he protests to the Lord, "*Meine Zunge ist un gelenk*". He, Moses, is impeded by his speech and Aron does not possess the required purity. The action is blocked before reaching fruition. The task which failed in the desert, fails in modernity and becomes the driving force of the opera. *Moses und Aron* represents the underlying drama inherent in the structure of leadership/Judaism/the avant garde/ modern music.

We are now in a more advantageous position to respond to the question which we posed above: why it is that Schoenberg chose to cast *Moses und Aron* into an operatic mould? Our preceding discussions would lead us to the following reply: The underlying pathos which Adorno detects in *Moses und Aron*, and which has to do with Schoenberg's past; the intensity of the manifold levels of drama concerning the position of the Jew in the first half of twentieth century Europe--a drama to which Schoenberg was living witness; the deep reflections on the nature of modern music itself which lie in this seminal twentieth century work-- all these complex strands are reflected in *Moses und Aron* and clearly demand the broad scope of a music drama, that is to say opera. For in the Mosaic figure, so Schoenberg believed, were incarnated those forces which would spiritualise not only the Jewish people but through transmission of the Mosaic message, spiritualise modern humanity. At the same time the incomplete *Moses und Aron* is an acknowledgment that the leader, the one who has as his goal the pursuit of the impossible Idea, must, by the very nature of his condition, be misunderstood.

This then raises a further question in relation to Schoenberg's other large religious work. In light of the fact that *Moses und Aron* had to be an opera, why did *Die Jakobsleiter* have to be an oratorio? The answer may read as follows:

When Schoenberg conceived of the idea of writing his oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*, (the letter to

Dehmel requesting that he write the libretto was written in 1912) his world was part of an old order governed by seemingly sound principles in a centuries-old empire. In 1936 he wrote:

Supposing times were normal—normal as they were before 1914—then the music of our time would be in a different situation. A free younger generation, coming freely to their own decision, and choosing their own path, would stand enthusiastically behind it; like every previous generation, they would do their duty—that of placing the new, as yet unacknowledged treasures of art in their rightful place alongside all that has already come to be acknowledged.³⁰

Although in 1912 Schoenberg's personal life was fraught with difficulties, he clung to the conviction that by "doing ones duty", by bravely carving out the new on the grand edifice of the old, art would reach new levels. In short his world was an idealistic one which conformed to the hierarchical image of the ladder. His oratorio was correspondingly an allegory dealing with individual values (admittedly Schoenberg's own code of values) which would merit either reward or punishment. These would be dealt out according to the level of morality of the individual's life on earth. The personae of *Die Jakobsleiter* such as the Malcontents, the Doubters, the Quietly Resigned, One Who is Struggling are typically allegorical prototypes. They demand nothing of each other-- indeed apart from their communication through Gabriel they do not interact with each other at all. Upward progress is the prevailing intention and it takes place through subjective spiritual purification. It was, from Schoenberg's 1912 perspective, possible to ascend the ladder of spiritual transformation and in parallel to follow the path of progressive music without recourse to the drama which twenty five years later had invaded every aspect of life and which appeared to be utterly inescapable. *Moses und Aron* is built around conflict in a political and social sense and deals with a complex web of human interests; *Die Jakobsleiter* is a matter of individual conscience-- the modern human has to learn to pray. The younger Schoenberg had found it necessary and possible to create a religious picture which was distinctly protestant in outlook and a contemplative work which was devoid of human drama. For such a work the oratorio genre was clearly the appropriate vehicle.

To quote Adorno once more since it is he, who so clearly recognises in Schoenberg that duality of perfect faith on the one hand and pessimism born of life-experience on the other-- qualities which preclude completion of his two largest works: "He tosses off a masterpiece

for the second time, again postponing the conclusion with that enigmatic faith in an endless life behind which the despair 'it- shall-not-be' is concealed." (Adorno, 1967: 170)

In moving in his two large religious works from the ladder to the mountain Schoenberg has dealt with problems of vast complexity; which in neither oratorio nor opera are played out to any kind of finality. Neither the works nor the subjects which they address would appear to have been capable of producing solutions. They remain forever incomplete.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. The biblical chapters on which *Moses und Aron* is largely based are Exodus Chapters 3-4 (The Calling of Moses); Exodus Chapters 20-31 (The Giving of the Law); Exodus Chapter 32 (The Golden Calf); and Numbers Chapters 20-24 (Moses barred from Entering the promised Land).
2. See Schoenberg's letter to Werfel quoted in Chapter III, Endnote 1.
3. Schoenberg's deep concern for his fellow Jews is passionately expressed in his *A Four-Point Program for Jewry* (reproduced in Ringer 1990: Appendix C, pp.230-244). He made many attempts to help acquaintances and colleagues as for example a letter to the conductor Alfred Hertz on behalf of Moriz Violin testifies (Letters: No. 166) "These people's fate moves me as though it were my own, which after all, it almost is. And if there were any way I could help, I would do anything...it is so sad that all these people with the finest musical culture there was in Europe should be cast out and have to spend their old age in anxiety and hardship and grief"
4. For a detailed record of the chronology of composition of *Moses und Aron* see Pamela White's *Schoenberg and the God-Idea*, 1983, Chapter I.
5. I am grateful for the loan of the German-Hebrew prayer book belonging to the late father of Mr. Bernhard Lazarus of Durban entitled *Gebete der Israeliten*. The book has no publication date but bears a personal inscription dated 1923. I also have in my possession a book published Vienna 1906, with a similar title most kindly given to me by Rabbi Yaakov Rosenberg of Jerusalem.
6. Maimonides formulated the Thirteen Principles of Faith which are intended to codify the Jewish creed. The first four of these deal with the following: God's Existence, God's Unity, God's Incorporeality, God is Eternal. Moses' opening address to God in *Moses und Aron* would appear to correspond to these.
7. The Hebrew word Adonai is itself a substitute for the four letters יהוה, the Tetragrammaton, the unpronounceable name of God.
8. These words occur in "A Survivor from Warsaw" in English. The *Shema* however is recited in the original Hebrew from Deuteronomy Chapter 6:4.
9. Information from the Schoenberg Institute in Vienna suggests that Schoenberg was not able to read Hebrew. The English transliteration was therefore probably provided for him.
10. It is customary to lead directly from the last line of the blessing without pause into the *Amidah*. This symbolically connects the theme of redemption in the past, themes which are central to the *Shema* and the *Mi Chomocho*, with hopes of redemption in the future as expressed in the *Amidah*.
11. Karl Wörner for example states (1963: 25). "In his later religious works Schoenberg has moved completely into the world of the Old Testament. However only one of these has

a direct liturgical basis: the *Kol Nidre* of 1938.” The last sentence is clearly incorrect as our discussion shows.

12. The facsimile of the certificate of Schoenberg’s “re entry into the Community of Israel” on 24 July 1933 is reproduced in Ringer, 1990: 135.
13. In a letter to Berg (Letters: 156), Schoenberg cites his Opus 27 as one of the works, along with *Moses und Aron* and *Der biblische Weg*, which reflect his return to the Jewish faith.
14. Reich(1971:190) follows Schoenberg’s letter to Webern with the reaction to Schoenberg’s re-conversion published in Vienna’s *Acht-Uhr-Blatt* on 31 July 1933

This shows the true face of these liberal Jews’ religious depths and metaphysical roots. For them, faith is a tool like any other, a means to an end... In reality it is a manoeuvre. The sum total of all his views meant so little to him that he could throw them out double-quick, and by the same token his new faith will mean no more to him than a cloak about his shoulders, to be blown away again by the next shift in the wind of opinion.

15. Schoenberg’s Mailam lecture makes it clear that he was extremely familiar not only with Wagner’s music but with his *Weltanschauung* (S&I: 503); Weininger is mentioned by Schoenberg in his *Harmonielehre* introduction. The quotation from Jung is found in Harold Bloom’s essay “Jewish Culture and Jewish Identity” in *Poetics of Influence* 1988. Adorno claims that Schoenberg “produces his own material as well as its resistances, driven incessantly by the disgust of everything he produces which is not entirely new. The flame of untrammelled, mimetic creation, which came over Schoenberg from that subterranean heritage in the end also consumed the heritage. Tradition and fresh start are as interwoven in him as the revolutionary and conservative” (*Prisms*: 151-152) Adorno uses the word “subterranean” in *Quasi una Fantasia* (p.232) in connection with Schoenberg’s Jewish heritage and clearly uses it in the same sense in this passage from *Prisms*. He too appears to accept the mimetic nature of Jewish creativity and recognises in Schoenberg its opposite.
16. I am pleased to acknowledge that in the course of writing this study I find that Charlotte De Vries Robbé’s conclusions are invitingly similar to my own. I wish to express my appreciation for the help I have received from her unpublished doctoral thesis (1995). I also wish to thank again Professor Alexander Goehr who was extremely helpful in conversation with me and who led me to the work of De Vries Robbé.
17. Schoenberg with characteristically acerbic tone says of folk music “Generally some method is used to make a short story long; numerous repetitions of a short phrase...Thus nothing has been said that was not said in the first presentation” (S&I: 165 quoted in De Vries Chapter 3)
18. Schoenberg employs unison male voices for the song of Seventy Elders. The fact that he does the same for the singing of the *Shema* in *A Survivor from Warsaw* would suggest that he recognized this as a device frequently used in Jewish liturgical services.

19. See for example Act II, mm. 806-808 at the end of the song of the Four Virgins.
20. This passage precedes the awesome moment of divine revelation in Exodus XX in which the ten commandments are given for the first time.
21. Exodus XII: 38, referring to the children of Israel before receiving Torah, reads "And a mixed multitude (ערב רב) went up also with them..." This refers to the mob of non-Israelite strangers who joined the Hebrew refugees in their flight out of Egypt. A similar term אספסוף is found in Numbers XI:4 denoting the rabble or riff raff who gathered from many quarters.
22. I acknowledge with pleasure the assistance which I have received from the unpublished dissertation by Hendrik Pienaar Hofmeyer, 1979.
23. See Pamela White, 1985: Chapter 1 for details of chronology in *Moses und Aron* and *ibid.* Chapter 3 for discussion of the change from oratorio to opera.
24. The title of Adorno's essay dedicated to Gershom Scholem is "Sacred Fragment: *Quasi una Fantasia*."
25. This passage is from Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* Part I p.101 in The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud Vol. XXIII. It is quoted with different translation in Adorno's *Prisms* p. 155.
26. Schoenberg was not only disappointed in the failure of religious assimilation as he says in *Jeder junge Jude* but also in the attitude of his gentile friends such as Kandinsky and later even Berg (see George Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg*, Vol. II, pp235-236 and 282-287).
27. It should be noted that *Moses and Monotheism* touched on extremely sensitive issues for both Jews and Catholics. The work was suppressed by Freud himself for fear of antagonising Catholic authorities. It was of course vehemently rejected in Jewish circles. Freud was aware of the hostility which the work would invoke. Yet it was important for him to write the work and to have it published.
28. Kierkegaard's views on the opera *Don Giovanni* are discussed in an article by Daniel Herwitz entitled "The Cook, His Wife, the Philosopher, and the Librettist" in *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. 78, No.1
29. The term "New Music" (*neue Musik*) was coined by Paul Bekker in 1919. It is a term which was not altogether approved by Schoenberg (see *New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea* in S&I 113-124) It has come however to be the accepted term which denotes the radical and new trends in twentieth century music and I use it here in this sense.
30. In Willi Reich 1971, Appendix 3, page 245. The italics are as they appear in Reich's copy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, T. W. 1967 *Prisms* trans S. and S. Weber. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press
- 1973 *Philosophy of Modern Music* London: Sheed & Ward.
- 1992 *Quasi una Fantasia* London: Verso.
- Albright, D. 1981 *Representation and the Imagination. Beckett, Kafka, Nabokov, and Schoenberg*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bailey, W. B. 1984 *Programmatic Elements in the Works of Schoenberg*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press.
- Bauer, G. A. 1986 *A Contextual Approach to Schoenberg's Atonal Works: Self Expression, Religion, and Music Theory* Ph.D. Dissertation, Washington University.
- Bauer-Lechner, N. 1980 *Recollections of Gustav Mahler* trans Dika Newlin, ed.& annotated by Peter Franklin. London: Faber Music.
- Beckett, Lucy 1981 *Parsifal* Cambridge University Press.
- Beer-Hofmann, R. 1945 *Jacob's Dream: A Prologue*, The Jewish Publication Society of America.
- Benjamin, W. 1969 *Illuminations* ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books
- Beller, S. 1990 *Vienna and the Jews*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Berg, A. 1971 *Letters to his Wife* ed. & trans. by Pernard Grun. London: Faber & Faber.
- Berkowitz, M. 1993 *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bloom, H. 1988 "Jewish Culture and Jewish Identity" in *Poetics of Influence New Haven Connecticut: Henry R. Schwab*.
- Boehme, J. 1969 *The Signature of All Things*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co.
- Botstein, L. 1995 "Language, Modernism and Jewish Identity" in *Wistrich* 1995.
- Bowra, C.M. 1943 *The Heritage of Symbolism* London: Macmillan.
- Brand J., Hailey C., and Harris D. eds. 1987 *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*. Macmillan Press.

- Broch, H. 1984 *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and his Time: the European Imagination, 1860-1920* trans. ed. & with Introduction by Michael Steinberg. The University of Chicago Press.
- Buber, M. 1970 *I and Thou*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Cantor, N. E. 1994 *The Sacred Chain: the History of the Jews*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Cardozo, N. T. 1995 *Between Silence and Speech*. Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson.
- Carpenter, P. 1984 "Musical Form and Musical Idea: Reflections on a Theme of Schoenberg, Hanslick and Kant" in *Music and Civilization: Essays in Honor of Paul Henry Lang*, edited by E. Strainchamps & M. Maniates, New York: W.W. Norton.
- Cook, D. 1980 *Gustav Mahler*. London: Faber Music.
- Cherlin, M. 1986 "Schoenberg's Representation of the Divine in *Moses und Aron*" in *JASI*. Vol IX, No.2 pp. 210-216.
- Childs, G. 1995 *Rudolf Steiner: his Life and Work*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.
- Christensen, J. 1978 "Schoenberg's Sketches for *Die Jakobsleiter*: a Study of a Special Case" in *JASI*, Vol.II, No.2, pp.112-121.
- 1979 *Arnold Schoenberg's Oratorio Die Jakobsleiter* Vols. I & II. PhD dissertation, University of California : Los Angeles.
- 1984 "The Spiritual and the Material in Schoenberg's Thinking" in *M&L* Vol 65, No. 4 pp. 337-344.
- Crawford, J.C. and Crawford, D. L. 1993 *Expressionism in Twentieth-Century Music*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Crawford, J.C. 1974 "*Die Glückliche Hand*: Schoenberg's Gesamtkunstwerk" in *The Musical Quarterly* Vol LX, No.4, pp. 583-601.
- Cross, C.M. 1980 "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings" in *Current Musicology* No.30 pp.24-37.
- Davidowicz, Lucy. 1977 "Arnold Schoenberg: A Search for Jewish Identity" in *The Jewish Presence*. New York
- De Vries Robbé, C. 1995 *Religion 'Without any Organisational Fetters'* PhD. dissertation Trinity Hall, Cambridge.
- Donin, Hayim Halevy 1980 *To Pray as a Jew* New York: Basic Books.
- Franklin, Peter. 1985 *The Idea of Music: Schoenberg and Others*. London: Macmillan.

- Franklin, Peter 1991 *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freud, E.L. ed. 1970 *The Letters of Zigmund Freud & Arnold Zweig* London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. 1964 *Moses and Monotheism* trans. James Strachey in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological works of Sigmund Freud* Vol. XXIII London: Hogarth Press
- Frisch, W. 1993 *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Funkenstein, A. 1993 *Perceptions of Jewish History*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Gilman, Sander L. 1986 *Jewish Self-hatred: Anti-Semitism and the Hidden Language of the Jews*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Gilman, Sander L. and Katz, Steven T. eds. 1991 *Anti Semitism in Times of Crisis*. New York: New York University Press
- Goehr, A. 1973-4 "The Theoretical Writings of Arnold Schoenberg" in *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, No.100 1973-4
- 1977 "Schoenberg's *Gedanke* Manuscript" in *JASI* Vol II, No.1
- 1985 "Schoenberg and Karl Kraus: the Idea Behind the Music" in *Music Analysis* Vol.4, 1-2
- Goldstein, B. 1992 *Reinscribing Moses: Heine, Kafka, Freud, and Schoenberg in a European Wilderness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Gradenwitz, P. "The Religious Works of Arnold Schoenberg" in *The Music Review* Vol. 21.
- Gray, R. 1967 *Goethe: A Critical Introduction* Cambridge University Press.
- Grunfeld, Frederic V. 1979 *Prophets Witout Honour*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Hahl-Koch, Jelena ed. 1984 *Arnold Schoenberg Wassily Kandinsky*. Trans. John C.Crawford. London: Faber & Faber.
- Hanson, A. 1985 *Alice Musical Life in Biedermeier Vienna*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hermant, J. 1997 "Arnold Schönberg" a paper delivered at 2. *Internationales Theodor Herzl Symposion Wien*
- Heschel, A.J. 1955 *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

- Hofmeyer, H. P. 1979 *Symbolism in Schoenberg's 'Moses und Aron'* unpublished B.Mus. essay, University of Cape Town.
- Hough, G. 1984 *The Mystery Religion of W.B. Yeats*. Brighton, Sussex Harvester Press.
- Jacobs, L. 1964 *Principles of the Jewish Faith: an Analytical Study*. London: Vallentine Mitchell.
- James, W. 1902 *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Longmans Green.
- Jannik, A. and Toulmin, S. 1973 *Wittgenstein's Vienna*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Jung, C. G. 1983 *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. London: Fontana Paperbacks.
- Kadourie, E. ed. 1979 "Jewish Mysticism" in *The Jewish World* London: Thames & Hudson.
- Kafka, F 1954 *Dearest Father: Stories and Other Writings*. New York: Schocken.
- Kandinsky, W. 1977 *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* trans.M.T.H. Sadler. New York: Dover.
- Katz, J. 1978 *Out of the Ghetto: the Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770-1870*. New York: Schocken Books.
- ed. 1987 *Toward Modernity*. New Brunswick (U.S.A.): Transaction Books
- Keller, H. 1957 "Schoenberg's 'Moses and Aron' in *The Score* 21, pp. 31-45
- Lazar, M. 1994 "Arnold Schoenberg and his Doubles: a Psychodramatic Journey to his Roots" in *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* Vol. XVII, Nos. 1 & 2 pp.8-145.
- Lessem, A. P. 1979 *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg: the Critical Years, 1908-1922*. UMI Research Press.
- 1974 "Schönberg and the Crisis of Expressionism" in *Music and Letters* Vol. 55, pp.429-436.
- Lindenberger, H. "Arnold Schoenberg's *Der biblische Weg* and *Moses und Aron*: on the Transactions of Aesthetics and Politics" in *Modern Judaism*, Vol. IX 1989, P.55-70
- MacDonald M. 1976 *Schoenberg*. London: J.M. Dent.
- Mason, Eudo C. 1967 *Goethe's Faust Its Genesis and Purport* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Mayer, A. J. 1981 *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War*. London: Croom Helm
- Morgan, M. 1985 *August Strindberg* London: Macmillan Publishers

- Musil, R. 1953 *The Man Without Qualities* trans. E. Wilkins and E. Kaiser. 3 vols. London: Secker & Warburg
- Neighbour, O. 1980 "Schoenberg [Schönberg] Arnold (Franz Walter)" in *The New Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 20 vols. London: Macmillan.
- Newlin, D. 1968 "Self-Revelation and the Law: Arnold Schoenberg in his Religious Works" in *Yuval*, I pp.204-220.
- Nono-Schoenberg, Nuria ed. 1992 *Arnold Schönberg 1874-1951: Lebensgeschichte in Begegnungen*. Klagenfurt: Ritter
- Notley, M. 1993 "Brahms as Liberal: Genre, Style and Politics in Late Nineteenth-Century Vienna" in *19th Century Music* Vol. XVII, No. 2 pp.107-123
- Oxaal, I. 1987 "The Jews of Young Hitler's Vienna" in *Jews, Antisemitism and Culture* eds. Ivar Oxaal, Michael Pollak and Gerhard Botz London: Routledge & Kegan
- Reich, W., 1971 *Schoenberg: a Critical Biography* trans. Leo Black. London: Longman.
- Ringbom, S. 1970 *The Sounding Cosmos: a Study in the Spiritualism of Kandinsky and the Genesis of Abstract Painting*. Abo: Abo Akademi.
- Rochberg, G. 1988 *The Aesthetics of Survival: a Composer's View of Twentieth-Century Music* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Rozenblit, M.L. 1983 *The Jews of Vienna, 1867-1914: Assimilation and Identity*. New York: Albany.
- 1992 *The Jews of Germany and Austria: A Comparative Perspective* in Wistrich 1992.
- Rufer, J. 1962 *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg* trans. D. Newlin. London: Faber.
- Sachs, J. 1991 *The Persistence of Faith* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson Ltd.
- Schenker, Heinrich 1973 *Harmony*. The MIT Press.
- Schoenberg, A. 1952 "My Evolution" in *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. XXXVIII, No. 4 pp.517-527.
- 1964 *Arnold Schoenberg Letters* ed. E. Stein trans. E. Wilkins & E. Kaiser. London: Faber
- 1967 *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* ed. L. Stein. London: Faber
- 1975 *Style and Idea* ed. E. Stein, trans. L. Black London: Faber.
- 1983 *Theory of Harmony* translated by Roy Carter based on 3rd edition 1922 University

of California press

----- 1990 "A Four-Point Program for Jewry" in *Arnold Schoenberg: the Composer as Jew* pp.230-244. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

----- 1995 *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation*. Edited, translated , and with a commentary by Carpenter and Neff New York: Columbia University Press

Schoenberg, E. Randol 1987 "Arnold Schoenberg and Albert Einstein" in *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* Vol. X, No2 pp. 134-187.

Scholem, G.G. 1955 *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. London: Thames and Hudson.

----- 1978 *Jews and Judaism in Crisis*. New York: Schocken.

----- 1982 *Walter Benjamin: The Story of a Friendship*. London: Faber & Faber

Schorske, C. E. 1980 *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna Politics and Culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Smith, J. Allen. 1986 *Schoenberg and his Circle: A Viennese Portrait*. New York: Schirmer.

Steinberg, Michael P. 1988 "Jewish Identity and Intellectuality in *Fin de Siècle* Austria: Suggestions for a Historical Discourse" in *New German Critique* No.43, pp.3-33.

----- 1992 "The Musical Absolute" in *New German Critique* No.56 pp.17-42

----- 1993 "Introduction: Music, Language and Culture" *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No.3.

Strindberg, A. 1945 *To Damascus I II and III* in "Eight Expressionist Plays by August Strindberg" New York: New York University Press.

----- 1912 "Wrestling Jacob" in *Legends*. London: Andrew Melrose.

Stuckenschmidt, H. 1977 *Arnold Schoenberg: His Life World and Work* trans. H. Searle. London: Schirmer Books.

----- 1981 "Arnold Schoenberg's 'Kol Nidre and Jewish Elements in his Music" in *Journal of Synagogue Music* Vol.XI, No. 1.

Swedenborg, E. [probably 1912] *Divine Providence* Everyman London: J.M. Dent (first published in Amsterdam 1764).

-----1899 7th ed., 4th Impression, from the Latin, *Heaven and its Wonders and Hell: From Things Heard and Seen* London: Swedenborg Society. First published 1758.

Taylor, A.J.P. 1991 *Europe: Grandeur and Decline* London: Penguin Books

- Timms, E. 1986 *Karl Kraus Apocalyptic Satirist*. Newhaven and London: Yale University Press.
- Viertel, Berthold. 1937 "Die Jakobsleiter" in Merle Armitage ed. *Schoenberg pp165-181*, New York: G. Schirmer.
- Wagner, Richard 1897 "Das Judenthum in der Musik" translated by Ashton Ellis in *Richard Wagner's Prose Works* Vol. III, pp.75-122.
- Weininger, O. n.d. 1906? *Sex and Character*. London: William Heinemann.
- Wellesz, E. 1965 Programme Notes to a performance of *Moses and Aaron* at Convent Garden Opera House on 10th July 1965.
- White, P. 1985 *Schoenberg and the God-Idea*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press
- 1984 "Schoenberg and Schopenhauer" in *JASI* Vol.VIII.
- Wiesel, E. 1997 "Aaron and his Problem of Innocence" in *A Festschrift in Honor of Dr. Louis L. Kaplan-90th Birthday*. Baltimore.
- 1976 *Messengers of God* New York: Random House
- Wistrich, Robert S. 1990 *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*. Oxford University Press.
- ed. 1992 *Austrians and Jews in the Twentieth Century*.
- Wolin, Richard 1982 *Walter Benjamin: An Aesthetic of Redemption* New York: Columbia University Press
- Wörner, K.H. 1959 *Schoenberg's Moses and Aaron* trans. P. Hamburger. London: Faber.
- Yeats, W.B. edited and transcribed Denis Donoghue. 1988 *Memoirs* London: Papermac.
- Yovel, Yirmiyahu . 1989 *Spinoza and Other Heretics: the Adventures of Immanence* Princeton: Princeton University Press

Scores

Schoenberg works from *Sämtliche Werke*.

Piano reduction for *Die Jakobsleiter* by Winfried Zillig Los Angeles: Belmont Publishers.

Miniature score for *Moses und Aron*. Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne.