

PART III

After Wozzeck

8 Secret programmes

Douglas Jarman

Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester

In January 1977 the American composer and Berg scholar George Perle made a trip to Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania to visit Dorothea Robetin, the daughter of Herbert and Hanna Fuchs-Robettin, who had in her possession a previously unexamined copy of the first published score of the *Lyric Suite* given to her mother by the composer. Annotated in red, blue and green ink by Berg himself and consisting of ninety pages, only eight of which were without some annotation in Berg's hand, this extraordinary document revealed that the work had behind it a detailed extra-musical programme charting the course of a love affair between Alban Berg and Hanna Fuchs-Robettin.

For many years, scholars had known that extra-musical programmes of some kind lay behind much of Berg's music – Willi Reich's description of the programme of the Violin Concerto in the first article ever published about the work¹ and Berg's own 'Open Letter' on the Chamber Concerto² had made that much clear. Such things as the sequence of tempo directions that head the movements of the *Lyric Suite* (*Allegretto giovale*, *Andante amoroso*, *Allegro misterioso* and *Trio estatico*, *Adagio appassionato*, *Presto delirando*, *Largo desolato*), and the various musical quotations from Zemlinsky and Wagner that appear during the course of the work, had already led commentators to indulge in speculation about it.³ Only with the publication in the summer of 1977 of Perle's articles about his discovery, however, did the precise nature of the programme of what Adorno had called 'a latent opera' and the extent to which the details of the programme were incorporated into and influenced the structure of the final work become clear.⁴

In brief, the *Lyric Suite* documents the love affair of Berg and Hanna from its innocent beginnings (first movement), to their declaration of love (third movement) and finally, in the last movement, to the recognition of the impossibility of its ever developing into anything more permanent. The second movement of the work is dedicated to, and paints a portrait of, Hanna and her two children, Munzo and Dorothea; the fourth movement is a love scene in which the two protagonists exchange their pledge, to a quotation from Zemlinsky's *Lyric Symphony* (where it appears

to the words 'Du bist mein eigen, mein eigen' – 'you are my own, my own'), and the fifth is a depiction of 'the horrors and pains which now follow, of the days with their racing pulses, of the painful Tenebroso of the night'. The last movement was revealed by the annotated score as a setting of 'De profundis clamavi' from Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* in a translation by Stefan George – 'To you, you sole dear one, my cry rises out of the deepest abyss in which my heart has fallen'⁵ – that gradually dies away 'in love, yearning and grief'.

The revelation of Berg's illicit love affair came as a surprise only insofar as it overturned the idealistic picture of the relationship between Berg and his wife Helene that had been painted in all the biographies of the composer published to that point. More extraordinary was the revelation of the way and the extent to which Berg had used the details of this 'secret programme' as a means of determining pitch, proportions, tempi and other technical features of the work. Thus the annotated score revealed that the four note cell A–B \flat –B \flat –F, which acts as the main motivic cell of the work and frequently determines, amongst other things, the choice of row forms and row transpositions, is derived from the initials of Alban Berg and Hanna Fuchs converted into German musical notation. A further figuration in the Andante amoroso second movement – the repeated C \sharp in the viola – has its origins in the Robettin family's pet name for Dorothea, 'Dodo'. Similarly, both the formal proportions and the metronome markings of the whole work are based on two numbers which Berg particularly associated with himself and Hanna: the number 23, which he believed to be his own fateful number, and the number 10 which, for some reason, he associated with Hanna Fuchs.

The Allegro misterioso and Trio estatico of the third movement of the work can be taken as an illustration of the way in which not only the character of the sections but many of the most important aspects of the structure and the musical material are determined by extra-musical, programmatic considerations.

In the annotated score, only the date '20.5.25' stands at the head of the movement. That this date refers to the day when Alban and Hanna first declared, or became aware of, their feelings for one another is confirmed by the annotation that Berg adds following the word misterioso, 'for everything was still a mystery'. The necessarily clandestine nature of the couple's declaration is reflected in the fact that the four instruments play with mutes throughout ('like a whisper' says Berg's annotation at the opening of the movement), even in the Trio in which the dynamic marking is 'sempre *f* possibile'. The movement is an ABA structure with the proportions of each section determined by Berg's fateful number 23, the first A section having 69 bars (3×23) and the B section (the Trio) 23 bars. The final A

section is a shortened (46 bars = 2×23) retrograde reprise of the opening section, the significance of the retrograde – which here, as always in Berg’s music, acts as a metaphor for negation or denial – being pointed out by the annotation ‘Vergessen Sie es ... !’ (‘Forget it ... !’). While the number of bars in each section and in the movement as a whole are multiples of Berg’s number, 23, the metronome marking of $\text{♩} = 150$ is a multiple of Hanna’s 10. Finally, the twelve-note row that forms the basis of the Allegro sections of the third movement derives from that used in the first movement, but now modified by exchanging the fourth and tenth notes of the original so that the notes of the A–B \flat –F–H cell appear adjacently. The choice of row forms and transpositions is restricted to those that embody permutations of this cell.

Now that we know of the annotated score, we can see that the relationship between the musical material and the extra-musical programme of the *Lyric Suite* is not unlike that between the musical material and the programme of its immediate predecessor, the Chamber Concerto. In his ‘Open Letter’ on the Chamber Concerto, which he published in February 1925, some three months before the date inscribed at the head of the Allegro misterioso of the *Lyric Suite*, Berg had drawn attention to the cryptographic and numerological features of the work, describing the way in which the letters of three names ‘Arnold Schönberg’, ‘Anton Webern’ and ‘Alban Berg’ had been used as a source of musical material and the all-embracing role which the resulting number three played in the piece.⁶ By giving us detailed, concrete evidence about the way in which the extra-musical programme of the *Lyric Suite* affects the structure and technical aspects of the work, however, Perle demonstrated that the kind of cryptographic and numerological procedures that Berg described in the ‘Open Letter’ were not confined to the Chamber Concerto, and suggested that there was, at the very least, a strong possibility that Berg might have adopted a similar strategy in works other than the two that we now knew about.

Even with the evidence of the annotated score, however, it would have been difficult to do more than speculate about the programmes of other works had it not, coincidentally, become possible for scholars to gain access to Berg’s sketches and manuscripts. In August 1976, five months before Perle’s discovery of the *Lyric Suite* score, the composer’s widow Helene had died, and gradually over the next year the material from the Berg estate (some of which had already been deposited in the Austrian National Library and some of which remained at the Bergs’ flat in Trauttmansdorffgasse) was brought together, catalogued and for the first time made freely available for scholarly study. Now, with the evidence of the sketches, it became clear that, even for the Chamber Concerto, Berg had revealed only a handful of his programmatic secrets. ‘If it became known,’ Berg had said

in his Open Letter dedicating the work to Schoenberg, ‘how much friendship, love and a world of human and spiritual references I have smuggled into these three movements, the adherents of programme music – should there be any left – would go mad with joy.’⁷

What Berg had not revealed, but what the sketches for the work make clear, is that ‘Friendship’, ‘Love’ and ‘the World’ are the secret titles of the three movements, and that each of the variations of the first movement depicts a different member of the Schoenberg circle.⁸ Nor, understandably, had he told Schoenberg that the Adagio charts the breakdown of the relationship between Schoenberg and his first wife Mathilde following her affair with the painter Richard Gerstl. As Berg’s annotations make clear, the large-scale palindromic structure of the second movement represents Mathilde’s decline into illness after leaving Gerstl in 1908 and returning to Schoenberg, while the situation between the three of them is alluded to through a reference to the ‘Melisande’ theme from Schoenberg’s own *Pelleas und Melisande* and through a figuration that transforms the letters of the name Mathilde into musical notation.⁹ Moreover, as we know from sketches, letters and a variety of internal evidence, the Chamber Concerto also contains a host of other personal allusions, some of which we recognise and understand,¹⁰ some of which we know about without fully understanding their significance,¹¹ and some of which will perhaps always remain a secret. Starting in the first movement as a kind of Viennese ‘Enigma’ Variations and ending, perhaps, as a kind of *Heldenleben*, the whole work, in effect, paints a picture of the personal relationships and the professional standing of the Schoenberg school at that time.

After the *Lyrical Suite*, the affair with Hanna Fuchs and its musical expression through her cipher B–F and her number 10 were to be among the secrets at the centre of all Berg’s remaining compositions. In the following work, *Der Wein*, he returned to the set of Baudelaire poems that had provided the secret text of the sixth movement of the *Lyrical Suite* and composed a concert aria that – referring obliquely through its title to Hanna’s husband who was a great wine connoisseur and the owner of a famous cellar – takes up again the theme of lost love and the resulting solitude that had been the subject of the Allegro desolato:

What has it to do with anyone other than you, Hanna, if I say, in ‘The Wine of the Lovers’, “Let us fly breast to breast, without resting, to my dream land” and these words are accompanied by the lightest of B and F majors? And what can follow then but the song of ‘The Wine of the Solitary Man’? That I am and that I remain.¹²

And in the Violin Concerto, Hanna’s number stands at the very head of the work, with our attention drawn to it by the wholly superfluous indication

'Introduction 10 bars', while Berg's 23 determines, amongst other things, the point at which the fate rhythm of Part II first appears (bar 23) and the metronome marking ($\text{♩} = 69$) of the Allegro. The last bar of the Concerto, bar 230, finally unites Alban's and Hanna's numbers.

The Violin Concerto

The Violin Concerto is something of an exception in Berg's output, however, for in this work we have not a 'secret' programme (or even, as in the Chamber Concerto, a 'half-secret' one), but a quite explicit programme that Berg himself made public through his pupil and first biographer Willi Reich. As is well known, the Concerto is dedicated to the memory of – and was designed as a requiem for – Manon Gropius, the daughter of Alma Mahler and Walter Gropius, who died of infantile paralysis in April 1935 at the age of eighteen. According to Reich, the first Part of the Concerto, which consists of an Andante and an Allegretto, paints a portrait of Manon, while the Allegro and the final Adagio of Part II depict her illness and death.¹³ This programmatic interpretation of the work springs directly from Berg himself – and indeed many of the words that appear in Reich's description of the Concerto appear in Berg's sketches for Part II, where the annotations 'cries', 'groans' and other programmatic references appear above specific musical figurations; the chord at the climax of the opening Allegro of Part II, for example, is labelled *Lahmungsakkord* – 'Kinderlahmung' being the German name for the illness from which Manon died.

We may well wonder why both Berg's 23 and Hanna's 10 play so prominent a role in the structure of a work about, and dedicated to, Manon Gropius, and, as I have argued elsewhere, there is enough internal evidence in the piece to suggest the existence of another, more autobiographical, programme – a programme in which Berg consciously saw the Concerto as a requiem for himself, as well as Manon, and took the opportunity to write into the work a number of references to both his first love, Marie Scheuchl, and his last love Hanna Fuchs.¹⁴ The sketches for the work make clear, however, that for some considerable length of time Berg had in mind yet another, third, programme and that the idea of the Manon programme occurred to him only when he was some way into the piece.

One of the earliest sketches for the Concerto is a formal plan that Berg made in his diary in March 1935. This shows that, even at that stage, he intended the Concerto to be in two Parts – with Part I consisting of an improvisatory Andante (Berg uses the word 'phantasierend') followed by

a *ländler*-like *Allegretto*, and Part II consisting of an *Adagio* chorale movement separated by a *cadenza* from a final *Allegro rondo*. This formal plan, which predates Manon's death by some five or six weeks, thus shows that from the outset Berg intended that the *Concerto* should include a set of chorale variations, but that he originally thought of these variations as forming the opening movement of Part II and did not, initially, see them as having the programmatic significance (or rather the same programmatic significance) that they have in the final work.

The point at which Berg decided to use the Bach funeral chorale 'Es ist genug' as the basis for the Chorale Variations which form the last movement of the *Concerto* as we know it, has been a matter of some controversy and discussion. All the evidence suggests, however, that, having decided at the outset that one movement of the piece was to be a set of chorale variations, the idea of using 'Es ist genug' and of turning the work into a tone poem in memory of Manon Gropius only occurred to Berg at quite a late stage in the composition of the piece – well after he had settled on the note-row of the work, as we can see from a couple of sketches that show him trying to devise a chorale of his own based on the row of the *Violin Concerto*.¹⁵

The extraordinary thing is that even after Berg had decided to use the Bach funeral chorale he was for some time reluctant to abandon his original plan of having the chorale movement at the beginning of Part II. Amongst the sketches is a draft that shows what, at one stage, was Berg's idea of how the opening of the second Part of the *Concerto* might work, the first five bars of the draft corresponding to bars 14–18 of Part II as we know it, but leading straight into a statement of the Bach chorale, firstly in C and then, after a change of mind, resketched in D major. Only having done this – and the draft shows the precise moment at which Berg changed his mind – did he decide to reverse the order of the last two movements (to put the *Allegro* before the *Adagio* chorale movement) and, taking his pencil and making a heavy line through the sketch, write the reminder 'Übergang zu IIb bleibt' – ('the transition to IIb stays') – at which point the *Concerto* achieved its final form.¹⁶

Why was Berg so reluctant to abandon the original formal scheme? Why – even after he had decided to use the Bach funeral chorale (and thus presumably having, at least to some extent, settled on the final programme of the *Concerto*) – did he for so long cling to the idea that Part II should open with the *Adagio* chorale movement and end with an *Allegro rondo*? A brisk *Allegro* is, after all, hardly an appropriate conclusion to a work that is intended as a requiem. The reason is, as the sketches reveal, that he was trying to reconcile two extra-musical programmes – that one that we know and another one that had nothing to do with Manon Gropius but

was there from the beginning, its existence clearly indicated in the earliest sketches for the work.

The original programme of the Violin Concerto first appears on the page in Berg's diary immediately before that on which he outlines the form of the work. Halfway down this page, in the margin, there appear the initials FFFF and, alongside them, the tempo indications *Allegro*, *Largo*, *Allegretto*, *Rubato*. The meaning of these initials and their relation to the tempo indications is revealed further down the same page where we find the words: 'Die 4 Satzen: Frisch, Fromm, Fröhlich, Frei' – ('The 4 movements: Lively, Devout, Happy, Free') and beneath these words a sequence of roman numerals and tempo indications that show Berg reversing this original order thus:

Frisch	Fromm	Fröhlich	Frei
IV	III	II	I
	(Chorale)	Ländler	Andante

'Frei' (with the indication *Andante* beneath it) thus became the first movement, 'Fröhlich' the second (with the word 'Ländler' beneath), 'Fromm' ('devout') the third (with the word *Chorale* beneath) and finally 'Frisch', which became the fourth. The following diary page then outlines the two-part structure of the whole piece with the *Chorale* ('Fromm') opening Part II.¹⁷

The difficulties that Berg experienced with the composition of the opening of Part II came about because he wanted to retain the main features of this original plan but, whereas the first half of the plan could be adapted easily enough, the second half was incompatible with the new *Manon* programme and could only make programmatic sense when the order of the *Adagio chorale* variations and the *Allegro* were reversed.

Although the existence of the original FFFF programme is incontrovertible, its significance is unclear and any attempt to understand it raises some uncomfortable questions. The motto 'Frisch, Fromm, Fröhlich, Frei' – which, reversed, forms the original plan of the Concerto – was the motto of the *Deutscher Turnverein*. This was originally a movement formed in the early nineteenth century by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, the so-called 'Turnvater Jahn', and concerned with the setting up of clubs devoted to gymnastics. Jahn was a fervent patriot who believed that physical education was a cornerstone, not only of the health, but of the very identity of a nation, and the motto of the *Turnverein* was a slogan adopted by many German youth and nationalist groups that were active in the early decades of this century. Certainly the distinctive four F symbol, which we find in the first sketch for the Violin Concerto and which had been the symbol of the *Deutscher Turnverein* since the mid-1840s, and the rhyme 'Frisch,

Fromm, Fröhlich, Frei ist der Deutscher Turnerei' would be well known to any German or Austrian of Berg's generation.

What, then, are we to make of Berg's original plan of basing the Violin Concerto on a slogan associated with German nationalism? We have it on the authority of Adorno¹⁸ that Berg was completely free of the anti-Semitism that was such a feature of Viennese life at the period and we know that throughout the 1930s Berg lent his name to and supported the periodical *23* – a periodical that contained a number of outspoken and courageous attacks on the artistic policies, and often on the leading figures, of the Third Reich; yet we also know that, in those passages in Act III scene 1 of *Lulu* that include the Jewish banker, Berg made some additions to Wedekind that both Schoenberg and Erwin Stein regarded as anti-Semitic – additions that were one of the reasons for Schoenberg refusing to complete the orchestration of the opera.

George Perle has argued eloquently, invoking Berg's admiration for Karl Kraus and *Die Fackel*, in defence of Berg's handling of the character of the banker in *Lulu*.¹⁹ Yet, while it is impossible to know for certain why Berg initially chose to base the Violin Concerto on an overtly nationalist slogan, it is difficult to avoid the thought, voiced by Schoenberg in response to the *Lulu* libretto, that in doing so Berg perhaps hoped to find favour with the National Socialist Party.²⁰ On the other hand, it seems more a sign of political naivety than opportunism to imagine that anything as footling as the addition of a few phrases to the libretto of *Lulu* or the basing of a work on a nationalist motto (and a nationalist motto used backwards at that) would make the chance of performance of these works in the Germany of the Third Reich more likely. The Hindemith affair of 1934, when Goebbels publicly denounced atonality as 'furnishing the most dramatic proof of how strongly the Jewish intellectual infection had taken hold of the national body' had surely shown Berg that it was his musical language that made his work politically unacceptable and placed it firmly in the category of degenerate art – and yet this language remained unaffected by considerations of political expediency.

It is, I think, possible to read a quite different meaning into Berg's intended use of this FFFF motto than that which immediately suggests itself. It is a reading that rests on the fact that Berg, from the outset, chose to use this motto backwards. Backwards or retrograde motion is a particular feature of Berg's music (the Violin Concerto is the only mature work of Berg's that does not include a large scale retrograde or palindrome) and in both the operas and the instrumental music – as Berg's annotation in the third movement of the *Lyric Suite* makes clear – such retrograde motion always has a special symbolic significance in that it is consistently associated with negation or denial.²¹

By the time Berg wrote the Violin Concerto his music was labelled as a manifestation of ‘cultural bolshevism’ and was no longer played in Germany or even his native Austria. He himself was reviled in the press (‘Hindemith’, wrote one newspaper at the time of the 1934 affair, wrote music fit only for an atmosphere ‘characterised by the names of Alban Berg, Arthur Honegger and Béla Bartók’) and was no longer regarded as an indigenous composer.²² The Violin Concerto, with its *ländler*s, waltzes and folk tunes, is the most overtly Austrian of all Berg’s works and, given the consistent metaphoric significance that Berg attached to retrograde movement, it seems at least possible that in basing the work on the FFFF motto backwards he intended the retrograde to have the same significance as his use of musical retrogrades elsewhere. Berg’s reversal of the phrase ‘Frisch, Fromm, Fröhlich, Frei’ thus symbolises a rejection – albeit a private act of rejection, since no one who heard the piece would ever be aware of the role played by the motto in the structure of the piece – rather than an endorsement, of the nationalism inherent in the motto. It was a rejection that came from a composer whose works were no longer regarded as forming any part of German music, of that narrow nationalism that denied him (and others) a place in the German tradition of which he felt himself so much a part.

The significance of *Wozzeck*

Recent research has accustomed us to the fact that, far from being purely detached essays in technique, much of even the free atonal and twelve-note music of the Second Viennese School has its origins in some kind of subjective programme.²³ For the most part such programmes were ‘inspirational forces’ which had little effect on the formal organisation of the music²⁴ and remained private and unrevealed – not least because, by the 1920s, the heyday of programme music was past and a new aesthetic of objectivity was being pursued by the youngest and most radical composers.

Berg’s ‘programmes’, however, are of a different order. Clearly he, like many composers, felt the need for some extra-musical starting point as a way of stimulating his creative imagination; but the detailed autobiographical nature of the programmes, and the way in which these details are embodied in the very structure of the music, make them essentially different from the more generalised programmes that served as a starting point for his colleagues. *Wozzeck* seems to be the crucial work in Berg’s adoption of this kind of detailed autobiographical programme. It is sig-

nificant that there is not a single non-operatic work after *Wozzeck* that does not – and not a single work before it that does – have an extra-musical programme of this kind.²⁵

One of the most discussed aspects of *Wozzeck*, and the one to which Berg himself drew most attention and of which he was especially proud, is its use of the forms of ‘absolute’ instrumental music – and its use of these forms in such a way that they reflect both the psychological and dramatic kernel of the scene and the tiniest detail of the dramatic action while, at the same time, retaining their autonomy as self-sufficient musical structures.²⁶ Discussing Berg’s preoccupation with the technical and formal aspects of his operas, Christopher Hailey has perceptively described the composer’s use of such forms in an operatic context as a symptom of his artistic need ‘to reconcile the lower impulses of theatre with the requirements of “high art”, the sensual self-indulgence of his Viennese heritage with the discipline of the Classical legacy.’²⁷ It is an observation that is equally applicable to one of the roles which Berg’s secret programmes play in the instrumental music, in which the emotional intensity and ‘sensual self-indulgence’ are not only held in check by, but are themselves transformed into, controlling factors that distance him from the feelings expressed, so that ‘subjective elements are transformed into objective restraints which, paradoxically, both embody and curb the subjectivity from which they sprang.’²⁸

Wozzeck, like *Lulu*, is full of autobiographical allusions, and it is striking how closely the tactics adopted in the post-*Wozzeck* instrumental music mirror those adopted in the opera. In the opera, Berg chooses to impose ‘abstract’, self-contained musical forms (albeit forms of which he hoped that the audience would be unaware)²⁹ onto an existing narrative; in the later non-operatic works, he chooses to impose a narrative (albeit a ‘secret’ one of which the listener would be unaware) onto the abstract, self-sufficient forms of the instrumental music. Essentially the procedure in both the operatic and instrumental works is identical: the creation of a situation in which the demands of the textual narrative – whether operatic plot or secret programme – and the demands of the autonomous musical structures become identical. Stimulated and inspired by his work on *Wozzeck*, and having succeeded so magnificently in reconciling absolute musical forms with an existing story line, Berg then set about creating secret story lines for the instrumental works; having shaped the libretto of the opera to ensure that it lent itself to be set as sonata forms, passacaglias, variations and so on, he then began to take care to devise secret programmes, shaped in such a way that both the whole and the details were capable of being transformed into satisfactory and ‘absolute’ musical structures. Many pages of the annotated score of the *Lyric Suite* outline a

narrative as detailed as the story line of any opera, and it seems not only possible but likely that in Berg's mind many movements had even more specific programmes than his annotations reveal. Mark DeVoto has drawn attention to

the final chord of the second movement, *Andante amoroso* [bar 150], sustained after the pizzicato C's in the cello ('Wie aus der Ferne. Do-Do') have died away. Here the Tristan chord is transposed down a perfect fifth, but otherwise maintains its characteristic spacing. The signification is plain: Hanna's children have run off to play somewhere else, while Alban and Hanna are left to contemplate their love for each other.³⁰

Similarly, although according to Dorothea Robetin the love affair between Berg and her mother was never consummated, it is difficult not to wonder whether the passage at bars 51–8 of the *Adagio appassionato* does not represent such a consummation – whether real or imaginary.

After *Wozzeck*, the invention of some kind of extra-musical story line became so habitual and necessary a part of Berg's working methods that one is inclined to agree with Adorno who, writing to Helene Berg following the composer's death, advised her not to worry about the affair with Hanna since Berg 'didn't write the *Lyric Suite* because he fell in love with Hanna Fuchs but fell in love with Hanna Fuchs in order to write the *Lyric Suite*'.³¹ But the adoption of such secret narratives seems to have satisfied a number of needs in Berg's creative and personal psychology and there are, perhaps, additional reasons why he felt it important that the precise details of autobiographical events should be embodied in the music – irrespective of whether or not anyone else ever knew what these events were. They are reasons which, again, first come to the fore in *Wozzeck*.

Reviewing the publication of the diaries of Berg's contemporary and fellow Viennese Arthur Schnitzler, Edward Timms has observed that 'Schnitzler's writings are haunted by evanescence. The painstaking attempt to record how he spent every morning, every afternoon, every evening of his adult life emerges as an attempt to fortify the self against transience and oblivion. It is an exercise in self-confirmation.'³² Time and the passage of time are central themes of Berg's first opera, and his obsessive recording of the details of his own emotional life in his works can, like Schnitzler's, be seen as an attempt in some way to make permanent the transient, to assert and maintain the reality of individual experience in the face of the fatefully revolving world and endless passage of time that so preoccupy both the Captain and the Doctor in *Wozzeck*.

In a letter to Hanna dated October 1931, Berg distinguishes between the inner person and 'the exterior person, the one I have been forced to present myself as to my fellow human beings ... and who might for a time

be fulfilled with the joys of motoring but could never be able to compose *Lulu*.³³ The inner, private Berg was a man who felt – who wanted to feel – that the whole of his life was governed by some strange preordained destiny; a man who would examine tram tickets³⁴ and postmarks to see whether they contained his fateful number (and would go through extraordinary mathematical convolutions to ensure that they did),³⁵ who, having worked the number 23 into the structure of the second part of the Violin Concerto, took pains to see that the first part took 23 manuscript pages in the short score; a man eager to accept any theory or to read significance into any coincidence that seemed to confirm his sense that everything was pre-destined. A belief in such things was common in the Vienna of Berg's day, and even without the testament of friends and colleagues like Adorno and Louis Krasner, Berg's letters and compositions themselves provide evidence enough of his interest in numerology, astrology and predestination. Indeed, as I have argued elsewhere, Berg, through purely musical means, identifies not only time but also predestination as central subjects of both *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*.³⁶

Berg's first stay with the Fuchs-Robettin family and his first meeting with Hanna came about as a result of his attending a Prague performance of the *Three Fragments from 'Wozzeck'* – pieces, from an opera completed four years earlier, in which the notes of her initials already act as a fate motif. As George Perle has pointed out, 'it is unlikely that a man of Berg's predisposition would have failed to notice what would have struck him as a prophetic coincidence'.³⁷ Berg's feeling that Hanna Fuchs represented his destiny was further confirmed when, following their meeting, he went back through his earlier works and discovered afresh that the first and last notes of the opening motif of his String Quartet Op. 3 were the notes F \sharp –B \flat and that the opening bar of the second movement of his newly-composed Chamber Concerto (significantly entitled 'Love' in the sketches) contained both her and his initials.

Berg had already realised that there were similarities between his situation and the situation of the protagonist of Büchner's play *Woyzeck*. 'There is something of me in his [Wozzeck's] character', he wrote to Helene on 7 August 1918,³⁸ referring ostensibly to the similarities between the world of the down-trodden Wozzeck and his own experiences in the war years – although he cannot have helped, in his own mind at least, thinking of the similarity between himself and Wozzeck as fathers of an illegitimate child by a woman called Marie.³⁹ The recognition of these similarities might, indeed, have played a role in his deciding to set the play, just as some years later a recognition of the similarities between the names and situations of Alwa and Schön and Alban and Schoenberg, and the similarities between the deaths of Richard Gerstl and Wedekind's painter, must have influ-

enced his decision to set *Lulu*. The meeting with Hanna can only have confirmed the sense that *Wozzeck* not only reflected his own life but in some uncanny way anticipated it.

‘Lines, circles, mysterious figures – if only one could read them’, sings Wozzeck in Act I scene 4, accompanied by a flurry of inversionally and palindromically symmetrical figurations, of the mysterious patterns that he sees in nature. Wozzeck’s obsessions are those of Berg himself, and, as Geoffrey Poole has suggested, ‘if the constant recurrence of such patterns in day-to-day life – whether real or imaginary – provided an illusion of order and purpose then that illusion must in its turn have brought a measure of real security’.⁴⁰ In 1919, when Berg had already started his work on *Wozzeck*, the Viennese biologist Paul Kammerer published a book entitled *Das Gesetz der Serie* (‘The Law of Seriality’) in which, believing that ‘coincidence rules to such an extent that the concept of coincidence itself is negated’ he attempted to set out the unexplored laws of ‘seriality’. The final pages of the book express a belief with which Berg would doubtless have agreed. The action of seriality, wrote Kammerer, ‘is ubiquitous and continuous in life, nature and cosmos. The law of seriality is the umbilical cord that connects thought, feeling, science and art with the womb of the universe which gave birth to them.’⁴¹