

Making Korngold: Korngold, Schoenberg and the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* Poll, Vienna, 1930

Abstract

On 15 August 1930, the popular Viennese newspaper, *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* conducted a poll among its readership to establish which twelve living citizens were the most influential artists of the day. It is intriguing to find Schoenberg and Korngold appearing in the final list. However, by 1930, perceptions of where the value in music lay were already in place. The subsequent use and misuse of the poll results over the next 60 years highlights the role of polemic and mythology in creating and perpetuating precepts. It also highlights the need among researchers to examine objectively and critically challenge information which flies in the face of received knowledge.

Author's Biographical Notes

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Making Korngold: Korngold, Schoenberg and the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* Poll, Vienna, 1930.¹

Marian Poole

In August 1930 the Viennese newspaper *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* conducted a poll amongst its readers to identify the most famous Austrian scientists and artists of the day. Arnold Schoenberg and Erich Korngold were listed amongst the most influential composers. This article describes the poll and investigates its use and misuse over the years in the context of the rivalry between Schoenberg and Korngold, their musical styles, subsequent careers and changing reputations. While not mentioned in every biographical reference, the poll appears in one form or another in influential and widely read sources. Though it is a culturally and temporally limited piece of evidence, the poll highlights two serious issues in the reception of twentieth-century music: the comparative cultural significance of Schoenberg and Korngold, and the tension between two musical cultures—art music and film music. This article charts the way in which scholars have used the poll to argue for the relative importance of those two genres, and provides a salutary reminder about the questionable wisdom of relying too heavily on secondary sources.

In the early years of the twentieth century Korngold and Schoenberg moved in the same Viennese music circles and came to the attention of the same prominent people. Schoenberg received tuition from Zemlinsky and enjoyed Richard Strauss's and subsequently Mahler's support. Hanslick named him the second Mozart.² Korngold, a child prodigy pianist and composer, who was a generation younger than Schoenberg, caught the imagination of Viennese aristocracy. In 1904, when he first suspected that his son had prodigious talents, Julius Korngold was at the peak of his career, having succeeded Hanslick as music critic for *Die Freie Presse*, a world-renowned liberal-bourgeois newspaper.³ Julius drew upon Hanslick's considered opinion and reputation

¹ An earlier version of this article was read at the Symposium of the International Musicological Society in Melbourne in July 2004. The author wishes to express her gratitude to the referees for *Context* and to her supervisor Professor John Drummond for their helpful suggestions.

² Malcolm MacDonald, *Arnold Schoenberg* (London: Dent, 1976) 22.

³ 'Neue Freie Presse,' *AEIOU Austrian Forum: Encyclopedia of Austria* <<http://aeiou.iicm.tugraz.at>> (accessed 5 August 2008).

together with that of other reputed scientists and musicians of the day, including composers Gustav Mahler, Engelbert Humperdinck and Arthur Seidl; musicologists Erich von Hornbostel, Hugo Leichtentritt and Hermann Kretzschmar; conductor Artur Nikisch; and music critics Ferdinand Pfohl and Otto Lessmann.⁴ With Erich's genius confirmed by these authorities, Julius approached Richard Strauss with a sample of his son's composition and subsequently secured lessons for him from Zemlinsky. Hanslick revised his prediction probably supported by Strauss' endorsement of *Die Gurrelieder* and *Pelleas und Melisande* in 1902; *Knabe*, performed in 1905, and "Theme with Three Variations" played by Erich to Mahler in 1905, gave evidence that the adolescent Korngold was now to be the second Mozart. By 1925 both Schoenberg and Korngold had been the subjects of biographical monographs that promoted them as leaders of twentieth-century music.⁵

In 1930, the year the poll was taken, Korngold was at the peak of his European career. His opera *Die tote Stadt*, which was first performed in 1920, continued to be an enormous success; *Das Wunder der Heliane* (1927), though his first significant critical disappointment, was very popular. His arrangements of Johann Strauss and Offenbach's operettas were also successful,⁶ and he was collaborating with fellow operetta composer Julius Bittner on Johann Strauss II's *Walzer aus Wien*, which opened in October 1930 at the Vienna Stadtheater. The Austrian President awarded him the title of Professor *honoris causa*.

Schoenberg, meanwhile, was teaching at Berliner Hochschule. In April 1930, the BBC broadcast a programme devoted exclusively to Schoenberg, which featured *Pierrot Lunaire*. Jennifer Doctor claims that this programme, which exploited Schoenberg's 'controversial history', was introduced as part of the 'effort to spread the gospel of his work',⁷ when by and large his music remained incomprehensible to critics and public

⁴ Julius Korngold, *Child Prodigy. Erich Wolfgang's Years of Childhood (Preliminary Printing from the Work of Memoirs "Postludes in Major and Minor")* (New York: Willard, 1945) 29-31; Brendan Carroll, *The Last Prodigy: A Biography of Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Portland: Amadeus, 1997) 42.

⁵ Egon Wellesz, *Schoenberg* (London: Galliard, 1971), originally published by Dent in London, 1925. R.S. Hoffmann, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Vienna: Stephenson Moser, 1922).

⁶ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy* 209-215.

⁷ Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936: Shaping a Nation's Tastes* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999) 176.

alike.⁸ Although Schoenberg's music was being performed – *Von Heute auf Morgen* had opened in Frankfurt, *Pelleas und Melisande* had been broadcast on the Berlin Radio, *Suite* op. 29 was performed in Paris, *Gurrelieder* was performed in Leningrad and *Erwartung* and *Die Glückliche Hand* were both performed in Berlin – it received little public or critical success.⁹

On 27 July 1930, *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, a reputable Viennese newspaper,¹⁰ announced an initiative to honour those citizens who contributed to national pride through their outstanding achievements:

A motion will soon be put before a meeting of the National Council to bestow on those people “who through their special and high status creative achievements in the service to the Arts and Sciences have made their name and gained general recognition”. The honour will not only bestow a greater significance to their standing in the hierarchy of decorated Austrians, but will also create a class of excellence.¹¹

Despite the comparatively small size of the post-Empire Austrian state, the newspaper encouraged its readers to consider the cultural wealth of its people. It would, *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* assured its readers, be no easy task to decide who would tower above so many outstanding citizens. This honour, democratically decided and confirmed by experts from every relevant discipline, seemed designed to put modern Austria on the European cultural map.¹²

⁸ Edward Dent, Introduction. *Annals of Opera 1597-1940*, by Alfred Loewenberg (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1978) 1376, 1378, 1410.

⁹ Willi Reich, *Schoenberg: A Critical Biography*, transl. Leo Black (London: Longman, 1968) 168-9.

¹⁰ ZPH 1232. *Sammlung Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, ed. Hermann Böhm, Newspaper Archive: Vienna City Library Vienna, last updated 13 April 2003
<<http://www.wienbibliothek.at/cgi-bin/ma09/embed-wo.pl?lang=-de&l=3&doc=http://www.wienbibliothek.at/bibliothek/erwerb/2003/sammlung-neues-wiener-tagblatt-de.htm>> (accessed 5 August 2008).

¹¹ NWT Nr. 205, 27 July 1930, 5. ‘Ein österreichisches Ehrenzeichen für Kunst und Wissenschaft soll geschaffen werden. Es ist nach kürzlich im Nationalrat eingebrachten Gesessentwurf bestimmt zur Verleihung an Personen “die sich durch besonders hochstehende schöpferische Leistungen auf dem Gebiete der Kunst oder der Wissenschaft allgemeine Anerkennung und einen hervorragenden Namen erworben haben”. Der Auszeichnung wird nicht nur durch ihren Rang auf der Stufenleiter der österreichischen Orden eine hohe Bedeutung zukommen, ihr Wert wird noch dadurch gehoben, dass ein Numerus Clausus für ihre Verleihung eingeführt wird’. (All translations are the author’s.)

¹² NWT Nr. 224, 15 August 1930, 4; NWT Nr. 205, 27 July 1930, 5.

The newspaper circulated a questionnaire among its subscribers, who were asked to vote for the twenty-four most famous contemporary Austrian citizens: twelve artists, including composers, poets, painters, sculptors and architects, and twelve scientists. The person whose vote best approximated the final decision would win a cash prize. The results were published on 15 August 1930.

Over 630 people were nominated, but actors, musicians and directors were removed from the list to expedite the decision, thereby reducing the total by some 400, to 230. Several notable people were also disqualified because they were not Austrian citizens. Franz Léhar was voted 'the greatest living operetta composer' and Richard Strauss was voted 'the greatest living composer of dramatic and symphonic music', but although both composers worked in Vienna and received more nominations than anyone else, neither was an Austrian citizen.¹³ The great theatre director Max Reinhardt had been born in Austria, but had taken Czechoslovakian citizenship. However, the newspaper suggested that his name and those of the other performing artists be resubmitted for subsequent awards.¹⁴

The final list of twelve artists, in order of the number of votes they received, is as follows:¹⁵

1. Dr Karl Schönherr: playwright (etc).
2. Dr Artur Schnitzler: playwright.
3. Dr Anton Wildgans: dramatist and poet, and twice director of Vienna Burgtheater – 1921 & 1930.
4. Dr. Wilhelm Kienzl: dramatic composer and writer on music, who had written Austria's National Anthem of the time.
5. Josef Hofman: architect in art and crafts movement.
6. Professor Anton Hanak: a sculptor who worked with Josef Hofman.
7. Professor Erich Wolfgang Korngold.
8. Hermann Bahr: dramatist, novelist critic.
9. Julius Bittner: composer of operas, choruses and songs and operetta collaborator with Korngold.
10. Karl Franz Ginskey: poet.

¹³ NWT Nr. 224, 15 August 1930, 4.2.

¹⁴ NWT Nr. 224, 15 August 1930, 4.2.

¹⁵ Though females were included in the poll returns, the top twelve artists (and incidentally the top twelve scientists) were all male.

11. Professor Dr. Klemens Holzmeister: architect who designed the Salzburg Festival Theatre, Government Buildings in Ankara, Turkey, and the Dollfuss Memorial in Vienna.
12. Professor Arnold Franz Walter Schoenberg.¹⁶

Despite being an intriguing snapshot of pre-World War II Viennese culture, this poll seems to have generated little interest. Korngold's wife, Luzi, in her biography of their life together, remembered 1930 for Erich's brief professorial posting, the success of *Walzer aus Wien* and his discussions with Max Reinhardt about *Schöne Helena*. Although she took pride in her husband's achievements, Luzi makes no reference to this poll.¹⁷ Similarly, it was not mentioned in Jessica Duchen's 1996 biography of Korngold,¹⁸ nor has any reference been found in the Schoenberg archives,¹⁹ or in Juliane Brand or Stein's²⁰ collections of Schoenberg's letters. The only mention of the poll that I am aware of in the Schoenberg literature is in Joan Allen Smith's *Schoenberg and his Circle: A Viennese Portrait*,²¹ discussed below. The results of the poll were, however, frequently mentioned in later discussions of Korngold. For a list of these see Table 1, below. As we shall see, over time the details of the poll were subtly changed in ways that often served to advance Korngold's reputation.

In 1934 Korngold left Austria for Hollywood and began a career as film music composer. Schoenberg, who had a familial connection with the Korngolds, also took up residence on the outskirts of Hollywood.²² Schoenberg continued to be the chief exponent of serial music, while Korngold was part of the renaissance of the Romantic tonal idiom with what Caryl Flinn describes as a "calm disinterest" in the "present [Modernist] understanding of music".²³ A few years later in 1939 journalist Frederick Othman,

¹⁶ NWT Nr. 224, 15 August 1930, 4.

¹⁷ Luzi Korngold, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Ein Lebensbild. Österreichischen Komponisten des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Elizabeth Lafite, 1967) 53.

¹⁸ Jessica Duchen, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (London: Phaidon, 1996).

¹⁹ Schoenberg archives in Vienna. Personal email between Eike Feß, archives librarian and the author, 26 Sept 2002.

<http://www.Schoenberg.at/6_archiv/bibliography_e.html>

²⁰ Juliane Brand, Christopher Hailey and Donald Harris (eds), *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Selected Letters* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987); Erwin Stein (ed.), *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, transl. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (London: Faber & Faber, 1958).

²¹ Joan Allen Smith, *Schoenberg and his Circle: A Viennese Portrait* (New York: Schirmer, 1986).

²² Carroll, *The Last Prodigy* 291.

²³ Caryl Flinn, 'The New Romanticism: Hollywood Film Composition in the 1930s and 1940s,' *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia and Hollywood Film Music* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992) 13-50, 29.

writing for the *Hollywood Citizen News* makes the first printed reference to the poll. Othman repeats a snippet of conversation frequently heard in the studios, and which would appear to be derived, if inaccurately, from the poll: 'If you don't know, Korngold ... [is] acknowledged generally as one of the world's greatest musicians.'²⁴

In 1945 Julius Korngold discusses the poll in his memoirs.²⁵ These memoirs were based on a journal of his son's career that Julius maintained sporadically throughout his life. Although the section devoted to Erich's childhood was published in 1945, it was only available through the Korngold family. Julius's account of the poll is inaccurate:

A large widely read newspaper "Neues Wiener Tagblatt" sent out a questionnaire to name the most important living artists creatively active, the two musicians selected by the poll as the most remarkable were Arnold Schoenberg and Erich Wolfgang Korngold.²⁶

This was a substantial misrepresentation of the actual poll results: the requirement of Austrian citizenship was ignored, as were Kienzl's and Bittner's placings. Rather than being two of the four greatest Austrian composers, Schoenberg and Korngold had become the two most remarkable living musicians.

Julius's account is consistent with his desire to promote his son as a serious musician. Erich's biographers, Brendan Carroll and Jessica Duchen,²⁷ both highlight Julius's staunch belief in the true and natural order of tonality, his abhorrence of Schoenberg's music, his tireless direction and, at times, belligerent promotion of his son, and his belief that Erich squandered his talents by working with Bittner on Johann Strauss's operettas. They agree that when Julius lived in Hollywood he was extremely homesick and was also possibly suffering from the early symptoms of senile dementia. In 1945 Schoenberg's reputation as 'a great twentieth-century composer' was already in place, but Julius's revision of the poll places Schoenberg on a par with Erich (Schoenberg actually polled twelfth, while Korngold was seventh) and ignores Bittner, Erich's collaborator and the source of his most recent success. Julius believed that both avant-

²⁴ Frederick Othman, 'His Music Painful to Korngold,' *Hollywood Citizen News* 9 May 1939. *Film Score: Online Magazine of Motion Picture and Television Music Appreciation*. Contributed by G D Hamann

<http://www.filmscoremonthly.com/articles/2001/26_Jul---Thirties_Film_Music_Articles.asp (accessed 12 Dec 2008)

²⁵ Julius Korngold, *Child Prodigy* 79.

²⁶ Julius Korngold, *Child Prodigy*, 79.

²⁷ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*; Duchen, *Korngold*.

garde music and operetta compromised music's proper status;²⁸ by aligning Erich with Schoenberg and the avant-garde, rather than with Bittner and operetta, he sought to advance Erich's reputation in the concert hall. In so doing, Julius appears to have been willing to overlook his objections to Schoenberg's music.²⁹ He may have been further motivated by a desire to impress Erich's American colleagues, some of whom studied composition with Schoenberg. As the following discussion will show, Julius's version of the poll was repeated for some sixty years.

The next mention of the poll is in a 1962 review of Korngold's film music by Anthony (Tony) Thomas.³⁰ Thomas had been corresponding with Erich since 1946, and in the 1960s was one of the first writers to archive film music and to acknowledge the creativity of film composers. This review echoes Othman's informal tone: 'It was often said in Vienna that the two most remarkable composers in Europe were Arnold Schoenberg and Erich Wolfgang Korngold.'³¹

Brendan Carroll, in the 1980 'Korngold' entry in *New Grove*, repeats Julius's version of the poll, but makes a spelling mistake and gives the wrong date: 'In 1928 the *Neue* (sic) *Wiener Tagblatt* conducted a poll whose returns named Korngold and Schoenberg as the two greatest living composers.'³² Five years later, in his 1985 biography of Korngold,³³ Carroll proudly tells of the mass of evidence he had accumulated over the previous twelve years, his close friendship with Korngold's sons, George and Ernst, and his dedication to restoring the status of a composer who, 'because of the caprices of political

²⁸ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy* 207.

²⁹ Marian Poole, *Placing Korngold: Erich Wolfgang Korngold's Place in the Twentieth Century and in the Great Tradition*. (MA thesis, U of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, 2008). 30; Letters between Julius Korngold and Schoenberg, 11 September 1944, 13 September 1944, 12 October 1944 and 15 October 1944. Arnold Schoenberg Centre, Correspondence <http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/correspondence/letters_database.htm> (accessed 5 August 2008).

³⁰ Anthony Thomas, 'Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold' [album review], *Films in Review* March 1962, 177-8; Jon Burlingame, 'The Korngold Anthology: An Interview with Tony Thomas,' *The Cue Sheet: Journal of the Society for the Preservation of Film Music* 12.4 (October 1996): 25-30.

³¹ Thomas, 'Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold' 177.

³² Brendan Carroll, 'Korngold, Erich Wolfgang,' *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: MacMillan, 1980) 210.

³³ Carroll noted in his note to the second edition dated March 1984 that after a "favourable reception", the first impression was "exhausted". Brendan Carroll, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold, 1897-1957: His Life and Works* (Paisley Scotland: Wilfion Books, 1985) 2.

history and musical fashion, became the victim of unjust neglect'.³⁴ The revised second impression was the result of 'suggestions kindly offered by certain readers who [had] pointed out inaccuracies and inconsistencies in the text' was printed in 1985.³⁵ Though providing valuable insights into Korngold's works and his life, a discography and a bibliography, the revised edition remains substantially unreferenced. In this 1985 revision, Carroll inexplicably changes the poll's date from the 1928 to 1932. In the Carroll's entry in the *New Grove Dictionary of American Music* (1986),³⁶ he again gives the date as 1932, and again misspells 'neues' as 'neue': 'A poll conducted by the *Neue* (sic) *Wiener Tagblatt*, in 1932, named Korngold and Schoenberg as the two greatest living composers.'³⁷ It is possible that another poll may have been conducted in 1932, but I have found no evidence of polls in any year other than 1930.

In 1986 – the same year as the publication of the *New Grove Dictionary of American Music* – Joan Allen Smith published her book on Schoenberg's Viennese circle. The biographical notes in Smith's book contain the only reference I have found to this poll in the Schoenberg literature. She repeats Carroll's 1980 dating and his spelling mistake, but did not explore or expand upon the information: 'In 1928 a poll by the *Neue* (sic) *Wiener Tagblatt* named Korngold and Schoenberg as the two greatest living composers.'³⁸

In 1991, Thomas mentions the poll once more, this time explicitly, but gives the date as 1932, presumably based on Carroll's 1985 publications. Thomas significantly inflates the importance of the poll by claiming that it was only European connoisseurs who were consulted, rather than the newspaper's Viennese subscribers.

In 1932, a Viennese newspaper, *Neue* (sic) *Wiener Tageblatt* (sic), conducted a poll among the European musical cognoscenti to determine which of the contemporary composers were considered the most important and the most influential. The two composers who headed the list were Schoenberg and Korngold. Ironically, both men would end their lives in California.³⁹

³⁴ Brendan Carroll, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold, 1897-1957: His Life and Works* (Paisley Scotland: Wilfion Books, 1985) 1.

³⁵ Carroll, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (1985) 2.

³⁶ Brendan Carroll, 'Korngold, Erich Wolfgang,' *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: MacMillan, 1986) 652.

³⁷ Carroll, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (1985) 10.

³⁸ Allen Smith, *Schoenberg and his Circle* 278.

³⁹ Tony/R Thomas, *Film Score: the Art and Craft of Movie Music, The Career and Views of 25 Eminent Composers*. (Burbank, CA: Riverwood Press, 1991) 80.

Thomas was an advocate of film music, who worked to promote its status by creating archives, and by encouraging an exploration of the connection between cultural hierarchy and cultural prejudice as it affected film music composers. The inaccuracies in his discussion of the poll, and the lack of explanation of the irony that Thomas found in the adopted domiciles of both composers, however, effectively undermine his cause.

The confusion about the exact date of the poll did not stop there. A new, wrong date, that places the poll closer to the premiere of *Das Wunder der Heliane*, Korngold's most avant-garde work, appears in Keith Anderson's 1996 liner notes to a Swedish recording of *Die tote Stadt*. He mentions a 'popular poll in Vienna in 1926 ... [where] the two [Schoenberg and Korngold] were described as the greatest composers then living there'.⁴⁰ Anderson's dating error indicates that he had not consulted the original document, although he accurately reports the location of the poll, and the fact that it was limited to living Austrian composers. Anderson appears to be unaware, however, that the poll was restricted to the newspaper's subscribers.

By 1997, Carroll had evidently seen the original article and, in his latest, generally exhaustive and excellently referenced biography acknowledges that the poll results had been 'rather exaggerated'. He does not, however, give any details of the nature of the poll except to say that 'readers were asked to establish the most highly regarded Austrians'. Nor does he mention that the results were in two categories, scientists and artists. However, he gives the correct results for Korngold and Schoenberg, and includes Richard Strauss's highest, though disqualified, rating. He elides over the misinformation with the aside that "at least Korngold was in good company", without making it clear whether he was referring to Strauss, Schoenberg or both composers. Carroll omits Kienzl and Bittner's significant placings, despite having made several mentions of Bittner⁴¹ and two mentions of Kienzl.⁴² A photograph of including Bittner and Korngold taken during the production of *Walzer aus Wien* is reproduced alongside the page containing the information about the poll. The date of the poll is given in the notes at the end of the biography. Carroll's selective discussion of the poll is therefore congruent with Luzi Korngold's desire to restore Erich's status as an art music composer.⁴³

⁴⁰ Erich Wolfgang Korngold, *Die tote Stadt*, Op 12. Recorded at the Royal Swedish Opera House, Stockholm. (31 August-September, 1996). (Swedish Broadcasting Corp. Naxos LC5537) Liner Notes 5-6.

⁴¹ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy* 158, 174-5, 210, 223, 294.

⁴² Carroll, *The Last Prodigy* 158, 180.

⁴³ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy* 211-2.

Helmut Pöllmann, in his 1998 *Erich Wolfgang Korngold: Aspekte seines Schaffens*, analyses Korngold's music and reception and repeats the information in Carroll's 1980 *New Grove* article, and again claims the poll took place in 1928. Like Thomas, Pöllmann refrains from any deeper discussion of the implications presented by these results.

When asked who were the two most important living composers, Korngold and Schoenberg were named. Artists and the general public were both caught up in the schism between those working for perfunctory gain and those who are committed to distinction. The reception of Korngold and Schoenberg provides the purest example of this polarity.⁴⁴

In 2000, Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, citing Carroll (1997), reported the poll a little more accurately:

Neues Wiener Tagblatt ran a 1930 poll of its readers on how they ranked prominent Austrians in various walks of life. Of the composers cited, Richard Strauss (who was in fact a Bavarian) came first, Korngold second, and Schoenberg third.⁴⁵

Finally, in 2002, Tim Ashley's article in the *Oxford Companion to Music* draws together inaccuracies from all the earlier sources: he cites Carroll's 1997 biography, but gives the date from the 1980 *New Grove* article, and takes Thomas's spelling from 1991, Anderson's geographical boundaries and Carroll's incomplete analysis, thus perpetuating Julius's version:

In 1928 a poll taken from among the readers of the *Wiener Tageblatt* [sic] revealed that Korngold was considered one of the two greatest contemporary Austrian composers, Schoenberg being the other.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Helmut Pöllmann, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold: Aspekte seines Schaffens* (Mainz: Schott, 1998) 23. 'Auf die Frage nach den beiden wichtigsten, lebenden Komponisten wurden Korngold und Schönberg genannt. Nicht nur der Künstler, auch das Publikum ist in der Polarität zwischen dem spielerisch zu Erlangenden und dem mit aller Anstrengung sich Anzueignenden verfangen. In der Rezeption von Korngold und Schoenberg hat diese Polarität ihre jeweils reinste Ausprägung erfahren.'

⁴⁵ Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, 'Korngold's Pleasure, and Deception,' *Western Music and Others* (Berkeley: California Press, 2000) 154.

⁴⁶ Tim Ashley, 'Korngold. Erich Wolfgang,' *The Oxford Companion to Music*, ed. Alison Latham (Oxford: OUP, 2002) 459.

The *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* poll tells us nothing significant about the relative quality of Schoenberg and Korngold's music. The poll does, however, provide a useful opportunity to assess objectively Schoenberg and Korngold's relative status within the context of 1930s Vienna. As we have seen, this opportunity was missed due to the failure of otherwise creditable writers to locate or accurately report the original poll results. Most of the writers who repeated this incomplete and inaccurate information were associates of Korngold's circle of friends and family or instigators of a musicology of film: the poll's results as communicated through the literature on Korngold can be seen as 'spin'.

After the Second World War, respected musicologists such as Wilfrid Mellers argued that film music's accompanying role diminished music's integrity.⁴⁷ In this climate, researchers were reluctant to evaluate Korngold's innovations and successes in Hollywood. They therefore established a mythology of Korngold as a forgotten composer of opera, and orchestral and chamber works. They cast Korngold as the victim of twentieth-century disillusionment with romanticism, rather than highlighting Korngold's real distinction as an innovative and highly influential composer of film music.

A central issue in twentieth-century music historiography was the polarized attitudes of audiences, critics and musicologists towards the different types of music exemplified by Korngold and Schoenberg. The rise and fall of Korngold's reputation illustrates the complexities of the reception of music during the twentieth century. The way in which the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* poll of 1930 was presented and misrepresented reminds us of the need to accurately check secondary sources. It is also an example of the tangled web of personal agendas and myth-making that is an important part of the musicology of the period.

⁴⁷ Wilfrid Mellers, 'Film Music,' *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Eric Blom (London: MacMillan, 1954) 93-110. Notable dictionaries of music and texts by recognised musicologists agreed that when or because Korngold became a film music writer his early promise was not reached. See Poole, *Placing Korngold*: Ch 4 'Musicologists' Descriptions of Korngold's Music', also Ch 5 'Critics' Descriptions of Korngold's Music'.