

THE ROLE OF  
**MUSIC AND  
MYTHOLOGY**  
IN THE  
**RISE OF FASCISM IN  
GERMANY**

**Reuben D. Ferguson**  
**EUH6939**  
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**Dr. Patricia Kollander**  
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**T**HE role played by German mythology and German music should be considered an important factor in the wide-spread adoption of Nazism by the German people prior to World War II. The pervasiveness of the idea of racial superiority throughout the mythology of Germanic peoples coupled with the dramatic and extremely popular musical renderings of those myths could not help but to have had an influence on the attitudes of the Germans who were familiar with them. Of course, other considerations were much more important in the German people's slide toward fascism and dictatorship; economic conditions and wounded pride from the loss of the first world war chief among them. However, it seems that no matter what theoretical cause one might postulate, an example can be found in another region or country that had the same condition but did not follow the path taken by Germany. This paper will examine the "cultural fertilizer" of mythology and music and seek an understanding of how such influences may have contributed to the German *Sonderweg*.

Many sources were consulted during the preparation of this paper in an effort to ascertain how the question of musical influences was handled. Two publications by Pamela Porter proved very helpful, and are focused primarily upon artistic concerns. A newly-published book, Wagner's Hitler by Joachim Köhler, also contributed a great deal about artistic influences.

Unfortunately, in a large number of works, the question was never addressed at all. That music was and is still one of the central features in German society and culture would seem to have been overlooked by many historians. For example, while in Revolutions of Our Time: Fascism, author Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf discusses nationalism, militarism, racism, and other ideas leading to the advent of fascism, he seems to be totally absorbed in the social context. Excluded is any discussion of the cultural attitudes. As far as can be determined, the words "music" and "Wagner"

are totally absent in this work.<sup>1</sup> In 1938, authors Max Ascoli and Arthur Feiler went to great lengths investigating the rise of fascism in Fascism for Whom? but there is not a single mention of cultural, artistic, or musical influences on the German people.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the exclusion of discussion of artistic influences continues: Fascists and Conservatives: The radical right and the establishment in twentieth-century Europe, a collection of writings by several authors published in 1990, contains no article concerned with cultural matters.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of attention paid to literary works, the elimination of discussion of artistic influences would seem to be widespread.<sup>4</sup>

Ironically, another work which failed to discuss musical or cultural matters was written by the man in charge of propaganda for the Third Reich: the diaries of Joseph Goebbels. The irony is present because Goebbels was, second only to Hitler, the top authority on the cultural aspects of the Reich; matters of repertoire, actors and musicians, and, in fact, all other public aspects of artistic and cultural life were under his control. In spite of this fact, there is almost no mention whatever in his diaries of musical, artistic or cultural preference. In the otherwise long and detailed entries, Goebbels seems to have given very little thought to such matters. It must be admitted that time constraints prevented the author from reading the diaries in their entirety, but a thorough examination of the contents and indices, as well as selected readings, failed to reveal any interest whatsoever in the arts on the part of Goebbels. In addition, an attempt was made to correlate the dates of cultural events in the Reich (e.g., Hitler's attendance at Bayreuth performances of Wagner's works) with the diary entries, but this was fruitless as well.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, when musical matters are addressed, the tendency is to treat Nazi use of music as propaganda as an aberration.<sup>6</sup> One simply cannot deny the huge impact of music on the population of German-speaking people when one considers the great influence that German music

has had on the study of Western music in general. A quick look at almost any music appreciation or music history textbook will reveal that many more composers and musicians of German heritage are discussed than any other, (indeed, almost as many as all other countries combined): J.S. Bach; C.P.E. Bach; Mozart; Haydn; Beethoven; Schubert; Brahms; Mahler; Bruckner; Wagner; Schönberg; and Webern; to name just a few of the most important. If German composers have had such a powerful effect upon other countries and cultures, it would seem reasonable to assume that they have had an even greater effect upon their own culture.<sup>7</sup>

It is fairly well-known that Adolf Hitler and many of his subordinates shared a great interest in the mythology of the Norse and early Germanic peoples. That Hitler, Goering, and others had an almost religious attitude toward Richard Wagner's musical treatments of these myths is hardly arguable considering the multitude of statements made by Hitler in reference to Wagner's works.<sup>8</sup> However, it can also be argued that music and mythology affected the entire population of Germanic people in addition to Hitler and his associates.

There are many indications of the widespread familiarity with Norse/Germanic mythology; in *Sagas of the Norsemen*, Jacqueline Simpson says:

... in the 1930s, left-wing German worker's movements were interested in the old myths; in the 1940s, a Danish newspaper conveyed hostility to the German occupation by retelling two heroic legends from Saxo. The Nazi stress on Germanic racial nobility, and on its pagan heritage, is only one instance (although notorious) of a wide-spread tendency to politicize mythology. Some Nazis even wished to reinstate the public worship of Wotan (Odin) and Thor, but Hitler thought the

attempt would be foolish, and it was not carried out.<sup>9</sup>

The literature is filled with heroic men, women, and gods who fight to the last no matter what the odds. Odin (Woten/Woden), the King of the gods, was a brooding, dark warrior who knew the ultimate fate which awaited both men and gods. Thor, the god of thunder, was also battle-ready with his magic war-hammer. Heroic mortals are also featured in these legends: Sigmund and Sigurd; Gunther; Ragnar Lodbrok; even Attila the Hun. Violence is featured quite prominently in most if not all of these stories. In the Volsung legends, one of the main characters, Signy, sister of Sigmund, is portrayed as heroic and bound by duty. Her actions today seem anything but heroic: she requested the deaths (by wolves) of nine of her ten brothers because they seemed unlikely to help her avenge the death of her father; she ordered two sets of her own sons be murdered because they failed to measure up to her ideas of loyalty and honor; she used witchcraft to seduce her twin brother, Sigmund, so she could bring forth a superior son; she arranged for the death of her husband, Siggeir, by burning; and engaged in other questionable acts.<sup>10</sup>

Some of these and many other heroic figures are woven into the fabric of the music dramas of Wagner, along with an easily-detectible tint of anti-Semitism and a strong message of Germanic pride and superiority. In the following excerpt from *Opera and the Culture of Fascism*, Jeremy Tambling writes:

*Die Sarazenin* (The Saracen Maid), planned in 1842, uses German history (Manfred, the illegitimate son of the Hohenstaufen emperor Frederic II, and his love for his Arabic half-sister Fatima) in order to focus on the virtual necessity of incest,... [and] suggests the virtual abolition of existing races in the name of a new order; but this is, at the same time, the promotion of the German race, since the 'other', the Oriental woman, turns out to be linked by consanguinity to Manfred.<sup>11</sup>

Wagner composed a prodigious amount of this type of music, insisting that the term *music drama*, rather than opera, be used to describe these heroic works. By far the most impressive achievement of Wagner is *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, a series of four independent music dramas based on the legends of the Volsungs as adapted by Wagner. The Ring Cycle consists of *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*. These works are but a few of many works in the same style: *Rienzi*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Lohengrin*, *Parsifal*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (at over four hours, the longest piece of music ever written), *Tannhäuser*, and *Tristan und Isolde*.<sup>12</sup> These are powerful dramatic works. Wagner had a rather fascist compositional technique; he controlled all aspects of his creative efforts: music; libretto; orchestration; set design and staging. Musicologist Donald J. Grout points out in *A History of Western Music* that his works are capable of stirring great emotion:

Above all, his music impressed itself on the late nineteenth century because it was able, by its sheer overwhelming power, to suggest or arouse or create in its hearers that all-embracing state of ecstasy, at once sensuous and mystical, toward which all Romantic art had been striving.<sup>13</sup>

Wagner's music can indeed have a startling effect upon its listeners. In the opinion of the author, *Siegfrieds Trauermarsch* (Siegfried's Funeral Music) from *Götterdämmerung* is one of the most sinister, heroic-sounding pieces ever experienced. More to the point, however, is the effect it had upon listeners in Germany. In the town of Bayreuth, King Ludwig of Bavaria financed and had built an opera house devoted exclusively to the performance of music written by Wagner. No other composer's music was to be performed there, and it has maintained this exclusive attitude to

the present day.<sup>14</sup> In 1924, the opera house and the festival associated with it reopened after a ten-year hiatus. Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* was performed; four hours of intense, dramatic, romantic, and sometimes comical music and drama with nonetheless never misses a chance to display a fervent German nationalism. At the end of the performance, the members of the audience spontaneously rose to their feet and burst into an enthusiastic rendition of the German national anthem, *Deutschland über alles*, an amazing and vivid display of the ability of such music to move people to nationalistic fervor (no less amazing was the willingness of the audience to sing after sitting through such a long performance).<sup>15</sup>

No doubt at least some of the audience's enthusiasm can be attributed to the libretto of *Die Meistersinger*. In the last scene is a speech delivered by Sachs, the main character, which is an exhortation to the people to strive for unity:

Young knights so filled with love and song as you do not often come to us here in Nuremberg from their castles and their revelry: in the face of their love of plunder we folk have often had to band together; and when crowded together, people fall easily to brawling: companies, guilds, societies have had wretched encounters (as we've seen lately in certain alleys!). In the Mastersingers' beloved guild, other guilds have always recovered their reason. Strong and secure, they are not so easily shaken; what is preserved is a lasting legacy. Many a custom, many a usage withers, falls into decay, vanishes in smoke. Away with strife! Neither blunderbuss nor gunpowder can restore what is blown away. Honour your German masters: then you will conjure up good spirits. And if you favour their endeavours, then even if the Holy Roman Empire dissolves in mist, there shall remain holy German art!<sup>16</sup>

This speech is delivered just after a scene in which Beckmeister, a character representing the Jews, is thoroughly humiliated by Sachs in a musical performance. Wagner's intent was not only to portray Jews as generally inferior, but also as incapable of performing German music, an opinion

for which he would become infamous. No doubt Hitler must have positively glowed whenever he heard the phrase "Honour your German masters...".

Other excerpts show Wagner's intense romantic treatment of what may be described as glorious fatalism. This attitude was certainly promoted by the Nazi hierarchy, if not always followed. An excerpt from the end of *Siegfried*, the third music drama in *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, features Brünnhilde's last words to the hero Siegfried and is quite revealing:

O childlike hero! O sublime boy! You silly store of doughty deeds! Laughing I must love you, laughing I will bear my blindness; laughing let us perish! Farewell, Valhalla's glittering world! Let your proud fortress fall to dust! Farewell, resplendent pomp of the gods! May your end be blissful, immortal race! You Norns, snap your rope of symbols! Dusk of the gods, let your darkness descend! Night of annihilation, let your mist fall! Siegfried's star now shines upon me: he is mine forever, always mine, my inheritance, my own, my one and all: radiant love, laughing death! <sup>17</sup>

Or this verse from *Götterdämmerung*, again spoken by Brünnhilde:

Shining spear, hallowed weapon, aid my eternal oath! On the spear-point I take this vow: spear-point, mark my words! I dedicate your dominant power to his downfall! I bless your blade, that it may pierce him; for this man has broken his entire oath and now has perjured himself! <sup>18</sup>

At times, the characters in these dramas approach ecstatic hysteria, but the messages intended by Wagner are quite obvious: a violent heritage; nationalistic fervor; adherence to customs; exaltation of the Germanic race; and denigration of other, lesser, peoples.

It should be understood that Wagner cannot be blamed for the use of his music by the Nazis.



Though unabashedly nationalistic, these works are much more than political statements. Wagner had indeed hoped that his work would inspire a new nationalist fervor which would lead to a new political order in Germany, one which incorporated nationalism and the desire for a German republic, but it is doubtful in the extreme that he envisioned the Nazi police state.<sup>19</sup> But it is precisely that fact - his desire for a change of political attitude among the German people - that prepared the ground for a deep-rooted nationalistic fervor, based in what was seen as a noble past, which would lead to an equally noble future. Wagner's music was appreciated as art by large numbers of German-speaking people, and therefore large numbers were exposed to the sociological and political attitudes and ideas of the composer.

To some extent, the ability to move an audience emotionally can be explained by a harmonic analysis of some of Wagner's music. A relatively straightforward example of this is Wagner's avoidance of cadences. A cadence in music is a point of repose, or a place where the harmonic progression ends. This is easily detected by anyone who listens to any kind of music; almost everyone "knows" when the end of a verse in a song is reached because it "feels right". Wagner used this in an interesting way: he would avoid it. There are a multitude of places in his music when the listener, consciously or unconsciously, expects a phrase to end. Instead, Wagner would sail directly into a new phrase, taking the listener to a higher plane of emotion rather than allowing a period of relaxation.<sup>20</sup> This kind of thing was perfect for the mass rallies and meetings of the Nazi Party.<sup>21</sup>

Under Hitler's influence, it is not surprising that such music was featured prominently and came to be equated, to a large extent, with the state. Perhaps the best example of this comes from today's press. Recently, the *New York Times* published an article in their International section

dealing with the planned performance of Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll* by the Israel Symphony Orchestra. The announcement has created a controversy, and it is not the first. Several times in the past, the Israel Symphony (and other organizations) has planned to perform works by Wagner, only to cancel their programming in deference to the survivors of the Holocaust. There is a great deal of argument about the propriety of this, but the fact remains that fifty-plus years after the end of the war, the thought of hearing music by Wagner immediately brings back extremely painful memories of the Nazi police state and the concentration camps.<sup>22</sup> A brief description of the consequences of a previous attempt is given in the article:

In 1981, Zubin Mehta conducted a successful performance of the Israeli Philharmonic with a surprise encore of some Wagner excerpts. The audience erupted in protest, crying out "Shame, shame!" An usher rolled up his sleeves to show his concentration camp number. Fistfights ensued.<sup>23</sup>

Obviously, Wagner's music has made a very deep and permanent impression upon a great many people.

Before the advent of Hitler and the Nazis, the arts in Germany had undergone many trials. German musicologists suffered during World War I. They had been cut off from the rest of the international community; consequently, the channels of scholarly communication had been severed as well. To add to their troubles, travel funding was slashed, and the International Music Society was abolished in 1914. After the war, these same scholars, perhaps resenting their being ostracized, formed new societies and journals with a decidedly German focus. These organizations did not have an easy time of it; they were faced with crushing budget restrictions and an inability to justify their field in a political or social fashion. Sensing disaster, some musicologists made profound changes in the way they approached their discipline. Arnold Schering publicly denounced the growing

division between contemporary compositional techniques and the current focus of musicology, i.e., the music of the distant past. Hans Mersmann and Egon Wellesz wanted state-funded programs of public music appreciation classes, promotion of folk music, and various series of local concerts. Their aim was to have the "state be responsible for making music a part of everyday life through education."<sup>24</sup> The success enjoyed by these various reformers was uneven at best, but these activities would seem to reveal the intent to make available to the German public a source of enjoyment and an appreciation of music by exposing them to the classics. Ultimately, owing mostly to a growing number of amateur musicians and the availability of early music editions for them to play, the attempts to heal the rift between musicology and the general public were successful - just in time for the Nazi assumption of control of the arts.<sup>25</sup>

The new government moved quickly to use the power of music to reinforce fascist ideas. In the opening remarks of a chapter on musicology (which was dedicated to Hitler on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday), Friedrich Blume wrote:

... the direction of music research is predetermined and is to be taken seriously along with its duties to the *Volk* and to the state. The heritage of German music dictates its commission.<sup>26</sup>

Although this paper is concerned with the effect of music and mythology on the general population of Germany, some insight can be gained by examining various facts concerning Hitler himself before he rose to prominence. Hitler's exposure to and adoration of Wagnerian opera was by no means an isolated case. He became familiar with Wagner's works when he (Hitler) was living, unemployed, in Linz. In 1905, at the age of sixteen, Hitler quit school and spent the next three years being idle, which he later described as the happiest time of his life. Having a passion for music, one

of his favorite pastimes was attending the opera, most especially the mystic operas of Wagner which he would attend night after night. His limited funds were spent mainly on opera, (a standing-room ticket cost only the equivalent of ten cents), and on purchasing books on German history and mythology, which he would read for hours at a time.<sup>27</sup>

His fascination with Wagner's operas seems to have had a profound effect upon him. His only friend from this period of his life was one August Kubizek, (nicknamed "Gustl"), who gave the following interesting observation:

The charged emotionality of this music seemed to have served him as a means for self-hypnosis, while he found in its lush air of bourgeois luxury the necessary ingredients for escapist fantasy.<sup>28</sup>

Kubizek goes on to relate the events of a particular evening spent in Hitler's company. They had attended a performance of Wagner's *Rienzi*, and according to "Gustl", Hitler had a quite powerful reaction to the opera. The youthful Adolf was "overwhelmed by the resplendent, dramatic musicality"<sup>29</sup> of the opera, as well as deeply affected by the story therein; that of Cola di Rienzi, a medieval rebel who was an outcast from his fellows and was ruined by their lack of understanding.

After the opera ...

... Hitler began to orate. Words burst from him like a backed-up flood breaking through crumbling dams. In grandiose, compelling images, he sketched for me his future and that of his people.<sup>30</sup>

Thirty years later, the boyhood friends would meet again in Bayreuth, (at an opera, perhaps?), and Hitler would remark: "It began at that hour!".<sup>31</sup>

Even though these comments were made in specific reference to Hitler, it should be realized that operas must have been extremely popular for there to have been so many opportunities for Hitler to view them. Later, when Hitler was in Vienna, he claimed to have heard *Tristan und Isolde* thirty to forty times during these years.<sup>32</sup> During this period of time in Vienna, at the Hofoper opera house alone, at least 426 evenings featured performances of works by Wagner.<sup>33</sup> The German and Austrian public had a steady supply of heroic, nationalistic music dramas available for consumption.

Hitler, aware of the effect such music had upon his own emotions, was fully prepared to use it to his own ends to inspire and manipulate the German people. In *Inside the Third Reich*, author Albert Speer, Hitler's friend, chief architect, and armaments minister recounts a lengthy list of responsibilities and problems, then goes on to say:

With all this to attend to, I missed most of Hitler's rallies except for his "cultural speeches," as he himself called these major oratorical flights. He used to draft these while he was at Obersaltzburg. At the time I admired the speeches not so much for their rhetorical brilliance as for what I felt to be their incisive content, their intellectual level. In Spandau I decided I would reread them, once my prison term was over, on the theory that I would find in them one element in my former world which would not repel me. But my expectations were disappointed. In the context of that time they had said a great deal to me; now they seemed empty, without tension, shallow and useless. What was more, in them Hitler openly aired his intention to pervert the very meaning of the concept of culture by mobilizing it for his own power goals. I found it incomprehensible that these tirades should once have impressed me so profoundly. What had done it?<sup>34</sup>

Apparently, another trait shared by both Hitler and Wagner was their ability to make a profound impression upon others.

Other indications of exposure of opera to the German people can be found. An examination of the number of contemporary operas performed at 47 German opera houses between 1927 and 1933 reveal an interesting trend:

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| <b>1927-8</b>  | <b>60</b>              |
| <b>1928-9</b>  | <b>43</b>              |
| <b>1929-30</b> | <b>30</b>              |
| <b>1930-1</b>  | <b>24</b>              |
| <b>1931-2</b>  | <b>6</b>               |
| <b>1932-3</b>  | <b>9</b> <sup>35</sup> |

These figures would seem to indicate a decline in opera performance, but it must be remembered that they reflect contemporary operas. The overall number of performances probably did not vary significantly; a corresponding increase in operettas, (works which are smaller-scale and more economical to present), took place at the same time. Money was definitely a factor; in 1931 the Dresden state theaters moved to exclude from performance any work which would require a royalty payment. This effectively put the emphasis on older, more traditional works.<sup>36</sup>

The following table reproduced from *Music In the Third Reich* by Erik Levy, shows figures for the top five opera composers for each of the eight opera seasons from 1932 to 1940. The column and row showing totals has been added by the author:

*Table 1*<sup>37</sup>

| Composer        | 1932-3 | 1933--4 | 1934-5 | 1935-6 | 1936-7 | 1937-8 | 1938-9 | 1939-40 | TOTALS |
|-----------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| <b>Wagner</b>   | 1837   | 1632    | 1641   | 1607   | 1409   | 1402   | 1327   | 1154    | 12,009 |
| <b>Verdi</b>    | 1265   | 1280    | 1468   | 1497   | 1351   | 1405   | 1309   | 1440    | 11,015 |
| <b>Puccini</b>  | 762    | 817     | 889    | 1082   | 1186   | 919    | 1013   | 971     | 7639   |
| <b>Mozart</b>   | 719    | 1096    | 1067   | 916    | 960    | 632    | 734    | 643     | 6767   |
| <b>Lortzing</b> | 691    | 531     | 707    | 851    | 995    | 951    | 1027   | 1140    | 6893   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>   | 5274   | 5356    | 5782   | 5953   | 5901   | 5309   | 5410   | 5348    | 44,323 |

The table clearly shows that the number of Wagner performances declined over this period of time, which is the point being made by Levi. However, the same data can point out some other trends. It should be noted that the overall number of performances forms something of a bell curve, with the final entry only marginally greater than the first. But a comparison should also be made of the comparative popularity of the composers. Although showing a definite decrease, Wagner still boasts the most performances, particularly in the early years. Consideration should also be given to the significantly large disparity between the totals for Wagner and Verdi and the other three composers on the list. Giuseppe Verdi's operas are known for speed of action; much more so than most other operas. This undoubtedly contributes to their popular appeal. Verdi was also a nationalist, and of course, Italy was on very good terms with Germany at this time. Ultimately, two facts leap out: there were 44,323 opera performances in eight years, and 12,009 of them were of works written by Wagner.

Levi has supplied another table showing the comparative popularity of specific operas. Again, his intention is to illustrate the decline in popularity of Wagner's operas over time. It is conceded that the statistics show a precipitous decline in performances, but the emphasis here is on Wagner's overwhelming popularity early on. Levi's table is in two parts, half showing data for 1932-33 and the other for 1938-39. Only the first half will be reproduced here:



*Table 2*<sup>38</sup>

| Composer                     | Opera                          | # of Performances |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 - Bizet                    | <i>Carmen</i>                  | 373               |
| 2 - Weber                    | <i>Der Freischütz</i>          | 306               |
| 3 - Wagner                   | <i>Der Fliegende Holländer</i> | 304               |
| 4 - Wagner                   | <i>Tannhäuser</i>              | 274               |
| 5 - Wagner                   | <i>Die Meistersinger</i>       | 262               |
| 6 - Wagner                   | <i>Lohengrin</i>               | 252               |
| 7 - Verdi                    | <i>Rigoletto</i>               | 249               |
| 8 - d'Albert                 | <i>Tiefland</i>                | 238               |
| 9 - Puccini                  | <i>Madama Butterfly</i>        | 234               |
| 10 - Puccini                 | <i>La Bohème</i>               | 228               |
| 11 - Flotow                  | <i>Martha</i>                  | 220               |
| 12 - Beethoven <sup>39</sup> | <i>Fidelio</i>                 | 206               |
| 13 - Verdi                   | <i>Il Trovatore</i>            | 203               |
| 14 - Offenbach               | <i>Tales of Hoffman</i>        | 197               |
| 15 - Lortzing                | <i>Undine</i>                  | 197               |

The second half of the table shows only one opera by Wagner on the list, *Lohengrin*, and it is twelfth, with 236 performances. But by that time, the mark had been made; in 1932-33 Wagner's operas occupied four of the top ten places.<sup>40</sup>

# MUSICAL TIME PERIODS

## **Antiquity and Greek Music**

**B.C. - 476 A.D.**

*Pythagoras, ca. 500 B.C.*

## **The Middle Ages**

**476 - 1453**

*Guillaume de Machaut, ca. 1300-1377*

## **The Renaissance**

**1453 - 1600**

*John Dowland, 1562-1626*

## **The Baroque**

**1600 - 1750**

*Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685-1750*

## **The Classical Period**

**1750 - 1809**

*Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1756-1791*

*Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827*

## **The Romantic Period**

**1809 - circa 1883**

*Richard Wagner, 1813-1883*

*Giuseppe Verdi, 1813-1901*

## **Post-Romanticism, Impressionism**

**circa 1883 - circa 1913**

*Richard Strauss, 1864-1949*

## **The Twentieth Century**

**circa 1913 - 2000**

*Arnold Schönberg, 1874-1951*<sup>41</sup>

# RECOMMENDED LISTENING

## From *Der Ring des Nibelungen* by Richard Wagner:

"Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla" from *Das Rheingold*

"Ride of the Valkyries" from *Die Walküre*

"Siegfried's Funeral March" from *Götterdämmerung*

"Brünnhilde's Immolation Scene" from *Götterdämmerung*

## From other works mentioned in the text:

Wagner, Richard: Prelude and Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde*

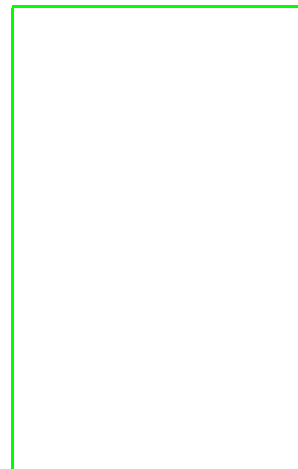
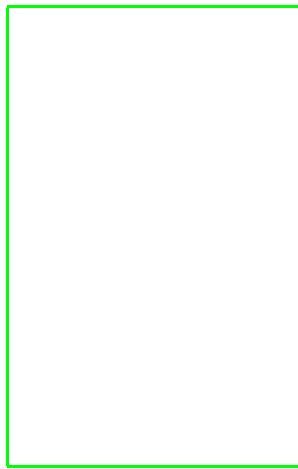
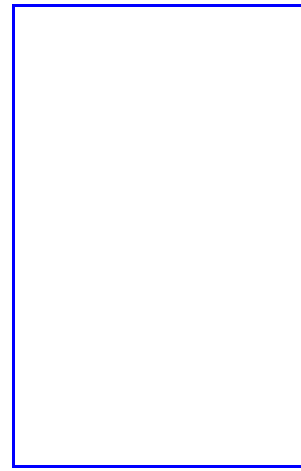
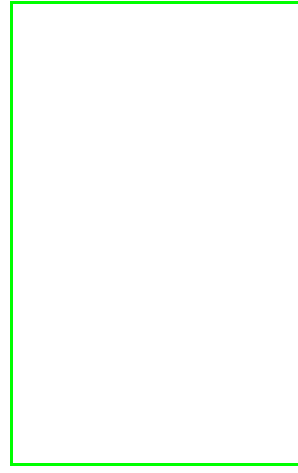
Wagner, Richard: Prelude to Act III from *Lohengrin*

Wagner, Richard: Prelude to Act I from *Die Meistersinger*

Wagner, Richard: Overture to *Tannhäuser*

(If you have the fortitude, listen to the complete works. This is not music for the faint of heart; for example, *Götterdämmerung* is 4 hours, 25 minutes in length. The others are of similar duration. Pack a lunch.)

## SCENES FROM WAGNER'S MUSIC DRAMAS\*





Commissioned by Siegfried, Wagner's son, these paintings were done by Ferdinand Leeke (1859-1925) to commemorate the works of his father. They were created between 1889 and 1898.

\* Downloaded from the Richard Wagner Archive at <http://users.utu.fi/hansalmi/wagner/art.html>

## NOTES

1. Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, Revolutions of Our Time: Fascism, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 7, 9-81, 147-90, 220-24.
2. Max Ascoli and Arthur Feiler, Fascism for Whom? (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1938), 5-10, 333-41.
3. Martin Blinkhorn, ed., Fascists and Conservatives, (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1990), vii-viii, 285-92.
4. C.S. Forester, The Hornblower Companion. (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1964), 116. In this book, Forester writes about the formulation of the personality of his famous fictional sea captain, Horatio Hornblower. On page 116, Forester decides Hornblower must be made tone-deaf because: "I knew more - far more - about the etiquette of the court of Hapsburg-Lorraine than I did about harmony and counterpoint. ...Hornblower had to be tone-deaf, barred forever from the pleasures of music." By employing this dodge, he was saved the difficulty and possible embarrassment of revealing his ignorance of Classical Period music. At least Forester recognized his predicament; whether or not the same can be said of some historians remains open for debate.
5. Joseph Goebbels, The Goebbels Diaries: 1939-1941, trans. and ed. Fred Taylor, (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1983), ix-xiii, 461-90; Joseph Goebbels, The Goebbels Diaries: 1942-1943, trans. and ed. Louis P. Lochner, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1948), v-ix, 3-30, 551-66; Joseph Goebbels, The Goebbels Diaries: The Last Days, trans. and ed. Hugh Trevor-Roper, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1978), v-xxxiii, 345-68
6. Pamela M. Potter, Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler's Reich, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1998) xv-xvii.
7. Donald J. Grout, A History of Western Music, 4th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988) v-viii.
8. See *Hitler and Wagner: An Investigation Into the Effects of the Music of Richard Wagner on the Pseudo-Mysticism of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich*, an unpublished paper by the author, for a more detailed discussion of the influence of Wagner's music on Hitler and the Reich. It can be found on the internet at [www.flinet.com/~reuben/hitwag.htm](http://www.flinet.com/~reuben/hitwag.htm) Some of the research done for that paper is incorporated into this one.
9. Loren Auerbach and Jacqueline Simpson, Sagas of the Norsemen: Viking and German Myth, Myth and Mankind 3. (Amsterdam: Time-Life Books BV, 1997),135-7.

10. Ibid., 88-91.
11. Jeremy Tambling, Opera and the Culture of Fascism, (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1996) 19. For a multitude of other examples of Wagner's racist ideas, see the librettos for the following works by Richard Wagner: Das Rheingold (libretto). compact audio disk. (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 1989); Tristan und Isolde (libretto). compact audio disk. (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 1997); Siegfried (libretto). compact audio disk. (London: Decca Record Company Ltd., 1984); Götterdämmerung (libretto). compact audio disk. (London: Decca Record Company Ltd., 1985).
12. Grout, 751-2.
13. Ibid.
14. Joachim Köhler, Wagner's Hitler: The Prophet and His Disciple, trans. Ronald Taylor, (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2000), 48.
15. Erik Levi, Music in the Third Reich,. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994) 6.
16. John Warrack, Richard Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1994), 157-8.
17. Richard Wagner, Siegfried (libretto), compact audio disk. (London: Decca Record Company Ltd., 1984), 186.
18. Richard Wagner, Götterdämmerung (libretto), compact audio disk. (London: Decca Record Company Ltd., 1985), 152.
19. William Bridgewater and Seymour Kurtz, "Wagner, Richard", The Illustrated Columbia Encyclopedia, 3rd ed., Vol. 21, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 6532.; Holger H.Herwig, Hammer or Anvil? Modern Germany 1648-Present, (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1994), 100-1.; John Warrack, Richard Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1994) 141-2.
20. Charles Burkhart, Anthology For Musical Analysis, 4th ed., (Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1986) 377-8. Also see Chapter 12, "Von Braun" of *Twelve Scientists*, written by the author, at [www.flinet.com/~reuben/](http://www.flinet.com/~reuben/) Go to the Index, scroll down to Music, and click on *Twelve Scientists*.
21. Albert Speer, Inside the Third Reich, (New York: Avon Books, 1970) 98-9. *Die Meistersinger* was always included in the annual party rallies. It was always the first event, intended to set the mood for the rest of the rally.

22. Deborah Sontag, "Israel Plans a Test for Wagner", New York Times, 8 April, 2000, sec. A, p.5.
23. Ibid.
24. Pamela M. Potter, "German Musicology and Early Music Performance", Music and Performance During the Weimar Republic, Bryan Gilliam, ed. (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1994) 95-7.
25. Potter, "German Musicology", 103-5.; Potter, Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society, xi.
26. Potter, "German Musicology", 103-4.
27. William L. Shirer, The Rise and Fall of Adolf Hitler, (New York: Scholastic Book Service, 1961) 9-12.
28. Joachim C. Fest, Hitler, (New York: Vintage Books, 1975) 22.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 22-3.
31. Ibid., 21-3.
32. Shirer, 15-20; Fest, 30.
33. Fest, 769.
34. Speer, 98.
35. Levi, 169.
36. Ibid.
37. Levi, 192.
38. Ibid., 193.
39. Beethoven only wrote one opera. He wanted to do another, but never found a libretto to suit him.



40. Levi, 193.

41. Dates for composer's lives were verified with Donald J. Grout's A History of Western Music

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