

The Correspondence between Arnold Schoenberg and Universal Edition

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‘[...] publishers and authors cannot
remain friends in the long run.’¹

The first curator of Schoenberg’s archival legacy was the composer himself: throughout his life he remained an archivally gifted and visionary collector, the guardian of what is now considered an unparalleled heritage in the musical history of the last century. Its spectrum, ranging from compositions and philosophical-political, musical-aesthetic and literary-political writings, to paintings and drawings and finally to the invention of objects, illuminates a personality who as both man and artist resisted to the end the tendency to conform, a personality worth discovering not only for the indelible signature he left upon the music of his century.

The Arnold Schönberg Center, established in 1998 in Vienna, is a unique repository of Schoenberg’s archival legacy² and a cultural institution that is open to the public. The Schoenberg archive is one of the most renowned and comprehensive collections of works by a twentieth-century composer and promotes a broad spectrum of research. In addition to the archive, exhibition and concert facilities, the Center also houses the Arnold Schönberg Research Center (Wissenschaftszentrum Arnold Schönberg, Institut für Musikalische Stilforschung of the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien).

Activities at the Research Center are focused on the Viennese School, particularly in its role as a group that had a lasting influence on twentieth-century music throughout the world. Special educational events communicate the latest research findings and knowledge relating to both theory and practice, as well as the historical preconditions and the impact of the music of the Viennese School. Working in close cooperation with the Arnold Schönberg Center, it also gives special emphasis to this composer's oeuvre and reception.

It is a little-known fact that the Arnold Schönberg Research Center is home to an extensive part of the correspondence collected by the Viennese publishing house Universal Edition (UE) from the years between 1931 and 1961, which has been made available by UE to the Research Center as a permanent loan. Founded in 1901, the company published as many as 1,000 compositions of Classical and Romantic music literature during the first three years of its existence, and increasingly attempted to make a name for itself with contemporary music. In 1907 Emil Hertzka – a distinctly progressive publisher – took up the helm of the company, which he continued to manage until his death in 1932. Within a short amount of time, UE became an avant-garde publisher with an international reputation, concluding contracts with composers such as Gustav Mahler, Franz Schreker, Arnold Schoenberg, Alexander Zemlinsky, Alfredo Casella, Franz Schmidt, Egon Wellesz, Julius Bittner, Alban Berg, Hanns Eisler, Kurt Weill and Darius Milhaud, to name but a few. The correspondence in question details all areas of activity at the music publisher during thirty years: communication with composers, musicians, event organisers and broadcasting companies, educational institutions, authorities relevant to cultural policy, media, collecting societies, publishing companies, music dealers and others, and furthermore includes internal UE correspondence between employees during their travels, as well as between the UE branch in London and the publishing house located in Vienna from 1937 onwards.

The collection contains correspondence from many composers whose music was published by UE during this period, such as Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, Alexander Zemlinsky, Ernst Krenek, Gian Francesco Malipiero, Luigi Dallapiccola, Goffredo Petrassi, Dimitri Shostakovich, Bruno Maderna and Pierre Boulez. The total number of UE documents archived in approximately 400 units at the Research Center is estimated at about 160,000 letters. Viewing and indexing these documents, as well as enabling access for research purposes, is the focus of a long-term database project³ which currently has around 35,000 entries and is financed by the University of Music in Vienna. Among the documents in the project are many letters written by and to Arnold Schoenberg.

Furthermore, there are around 700 written documents that are connected with Schoenberg's works in some way and contain relevant background information.

Work is now underway at the Arnold Schönberg Center and the Arnold Schönberg Research Center on a complete edition of the correspondence between the composer and UE. The business relationship between Schoenberg and UE goes back to the early years of the twentieth century. In 1903 he signed three contracts with the company in Vienna for the production of piano scores of works by other composers which were printed in 1904. In October 1909 Schoenberg signed a contract with Emil Hertzka for his works that had yet to be printed. UE also acquired the licences for all of Schoenberg's compositions that had been previously published by Verlag Dreililien in Berlin. Up until Schoenberg's emigration in 1933 – with the exception of a few works published by other companies – UE released his textbook *Theory of Harmony* and his songs, piano and chamber music, operas and orchestral works. TABLES 1 and 2 list the correspondences between UE and composers that have already been published in monograph form, in non-standalone publication and online.

With the exception of Mahler's letters, of which only a few have survived owing to considerable losses, and the Polish edition of Szymanowski's correspondence, each of these editions has only published a selection.

The criteria used to select correspondence for abridged editions are essentially based on the following components:

- historical circumstances, e.g. a specific period in the composer's life;
- author/recipient (for example, from the composer to the publisher and not vice versa);
- thematic, contextual focus: a) correspondence related to a specific work, or b) differing degrees of emphasis on aspects such as the genesis of the works and the performance history, and also aesthetic, political and biographical aspects as well as topics of cultural history. (This is coupled with a reduction of letters with financial and legal concerns and those relating to the production of scores.)

The editorial standards of the different editions also vary greatly – ranging between those that are intended for a wide readership, and more highly detailed descriptions.

TABLE 1. Correspondences between UE and composers published in book form

Karol Szymanowski ↔ UE	<i>Między kompozytorem a wydawcą. Korespondencja Karola Szymanowskiego z Universal Edition</i> , ed. by Teresa Chylińska, Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1978. (591 letters, complete)
	Karol Szymanowski, <i>Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition 1912–1937</i> , ed. by Teresa Chylińska, Wien: Universal Edition A.G., 1981. (Selection)
Leoš Janáček → UE	Leoš Janáček, <i>Briefe an die Universal Edition</i> , ed. by Ernst Hilmar, Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1988. (350 letters, selection)
Kurt Weill ↔ UE	Kurt Weill, <i>Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition</i> , ed. by Nils Grosch, Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2002. (207 letters, selection)
Ernst Krenek ↔ UE	Ernst Krenek, <i>Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition (1921–1941)</i> , ed. by Claudia Maurer-Zenck, Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 2010. (1,298 letters, selection)
Gustav Mahler → UE	Gustav Mahler, <i>Briefe an seine Verleger</i> , ed. by Franz Willnauer, Wien: Universal Edition A.G., 2012. (34 letters, complete)

TABLE 2. Other correspondences in non-standalone publications or online

Béla Bartók → UE	95 letters: ‘Briefwechsel zwischen Bartók und der Universal Edition: Ein Querschnitt’, ed. by Adrienne Gombocz & László Vikárius, in: <i>Musikerbriefe als Spiegel überregionaler Kulturbeziehungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa – Eine Edition</i> , online: http://www.gko.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/user_upload/musikwissenschaft/institut/arbeitsgemeinschaft/musikerbriefe/5_Vikarius.pdf [18 March 2015]
Vítězslav Novák → UE	86 letters: ‘Vítězslav Nováks Korrespondenz an Universal Edition Wien’, ed. by Lenka Krupková, in: <i>Musikerbriefe als Spiegel überregionaler Kulturbeziehungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa – Eine Edition</i> , online: http://www.gko.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/user_upload/musikwissenschaft/institut/arbeitsgemeinschaft/musikerbriefe/12_2_KrupkovaEd.pdf [18 March 2015]
Leoš Janáček ← UE	62 letters: ‘Der Weg eines Brünners von Prag nach Wien. Janáčeks “Její pastorkyňa” im Lichte der Korrespondenz der Universal-Edition Wien an den Komponisten in den Jahren 1916–1918’, ed. by Josef Bek & Mikuláš Bek, in: <i>Musikerbriefe als Spiegel überregionaler Kulturbeziehungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa – Eine Edition</i> , online: http://www.gko.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/user_upload/musikwissenschaft/institut/arbeitsgemeinschaft/musikerbriefe/13_Bek.pdf [18 March 2015]

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S PUBLISHERS AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH PUBLISHERS

The publishing houses connected with Schoenberg are located in Austria, Germany, Denmark and the USA – with the exception of Denmark, these are all countries in which the composer lived. While UE in Vienna and Schirmer in New York were Schoenberg's main publishers during his lifetime, after his death Schott Verlag in Mainz and above all Belmont Music Publishers in Los Angeles, which was founded by the composer's widow, also played a significant role.

Considering Arnold Schoenberg's correspondence as a whole, we can see that he wrote a large proportion of his letters to publishers. Of the roughly 24,000 letters known to us, correspondence with publishers constitutes about 12 per cent of the total (TABLE 3). However, only 5 per cent of these letters have been published, not including the sections printed in the documentary volumes of the Arnold Schönberg Complete Edition. This is an astonishing figure if one considers the relevance of the letters' contents for research concerning Schoenberg, especially since they contain discussions of enormously important issues pertaining to the works. About half of the letters exchanged between Schoenberg and publishers involve UE.

Some highly relevant letters exchanged between Schoenberg and UE, as well as other printers, engravers (Breitkopf & Härtel, Geidel) and copyists have not yet been fully researched. Another area to be explored is the correspondence between Schoenberg and his son Georg, who was employed as a copyist at UE as of the late 1920s, in addition to a number of students who were taken on temporarily as editors at the publishing house, which could bring about a dramatic increase in the number of letters to be edited. As has been mentioned, licences for the works published by Verlag Dreililien in Berlin starting in 1903 were purchased by UE and thus, broadly speaking, these works are to be considered UE publications as well. This qualification has consequences for the contents of the edition of the Schoenberg–UE letters. As the Dreililien and UE correspondence overlaps in many places, we have decided to publish the letters exchanged between Schoenberg and Verlag Dreililien (represented by Max Marschalk) as an appendix to the edition, which increases the total number from 1,500 to 1,630 letters.

In the spring of 1951, a few months before his death (on 13 July), Arnold Schoenberg arranged for his entire correspondence – the originals of letters written to him as well as his own letters in the form of drafts or carbon copies – to be deposited at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. The comprehensive collection, comprising approximately 21,000 letters of

TABLE 3. Arnold Schoenberg's correspondence with publishers

Universal Edition, Vienna	1500 letters	1902–1951
Verlag Dreililien, Berlin	130 letters	1903–1933
Tischer & Jagenberg, Cologne	50 letters	1911–1947
Edition Peters, Leipzig	150 letters	1911–1951
Bote & Bock, Berlin	20 letters	1912–1930
Wilhelm Hansen, Copenhagen	120 letters	1920–1950
Heinrichshofen's Verlag, Magdeburg	15 letters	1930–1934
The New Music Society of California Publisher, San Francisco	7 letters	1932–1942
G. Schirmer, New York	740 letters	1934–1951
Shilkret	13 letters	1934–1951
H. W. Gray Company, New York	40 letters	1941–1951
Edward B. Marks Music Corporation, New York	110 letters	1947–1951
Bomart Music Publications, New York	80 letters	1948–1951
Prisma, Stockholm	9 letters	1949–1950
Ars Viva, Brussels	32 letters	1950–1951

correspondence and 35,000 written pages, provides biographical documents as well as information on Schoenberg's artistic development. The letters also attest to a half-century of cultural and intellectual history.

The correspondence between Schoenberg and UE is located in many different places. Some letters are privately owned, while others are found in public collections:

- Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, Vienna (Universal Edition Deposit I);
- Wissenschaftszentrum Arnold Schönberg, Vienna (Universal Edition Deposit II);
- The Library of Congress, Washington D.C. (Music Division, Arnold Schoenberg Collection);
- Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna (Arnold Schönberg Estate, Gertrud Schönberg Estate).

A not inconsiderable number of letters are currently considered missing; this applies above all to the letters exchanged between Schoenberg and Emil Hertzka, which were stored privately by the publisher. After his death in 1932, the letters remained in the possession of his widow Yella Hertzka, who emigrated to England when the Nazis seized power in Austria. Parts of Hertzka's correspondence have been regarded as missing ever since.⁴ To date, nothing is known about the whereabouts of his correspondence with Schoenberg. For the correspondence between 1909 and approximately 1920 we are therefore dependent on the letters kept by Schoenberg himself; the sources improve from that date onwards. After Emil Hertzka's death and following Schoenberg's emigration to the USA he corresponded with Hertzka's successors Yella Hertzka, Alfred Kalmus, Hans Heinsheimer and Alfred Schlee.

EDITORIAL METHODS

With the digitisation and publication of the heterogeneous extant sources of the Schoenberg archive,⁵ a multitude of methodically formulated questions are being raised that are of interest to similar music collections worldwide. The virtual presentation of the music and text manuscripts, letters, works of visual art, calendars, diaries, historical documents, programmes, reviews, first editions, photographs, as well as audiovisual material brings together both archival and editorial concerns.

Our editorial project – starting with an online database – has the objective of compiling all relevant letters, including divergent versions, alternative texts, and readings differing from the originals due to additions by third parties, and adding documentation and commentary. In the course of our editorial work, we are

- critically examining the sources and preparing a chronology of the letters;
- compiling the letters (that is, diplomatically transcribing them, as well as working out emended versions);
- critically reviewing the letters, including a list of variants and scholarly documentation.

While compiling the individual letters, it became clear that differing source types require different approaches. The correspondence includes a considerable quantity of sources which cannot be defined as correspondence as such: prints of music, correction proofs, drawings, writings, lists, financial matters, memoranda, reports, advertisements, teaching materials, etc. Although such sources need not

be part of the edition, they still require critical evaluation and organisation before the information they contain can be released.

We are endeavouring to deal with these heterogeneous sources by means of an ‘open source’ edition of the letters, for example by integrating all information drawn on for the commentary as digital copies, insofar as they are available as documents. The following parameters can be found in the online database of the Arnold Schönberg Center:

- date, location of sources, transcriptions, publications;
- links to the digital facsimiles of the original sources;
- digital facsimile of original letter;
- transcription;
- links to materials which are directly referred to in the letters;
- links to materials which are drawn on for the commentary;
- links to the work/source database;
- detailed content of the Schoenberg Critical Edition (Arnold Schönberg: *Sämtliche Werke*).

The sheer volume of letters precludes an overly liberal inclusion of documents that are not relevant in the strictest sense. It therefore seems logical to work with an electronic system, whose capacities are naturally unlimited. The advantages of this are huge, not only for the integration of additional letters, but also for relevant comments. Cross-linking within the databases opens up a wealth of illustration options. The rich pool of manuscripts for compositions and writings is integrated, as are concert programmes, reviews, the image archive, and other materials of relevance to the commentary. This goes far beyond the contents of the archives at the Arnold Schönberg Center.

CASE STUDY – 1914⁶

The correspondence from the year 1914, presented here as a case example, combines a large number of topics which can be taken as typical of the Schoenberg–UE correspondence as a whole:

- printing of unpublished works and new versions of works;
- royalties;
- contractual clauses;
- promotion of works;
- performances (for example, *Gurre-Lieder* in Amsterdam and Vienna);
- biographic information;

- contemporary history (the outbreak of the First World War, the economic moratorium and the subsequent discontinuation of various publishing activities).

In addition, the 1914 correspondence contains examples that are characteristic (as is the case with the publishing house's correspondence as a whole) of:

- secondary correspondence, in other words letters which are related in some way to the UE correspondence, but were not written by Schoenberg to UE – or vice versa (this would include correspondence with engravers or copyists, for example);
- enclosures (letters from other people);
- reviews, concert programmes;
- documents/contracts;
- music sources.

In this year a total of 99 letters were exchanged between UE and Schoenberg; the majority are kept in Schoenberg's archive and there is not a single letter in the archives of UE. The contents of the correspondence for this year also reveal that at least 16 letters and several enclosures have gone missing. A large proportion of the correspondence from 1914 focuses on the printing of Schoenberg's monodrama *Erwartung*, op. 17. The letters are written by three different parties: Arnold Schoenberg, Geidel engravers, and UE.

The letter from the publisher's secretary Betti Rothe to Arnold Schoenberg dated 4 June 1914 (FIGURE 1), which has been chosen as an example here, is illustrated online together with several documents mentioned by Frau Rothe in the main text and the postscript, which are relevant to the context of the content and also to the commentary:

We hereby inform you that Herr von Wöss has finished the correction of *Pierrot lunaire* and the work has consequently been sent to Breitkopf & Härtel for printing. As the texts by O. E. Hartleben are to be added, the title page will not be printed until they have been completed. We hope that you are in agreement with the following page arrangement: p. 1 title page, p. 2 empty, p. 3 preface, p. 4 contents, pp. 5 and 6 the texts and page 7 beginning of the score. We will use the same typesetting for the cover as for the title page.

We have asked the printers about the copies on handmade paper; unfortunately the production price for these volumes is rather high and the selling price must therefore be set at 20 Marks for the normal edition and 30 Marks for the edition on handmade paper. These copies must be numbered and signed by you. [...]

We enclose with this correspondence a letter from the printers, Druckerei Geidel, and also a trial proof of page 4 of the monodrama, with the request that both should be returned to us very soon together with your comments.⁷

Documents to be linked:

- *Pierrot lunaire*. Original printed edition. Large score. Universal Edition Wien–Leipzig, U.E. 5334. Cover and title page with the texts from poems by Albert Giraud, in the German translation by Otto Erich Hartleben.
- *Pierrot lunaire*. Original printed edition. Large score. Universal Edition Wien–Leipzig, U.E. 5334a. Limited special edition on handmade paper. Title pages with Arnold Schoenberg’s signature.

On the front cover and on page [0.1] of the special edition of 50 copies delivered on 30 July 1914, ‘Numbered special edition on handmade paper’ is written in the lower half of the page, in the middle underneath PARTITUR (score); the numbers are stamped on page [0.2], with Schoenberg’s handwritten signature added.

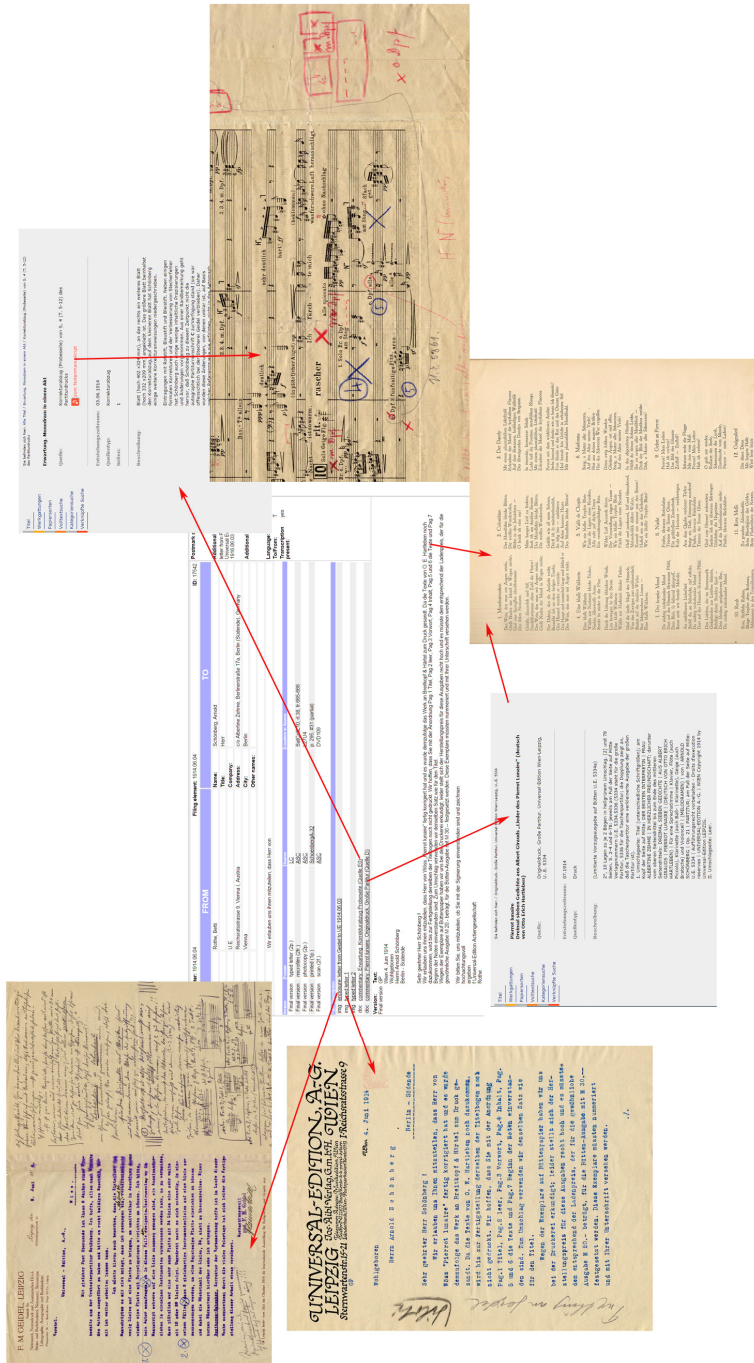
- Cross-references to letters exchanged between Schoenberg and UE, with details of the corrections to the proofs for *Pierrot lunaire* from Josef Venantius von Wöss.
- Letter from the music printers F. M. Geidel, Leipzig, to Universal Edition, dated 3 June 1914 (‘Please find enclosed 2 copies of a trial page from Schönberg’s orchestral score’).
- Correction proof (trial page) of page 4 (bars 5–12) of the printed score of *Erwartung*.

Sheet of paper, with another sheet affixed to the right-hand side. The larger sheet contains the correction proof; on the smaller sheet Schoenberg has written some more instructions for correction. Entries in red pencil, blue pencil and lead pencil. In addition to several formal corrections and improvements to engraving errors, Schoenberg has also made a few clarifications and alterations of the content.

- Reply by Arnold Schoenberg to the printers, Geidel engravers, with comments on the correction proof (no date, after 5 June 1914).

In addition to an online edition, whose wealth of material would exceed the capacities of a printed edition, a book is also planned to be published. This edition of hand- and typewritten letters is based on the guidelines specified for the *Briefwechsel der Wiener Schule*⁸ series, published by the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung, Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin.

FIGURE 1: Letter from Betti Rothe to Arnold Schoenberg of 4 June 1914 with related documents accessed through the online edition (illustrative map)



Notes

- 1 Arnold Schönberg, *Versuch eines Nachrufs für Her[t]zka*, 1932 (Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna [T05.39]).
- 2 In 2011 the estate of Arnold Schoenberg was inscribed on the UNESCO ‘Memory of the World’ Register.
- 3 <http://www.mdw.ac.at/i14/?PageId=3668> [18 March 2015].
- 4 A small section, the letters exchanged between Gustav Mahler and Hertzka were purchased by Hans Moldenhauer after the war. See Gustav Mahler, *Briefe an seine Verleger*, ed. by Franz Willnauer, Wien: Universal Edition A.G., 2012, p. 62.
- 5 <http://www.schoenberg.at>
- 6 http://213.185.182.229/letters/search_show_letter.php?ID_Number=17542 [18 March 2015].
- 7 ‘Wir erlauben uns ihnen mitzuteilen, dass Herr von Wöss “Pierrot lunaire” fertig korrigiert hat und es wurde demzufolge das Werk an Breitkopf & Härtel zum Druck gesandt. Da die Texte von O. E. Hartleben noch dazukommen, wird bis zur Fertigstellung derselben der Titelbogen noch nicht gedruckt. Wir hoffen, dass Sie mit der Anordnung Pag. 1 Titel, Pag. 2 leer, Pag. 3 Vorwort, Pag. 4 Inhalt, Pag. 5 und 6 die Texte und Pag. 7 Beginn der Noten einverstanden sind. Zum Umschlag verwenden wir denselben Satz wie für den Titel. Wegen der Exemplare auf Büttenpapier haben wir uns bei der Druckerei erkundigt; leider stellt sich der Herstellungspreis für diese Ausgaben recht hoch und es müsste dem entsprechend der Ladenpreis, der für die gewöhnliche Ausgabe M 20.- beträgt, für die Bütten-Ausgabe mit M 30.- festgesetzt werden. Diese Exemplare müssten nummeriert und mit Ihrer Unterschrift versehen werden. [...] Wir fügen unserem Schreiben einen Brief der Druckerei Geidel, sowie Probe-Abzug von Pag. 4 des Monodrams bei, mit der Bitte uns beides mit Ihren Bemerkungen versehen recht bald zu retournieren.’ (The Library of Congress, Washington D.C. [Arnold Schoenberg Collection]).
- 8 *Briefwechsel Arnold Schönberg – Alban Berg*, ed. by Juliane Brand, Christopher Hailey and Andreas Meyer, Mainz: Schott (Briefwechsel der Wiener Schule, 3), 2007.