

# Performance as source : a new document on the genesis of Berg's Wozzeck

Autor(en): **Lucentini, Valeria**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Schweizer Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft = Annales suisses de musicologie = Annuario Svizzero di musicologia**

Band (Jahr): **33 (2013)**

PDF erstellt am: **25.05.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-835159>

## **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern.

Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden.

Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

## **Haftungsausschluss**

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

## Performance as source. A new document on the genesis of Berg's *Wozzeck*

VALERIA LUCENTINI (Bern)

"Isn't it fantastic, incredible? [...] Someone must set it to music".<sup>1</sup> On 5<sup>th</sup> May 1914 Berg left the theatre with this strong impression, which gave him the initial fillip to create *Wozzeck*, the first full-length opera composed according to atonal principles.

Paul Elbogen's statement, well-known by scholars, reveals much more than what the two sentences communicate at the first reading. But which *Wozzeck* did Berg see that evening? And what role did the theatrical performance play in the genesis of his libretto? Asking these questions means adopting a new philological perspective, which takes into consideration the gap between bequeathed sources and the actual performances (as judicious philology has taught us with regard to different repertoires). If it is true that the idea of setting to music *Wozzeck* came to Berg after seeing the theatrical representation, the analysis of the genesis of his libretto cannot avoid the comparison with that performance and it should therefore consider the version realized in that occasion just like any other edition used by the composer.

For a long time, research on available written sources has contradicted Berg's and his biographer Willi Reich's declarations. This paper will deal with the analysis of a new document, not considered by scholars so far, which could have influenced Berg in a decisive way, being therefore a common ground between these contrasting positions.

### 1.

Before commenting in further detail on this issue, it is essential to take stock and illustrate the history of *Wozzeck*, which relates a real crime to Berg's opera, through Büchner's play and its critical editions. Büchner

---

1 Paul Elbogen, "Firsthand reminiscence of a historic night", in: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 October 1981, p. 40, cit. in Douglas Jarman, *Alban Berg: "Wozzeck"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 1.



was at first inspired by a murder case which took place on June 21<sup>st</sup> 1821 in Leipzig: the barber and ex-soldier Johann Christian Woyzeck mortally stabbed his mistress, driven by insane jealousy. Thus, he was sentenced to death. The appointed forensic scientist Dr. Johann Christian August Clarus gave evidence that Woyzeck could not be regarded as insane. He declared Woyzeck in complete control of his mental faculties. Thus, Woyzeck was executed in 1824 and in the same year Dr. Clarus published his report in a medical journal. Büchner read that article and based his piece on it.<sup>2</sup>

This play is about the dehumanising condition of the soldier Woyzeck, victim of a system of social relations that isolates and humiliates him. His unstable mental health is constantly fuelled by the figures of the Captain (Hauptmann) and the Doctor who, by different means, torture him and accuse him of immorality. His situation get worse when his mistress Marie, from whom he had a child with no “blessing from the Church”, who cheats on him with the Drum major (Tambourmajor). Woyzeck confronts the latter, who humiliates him by beating him up. This climax leads Woyzeck to indulge his “fixed idea” and mortally stab Marie. Then he drowns while trying to clean himself of the blood after having throw the knife in the water.

The genesis of the play is not well-known. The author died in 1837 leaving the text in a fragmentary state. The plot does not develop in a conventional or coherent way; it rather seems to go forward randomly, though describing the main character’s development. Therefore, it is difficult to perceive the original intention in regard to the sequence of the scenes.

The first editor of the complete edition of Büchner’s work was Emil Franzos (1848–1904), who retrieved the manuscripts thanks to Ludwig Büchner, the playwright’s brother. The manuscript was extremely difficult to read and a chemical process was necessary to improve legibility. Once this was solved, Franzos still had to face the difficult task of sorting the different drafts in a dramaturgically logical way, since there was no ordering information available.<sup>3</sup> His edition of *Wozzeck* first appeared in instalments in the Viennese *Neue Freie Presse* in 1875,<sup>4</sup> then in 1878 in the Berlin journal *Mehr Licht*.<sup>5</sup> The complete edition of Büchner’s output

2 See Mosco Carner, *Alban Berg, the man and the work* (London: Duckworth, 1985; 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1975), p. 166.

3 The various and complex phases of the edition have been described by Karl Emil Franzos himself within his work, p. 202ff.; the most salient details are in *Georg Büchner*, by Karl Emil Franzos, in Jarman, *Alban Berg: “Wozzeck”*, pp. 111–129.

4 Karl Emil Franzos, “Aus Georg Büchner’s Nachlass”, in: *Neue Freie Presse*, 3 November 1875, pp. 1–4; 5 November 1875, pp. 1–4; and 23 November 1875, pp. 1–4; online: <http://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=nfp&datum=1875>.

5 *Mehr Licht. Eine deutsche Wochenschrift für Literatur und Kunst*, 5 October 1878, n. 1 pp. 5–7; n. 2, pp. 21–24; n. 3, pp. 39–42.



was published in 1879.<sup>6</sup> Franzos always described his edition as a literally faithful reproduction of the manuscript and claimed he did not add or invent anything even though the text would not be readable. Indeed, later researchers proved that it was not actually the case. He attempted many changes to the original text and there were some deletions made with no indication of *emendatio*. Furthermore, he also misread some passages of the text, among which the name of the protagonist ("Wozzeck" instead of "Woyzeck") is the best-known example, but by no means the only one.

After Franzos, other authors faced the task of the edition of *Woyzeck*, suggesting different solutions and new orderings of the scenes. For instance, in 1920 Georg Witkowski<sup>7</sup> revealed some misinterpreted details and Fritz Bergemann,<sup>8</sup> in his 1922 edition, misread the term "Barbier" in the scene following Woyzeck's fall in the water as evidence of the latter's surviving. Therefore Bergemann imagined a different ending, in which Woyzeck would be arrested and perhaps judged.<sup>9</sup>

Because of its importance in the genesis of Berg's libretto, the most discussed edition of *Woyzeck* is that by Paul Landau (1880–1951), published in 1909.<sup>10</sup> Scholars have hitherto highlighted the similarity of Berg's libretto with this edition, even if the composer denied having used it.

## 2.

In May 1926, Rudolf Schäfke published an article about *Wozzeck* in the Berlin newspaper *Melos*, writing that "Ein Vergleich des Operntextes mit diesen Woyzeck-Editionen zeigt, dass Berg die Ausgabe Landaus vorgelegen hat".<sup>11</sup> In his own copy of this article, Berg corrected the sentence by replacing

6 Georg Büchners, *Sämtliche Werke und handschriftlicher Nachlaß. Erste kritische Gesammt-Ausgabe*, eingeleitet und hrsg. von Karl Emil Franzos (Frankfurt am Main: Sauerländer, 1879).

7 Georg Witkowski, *Büchners Woyzeck* (Leipzig: Insel, 1920).

8 Georg Büchner, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, hrsg. von Fritz Bergemann (Leipzig: Insel, 1922).

9 The inconsistency of this assumption has been proved by George Perle, *The operas of Berg: "Wozzeck"* (Berkeley [...]: University of California Press, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 31–34.

10 Georg Büchner, *Gesammelte Schriften*, hrsg. von Paul Landau (Berlin: Paul Cassirer, 1909).

11 "A comparison of the opera text with this edition of *Woyzek* shows that Berg based his work on the Landau's edition"; Rudolf Schäfke, "Alban Bergs Oper: *Wozzeck*", in: *Melos*, 5 (Mai 1926), pp. 133–267: 267.



the word "Landau" with "Franzos".<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, Willi Reich, Berg's official biographer, let be known that the composer had worked only with the Franzos edition in preparing the libretto and that he had consulted other editions only after the work was finished. Berg himself always said he had never used the Landau edition.<sup>13</sup>

Immediately after attending the drama performance in 1914, Berg jotted down the first musical ideas, still available in sketches.<sup>14</sup> As the composition process was interrupted several times, it is not clear at which moment the ordering of scenes of the libretto was definitively resolved. Again Reich expressed contradictory positions about it since, as G. Perle has already pointed, he asserted that "in the summer of 1917 the arrangement of the text of *Wozzeck* was completed"; but then he stated "in the summer of 1917 he had already begun on the composition (Act II, scene 2), although the text was not yet finished".<sup>15</sup> If the exact date cannot be established, it is possible to set a *terminus ante quem* the genesis of his libretto is supposed to be finished, which is July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1919. On that date Berg wrote to Gottfried Kassowitz telling, for the first time, that every act had five scenes.<sup>16</sup> Berg made some minor textual changes until 1921, after buying the Witkowski edition.<sup>17</sup> The orchestration was completed on April 1922 and the premiere took place only on December 14<sup>th</sup> 1925 at the Berliner Staatsoper, under the direction of Erich Kleiber.

Which edition did Berg base his libretto on? The Franzos edition was undoubtedly the medium between Büchner and the later expressionists".<sup>18</sup> However, other editions were published before the performance of Berg's opera, which could have played a role in the genesis of his libretto.<sup>19</sup> As mentioned above, the most discussed one is the 1909 edition by Landau. Even though he reproduced the text of Franzos literally, Landau revisited the ordering of the scenes and gave them a more coherent arrangement. In order to remind the reader of the different orderings, a direct comparison between the Franzos edition, the Landau revision, and Berg's libretto is proposed below.

12 See Carner, *Alban Berg*, p. 174; cfr. Perle, *The operas of Berg*, p. 27.

13 Willi Reich, *Alban Berg* (Harcourt: Brace & World, 1965), p. 118.

14 See *Alban Berg "Wozzeck". Texte, Materialien, Kommentare*, hrsg. von Attila Csampai und Dietmar Holland (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1985), pp. 108, 117.

15 Perle, *The operas of Berg*, p. 30, note 18.

16 Berg to Kassowitz, letter of July 22 1919, cfr. *Alban Berg "Wozzeck"*, p. 122.

17 Patricia Hall, "Berg's Büchner text and the genesis of form", in: *Theory and Practice*, 33 (2008), pp. 249–271: 262.

18 Carner, *Alban Berg*, p. 173.

19 For a complete list of *Wozzeck* editions owned by Berg see Hall, *Berg's Büchner text*, p. 262.



Franzos Edition (1879)	Landau Edition (1909)	Berg's Libretto
1 Zimmer	1 Zimmer	I,1 Zimmer des Hauptmanns [= Zimmer]
2 Öffentlicher Platz. Buden	2 Freies Feld [6]	I,2 Freies Feld [= Freies Feld]
3 Das Innere der Bude	3 Die Stadt [7]	I,3 Mariens Stube [= Die Stadt]
4 Stube	4 Studierstube des Doktors [8]	I,4 Studierstube des Doktors.
5 Der Hof des Doktors	5 Öffentlicher Platz. Buden [2]	–
6 Freies Feld. Die Stadt in der Ferne	6 Das Innere der Bude [3]	–
7 Die Stadt	7 Straße [9]	I,5 Straße vor Mariens Tür [= Straße]
8 Studierstube des Doktors	8 Der Hof des Doktors [5]	–
9 Straße	9 Stube [4]	II,1 Mariens Stube [= Stube]
10 Straße	10 Straße [10]	II,2 Straße in der Stadt [= Straße]
11 Mariens Stube	11 Mariens Stube [11]	II,3 Straße vor Mariens Wohnungstür [= Mariens Stube]
12 Wirtshaus	12 Die Wachtstube [13]	–
13 Die Wachtstube	13 Wirtshaus [14]	II,4 Wirtshausgarten [= Wirtshaus]
14 Wirtshaus		
15 Freies Feld	14 Freies Feld [15]	–
16 Kaserne	15 Kaserne [16]	
17 Kasernenhof	16 Kasernenhof variants [12] or [17] }	II,5 Wachstube in der Kaserne [= Kaserne + Kasernenhof]
18 Mariens Stube	17 Mariens Stube [18]	III,1 Mariens Stube
19 Kramladen	18 Kramladen [19]	–
20 Straße	19 Straße [20]	–
21 Kaserne	20 Kaserne [21]	–
22 Waldweg am Teich	21 Waldweg am Teich [22]	III,2 Waldweg am Teich
23 Wirtshaus	22 Wirtshaus [23]	III,3 Eine Schenke [= Wirtshaus]
24 Waldweg am Teich	23 Waldweg am Teich [24]	III,4 Waldweg am Teich
25 Früher Morgen. Vor Mariens Haustür	24 Früher Morgen. Vor Mariens Haustür [25]	III,5 Straße vor Mariens Tür. Heller Morgen, Sonnenschein [= Früher Morgen]
26 Seziersaal	25 Seziersaal [26]	–

Tab. 1: Comparison between Franzos Edition (1879) Landau Edition (1909) and Berg's Libretto.



The first column takes account of the 1879 Franzos edition, since it was the first official critical edition, even though in the previous publications in the newspapers the ordering was the same. In the second column the scenes in the Landau edition are listed and the correspondent scenes in the Franzos edition are indicated in square brackets. Finally, the third column accounts the selected scenes in Berg's libretto and, since some of the scenes have different titles, the correspondent scene-title in the Landau edition (Tab. 1). The strong equivalence in the ordering of the scenes between Berg's libretto and the Landau edition seems to suggest Berg consulted the latter, since "with the deletion from Landau's version of those scenes which Berg excluded from the opera, the succession of scenes in Landau and in Berg is identical".<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, G. Perle remarks that in his own Axel Junker Edition of *Wozzeck* (n. 29 Orplidbücher series, 1919),<sup>21</sup> Berg wrote the following:

(in der Fassung von Karl Emil Franzos)  
 Oper  
 in  
 drei Akten  
 (15 Scenen)  
 Von  
 Alban Berg  
 Op. 7  
 (Textbuch)

But in "this version of the drama [...] the order of the scenes is that of Landau".<sup>22</sup> However, even in the case Berg had confused the two editions, as written above at the time of this publication the arrangement and ordering of the scenes were already completed.

Therefore, if we take into account exclusively the Franzos and Landau editions, and we compare them with Berg's libretto, it can be said that the order of scenes of this latter corresponds to that of Landau. One would be tempted to think that Berg and Reich have always lied regarding this source. Otherwise, how can this incongruity be explained? Perhaps it was a matter of authorship, wherefore Berg would have claimed the credit for the ordering of scenes according to his own dramaturgical needs. It would be worth investigating the issue of copyright, the regulation of which was particularly complex in Austro-Hungarian Empire at the beginning of twentieth century. Copyright could have prevented Berg from modifications on the original text and probably forced him to pay a fee to its author.

20 Perle, *The operas of Berg*, p. 27.

21 Neither the editor nor the year is indicated; see *ibid.*, p. 28.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 28.



# Residenzbühne

## I. Rotenturmstrasse 20.

Direktion:  
Telephon 20988

Direktion: Arthur Rundt

Tageskasse:  
Telephon 23006

Dienstag den 5. Mai 1914

## Gastspiel ALBERT STEINRÜCK

Zum 1. Male

# WOZZECK

von Georg Büchner

Regie: Arthur Rundt

Wozzeck . . . . .	Albert Steinrück a. G.	Erster Handwerksbursche Paul Gerhardt
Marie . . . . .	Hany Speidel	Zweiter Handwerks-
Tambourmajor . . . . .	Herbert Hübner	bursche . . . . . Otto Nebelthau
Hauptmann . . . . .	Georg Kundert	Erster Bürger . . . . . Fritz Bogvansky
Doktor . . . . .	Karl Etlinger	Zweiter Bürger . . . . . Albert Paulmann
Eine alte Frau . . . . .	Henny Herz	Soldat . . . . . A. Neugebauer
Andres . . . . .	Ednard Spieß	Margaret . . . . . Alice Lach
Jude . . . . .	Leo Mittler	Ein Irrsinniger . . . . . Ernst Deutsch
Käthe . . . . .	Ch. Giampietro	Ein Bauer . . . . . Fritz Richter
Wirtin . . . . .	Else Rauch	Ein Richter . . . . . Jens Friedrich

Kinder, Volk

Die Dekorationen sind nach Entwürfen von M. Cammerloher in den Werkstätten der Volksbühne und Residenzbühne angefertigt

Es findet keine Pause statt

Sämtliche Räume des Theaters werden täglich mit „Perolin“ desinfiziert

Kassa-Eröffnung 7 Uhr

Anfang 8 Uhr

Ende gegen 1/2 10 Uhr

Mittwoch den 6. Mai.	(Anfang 8 Uhr)	Gastspiel Albert Steinrück. <b>Wozzeck</b>
Donnerstag den 7. Mai.	(Anfang 8 Uhr)	Gastspiel Albert Steinrück. <b>Baumeister Solneß</b>
Freitag den 8. Mai.	(Anfang 8 Uhr)	Gastspiel Albert Steinrück. <b>Baumeister Solneß</b>

Für die in diesem Spielplan angekündigten Vorstellungen werden die Sitzplätze täglich von 9—1 und von 2—5 Uhr an der Tageskasse der Residenzbühne, I., Rotenturmstraße 20, sowie in sämtlichen Theaterkartenbureaux verkauft

### Preise der Plätze:

Parterreloge . . . . .	K 45.—	Cercle, 7. Reihe . . . . .	K 6.10
Logensitz . . . . .	K 10.—	Parkettfauteuil 1. Reihe . . . . .	K 5.60
Balkonloge . . . . .	K 40.—	Parkettfauteuil 2. Reihe . . . . .	K 5.10
Logensitz . . . . .	K 7.50	Parkettfauteuil 3.—5. Reihe . . . . .	K 4.60
Balkonloge . . . . .	K 36.—	Parkettfauteuil 6.—10. Reihe . . . . .	K 4.10
Logensitz . . . . .	K 7.50	Parterresitz 1. Reihe . . . . .	K 3.90
Balkonloge . . . . .	K 35.—	Parterresitz 2. Reihe . . . . .	K 3.10
Logensitz . . . . .	K 8.50	Parterresitz 3. Reihe . . . . .	K 3.60
Balkonloge . . . . .	K 25.—	Parterresitz 4.—5. Reihe . . . . .	K 1.80
Logensitz . . . . .	K 7.10	Balkonsitz 1. Reihe . . . . .	K 6.10
Cercle, 1. Reihe . . . . .	K 10.—	Balkonsitz 2. Reihe . . . . .	K 5.10
Cercle, 2. Reihe . . . . .	K 8.10	Balkonsitz 3. Reihe . . . . .	K 4.10
Cercle, 3.—4. Reihe . . . . .	K 7.60	Balkonsitz 4. Reihe . . . . .	K 3.10
Cercle, 5.—6. Reihe . . . . .	K 6.60		

H. I. Hoftheater-Druckerei „Glocken“, Wien IX.

Fig. 1: Poster of the first performance of Büchner's play in Vienna, attended by Berg (May 5, 1914).



## 3.

At this point, it is necessary to consider a further document, which could greatly improve our understanding of the genesis of Berg's libretto. Despite having been mentioned by some scholars,<sup>23</sup> this source was never analysed before. We know for sure that Berg attended the Vienna performance on May 5<sup>th</sup> 1914. At that occasion, Arthur Rundt was the director.<sup>24</sup> The *Regiebuch* employed in that representation at the Residenzbühne, now Wiener Kammerspiele located in Rotenturmstrasse 20, was a copy of the "Insel-Bücherei" edition, published as a separate exemplar of *Wozzeck und Lenz* (n. 92) in 1913. This duplicates exactly the Landau edition. Two copies of this *Regiebuch* are currently known,<sup>25</sup> which show stage indications and textual changes made by the director (Fig. 2a e 2b). One of these was surely used for the performance of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> May 1914,<sup>26</sup> as the front endpaper shows (Fig. 3). This *Regiebuch* passed on to the *Renaissancetheater* of Vienna, as the stamp on the inside says, probably with the same Rundt, who became its Director.<sup>27</sup>

The analysis of these modifications illustrates what Berg attended that night in a better and more precise way: a performance which differed from the Landau version as a whole, by this way becoming an independent source itself. For this purpose, a direct comparison between these three sources is proposed below: Insel-Bücherei (Landau, edition), the *Regiebuch* (with changes by Arthur Rundt) and Berg's libretto (Tab. 2).

The collation of the *Regiebuch* with Berg's libretto highlights a strong similarity in the structural and formal decisions. As it can be seen in the table below, A. Rundt made a selection of scenes, resulting in some of them being merged together (e.g. scenes 12–13–13b were performed as one), others had been eliminated for dramaturgical reasons (e.g. the final scene in which the police find Wozzeck's body).

23 For instance see Carner, *Alban Berg*, p. 174, and Perle, *The operas of Berg*, p. 29, note 16.

24 See the poster of the *Premiere* (Fig. 1).

25 These two copies of *Regiebuch* are preserved in the theatre section of Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (A-Wn), R-63a e R-63b.

26 Exemplar R-63b.

27 The name *Renaissancetheater* occurred only since 1920, and perhaps on that occasion the stamps were affixed. Before it was called *Volksbühne*.



Landau Edition	Regiebuch (changes by A. Rundt)	Libretto (Berg)
1 Zimmer	1 Zimmer	I,1 Zimmer des Hauptmanns [= Zimmer]
2 Freies Feld	2 Freies Feld	I,2 Freies Feld
3 Die Stadt	3 Die Stadt	I,3 Mariens Stube [= Die Stadt]
4 Studierstube des Doktors	4 Studierstube des Doktors	I,4 Studierstube des Doktors
5 Öffentlicher Platz. Buden	–	–
6 Das Innere der Bude	–	–
7 Straße	5 Straße	I,5 Straße vor Mariens Tür [= Straße]
8 Der Hof des Doktors	–	–
9 Stube	6 Stube	II,1 Mariens Stube [= Stube]
10 Straße	7 Straße	II,2 Straße in der Stadt [= Straße]
11 Mariens Stube	8 Mariens Stube	II,3 Straße vor Mariens Wohnungstür [= Mariens Stube]
12 Die Wachtstube	–	–
13 Wirtshaus	9 Wirtshaus	II,4 Wirtshausgarten [= Wirtshaus]
14 Freies Feld	–	–
15 Kaserne	10 Kaserne	II,5 Wachtstube in der Kaserne [= Kaserne + Kasernenhof variants]
16 Kasernenhof [variant 12 or 17]	10a Kasernenhof [variant 17]	
17 Mariens Stube	11 Mariens Stube	III,1 Mariens Stube
18 Kramladen	12 <del>Kramladen</del> Kaserne	
19 Straße	13 Straße	–
20 Kaserne	13b Kaserne	
21 Waldweg am Teich	14 Waldweg am Teich	III,2 Waldweg am Teich
22 Wirtshaus	15 Wirtshaus	III,3 Eine Schenke [= Wirtshaus]
23 Waldweg am Teich	16 Waldweg am Teich	III,4 Waldweg am Teich
24 Früher Morgen. Vor Mariens Haustür	17 Früher Morgen. Vor Mariens Haustür	III,5 Straße vor Mariens Tür. Heller Morgen, Sonnenschein [= Früher Morgen]
25 Sezierraum	–	–

Tab. 2: Comparison between Insel-Bücherei (Landau edition), the *Regiebuch* (with changes by Arthur Rundt) and Berg's libretto.



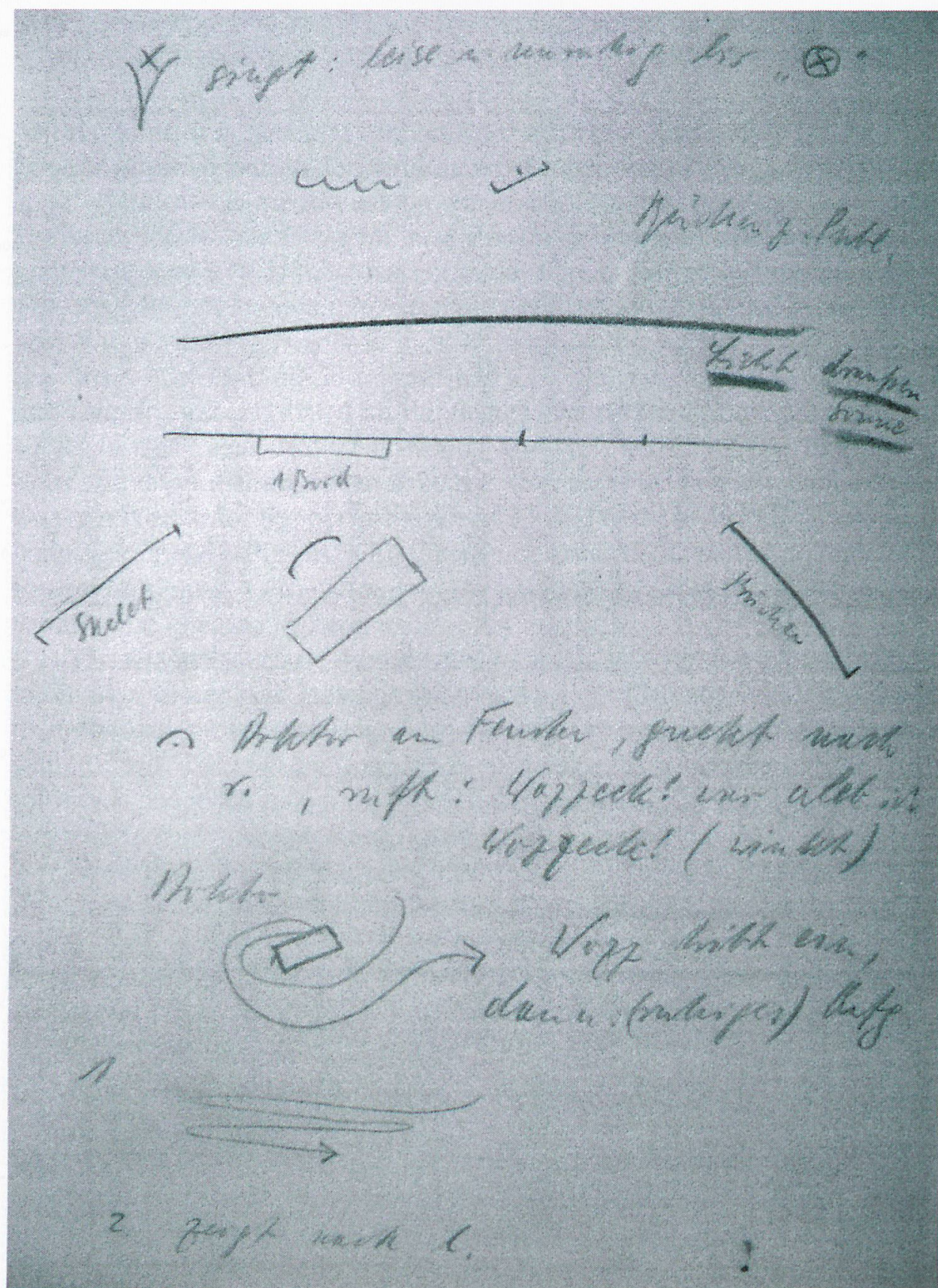


Fig. 2a: Stage setting of scene 4 ("Studierstube des Doktors"), Regiebuch (A-Wn, R-63a, KHM-Museumsverband, Vienna).



Tambourmajors! ~~Ein Busen und Schenkel!~~ Und alles  
fest! Die Augen wie glühende Kohlen. Ein Weibsbild  
sag ich Ihm ...

Andres. He! He! Wer is es denn?

Tambourmajor. Frag Er den Wozzeck da! Hehe! Id  
bin ein Mann, ein Mann! (Ab.)

Wozzeck (zu Andres). Er hat von mir geredt? Was ha  
er gesagt?

Andres. Ich sollt dich fragen, wer sein Mensch ist. Hat  
ein prächtig Weibsbild - ~~die hat Schenkel~~ -

Wozzeck (ganz kalt). So? Hat er das gesagt? Was ha  
mir heut nacht geträumt, Andres? War's nicht von einen  
Messer? - Was man doch närrische Träume hat! Ode  
fluge Träume? (Will fort.)

Andres. Wohin, Kamerad?

Wozzeck. Meinem Hauptmann Wein holen. Ach! An  
dres, sie war doch ein einzig Mädel!

Andres. Wer war? War? Ist nicht mehr?

Wozzeck. Wird bald nicht mehr sein. Adieu!

## Marlens Stube

Marie (allein, blättert in der Bibel:) „Und ist kein Betrug  
in seinem Munde erfunden worden“ ... Herrgott, Herr  
gott! Sieh mich nicht an! (Blättert weiter:) „Aber die  
Pharisäer brachten ein Weib zu ihm, so im Ehebruch lebte  
und stelleten sie vor ihn.“ (Liest murmelnd weiter, dann mit ge  
hobener Stimme:) „Jesus aber sprach: So verdamme ich dich  
auch nicht, geh hin, und sündige hinfort nicht mehr.“  
(Schlägt die Hände zusammen.) Herrgott! Herrgott! - ich kann

Fig. 2b: Formal and textual alterations, Regiebuch (A-Wn, R-63b, KHM-Museumsverband, Vienna).



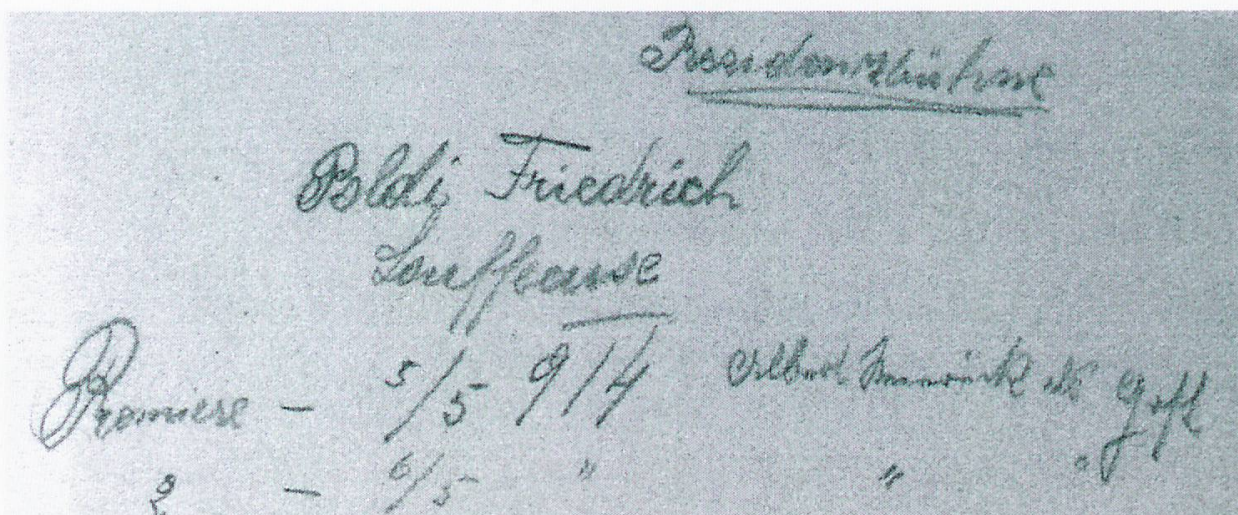


Fig. 3: Premiere 5/5 1914, *Regiebuch's* front endpaper (A-Wn, R-63b, KHM-Museumsverband, Vienna).

The correspondence between these two sources is much more stronger than that with the Landau edition itself. Aside from the formal organisation in three acts of five scenes (occurred, as written above, in a later time) all the scenes correspond: those eliminated by A. Rundt are also absent in Berg's libretto; scenes 15 and 16 in the Landau edition had been merged together (for reasons due to the change of scene) and are together also in Berg. Here, an important textual difference occurs: whereas Landau considered the scenes 12 and 17 from Franzos edition as variants of the same scene (number 16 in his own edition) and from the *Regiebuch*, since there are no further indication or interpolations, we can assume only variant 17 was performed with some very little textual eliminations (scenes 10–10a, see Fig. 2b), Berg instead combined these two variants in order to obtain a strained situation without revealing Wozzeck's intentions (See the Tab. 3, extract from Act II, scene 5). In this way Berg reveals his autonomy in both structural and textual choices due to dramaturgical reasons and these could have been based on both Franzos and Landau editions.

The only relevant structural difference regards the decision by Berg to eliminate a scene which A. Rundt had obtained by putting together three different following scenes from the Insel-Bücherei edition: the scenes 12–13–13b (18–19–20 in Landau) had been performed together as a one. Again, the elimination of this scene is easy to explain for dramaturgical reasons; in the first one Wozzeck is shown with a Jew while buying a knife with which he would later kill Marie, in the second part an old woman tells a sad story to some children, and in fact it does not add anything to the plot, and the third scene consists in Wozzeck giving his belongings to Andres. These episodes clearly reveal Wozzeck's intentions, anticipating the tragic consequences to the audience. Removing this scene meant ensuring a less predictable end and more tension from a dramaturgical point of view.



	Regiebuch		Berg's libretto
TAMB.	Ich bin ein Mann! Ich hab' ein Weibsbild, ich sag' Ihm, ein Weibsbild! – Zur Zucht von Tambourmajors! <del>Ein Busen und Schenkel! Und Alles fest!</del> Die Augen wie glühende Kohlen. Ein Weibsbild, sag' ich Ihm...	TAMB.	Ich bin ein Mann! Ich hab' ein Weibsbild, ich sag' Ihm, ein Weibsbild! Zur Zucht von Tambourmajors! Ein Busen und Schenkel! und alles fest. Die Augen wie glühende Kohlen. Kurzum ein Weibsbild, ich sag' Ihm...
ANDRES	<del>He! He!</del> Wer is[t] es denn?	ANDRES	He! Wer ist es denn?
TAMB.	Frag' Er den Wozzeck da! Hehe! Ich bin ein Mann, ein Mann! ( <del>Ab.</del> )	TAMB.	Frag' Er den Wozzeck da! (* <i>Da, Kerl, sauf'! Ich wollt', die Welt wär Schnaps, Schnaps, der Mann muss saufen! Sauf', Kerl, sauf'! Kerl, soll ich Dir die Zung' aus dem Hals zieh'n und sie Dir um den Leib wickeln? Soll ich Dir noch so viel Atem lassen, als ein Altweiberfurz? Soll ich... Jetzt soll der Kerl pfeifen! Dunkelblau soll er sich pfeifen! Was bin ich für ein Mann!</i>
WOZZECK	(zu Andres). Er hat von mir geredt? Was hat er gesagt?		
ANDRES	Ich sollt' dich fragen, wer sein Mensch ist. Hätt' ein prächtig Weibsbild – <del>die hätt' Schenkel</del> –		
WOZZECK	(ganz kalt). So? Hat er das gesagt? Was hat mir heut Nacht geträumt, Andres? War's nicht von einem Messer? – Was man doch närrische Träume hat! Oder kluge Träume? (Will fort.)	SOLDAT	<i>Der hat sein Fett!</i>
ANDRES	Wohin, Kamerad?	ANDRES	<i>Er blut'...</i>
WOZZECK	Meinem Hauptmann Wein holen. Ach! Andres, sie war doch ein einzig Mädel!	WOZZECK	<i>Einer nach dem Andern!</i>
ANDRES	Wer war? War? Ist nicht mehr?		
WOZZECK	Wird bald nicht mehr sein. <i>Adiest</i>		

Tab. 3: Extract from II,5, Berg's textual choice (\* variant 12).

Whereas the editors of Büchner's *Woyzeck* have tried to establish the original text and to respect the author's will,<sup>28</sup> a theatrical performance follows dramaturgic requirements, and it is expected that the director should make some changes or adjustments in order to obtain a better performance on the stage. Berg paid obviously close attention to the effect of the play on a theatrical audience, more than on readers, therefore his necessities were surely closer to those of Rundt.

According to Berg's and Reich's declarations and considering the performance Berg had been attending, which is now known thanks to the

28 Besides the historical edition already mentioned, see the most recent ones: Georg Büchner, *Woyzeck. Faksimile, Transkription, Emendation und Lesetext*, hrsg. von Enrico De Angelis (Munich: Saur, 2000); Georg Büchner, *Werke und Briefe*, hrsg. von Arnd Beise, Tilman Fischer und Gerald Funk (Darmstadt: Lambert Schneider, 2013).



*Regiebuch*, it is reasonable to believe that during the first phase of the genesis of his libretto he held only the Franzos edition and that he based his work on that performance, without indeed owning the Landau edition, consulted only later. It is in fact established that Berg held a copy of the 1913 Insel-Verlag edition, however it is still not possible to ascertain when exactly he took possession of it.<sup>29</sup> The observations made by scholars can therefore be reconciled with Berg and Reich statements.

A further important edition was the Witkowski, published in 1920, which was the first one to adopt the original name “Woyzeck”. But it was not the first time the title name was brought to public attention. In June 1914, a very short time after the Vienna performance, Hugo Bieber published an article in which he told the real case of Woyzeck and revealed the source used by Büchner.<sup>30</sup> In his introduction, Bieber also quickly told the history of reception of Büchner’s drama, and there is no mention of the Landau edition, but only of Franzos, a very popular novelist at that time. Bieber underlined the importance of this widespread edition and his credit for having written a very modern story which had influenced several later writers. However, Bieber was wrongly commenting the Insel-Bücherei edition without knowing that it reproduced the Landau version. Being the only occurrence of the real name “Woyzeck” before the Witkowski edition, it is clear that Berg read the article, since he often used “Woyzeck” in his letters to Schönberg.<sup>31</sup> By reading this article, Berg perhaps considered the Franzos edition the only existing one at that time, thus he worked on it and reordered the scenes in accordance with the performance he attended. The Landau edition was probably not well-known at that time (only five years had passed since the publication). This is confirmed by Paul Elbogen’s statement about the premiere of *Wozzeck*, which he attended with Berg: “We youths became acquainted with the play through Franzos’ edition”.<sup>32</sup>

Berg apparently did not know about Büchner’s play before May 5<sup>th</sup> 1914; that performance was instead very relevant for the genesis of his libretto since it was so impressive that it played a fundamental role in the structure and ordering of scenes. By taking into account exclusively the Franzos and Landau editions it is not possible to fully understand this process and therefore the *Regiebuch* is a fundamental connecting link for the comprehension of the history of this opera.

29 See Alban Berg “Wozzeck”, pp. 105–118; cfr. G. Perle, *The operas of Berg*.

30 Hugo Bieber, “Wozzeck und Woyzeck”, in: *Das literarische Echo*, 16 (1913–1914), pp. 1188–1191.

31 *The Berg-Schoenberg correspondence selected letters*, ed. Julian Brand, Christopher Hailey and Donald Harris, New York – London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987.

32 Elbogen, “Firsthand reminiscence”, in: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 October 1981, p. 40.



## Abstract

Which *Wozzeck* did Berg see for the first time on May 5<sup>th</sup> 1914? What role did that theatrical performance play in the genesis of *Wozzeck*'s libretto by Berg? Asking these questions means adopting a new philological perspective which takes into account the gap between bequeathed sources and actual performances. If we assume that the idea of setting to music *Wozzeck* came to Berg after seeing the theatrical representation, the analysis of the genesis of his libretto cannot avoid the comparison with that performance and it should therefore consider that version like any other edition used by the composer. For a long time, research on available written sources mostly focused on the comparison between the libretto and the critical editions Berg owned. According to the order of the scenes, such research led to believe that the composer worked on the Landau edition (1909). Nevertheless Berg's and his biographer Willi Reich's statements contrast with such results since they always declared the composer had been using only the Franzos edition (1879). Through the analysis of the *Regiebuch*, still unconsidered by scholars until today, it is possible to cast light on a new source which could have influenced Berg in a decisive way, being therefore a common ground between these contrasting positions.

## Bibliography

- Alban Berg "Wozzeck". *Texte, Materialien, Kommentare*, hrsg. von Attila Csampai und Dietmar Holland (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1985).
- Berg-Schoenberg correspondence selected letters (*The*), ed. Julian Brand, Christopher Hailey and Donald Harris, New York – London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987.
- Bieber Hugo, "Wozzeck und Woyzeck", in: *Das literarische Echo*, 16 (1913–1914), pp. 1188–1191.
- Büchner Georg, *Gesammelte Schriften*, hrsg. von Paul Landau (Berlin: Paul Cassirer, 1909).
- Büchner Georg, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, hrsg. von Fritz Bergemann (Leipzig: Insel, 1922).
- Büchner Georg, *Sämtliche Werke und handschriftlicher Nachlaß. Erste kritische Gesamtausgabe*, eingeleitet und hrsg. von Karl Emil Franzos (Frankfurt am Main: Sauerländer, 1879).
- Büchner Georg, *Werke und Briefe*, hrsg. von Arnd Beise, Tilman Fischer und Gerald Funk (Darmstadt: Lambert Schneider, 2013).
- Büchner Georg, *Woyzeck. Faksimile, Transkription, Emendation und Lesetext*, hrsg. von Enrico De Angelis (Munich: Saur, 2000).
- Büchner Georg, *Wozzeck*, in: *Wozzeck – Lenz. Regiebuch* (Leipzig: Insel, 1913; A-Wn, R-63a and R-63b).
- Carner Mosco, *Alban Berg, the man and the work* (London: Duckworth, 1985; 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1975).
- Elbogen Paul, "Firsthand reminiscence of a historic night", in: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 27 October 1981, p. 40.
- Franzos Karl Emil, "Aus Georg Büchner's Nachlass", in: *Neue Freie Presse*, 3 November 1875, pp. 1–4; 5 November 1875, pp. 1–4; and 23 November 1875, pp. 1–4.



- Hall Patricia, "Berg's Büchner text and the genesis of form", in: *Theory and Practice*, 33 (2008), pp. 249–271.
- Jarman Douglas, *Alban Berg: "Wozzeck"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- Mehr Licht. Eine deutsche Wochenschrift für Literatur und Kunst*, 5 October 1878, n. 1 pp. 5–7; n. 2, pp. 21–24; n. 3, pp. 39–42.
- Perle George, *The operas of Berg: "Wozzeck"* (Berkeley [...]: University of California Press, 1980).
- Reich Willi, *Alban Berg* (Harcourt: Brace & World, 1965).
- Schäfke Rudolf, "Alban Bergs Oper: Wozzeck", in: *Melos*, 5 (Mai 1926), pp. 133–267: 267.
- Witkowski Georg, *Büchners "Woyzeck"* (Leipzig: Insel, 1920).