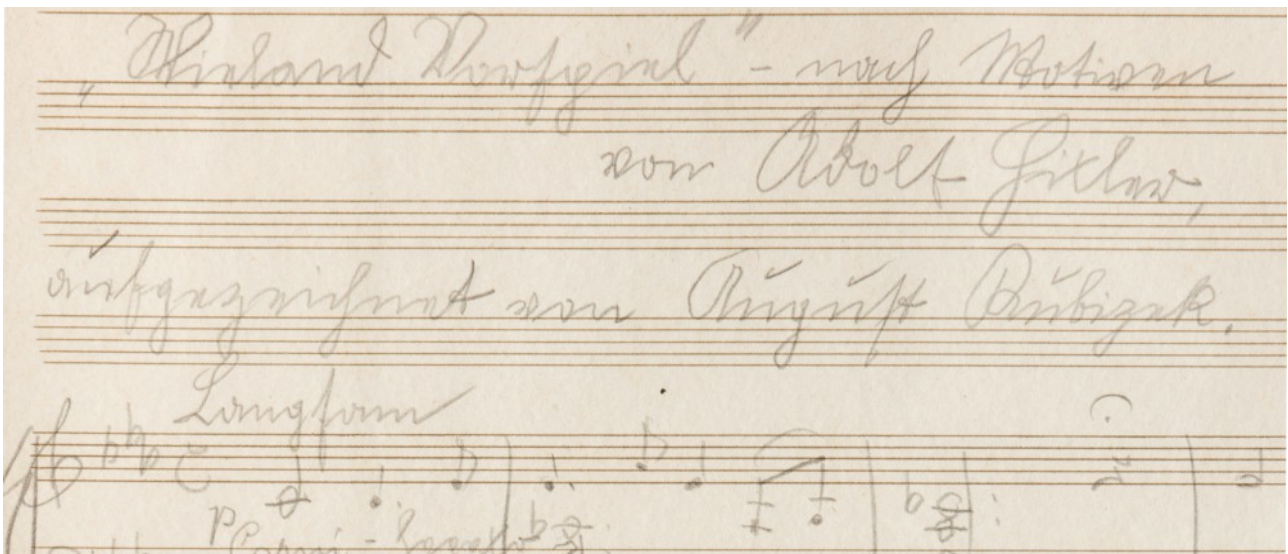


Hitler the composer of an opera? Another fairy tale by August Kubizek

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Again another spectacular Hitler related finding has caused a worldwide media storm: a fragment of an opera allegedly composed by the 19 year old Hitler in 1908: “Wieland der Schmied” (Wieland the Smith). It can be seen at the [Young Hitler exhibition](#) in the [Museum Niederösterreich](#), St. Pölten, Austria.



Opening fragment of the music sheet, titled “Wieland Vorspiel” nach Motiven von Adolf Hitler, aufgezeichnet von August Kubizek. © Legacy August Kubizek in cooperation with the DÖW

The sheet music originates from the legacy of August Kubizek (1888-1956), who was befriended with Hitler in 1906-1908. Yet, in 1938 Kubizek wrote:

“My friend took my transcripts of this music with him [when Hitler moved out of their common room, autumn 1908]. To my great dismay I possess none of it. It is just as unfortunate that I have so completely forgotten this music, that I can't reconstruct it from memory. What an infinitely valuable cultural document it would be if these pages were found today, and the musical ideas of Adolf Hitler from 1908 were to be reborn.

Unfortunately my friend never handed me these sheets, otherwise they would be mine, just as the other memorabilia

from this time I've kept [a few letters, postcards and sketches]. (...) The creative power of this man is invincible and all-round. I really do not know in which area my friend would not have been completely universal at that time.”¹

This followed after three pages in which he described that Hitler was too impatient to do finger exercises needed to play the piano and that Hitler couldn't read musical notation. Yet, according to Kubizek, the young Hitler was able to compose an entire opera, which supposedly was so genial that it would have baffled professional conductors. Even so, Kubizek could in 1938 not remember a single note of this opera.

Kubizek was tasked in that year to write a sort of monography on his time with the young Hitler by Albert Bormann, brother of Hitler's secretary Martin Bormann. Albert Bormann had become in 1938 *Chief of Persönliche Angelegenheiten des Führers* (Personal Affairs of the Führer). Kubizek couldn't remember much, which isn't surprising, as thirty years had passed by then. The notes on their mutual time in Vienna, when this opera was supposedly composed, consists of fifty typewritten sheets.

Dr. Franz Jetzinger, who published a very reliable biography of the young Hitler in 1956 and had been in close contact with Kubizek in 1948-1952, questioned Kubizek in 1949 about this alleged opera. Kubizek responded:

“I have to search again to see if I can find any sketches in my old sheet music originating from “Wieland”. That would of course be very fine for the composition of the upcoming film.”²

1 *August Kubizek. Erinnerungen, 1938, p. 46.* “Meine schriftlichen Aufzeichnungen über diese Musik hat mein Freund an sich genommen, sodaß ich zu meinem eigenen größten Leidwesen davon gar nichts besitze. Ebenso bedauerlich ist es, daß mir diese Musik so ganz und gar aus dem Gedächtnis kam, sodaß ich nicht im Stande bin, irgendwelche Rekonstruktionen dieser Musik aus meinem Gedächtnis heraus zu machen. – Welch' unendlich wertvolles Kulturdokument wäre es aber, wenn heute diese Blätter vorgefunden würden, wenn heute das musikalischen Gedankengut Adolf Hitler aus dem Jahre 1908 eine Wiedergeburt erfahren dürfte. Leider hat mir mein Freund diese Blätter nicht zu meinen Händen belassen, ansonst wären sie von mir, so wie die andere Erinnerungsstücke an diese Zeit, aufbewahrt in meiner Hand. – Ebenso bedauerlich erscheint es mir, daß die zeichnerischen Arbeiten meines Freunds anscheinend in Verlust geraten sind, auch diese Mappen wären heute von kulturellem Wert ohnegleichen.

Die schöpferische Kraft dieses Mannes ist unversiegbar groß und auch allseitig. Ich wüßte wirklich nicht, auf welchem Gebiete mein Freund schon damals nicht ganz universell beschlagen gewesen wäre.”
Kubizek, 1938. Page 46.

2 August Kubizek. Letter to Franz Jetzinger, June 19, 1949. Jetzinger legacy, 63/18, OÖLA. “Ich muß nun doch noch einmal nachsuchen, ob ich in meinen alten Notenblättern nicht doch noch irgendwelche Skizzen finde, welche vom “Wieland” herrühren. Daß wäre natürlich ganz fein für die seinerzeitige Komposition des Filmes.”

Kubizek was thinking of writing a novel or making a movie about the young Hitler, then. But apparently he didn't find any 'sketch' from the opera, as he showed nothing to Jetzinger. Could it be that Jetzinger's question triggered Kubizek in a later stage to produce just such a sketch?

Anyhow, Jetzinger remarked in 1956: "Kubizek's book contains at least 90 percent inaccuracies and imaginative fairy tales to glorify Hitler."³

He wrote so about the book Kubizek published in 1953, which is basically an extended version of what he wrote in 1938. In the 1953 book Kubizek wrote about this alleged opera seven pages - even though he could remember even less than he did in 1938. And again he tells:

"Of course I can't remember any note of this music." (...) I don't know what happened with our opera."⁴

So, back to the sheetmusic exhibited in the Museum Niederösterreich, St. Pölten, Austria. Who wrote it? Unknown - possibly August Kubizek, possibly somebody else. When was it written? Unknown. Is there any solid evidence that Hitler composed it? No, not a shred.

So, what's going on?

All this kerfuffle is part of an exhibition and book promotion campaign. Austrian historian Hannes Leidinger and culture scientist Christian Rapp are co-curators of the exhibition *The young Hitler* and writers of the book *Hitler – Prägende Jahre. Kindheit und Jugend 1889-1914 (Hitler. Formative years. Childhood and youth 1889-1914)*, published by Residenz Verlag.

In this book they rely heavily on statements made by the highly unreliable witness Kubizek. Their theories about Hitler's youth are further based on products and concoctions from other long since exposed fraudsters. They 'read' in a watercolor allegedly made by Hitler in 1910-1913 signs of

3 Franz Jetzinger. *Hitlers Jugend*. 1956, p. 136: "Das Buch [Kubizeks] enthält zu mindestens 90 Prozent Unrichtigkeiten und phantasievolle Märchen zur Verherrlichung Hitlers".

4 August Kubizek *Adolf Hitler, mein Jugendfreund*, 1953, p. 228 and 234. "Ich weiß selbstverständlich keinen Ton mehr von dieser Musik."(...) "Ich weiß nicht, was mit unserer Oper weiterhin geschehen ist."

Hitler's early antisemitism – but the work is very likely to be a forgery from the 1930's.

After Jetzinger debunked Kubizek in 1956, the Austrian-German historian Brigitte Hamann tried to rehabilitate him in 1996, in her book *Hitler's Vienna*. Why she did so, is incomprehensible – as all evidence supports Jetzinger's view.

No comment by Museum Niederösterreich

The spokesperson of Museum Niederösterreich was given the opportunity to react to this article. He choose not to do so.

See also:

Sven Felix Kellerhoff. War Hitler doch schon vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg Antisemit? *Welt*, Berlin, March 1, 2020.

<https://www.welt.de/geschichte/article206219535/Neue-Quellenfunde-War-Hitler-schon-vor-1914-Antisemit.html>

Jaap van den Born & Bart FM Droog. Books to avoid for Hitler authentication issues. On Birgit Schwarz's *Geniewahn* (2009) and on Brigitte Hamann's *Hitlers Wien* (1996). *The Post Online / Droog Magazine*, Amsterdam/Eenrum, March 4, 2019.

<https://www.droog-mag.nl/hitler/2019/geniewahn-and-hitlers-wien.pdf>

Sources

Franz Jetzinger. *Hitlers Jugend. Phantasien, Lügen - und die Wahrheit. Mit 20 Tafeln*. Europa-Verlag, Wien, [1956].

August Kubizek. *Erinnerungen. An die mit dem Führer gemeinsam verlebten Junglingsjahre 1904-1908 in Linz und Wien. Band 2 – Wien*. [Never published]. Jetzinger legacy no. 63.

Materialien zu Hitlerbuch. Oberösterreichisches Landes Archiv (OÖLA), Linz.

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Museum Niederösterreich, press release, February 28, 2020.

John Simkon. Albert Bormann. Spartacus Educational, 1997-2020.

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