Project Title:

The Poetry of Schoenberg’s Opus 6: Jacobowski’s Neue Lieder der besten neueren Dichter für’s Volk

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Project Summary:

The poetry anthology Neue Lieder der besten neueren Dichter für’s Volk (Ludwig Jacobowski, ed., Berlin: M. Liemann, 1899), was the source of several song texts for Arnold Schoenberg’s opera 6 & 8. In fact, no other anthology of poetry was a more fruitful source of lyrics for Schoenberg. My goal was to contextualize the poetry anthology Neue Lieder der besten neueren Dichter für’s Volk: who are the poets? What are the poems? Which are included in other anthologies from the time and since?

At the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, I examined 13 poetry anthologies. Of the 150 poets in Neue Lieder, one or more poems by 36 of these poets also appear in other anthologies of poetry. Among these are the most famous poets of the time, which I propose reflects editor Ludwig Jacobowski’s first-hand knowledge of the German literary scene. But Neue Lieder also includes numerous works by lesser-known poets, suggesting that Jacobowski’s social circle extended into the realm of amateur poets.

A significant piece of publication history that remains mysterious is a reference to a plan for “100,000 copies to be sold for 10 Pfennig each.” By modern standards, selling 100,000 copies of a poetry anthology is ambitious, particularly given that 10 Pfenning is equivalent to the cost of mailing a postcard. A further mystery concerns the publisher. No entry for “M. Liemann” could be found in Berlin around the turn-of-the-century, confounding the research librarians who assisted me. Thus, the need for further investigation remains.

Publications:

Not at this time. This research will be incorporated into my future books about Arnold Schoenberg’s Opera 6 & 8.

Presentations:


NA

External Grants Applied:

NA

External Grants Awarded:

NA

Student Number: 2