

**UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI  
FAKULTETA ZA DRUŽBENE VEDE**

JAN ORŠIČ

**GLASBA - MEDIJ DRUŽBENEGA KONFLIKTA**

Diplomsko delo

**Ljubljana 2007**

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**Diplomo posvečam mojim staršem.**

Zahvaljujem se vsem, ki so mi pri nastajanju diplome kakorkoli pomagali, me podpirali ali pa me samo tolerirali.

## MUSIC, THE MEDIA OF SOCIAL CONFLICT

The thesis deals with music and its ability to present the signs of social conflict through it before the development of the radio and television. We know that music can transmit emotional messages, but could it transmit a political or philosophical message? To prove such capability I have first focused on the historic relationship between society and music. Based on this I will explain that the interest of politics to control music is based on its usage to firm the established social system. In the second part of the thesis, I concentrated on opera as the most popular form of mass entertainment from its beginning up to the twentieth century. Due to its availability to all social classes this musical form has been able to carry through works of composers such as Mozart, Beethoven and Verdi, messages of social aspirations, values and ideals. In the third part of my thesis, I concentrated on the life and work of undoubtedly the most important romantic composer Richard Wagner. Wagner has namely enabled the communication of complex ideas through music with decomposition of harmonies and perfection of the leitmotifs. His case is especially interesting, as his music became the cultural base of a political movement forty years after his death.

**Key words:** music, opera, Richard Wagner, leitmotif, propaganda.

## GLASBA, MEDIJ DRUŽBENEGA KONFLIKTA

Osrednja tematika diplomskega dela je glasba in njena sposobnost, da se skozi izražajo znaki družbenega konflikta pred razvojem radia in televizije. Vemo, da glasba lahko prenaša čustvena sporočila, toda ali lahko prenaša tudi politično ali filozofsko sporočilo? Za dokazovanje takšne sposobnosti sem se najprej osredotočil na zgodovinski odnos med družbo in glasbo. Na podlagi tega sem lahko pojasnil zanimanje politike za nadzor nad glasbo, s pomočjo katere je potekalo utrjevanje vzpostavljenega družbenega sistema. V drugem delu naloge sem se osredotočil na opero kot najbolj popularno obliko množične zabave od njenega nastanka pa vse do dvajsetega stoletja. Ta glasbena oblika je ravno zaradi svoje dosegljivosti za vse družbene razrede ohranjala dela skladateljev, kot so Mozart, Beethoven in Verdi, sporočila o družbenih težnjah, vrednotah ter idealih. V tretjem delu diplome sem se osredotočil na življenje in delo verjetno najpomembnejšega romantičnega skladatelja Richarda Wagnerja. Wagner je namreč s podiranjem pravil o harmonijah in izpopolnitvijo glasbene tehnike leitmotivov omogočil sporočanje kompleksnih idej skozi glasbo. Njegov primer je še posebej zanimiv, saj je njegova glasba postala kulturni temelj političnega gibanja štirideset let po njegovi smrti.

**Ključni pojmi:** glasba, opera, Richard Wagner, leitmotiv, propaganda.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

It has always amazed me how strongly music influences our lives, and yet in most cases we are not even aware of it. I have witnessed on several occasions how the change of sound, the rhythm or instruments can change the perception of what we perceive as more or less important, good or bad. This can be easily seen in the sound production of films and how just a single tone can paint the whole atmosphere of a scene in a different way or how differently things can be emphasized by changing the timing of silence and music. This is how I started to realize the incredible expressive potential of music, which functions in such a subtle way that the details are registered mainly subconsciously but still have an effect. Therefore, I started to wonder if music alone could transfer also more complex messages, like political propaganda. And if so, it must have already been attempted and developed in the times when there was no television or radio.

Nowadays we get information from a number of sources in all kinds of forms and sizes. There are all the newspapers, the television and radio stations and all the Internet websites. If we want to find certain information, we have the possibility to search until we find it. We are aware that most of the media has a political background in this global village. In addition, different political ideas mean different ways in presenting the same information. We are all trying to be alert to the more or less obvious political content coming from all of the sources we encounter daily. However, there is one media, which we seem to forget.

Music is something that we perceive as a part of our daily routine. We all experience the perseverance of a tune we would hear in the morning and that we would murmur through the day even if we do not want to. We listen to music throughout our days in the car, in the supermarket, in a bar, a club or a restaurant. Music is always somewhere in the background, almost like we are accustomed to seeing it in the films. However, the sounds we hear, especially when we are young, stay with us through our lives like the language that we first learned to speak. After all, it is the songs that we learn from our parents or in the school that have a very important part when learning the language itself. Every generation has its own songs and performers. These mark our youth in the way that we identify with them and the messages they send out with their songs. Some of this music remains with us through our

lives and some we remember years later and it takes us back to the past like the Magdalene cookie took Marcel Proust.

Music is therefore a part of our socialization process and there is no doubt that it plays a very important role through our lives bringing with it messages that we may notice or not. The importance of music is well understood by all political regimes. Throughout history, music is a tool of politics. It has been monopolized, censored and controlled, so that it would be in accordance with the aesthetic values set by the politics and religion. After all, music is one of the three national symbols of every nation, the flag, the code of arms and the anthem. This means that a certain musical composition has the force to unite individuals into a nation. Moreover, as power is the goal of every politics it is easy to understand the historic attempts of political regimes to control music.

To use music as a communication channel, the sender (musician) and the receiver (audience) both need to have certain knowledge. A simple difference between the major and the minor key can make the difference between feeling emotions of happiness or sadness. However, through time as societies developed the musicians have also learned to express thoughts that are more complex.

In this thesis, I want to present the music as capable of disseminating ideas and mobilizing crowds. To achieve this I intend to first establish the natural relation between music in society. This means I shall focus primarily on how music was perceived in the ancient and medieval times as music became more and more independent from the lyrical expression and the monopoly over it by the political and religious elite which was achieved by J.S Bach for the first time, reflecting the new mentality after The Thirty Years' War. However, for music to be able to approach wide audiences a media capable of doing this was needed.

By presenting its development, I intend to present the opera as the most influential media before the invention of the modern mass media, capable of transferring a political or philosophical message to a great audience. It was created in Italy in the seventeenth century as an attempt to create the ultimate work of art. In less than a century after its premiere, it became the most popular form of entertainment in Europe. It had audiences of thousands and tunes that were sung on the street. The opera went from Italy to The Habsburg Empire, France, England and Germany, where it was accepted through their courts, but eventually



modifying into a form specific for each country. As its form was adapted to the individual national social situation and national language, it became understandable to all social classes. In these new, local forms, opera left the courts of Vienna, Paris and London and entered into the lives of all of the population. After performances were done in the local language, all of the population started to really fill up opera theaters. However, as ideas of a new social order were spread across Europe, the control of the censorship was getting tighter and tighter and the ways of transferring these ideas became increasingly subtler and music was the right or the job.

The potential of opera was well understood by the composers. We can make a simple division amongst those composers who are said to reflect the spirit of their time, such as Handel or Mahler and those, whose music already anticipates something that was still to come or that their music has a political message, like Mozart, Beethoven or Wagner. These are all claimed to have reformed music and gave it a new dimension. Moreover, even if they come from different generations what these musical reformists all have in common is not only the socio-political awareness, but they all used the same form of music for presenting their viewpoints, the opera. Therefore, I intend to show how opera changed in accordance with the demands of the specific public. I will show that opera became the transmitter of political messages, connected with reformist ideas all over Europe. However, to do this I shall present the gradual education of its public making it able to perceive its message without the use of text, which is to be perfected in the time of romanticism.

As Richard Wagner is probably the greatest and most disputed romantic composer, and the last musical reformist that used only the media of opera for transmitting philosophical and political ideas, his life and work will be separately presented. Through this, I intend to introduce the political and social contexts that Richard Wagner was working in and his cultural influences. In this way, I intend to find out what were the reasons for the creation of music that is still often more connected to the Nazi movement from the twentieth century to the time in which Wagner lived in. As it is mainly his later works which are claimed to have racist and anti-Semitic messages, I intend to explore the harmonic importance of Wagner's work and analyse his usage of the leitmotifs in the *Valkyrie*. In this way, I intend to present the height of the expressive capability of music and confirm it as the media of social conflict until the time of mass media.

## **2. METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS**

### **2.1 DEFINITIONS**

#### **2.1.1 MUSIC**

Music is the intentional composition of sound vibrations, according to the rules set by the musical system of the listeners, which causes an emotional response by them.

Sound in physics is the vibration of sound waves. For sound to be perceived as music it needs to be made and performed in the context of the musical system that is based on the ideas of the society (Merriam 2000). If tones are not produced in the code of the musical system, they are perceived as noise. The primary function of music is therefore that the composer or performer interprets their emotions through sound to which the listeners react with their personal emotional experience. However, in this work I will focus on the secondary, philosophical and socio-political interpretation, which is based on making the emotions felt through music to be connected with a certain ideology.

#### **2.1.2 OPERA**

Opera is the art form that unites dance, poetry, music and design.

Opera was created in the Renaissance as an attempt to create the ultimate work of art by uniting several forms of art. It was formed as drama in which the dialogues are sung and accompanied by instrumental music. Between acts it can have special intervals of ballet, recitative or spoken text. Its basic idea has been adopted in different ways in different surroundings. It is important to emphasize that I will talk about opera as a media before the creation of the mass media. Opera as a media was limited to the time and space of the performance; it had to be attended and was not available at a distance. However, I believe it can be called media as it had the greatest audiences of all events that were not royal or religious and with theaters where performances could be held several times a day for several thousand people each time.

#### **2.1.3 IDEOLOGY**

Ideology is a political doctrine that accepts certain theories, ideas and concepts based on philosophy or religion.

In Marxist terminology ideology is the entirety of ideas, concepts or terms that are reflected through different forms of social consciousness (politics, moral, science, art). The ideology is formed by socio-economic base (Verbin 1968).

#### 2.1.4 SOCIAL CONFLICT

Defiance and breaking of the rules set by the official social regime to indicate the demand for change in social relationships.

All societies have certain rules set by the leaders. These rules can be secular or religious and are designed to firm and protect the established social relationships. We speak of social conflict when these rules are consciously broken by one or a group of members of society in defiance of the established social order. I intend to look for elements of social conflict in the changes of music related with political change, as a change in music predicts a change in the social relations (Attali 1982).

## 2.2 METHOD

This thesis is aimed at proving that music as a media is capable of dissemination of philosophical or political ideas.

To achieve this I will first try to determine the meaning of the music in different societies through time, how music was understood and what was its primary function. For this I will have to compare mainly the results of other researchers and theorists. By understanding the historic development of the relationship between music and society and the expressive capabilities that they developed through time, I will be able to understand what messages are unconscious and which need a certain interpretation. To describe the development of the connection between music and society I will have to concentrate on the political and religious situation. It is namely these institutions that have had the control over musical expression throughout the most of our history by having the control of musical interpretation.

In the rest of the thesis I will use historic analysis, case analysis and the analysis of the content and leitmotifs. The historic analysis will be done by tracing the development of the genre of opera through time and how it adapted to national, social and political differences.

For this I will attempt to create a timeline of operatic authors and works that used new elements and approaches and have caused opera to reflect certain aspects development of the society or music. With this, I intend to present a historic cross-section of the development of national opera styles, which were intended for specific audiences and became very popular with the general public through which they boosted the expressive capability of the music. This way strengthening the possibility for the opera to disseminate the new socio-political ideas and expressions and influencing the public opinion. Only by looking at social and political situation, we can really assess the messages that opera was carrying. *A work of art, an artist, or a group of artists can only be understood, if we can create an image of the general spiritual state and the custom of their time. It is what Taine described as "moral temperature"* (Blaukopf 1993: 46). As I will be speaking of many operas the most important will have their stories shortly summoned at the bottom of the page on which they will be introduced, except for Valkyrie.

Special attention will be devoted to the life and work of Richard Wagner, who is regarded as the last great musical reformist before radio and television<sup>1</sup>. It needs to be emphasized that it is with the development of these forms of mass media that the musical perception has changed, Adorno called it new music, which caused that we perceive music in a different way as people did before. Wagner is also the composer, who has brought the explicatory capability of music to its limits. To get as close to the understanding the messages hiding in his music as possible we need to understand what his personal life was like where he got his inspiration and what were his political and philosophical perspectives.

The case analysis will then be done on the case of Valkyrie, one of operas, which are combined under the title The Ring of the Nibelung and are especially known for the use of the leitmotif technique. This analysis will be done through the listening of the music and seeing the performance in the theater. The most important and influential leitmotifs will be presented and described.

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<sup>1</sup> Opera remained a very important art form with these new technologies, but it has changed. Firstly by taking away the visual element and secondly, using it for the purposes of political propaganda of the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century. I also find it necessary to mention how the Fascist and Nazi regimes in Italy and Germany were both using ideology and music (Verdi and Wagner) of the second half of the nineteenth century as their foundation promoting them strongly through radio, cinema and opera. In communist Russia, they also focused on using the mass media for propaganda, but opera was strictly censored and was perceived as the culture of the bourgeoisie. However, in communist China the opera was adapted to the new regime and functioned as media of political propaganda in a society that was technologically far less developed. Opera also continued its tradition in Yugoslavia.

In the third part, the focus is on the symbolism in Wagner's grand work the Ring and Valkyrie that allowed the connection with the Nazi regime to be made. I shall look at the life of this great composer and try to determine his political stands and experiences which could be expressed through his work. I will do this by analysing the content of Valkyrie. I intend to examine the words, ideas and the music of the leitmotifs separately. I shall try to confirm my observations by watching the Valkyrie being performed live in theater and by listening to the recordings. I will then compare my observations with the critics. This will help me determine whether there are socio-political messages in Wagner's music and if they can still be understood today.

Hypothesis 1: Musical media has been monopolized by politics and religion to represent and explain the existing social relationships.

Hypothesis 2: With Romanticism the opera developed into the media capable of transferring ideology of social conflict without the use of words.

Hypothesis 3: Leitmotifs are used by Wagner to describe the internal conflict of the characters through which he expresses the faults of the socio-political reality.

H1: It is obvious how music can influence human behaviour. If we look at cinematic music, we can see how it acts as a guideline to emotions. This is a fact common to all composers. Music works as an emotional stimulant; this can be easily understood if we think of how different the emotional message is if for example the music is written in a minor or major key. Therefore, emotions could be provoked and controlled through music. However, as this characteristic of music could not be explained music had a connotation of magic and divine creating, a mixture of fear and respect amongst the general population. Described as potentially dangerous, music was controlled by the political and religious elite and its powers were presented only under its control. This served as proof of the power and superiority of the elite and firmed the social structure.

My opinion is that the music permitted by the elite to be performed by the rest of the population was the folk which had its principal role as the accompaniment of songs intended for special occasions or as accompaniment of the rhyming stories, keeping it as simple as possible. "Even as late as the thirteenth century musicians were sticking to notes derived from

the first few tones of the scale, which they arranged into basic tunes playing one note at a time. In any case much of it was popular music made by bands of barty buskers trashing out simple but joyous tunes to the rhythm of the merry drum” (Goodall 2000b: 0:13:23). These stories had the purpose of preserving the knowledge and experiences for the following generations. I believe the stories that have survived until the present still offer a unique insight into the way of how people’s simplicity helped perceive the world and the mysterious power of music.

H2: The time of Romanticism is the time of the great European revolutions and it is the time of the birth of the public opinion through people meeting in salons and pubs debating and reading newspapers. However, these revolutions stained by blood of thousands were made by the general masses, which were mobilized through a different kind of media, and I believe this was the opera.

H3: Wagner was not the first to use leitmotifs but he perfected their use. Wagner’s analysts claim that his early works are more representative of his political orientation as the later. However, with the later works, he perfected the usage of leitmotifs and it is mainly these works that were used by the Nazi propaganda. Therefore, my opinion is that leitmotifs permit the socio-political ideas to be interpreted.

### 3. MUSIC AND SOCIETY

The history of music is that of human development as a social being. The first music we encounter in our lives is the voice of our caretakers, whose sounds we try to replicate with our voice. The aim of this is to be able to communicate with the others. The history of humans tells us how a true breakthrough occurred when language started being used by our ancestors. A system of codes interpreted through sound. As soon as they were able to control the sounds, making them understandable for the others, they were able to express more than just basic emotions and feelings, like pain and excitement. “The song evolved into speech - verbal symbols for immediate needs” (Mann 1982: 13). Sound and music are two concepts, which go hand in hand. If we listen to an unfamiliar language, all we will hear is the sound. As we cannot decode it, it has no meaning for us and yet it sounds songlike (indicating to us the connection between song and language). If we would start learning this language, we would slowly start to differ sounds one from the other and eventually we would understand the system of the sounds and after distinguishing different sounds, we could start understanding words. These would then have to be connected with specific meanings and the noise would this way become an understandable message.

Complex vocal communication and music are regarded as human features, making us different from the animals. The capability of vocal expression and language present a huge step forward in communication; it is one of the few things that make us different even from other primates. Gorillas and chimpanzees can be thought to understand the symbols of the language of signs, enabling them to communicate but they cannot be taught to speak a language. They can produce noise through their larynx but do not have their vocal cord sufficiently developed.

The capability to make music represents a very high step in the evolution and can change our perception of it as an exclusively human feature. The latter can be seen in the case of the Neanderthal. These were always considered substantially more primitive than Homo sapiens. But then a 45 000 year old flute was discovered that was claimed to be made by the Neanderthal<sup>2</sup> when Humans had been making instruments between 40 000 and 30 000 years.

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<sup>2</sup> The bone flute was discovered in 1995 and was found in the layer dated as the end of the middle Palaeolithic. It was made from a cave bear's thighbone. Researchers Turk, Bastiani and Horusitzky have determined that it was hand made and not by accident.

A huge debate was started and the scientific world was divided to those who rejected this idea as preposterous and those supporting it. And so the Neanderthal became more interesting overnight and got the opportunity to become the first creature on earth capable of creating music and musical instruments. The debate is far from being resolved, but we can imagine that the image of a brutal savage could be changed into an image of a humanoid with a sense for music and could now be perhaps known as *Homo neanderthalensis musicus*. Making the term “To behave like a Neanderthal” mean something completely different. After all, if one is capable of producing music, one is capable of reason and emotion.

### 3.1 THE COMMUNICATIONAL ROLE OF MUSIC

In general there is a great debate raised on what function music had for the early humans. Wolfgang Suppan looks at the life of our ancestors from about 40 000 years as a life without any spare time. He therefore does not find it possible that an artistic activity could exist.

*Music in early time of the human history is not an independent “art” but...an inseparable part of the general social activity: work, cult. Its efforts are directed toward control and appropriation of foreign hardly known and therefore frightening nature and probably has the main function in organizing, balancing and strengthening physical and spiritual powers, with her goal to satisfy the life depending necessities of the society. On this primary level of culture, we still cannot speak of an aesthetic conscience, autonomous artistic creation and aesthetic pleasure (Suppan in Blaukopf 1993: 20).*

We must remember that humans were active in that time also in different types of art such as cave painting. In addition, there is much evidence of religious activity which points to the probability of music being used in rituals. It is since that time that musicians were connected with magic. “Music, in early times, was a form of magic, inducing trance like concentration in the listener. It soon became apparent that music had greater powers and could be used as active propaganda to inspire a whole tribe, perhaps to bravery in war, and not simply as a magical adjunct to sacred rites” (Mann 1982: 14).

There are two theories about the evolution of music. Darwin’s evolution theory puts music before language. Mann (1982: 14) agrees that it can be seen “in young children, song is suggested before speech”. Simmel (in Blaukopf 1993: 125) describes with what he calls the

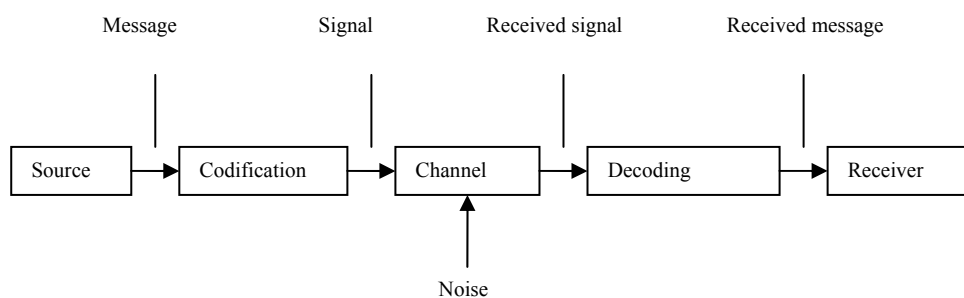


ethnological development of music, a somewhat different explication his scheme is: “language – vocal music – instrumental music”.

Music and language, regardless, which developed from the other, have been with us since the time that we evolved. It is therefore possible to understand how it is possible for music to affect people. We respond to music with emotions without words we can understand the feeling that a certain melody or even a chord gives out. It can make us sad, it can calm us down, it can stimulate our imagination and it can make us aggressive. However, what is important is that we all respond to the same music in the same way. This way music can function as a basic universal language and it can often express what could not be expressed with words. It is the moment when music and words first come together that we create an efficient media, and politics and art can be united.

Communication between humans can take place in different forms it can be direct or indirect; it can utilize just a certain sense or several at the same time. But the process of communication (Graph 3.1.1) always remains the same and includes a whole line of elements needed for information to be successfully sent and received. The message sent by the source needs to be encoded and then sent as a signal through the channel. It is anywhere during this part where noise can occur. Noise represents all of the interferences that can disturb the receiver from receiving the message. There is a whole variety of reasons why noise can occur. If the receiver is aware of the possibility of noise, he or she can take measures and can try to avoid it. When the signal is received it is decoded by the receiver into a message. If the message that was sent had been received correctly, the receiver gets the same information as intended by the source. If there has been an error in one of the segments of the process of communication or too much noise then the message will be wrongly received and decoded and the message received will differ from the message sent by the source.

Graph 3.1.1: Shannon and Weaver's model of communication (in Yus Ramos 1997: 79)



“The musical communication process is determined by three main elements – characteristics of the musical message, characteristics of the receiver and finally the structure of the communication channel (performance practice). From this alone comes out the intertwine of work analysis, study of the audience and the research of the performance practice” (Blaukopf 1993: 145). When art is being analysed it must be stressed that a certain cultural capital is needed for the code to be deciphered. It was therefore of great importance to unify the system through which music was created and understood. This system is based on the physical characteristics of composition of tones and based on this natural tonal scale my notes were eventually presented. By developing a fixed scale of notes, we would enable the creation of a framework for all music produced in a certain culture. Pythagoras was the first to establish the natural mathematical relationships between the notes of the scale, which became the foundation of western music.

*First came the principle of the octave, discovered by cutting a plucked string in half (and therefore expressed in the ratio 2:1). The interval of the Fifth (C-G on the piano and expressed as 3:2) gave the scale its “dominant” note; it is a sound that predominates in plainsong, and is much used in music for brass instruments.*

*A slightly smaller interval, 4:3 (C-F on the piano) was the Fourth – also deemed very important. Musicians know it as the subdominant. Three thousand years later, it is still common to harmonize almost any tune with the “three chord trick”, using just chords of the three most important notes laid down by Pythagoras: tonic (keynote); dominant and subdominant (Mann 1982: 15).*

These notes are all based on natural relationships and have been established by the Chinese in the same way. The perception of their elite about the importance of music was also the same. *Under T’ang dynasty (AD 618–907), music became increasingly sophisticated. Music for the Chinese was a tool to govern the hearts and minds of the people (Mann 1982: 17).* The only difference is that the Western music has been altered by the development of equal temperament while the Chinese musical system is still based on the natural ratios between sounds.

When music started being written it received a firm form and from then on we talk about musical compositions. This way a musical creation was no longer dependant only on memory. This makes a great difference between invention and improvisation as the practice of the

unnoted music and composition, which produces a work that can be repeated in the same way over and over. In societies without the knowledge of writing music would depend on invention and memory. It would be evolving and changing from one individual to the other and it could get lost. For easier memory, music would have had to be organized. “The organization of sung music into scales of five or seven notes (or more) must have taken centuries to evolve. The five note *pentatonic* scale current developed in the prehistory of music, and has remained predominant to this day among many Third World peoples” (Galway 1982: 15). The first attempts to document music were made around year 1000 and were designed as the interpretation of the string of the monochord. “Ethnomusicology names the change from unwritten tradition to notation as lifting of a spell in Weberian sense” (Blum and Blaukopf 1993: 326). Still the function of the old written music has changed since then. Today we use a prescriptive notation, which determines how something should sound and the older, descriptive records, and preserves how something sounded<sup>3</sup>. “Before the writer was a chronicler not a composer” (Blaukopf 1993: 214).

Kurt Sachs (in Blaukopf 1993: 226) proposed the following scheme for describing relationships in activity and dependence or independence of music in time and space:

1. *Unnoted music. The composer and performer is the same person. Music without this person cannot be disseminated and is permanently existent only in the form of tradition.*
2. *Notated music. The separation of the composer and the performer, poor ability of dissemination and durable existence.*
3. *Printed music. Greater possibilities of dissemination and existence*
4. *Technically written music (phonography). Complete separation or reproduction from real performance. Unlimited reproduction. The greatest possibilities of dissemination and permanent existence.*

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<sup>3</sup> Blaukopf (1993:138) explains that the notation is primarily not named as creation for the future, but still- even if only in the linguistic meaning- as a chronicle of something past. The function of music remains a message to be preserved for the future generations.

## 3.2 STORIES, MUSIC AND MAGIC

The magical context of music comes from the fact that it makes people feel something in an inexplicable way. The only explication could be that it is magic, and so there is a common motive of music being connected with supernatural. The old rituals of the shamans would combine music, dance and a chant to achieve a state of trance. At the same time, the magical power of sound could be demonstrated by making people feel happy or sad. The musician would become traditionally perceived as a magician. Attali (1983) places the music and the musician in a special place of the society. After all, music influences our bodies to respond unconsciously in a certain way<sup>4</sup>.

*The attempt of explication of the “magic” effects of music in different cultures is condemned to failure, if it considers only the ideal elements (that are certainly important) and does not consider the influence of music to the vegetative nervous systems. The influence of acoustic impulse on the vegetative nervous system, taken away from human conscious control, is almost the key to understanding suggestive effects. Ascertainable difference of the frequency of the pulse as a consequence from a crescendo to decrescendo proceeding drumming, measurable-technical ascertainable adaptation of the respiratory frequency to a changing tempo of music, the unconscious motoric action of the listener, caused by music, -all this points toward the biologic foundations of effects triggered by music (Blaukopf 1993: 206).*

“In this different state they would see the future and talk to ghosts and animal spirits” (Clotes and Lewis-Williams 2003: 9). The Egyptians claimed that music was created by Tot or Oziris, the Indians Brahma and the Jews Jubal. The Greeks say that music was invented by Appolon, Cadmus, Orpheus and Amfion (Look: Chevalier-Gheerbrant 1995: 149). Ulysses had to fight the singing of the sirens by filling his sailor’s ears with wax and he who wanted to hear the music was tied to the mast. Music represents to him the deadly lout to the trap. The story of Orpheus, a musician who could persuade Hades, God of the underworld, to release Eurydice to the world of the living, by playing music so beautiful no one could resist his pleas.

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<sup>4</sup> In medicine this “magical power” is used in music therapy when dealing with damage to parts of the brain. The attempts to use music in medicinal therapy are based on the fact that a patient can process musical information even when there is damage to the language center of his or her brain, and especially that music directly influences the vegetative nervous system affecting the functions of the heart, respiratory frequency, blood pressure and process of internal secretion (Blaukopf 1993). Due to these characteristics, it is also advised to talk to people in coma.

Eurydice is released by Hades but only under the condition that all the way back Orpheus shall not turn around to see her. However, right before the exit he cannot resist and turns around, losing her forever. This story is also one of the most popular motives of the first operas, as we will see later on.

Traditional Celtic music knows three ways of how to play an instrument. Happy, sad and dreamy, this is “the music of gods that put people to sleep with magic, it is the music of the nations of the Sid<sup>5</sup> and their messengers, who come in the shape of people or swans. Swans, into which the children of Lir were changed to, sing the divine music, which can enchant every Irishman that hears it” (Chevalier-Gheerbrant 1995: 149, 150).

If at first music dance and singing are all very closely related, this unity is eventually broken off and by the medieval times dancing is no longer a part of the ritual. Blaukopf (1993: 140) sees the beginning of this process in the hostile attitude of the medieval monks toward the movement of the body. If dance has been subdued in the Western cultures, the connection between music and magic can still be seen in some of the traditional folk stories from Central Europe, which have the same message although they come from different countries. Such are the French popular story of *the three gifts*<sup>6</sup> (Darnton 2005) and its German version called *the Jew in the thorn bushes*<sup>7</sup> (Darnton 2005). In both it is the good person who is awarded with magical tools among which there is a magical instrument that in the end resolves the story. “From thirty nine versions of this story recorded in France, twenty mention dancing in thorn bushes. In thirteen the villain is a priest, only once, in a story from Lorene, it is a Jew” (Darnton 2005: 67). The motif of the good armed with the power of music through magic can

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<sup>5</sup> “Sid in old Irish means peace, retirement and also a word beyond time, space and human inconstancy. The broader meaning of Sid also marks gods or godly creators that for some reason come to this world” (Chevalier-Gheerbrant 1995: 542).

<sup>6</sup> In this story we are introduced to a young boy whose stepmother has been neglecting and mistreating him. One day he gives his lunch to an old woman who reveals herself to be a good fairy. As reward, she fulfills him three wishes. Among these, he also gets a magical flute that can make everyone dance. At the end he is put to trial for performing magic, but with the use of the magical flute he makes everyone in court dance until they beg for mercy and promise to leave him in peace if he stops playing

<sup>7</sup> The story of the Jew in the bushes is about a poorly paid servant who gives his few coins to a midget and in return he receives a gun that can shoot everything, a flute that makes everyone dance and the ability that anything he asks for cannot be denied. He meets a Jew listening to a bird singing in the tree. Shooting the bird, he tells the Jew to bring the bird from the bush, but starts to play the flute and the Jew is almost killed, saved only by giving the servant a pouch of gold. The Jew accuses the servant of attack and robbery. He is put to trial and when he is about to be hanged, the servant asks as the last wish to play his flute one more time. Soon everyone starts to dance including the Jew who admits he has falsely accused the good servant. The judge frees the servant and hangs the Jew. This is the version written by Grimm.

also be seen in Mozart's Magic Flute where the Tamino receives a magic flute, and Papageno magic bells to go and save the captured Pamina.

Stories like these have been passed from generation to generation and have changed in accordance with the situation at the time. They contain ideas of morals and behaviour as perceived at the time and place of their creation. When Darnton compares German and French stories, he notices how/if anti-Semitic ideas are often found in German versions, these are replaced with anti-clerical ideas in the French ones.

Popular stories are closely connected with music and they usually rhyme. This is an obvious case of Mother Goose, a collection of folk stories and nursery rhymes intended for children. They all have a message of moral or an educational message and most of them carry composed rhymes. This way the messages are easier to remember and transmit. Such messages would pass through generations without losing their meaning without the need of being written for them to serve as a mean of communication.

Therefore, even if the physically visible effect of musical magic (dance) was removed the capability of transcending a message and making it more easily memorable is that the magical element of music that was preserved and developed in the Western culture and it is precisely this power that the politics was interested in.

### 3.3 MONOPOLY OVER MUSIC

*In great periods, the nations always chosen have a custom to claim that only they and no one else has music in lease (Adorno 1986: 202).*

According to Simmel (*in Blaukopf 1993: 122*) *we can only own visible objects as the audible vanishes in the moment of its presence and does not permit any ownership. It is a strange exception that the great families the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century would attempt to own musical works that were intended only for them and were not permitted to be published. To own musical works that were inaccessible to others was a sign of the nobility of the house.*

The latter is not the only example of how music was treated as something that could be owned. Throughout the human history, not all music was generally accessible. It would be divided in sacred and secular music. The state or church would be able to prescribe and control what kind

of music was suited for a certain segment of the society. It would declare a certain kind of music as the only official music of the kingdom and forbid all other. “The emperor approved the musical forms that firm the social order and forbade those which could upset the nation” (Attali 1983: 35)

Not understanding physical phenomena like the Pythagorean comma (later also referred to as the “Diavolo en musica”), which describes the occurrence of dissonance of the thirteenth tone and how to solve it caused that from the Greek all through to the medieval Europe certain sounds were not used. “The point of music was to be more than just a pleasing sound. It was supposed to mirror the perfection of God’s creation, and so it could not be tempered with lightly. To medieval ears, the note combinations that were derived from impure ratios felt unnatural and unholy so the Church all but prohibited their use. To break the rules by experimenting with chords including thirds and sixths was tantamount to heresy” (Goodall 2000b: 0:16:28).

In the ancient times, music was regarded as one of seven free arts, next to grammar, dialectics, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic and astronomy. This means that only free people would be allowed to pursue them. Music kept this connotation all through the middle ages when Troubadours (Minnesänger in Germany) began to emerge. “The best known ‘minnesinger’ was Walther von der Vogelweide (c. 1170-1230), who is portrayed in Wagner’s romantic opera *Tannhäuser* (1845), a story of minnesingers and their musical contests” (Mann 1982: 27).

This musical elitism reserved for the church and nobility only added to the perception of music as something mysterious and beyond the comprehension of the ordinary person. “A secular musician was either a nobleman, like the Duke of Aquitaine or King Richard I of England, or else an itinerant jongleur, clever but untutored or simply a workman singing as he toiled, perhaps inventing songs as they came to him” (Mann 1982: 28). The difference between secular musicians was in their social status and education but it was only “The church that provided the only developing and lucrative career for an ambitious musician” (Mann 1982: 32). The control over art and especially music would have the same importance as the monopoly of aggression in a state system. “Listening, censorship, recording, control - these are the weapons of authority” (Attali 1983: 28). Music was performed only for the in spaces selected for that purpose. Gregorio Allegri’s *Miserere* was only permitted to be

performed within the Sistine chapel and was prohibited to be transcribed. In 1770 the young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart heard it and after hearing it copied it by memory. His father wrote in a letter that he did not want to make this public *not to be scolded by the church* (Blaukopf 1993: 124).

The political elite also held a very tight grip over the musicians that worked for them. In 1761 Joseph Haydn was appointed as the deputy conductor to the newly established orchestra of Prince Paul Anton Esterhazy (1710-1762) in Eisenstadt. He signed a document that stated:

*On the almighty order of His high princely highness the vice-conductor is obliged to compose such music as demanded by the same Highness. He will not report of the new compositions to anyone and even less so allow them to be copied, but to save them only and solely for His Highness, and will not, especially without knowledge and merciful consent, create anything for anyone else* (quotation from Geiringer in Blaukopf 1993: 123).

Musicians often had problems with their employers. They would often practically belong to them and would be often expected to do works such as teaching in schools and taking care of the instruments. "The Grand Duke of Weimar had Bach imprisoned before letting him take a post elsewhere" (Mann 1982: 94).

Jaap Kunst (Kunst in Blaukopf 1993: 124) explains there are five connections established by the ethnomusicology in case of limiting a musical work:

1. Compositions connected to specific persons
2. Compositions reserved for certain festivities or occasions
3. Forms of composition that can only be performed by persons of female or male sex
4. Compositions where performance is reserved for a specific person
5. Compositions where performance is reserved for a specific group (tribe)

Jaap Kunst designates this social connection between music and certain people or groups of people or opportunities as "sociological ties in music". "This fits the facts of a case as the above are individual norms, which entered into the collective conscience and in Durkheim's sense represent the »fait social«"<sup>8</sup> (Blaukopf 1993: 25).

Throughout history, we can follow a certain extent of control over music by those who were in power. The connection between the social status and the availability of music also reflected

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<sup>8</sup> Fait social literally translated as social fact is a term for "more or less specific kind of activity, which is capable of pressure toward an individual" (Durkheim v Blaukopf 1993: 65).



the social structure. Several elements of musical work were controlled, such as the words what were put to music and the meanings they could carry, disharmonies were mainly prohibited and no excessive experimentation was done with the music itself. All this control started becoming more difficult as with time the development of instruments and theoretical knowledge increased and words were no longer a part of every musical work. Music began to work as abstraction to express emotions and ideas, however, this does not mean that music was not even more controlled.

There are clear cases of musical monopoly and drastic musical control from the twentieth century. This was mainly the product of ideological control and would be especially obvious in the totalitarian regimes. Richard Wagner's Parsifal was reserved to be performed only in Bayreuth Festspielhaus and the elitist meaning of the theater itself was continually promoted by the Nazi regime. "After the final victory the Führer wanted to have the old Festspielhaus roofed over and used only for very special occasions by very special people. Next to the old Festspielhaus he wanted to have another, built exactly like the old one to be used for performances (Wagner 2000: 31). The twentieth century also brought with it the development of the quality and availability of recorded music and the radio, which has enabled music to be more and more available to a broader public and at the same time what was available to the listener could be controlled.

### 3.4 MUSIC BECOMES ABSTRACT

The development of music and musical instruments goes along with technological development. How Richard Wagner imagined first musical instruments to be created can be seen in his opera Siegfried where the hero hears the singing of a bird, he cuts a pipe and tries to answer the bird. Musical instruments give musicians a specific freedom for their expression and a specific sound to their works. "Every composition needs certain instruments for its existence which are adequate for its realization and vice versa: the characteristics and the number of available instruments indisputably influences the way of composition" (Combarieu v Blaukopf 1993: 132).

By distinguishing different instruments we can say when the work was written and for what kind of event was it made. The technical progress has influence on psychological and social perception which would be manifested in music through new musical instruments.

*Weber provides the following examples of technical means of music, which have marked its history:*

- *Changed musical spirit as condition for the “development of the terce and its harmonic meaning” (Weber, GAWL<sup>9</sup>: 522)*
- *The development of rational notation, “without which we cannot even imagine a modern composition” (Weber, GAWL: 522).*
- *This progress enabled by the notation technique would not be possible without monasticism, which “not knowing the far-reaching of its doing, has rationalized the popular polyphony by taking care of its needs” (Weber, GAWL: 522) .*
- *From certain life forms of the Renaissance society came the taking over and rationalization of the dance tact, this “father of musical form that flows into sonata” (Weber, GAWL: 522).*
- *And finally the construction of the piano, “one of the most important technical carriers of modern musical development” (Weber, GAWL: 522). (Blaukopf 1993: 165)*

There are two other technical reasons that changed the perception of music: the book press and the fact that more and more people decided to study music. Consequently, music became more available and easier to understand and perform. Alongside the spread of musical knowledge another major change in musical history came with the creation of the sonata and the fugue. It is with these two musical forms that instruments start playing the lead role. The thesis focuses on the sonata.

The sonata means an exclusively instrumental musical work, it is completely abstract. In Italian the word sonata is the past participle of the word *sonare*, which means ‘to ring’. The word therefore means that something has rung out. There are examples of music that was performed without the accompaniment of lyrics, but these were mainly connected with ancient rituals. For entertainment purposes music would be played for nobility while travelling or during meals to provide a more relaxed ambient. However, sonata demanded a higher level of attention. They were written for religious and private use and enabled new, more complex dance routines to come into fashion. Sonata is the essential musical form of the classical age and the essence of the orchestral symphony.

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<sup>9</sup> GAWL = Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre. Tübingen, 1973 (Blaukopf 1993:10)

*There are four movements, the first being the most extended, with possibly a slow introduction. If it is in a major key, the music will soon modulate to the dominant for a contrasting after the first theme, usually more feminine, second theme. There will be a substantial development section discussing these and any other ideas before a return to the tonic for a restatement of the opening themes and a concluding coda* (Mann 1982: 141).

There is a difference between sonata *da chiesa* and sonata *da camera*. The first is intended to be performed in church and therefore has a strong religious element. The second was written to be performed for entertainment in the privacy of the nobility. These are not to be understood as necessarily small private events. Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) who is regarded as the composer, who shaped the sonata would make his compositions for parties of several hundred. Through time, the difference between the two got more and more blurred. “The convergence of the church and the chamber style represents a social phenomenon, which has compository consequences, which are not visible only in sonata” (Blaukopf 1993: 139). However, the sonata that has been the most marked by this. Afterall, the sonata was already fully developed by the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century achieving its peak with Bach who was producing mainly church music, Beethoven wrote most of his sonatas as chamber music.

### 3.5 THE FIRST REFORMER

Some of the greatest social conflicts were started because of religion. One of the most influential for the history of Europe occurred when Martin Luther nailed his list of objections on the door of the church in Wittenberg in 1517 consequently starting a new religious current in Europe that caused the Old Continent to be divided by war and religion. This was also reflected in music. The Catholic Church kept its Baroque music intended for performances in rich and decorated buildings. The protestant lands denied the physical manifestation of the wealth. Music was therefore also adapted to this situation. Lutheran composers like Schütz, Schein and Scheidt are those who represent this different kind of music. Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) studied music in Venice and is the author of the first German opera *Dafne*. This is his only known opera and according to Mann (1982: 82) “perhaps he realized that his own dramatic imagination would be more beneficially applied to Luther’s Bible so he spent the rest of his long, industrious life doing for church music what Monteverdi did for opera”. Herman Schein (1586-1630) is famous for his songs accompanied with instruments that function as a partner to the vocal. He was the cantor at the St. Thomas in Leipzig later

succeeded by J.S. Bach. Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654) brought the Venetian idea of double choir with separated orchestras firmly into the German Lutheran Church.

Each of these three great composers represents a particular new element in the music that had the influence on one of the most important composers in the history of music, Johan Sebastian Bach (1685-1759). He was a very religious man who “devoted most of his working life to the Lutheran Church as organist, choirmaster, teacher and composer of sacred music” (Mann 1982: 75). If we look at his life with all of the difficulties he experienced, from the death of his first wife to the death of his children, the conflicts at work and the strong religiosity we realise all this reflected in his music. “Basic sound and the sense for ideal ratios, as well as musical material in its content, all this has origin in Sebastian’s strong religious impulse as it had in all of his life” (Mayenell<sup>10</sup> 1993: 166).

The time of Bach’s life is the time after the Thirty Years’ War (ended in 1648); the reality of the religious divide of Europe is still present. He was creating his music when the church still officially had anti-innovation policies. The influence of Bach on music is greater than just the importance of his compositions. It was he who developed the modern technique of playing keyboard instruments and has brought the fugue to its height. He was the one to ultimately solve the problem of equal temperament by writing *Well-tempered Clavier*, “Bach proposed that all intervals on the keyboard should be made equal (and consequently fractionally out of tune) to facilitate moving into and out of remote keys, avoiding ugly “out of tune” gaps. Equal temperament is the system that remains in use on all our keyboard instruments today” (Mann 1982: 93). However, Bach was not adequately credited during his lifetime, as he was not internationally known and his works were often found to be too complex for the society he lived in.

Johan Sebastian Bach never wrote an opera himself, but his sons continued his musical legacy. His youngest Johann Christian (1735-1782) had the most success. He wrote several successful operas. His productions were performed in Italy, London and Paris. “Jochan Christoph (1732-1795) also wrote some successful operas; two texts by Herder and others” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 27). But most of all J.S. Bach has indirectly influenced opera when his works were discovered by Baron von Swieten who showed it to Mozart and Hayden,

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<sup>10</sup> Written in the memoirs of Anna Magdalena Bach, Bach’s second wife.

“thereby inspiring both to inject Bach’s sublime mastery of counterpoint into their late Viennese classical music” (Mann 1982: 98). Beethoven studied Bach when he was young. In Germany the cult of J. S. Bach was followed by composers such as Schumann, Brahms and Stravinsky. In the beginning of the twentieth century the youth movement (Jugendbewegung)<sup>11</sup> started appearing in Germany, they put Bach as the musical ideal and denied all later music. This is also an example of the Adorno’s (1986: 24) resentmental listener.

Music has had a very important role for the development of the Homo sapiens; it makes us different from other humanoids. The importance of this perception has been presented through the case of the dispute over the world’s oldest musical instrument. Music namely still has the same effect on us, if we want it to or not, as it had on our ancestors. Our bodies and minds still respond to its “magical” power and when we talk about power politics are always close by. As seen, music was controlled and manipulated for political and religious goals keeping within limits set by ideology. Attali (1983: 27) claims that Bach (or Mozart) reflects the dream of the bourgeoisie better and before all political theories of the nineteenth century. And so it was J.S.Bach who brought music to the point where its own expressive power needed no interpretation of words, even when explaining more complex human emotions.

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<sup>11</sup> During the First World War and after it this movement became nationalistic.

## 4. OPERA

*Of all music's forms opera is the one that generates the most excitement, rage and passion. Unlike the symphony, the concerto or sonata did not emerge gradually it burst onto the scene. But what makes opera unique within music and creates such a big bang is the form in which music interfaces with the real world, love, death and politics. The history of opera is stained with the blood of revolutions (Goodall 2000a : 0:0:3).*

To understand the power of the opera we must understand its history, how it developed into such influential media and how it was able to simultaneously entertain the political elite and the general public. Only in this way can we understand the political career of opera, which enabled it to represent the political regimes and political ideas. Its popularity corresponds with the “widespread disenchantment with traditional “philosophical” approaches to public opinion, which dominated the period between the seventeenth and the early twentieth century” (Splichal 1999: ix). The development of perception of the public opinion has influenced the perception of the importance of opera. It was for the opera performances that great masses gathered and in the time before the mass availability of printed news and general literacy opera was the media of the masses. Opera entered the domain previously mainly reserved by the church now being able to speak to grand audiences, presenting an alternative in the public space.

*If observed from the point of view of interconnectivity between music and politics we can claim that the freedom of speech in the political area is equivalent to the freedom of speech in music. There is of course a difference in perception and understanding. Sound is the basic mean of communication in both cases. It is therefore as much a tool of political as the political is a tool of sound (Jagodič 2006: 13).*

According to Habermas, the most significant difference between religion and public opinion was established with the economic and political emancipation of the Bourgeoisie, which at the end of the seventeenth century found its expression in the first ‘institutions of the public’ (Splichal 1999: 123). Still, “the salons and pubs” were places, where the public opinions were formed by discussion of those who could enter, depending on their social status, representing an important but small part of population. “In general, opinion of the public can be defined as

an opinion of the educated in contrast to a “large mass of people” (Tönnies in Splichal 1999: 124). However, it was in the opera theater where opinions collided on a bigger scale, often the subtler hints and comparisons were understood only by the educated which changed with the growth of the general education. The latter also caused the meanings of the operas to become more developed and insinuate more complex topics. From that we may conclude that it is at the opera that the first “large mass opinions” were formed.

Opera was the first form of art that could be observed by all classes. If a certain opera did not satisfy the demands of a particular public it was taken to a different theater where it could have great success (Mozart and Wagner both experienced this phenomenon themselves). In this way opera broke a certain part of the social hierarchies. Certainly the class hierarchy remained and could be determined by the specific theater, position of the seat, clothing, etc. However, in general I would say that opera became the popular entertainment, its popularity is what gave it the power to play its role in the political history of Europe.

#### 4.1 THE BEGINNING OF OPERA

The pursuit of the Renaissance was to learn from the ideas of the old Greek and Roman cultures and reapplying them to the situation of the day. There was knowledge that the Greek used theaters in which plays would be performed in verses which were sung, accompanied by an orchestra of flutes and lyres. In attempting to reproduce the Greek performances, the idea of creating the ultimate work of art was born. So the musicians of the Renaissance were now trying to unite music, poetry, dance and design in a single performance. This was also one of the topics of the Camerata, a companionship of artists and noblemen of Florence, sponsored by Giovanni de Bardi and Jacopo Corsi, discussing everything from astrology, literature, philosophy and also music. Amongst them was also Vincenzo Galelei (father of astronomer Galileo) who argued for the ideal of the Greek drama. *He decried both polyphonic music and florid solo song, recommending an accompanied recitative in which the words and their audible expression took precedence, supported by instrumental accompaniment* (Mann 1982: 69). His theories were implemented into the various productions of the Camerata. It is not precisely determined when the first opera was performed but it is estimated that the first opera was *Daphne*. It had “prologue and 6 scenes by Jacopo Peri and text by Ottavio Rinuccini produced in Jacopo Corsi’s house, probably at the Carnival of 1597” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 118). On 6th October 1600 Maria de Medici of Florence was married to Henry IV of

France and for that occasion Peri and Rinuccini composed the oldest preserved opera: *Euridice*. “There are recitatives to move the story forward, // there are tuneful solo songs, choruses and instrumental linking bits. The singing voice was usually accompanied by a bass instrument playing the bottom musical line that dictates the harmony with lutes and keyboard instruments filling in the necessary chords” (Mann 1982: 69).

It was not a great success, but it made a great impression on two guests of the wedding, Vincenzo Gonzaga and his secretary Alessandro Striggio, who represented the Gonzaga family from Mantua. After returning home an order for a similar composition was made to their court composer Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643). In 1607 followed the premiere of *La favola d’Orfeo*, telling the same story as Peri’s *Euridice*. The performance was an immediate hit. “Montverdi’s great achievement was to find a way of moving text along with high speed through the style known as recitative” (Goodall 2000a: 0:12:54). If Monteverdi’s first premiere was seen by the crowd of some thirty people, his second work *Arianna* made for the celebration of the ducal marriage in 1608 was performed in front of thousands. In 1613 Monteverdi was appointed director of music at St. Mark’s in Venice where he wrote several other operas, however, next to *Orfeo* only two remain preserved.

In 1637 the first opera theater opened its doors in Venice. “ With this, a public that assisted to an art event but did not participate in it was formed and with that came the birth of what Bessler- deriving it from the musical analysis- called active listening. The listener is now the one, who “puts together the composed and fitting musical elements, created by the composer, into relationships by listening”. The decomposing, connected listening is a characteristic of the times after 1600” (Bessler in Blaukopf 1993: 184). The opera was soon being performed in Vienna quickly becoming popular. By the end of Monteverdi’s life there were nineteen opera houses<sup>12</sup> working in Venice.

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<sup>12</sup> Along with the opera another phenomenon occurred, the leading roles were given to castrati singers. These were men who were castrated to keep beauty of their childlike voice, the need for high voices came from the ban for women to sing on stage. The castrati became the superstars of the opera until the half of the nineteenth century and the last, Moreschi, died in 1922.



## 4.2 NATIONAL ADAPTATIONS OF THE OPERA

### 4.2.1 OPERA SERIA AND OPERA BUFFA

The next step in the development of opera was taken by two librettists Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782) and Apostoli Zeno (1668-1750) who decided to free the opera of comedy, ballet, magic and other things they found inappropriate for their serious opera or as they called it - Opera seria. The new kind of opera did not deal with mythology but with history, especially kings and emperors and their great deeds. It soon became the “main operatic form in the second half of the 18th century” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 362). Opera seria was abandoned by the end of the nineteenth century as an art form for the aristocracy, who was now being more and more criticized and challenged. However, a part of it survived; it was the comical scene at the end of the acts of the opera seria, which became known as opera buffa (Italian for Comic opera). Opera buffa used everyday characters in everyday comic situations and started gaining its importance already in works of famous composers of opera seria as Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725). Achieving its first real breakthrough through the genius of Giovanni Batista Pergolesi (1710-1736), “composer, who is justly described as one of the first determined announcers of Rousseau’s principle of naturalness and immediateness of emotion in music” (Sivec 1976: 62). In 1733 he presented *The Maid mistress* (*La Serva Padrona*) as an intermezzo to his opera seria *The supreme prisoner* (*Il prigionero superbo*), but it was so well accepted at the premiere that the next night it was performed as an independent performance. Eventually opera buffa became more independent and at the same time it was grew closer to opera seria, creating a mixture of everyday motives in a provocative way intended for the general public. When opera buffa is introduced to the public across Europe, including Russia its idea is immediately taken but in France its form is changed to appeal to the demands of the local audience. This characteristic of adaptability of opera is what made it survive for centuries to come.

### 4.2.2 OPERA COMIQUE

In France opera first became popular among the aristocracy with the creation of *comédie-ballet* invented by Jean Baptiste Lully<sup>13</sup> (1632-1687) who worked for the French court and often collaborated with Moliere. More accessible to the general public, the *opéra comique* was started around the sixties. It started as a simple opera created to be performed at fairs. When Pergolesis *La Serva Padrona* was performed it started great debates between men such

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<sup>13</sup> Also known as the father of the French opera.

as Diderot, d’Alibert, Grimm and Rousseau. “These were striving toward a new art of buffonists, and ruthlessly attacked the French Baroque opera” (Sivec 1976: 66), opposing the standpoint of the King and nobility.

*Contrary to the Italians the French have the explicit socially critical sting and therefore the opéra comique is a faithful reflection of the political and cultural life of the time. When the nobility performs in it, it is presented as corrupted and violent or as strongly idealized, in an obvious contrast to reality. The clergy and other educated classes naturally were not spared* (Sivec 1976: 67).

Inspired by the ideas of the “opéra comique”, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) wrote *The Village Soothsayer* (Le Dévin du village)<sup>14</sup>, an opera about the working class that Mozart made a parody on in *Bastien & Bastienne*<sup>15</sup>. Opéra comique became artistically perfected with Egidio Romualdo Duni (1701-1775) an Italian who moved to France after achieving great success with one of his compositions in Paris. Following his influence were François André Philidor (1726-1795) and Pierre Alexandre Monsigny (1729-1817) who in his works started to go beyond the frame of opera comique and indicated the birth of “tragédie lyrique”, a term later developed by Quinault and Lully. It is a type of opera “which would make use of tragic mythological or epic subjects with great attention to clarity of declamation and naturalness of action” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 504).

#### 4.2.3 THE BALLAD OPERA

It was Georg Friedrich Händel (1685-1759) who, after success in United Kingdom, changed his name to George Frideric Handel; a contemporary of J.S. Bach, who really brought opera to England. After traveling to study in Italy he traveled to Hanover and from there he almost immediately went on to England. There he had great success that continued after the death of his patroness Queen Anne, by working for King George I of England who was already his patron in Hanover. In England he produced thirty-six works and by breaking away from the school of his mentor Scarlatti developed his own kind of opera seria style that was a mixture of Italian Opera seria and German ingenuity. He was accepted by the English. However, the musical taste of the English for imported music of the foreign composer eventually changed,

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<sup>14</sup> “Colette learns that her beloved Colin has been unfaithful to her and seeks the aid of a Soothsayer who advises her to display utter indifference to Colin’s advances. At the same time the Soothsayer tells Colin that Colette has fallen in love with someone else. The trick works and the lovers are reunited” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 132).

this is marked by the performance of *The Beggars Opera*<sup>16</sup> written by John Gay (1685-1732). It attacked the imported culture (including Handel's) and the general political situation. This is also the most famous example of the ballad opera, the English version of the French "opéra comique". "After the first flood of ballad operas in 1728-1735 which rapidly became so popular that it threatened the Italian opera which they lampooned, the genre waned to be revived in a somewhat modified manner with (generally) original tunes: a famous example is Arne's *Love in a Village*" (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 29). As Handel witnessed the lack of interest for his operas he started to develop religious concert performances known as oratorios. These were like his operas intended for his royal employers and the rest of the higher class audience.

#### 4.2.4 SINGSPIEL

It was around 1730 that the opera ceases to exist in Germany (Sivec 1976) instead the form of song-play called singspiel appears almost simultaneously with the appearance of the opéra comique. "It is a form of opera in which musical numbers are separated by dialogue" (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 463). In 1743 the German version of ballad opera *The Devil to pay* is performed in Berlin. It marks the beginning of the English influence that continues with the *Dreigroschenoper*, the German version of Gay's *The Beggar's opera*. Very quickly the singspiel started to develop and become strongly influenced by opéra comique although it never became as socially critical. The singspiel was supported by intellectuals as the new art form, including Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1794-1832) who also wrote several texts. The true representative of the singspiel has to be Johann Adam Hiller (1728-1804) who was strongly influenced by the opéra comique and opera buffa but managed to Germanize the foreign elements.

The singspiel also presents a very strong German cultural influence on Vienna and its music, where it becomes popular very quickly. After all the growth this art form was connected with "growing German nationalistic tendencies and also supported by the emperor Joseph II., who formed a special institution within of the Burgtheater called Nationalsingspiel" (Sivec 1976: 76). This was eventually overcome by the pressure of the Italian opera and so the singspiel moved into the suburban theaters. This only indicates how musical entertainment of the court

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<sup>16</sup> Macheath is the leader of a group of highwaymen and imprisoned at the Newgate prison after betrayal. Lucy and Polly try to defend Macheath and even threaten to be hung with him. But all is happily resolved by the Beggar who introduced the opera at the beginning.

that was the responsibility of the Italian musicians and composers was different of that of the general public.

By that time the Baroque style had changed to Rococo with Maria Teresa and even more with her son Joseph II, the rulers of the Holy Roman Empire, the biggest European country was in reforms. Christoph Willibald Glück (1714-1787) was the contemporary of Rousseau, Philidor and Monsigny and it is he that has reformed the opera in the eighteenth century like Monteverdi and Wagner did a century before and after. He travelled to Italy and England eventually returning to Vienna. With the alliance between Austria and France the cultural interchange flourished and Glück was occupied by first just adopting and translating the French operas and later start writing his own. He began subduing the musical elements to the drama, making the music and words sound closer, creating “the simplicity and naturalness, essential characteristic of his reforming operas” (Sivec 1976: 81). His reformed version of *Orfeo* along with *Alcesta* and *Paride et Elena* were too reforming for the audience and did not have great success in Vienna. It was with this we can see manifestation of Glück’s view “that opera should be not merely an elegant concert in costume but a form of music drama” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 6).

Just like with political reforms people had mixed feelings about them, and even if the public of Vienna was considered musically very well educated, they were not yet prepared for Glück’s musical vision. “It is the same gradation and purification of the subject as later seen with Wagner. *Orfeo* is the opposite of the one-act play *Innocenza giustificata* in the same ratio as *Lohengrin* is opposite to *Rienzi*” (Sivec 1976: 82). However, if in Vienna his works were negatively accepted, the situation in Paris was different. Due to better critics Glück moved to Paris. He came to Paris in 1771 where he started to reform the tragedie lyrique after reforming opera buffa. Three years later he was praised once again for his new work *Iphigenie en Aulide*<sup>17</sup> (1774) “overture, build in the form of the French overture, it is Glück’s most magnificent instrumental composition (Sivec 1976: 86). This work, amongst others would have a great influence on Richard Wagner who came in contact with his reforms when visiting Paris for the first time. In 1778 the Paris art scene is divided between those who

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<sup>17</sup> *Iphigenie en Aulide* and *Iphigenie en Tauride* are both based on works of Euripides. Iphigenie was the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Agamemnon promised his daughter to the gods for safe voyage of the Greek fleet from Aulis to Troy, but she is taken by Artemis to Tauris where she serves as priestess only to be found by her brother Orestes and taken back home.

supported Glück and those who preferred the works of the Niccolo Piccini (1728-1800), who together with Paisiello, Cimarosa and Guiliermi represents the last generation of the Neapolitan school” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 385), and whose works are more traditional. The conflict was not started by the authors but by their supporters and was solved when it was proposed that they both write an opera with the theme of *Iphigenie en Tauride*.

This proved to be Glück’s most reformatory work when premiered in 1779. Unfortunately, Glück’s last opera *Echo et Narcisse* did not prove to be a success and after which the aged composer returned back to Vienna where he was employed by the emperor. At the time he had practically no influence on the opera composers outside Paris, but luckily they all went there.

#### 4.3 CONSCIENCE OF THE ELITE - WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Vienna became the European musical centre around 1780 with Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), a composer who spent a great deal of his career as Vice-Kapellmeister for the Prince Paul Anton Esterhazy and his brother Prince Nicolas. For them he worked at first in Eisenstadt near Vienna and later in Esterhaza, Hungary. He produced many Italian operas serias and buffas, but is mainly renowned for his instrumental compositions. After the death of his employer he moved back to Vienna in 1790. There he became friends with Mozart, Scarlatti and also Baron von Swieten, who presented him the works of J. S. Bach. Haydn is known as the “father of the symphony” and “father of the string quartet” (Mann 1982:143), but he also produced operas that represent a link between Glück and Mozart. And it is with the arrival of the greatest Classicistic musician Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) that Vienna became the capital of opera production. He did not continue the work of his predecessor Glück (he discovers him later when he live sin Paris), instead he dedicated himself to singspiel and opera buffa which he developed to perfection.

Mozart was a boy genius displayed in courts all over Europe by his father Leopold Mozart, a professional musician who abandoned his own career after discovering the talent of his son. Mozart traveled throughout Europe and there he came in contact with Italian, German and French music styles, elements of which he later integrated into his music. These travels have made Mozart grow up surrounded with all musical differences of Europe, making his music universally appreciated. In his third travel to London he was introduced to Johann Christian

Bach and was tutored in singing by the castrato Manzuoli, both active in opera. By the time he was commissioned to write his first operas in Italy, he already wrote two important operas. *La finta semplice* (1768), an opera in three acts “a stock Goldoni<sup>18</sup> opera buffa, fluently imitating the best models” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 337), premiered in Salzburg 1769. A year after *Bastien und Bastienne*<sup>19</sup> is premiered in Vienna. This is his first German opera- 1 act singspiel.

After that, Mozart produces mainly opera seria although his works gradually mature and at his premieres of *Mitridate, Re di Ponto* (1770) in Milan he is not yet fifteen. “Mozart conducts and plays the cembalo at the first three shows that lasted for six hours. To Mozart the enthusiastic crowd cheered out loud Viva Maestro! Viva Maestrino!” (Zlobec 2006: 9). A year later he is back in Milan with *serenata teatrale in due atti Ascabino in Alba* (1771)<sup>20</sup>. Two years after the premiere of *Mitridate*, Mozart presents *Lucio Silla* (1772) to the Milan audience. He then has the premiere of *La finta giardiniera* in Munich in 1775 and just over a month later that same year *Il Re pastore* is premiered in Vienna. In 1775 he returned back to Salzburg where he was given a job as violinist and where he wrote several violin concertos and also started to write for himself, but there was no facility for opera in Salzburg and even after going to Paris he does not produce any opera. But it is in Paris where he discovers the changes proposed by Glück. Therefore, it is easy to see that he has matured when *Zaide*<sup>21</sup> is written in 1779. It is a German singspiel which announces his later works.

In 1781 he writes the first of his great operas, *Idomeneo*. It still has the old form of the opera seria but the influence of Glück’s reforms is clearly visible. Like Glück’s works *Idomeneo* is also not well accepted by the conservative part of the public. “It had too much emotional recitative with excitable orchestral accompaniment, too much counterpoint altogether. The arias were quite divine, but the whole had so absorbed Glück’s teaching in Paris that opera’s old heroic image was hardly perceptible - this was a new sort of musical drama” (Mann 1982:

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<sup>18</sup> Carlo Goldoni (1707-1793) Italian dramatist, whose works were often used by librettists.

<sup>19</sup> This parody of Rousseau’s *Le Devin du village* was written by the Parisian librettists de Harny and Favart, but due to adaptation of the text to the German singspiel the element of parody was eliminated.

<sup>20</sup> Dedicated to the marriage of archduke Ferdinand.

<sup>21</sup> The work is unfinished, talking about Zaide, Sultans favourite, who helps Gomatz to escape but is caught. “The work includes a comic slave master, Osmin, and anticipates not only *Die Entführung*, but also *Die Zauberflöte* in details such as Gomatz falling in love with Zaide’s portrait”(Rosenthal and Warrack 1980:555).

153). And as Rosenthal and Warrack (1980:338) claim: “*Idomeneo* looks directly forward beyond the later operas to Wagnerian music drama itself”. A year later he produces his first opera under the patronage of Joseph II, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*<sup>22</sup> (*The Abduction From the Harem*), and presented through Nationalsingspiel in Burgtheater. This is his most successful opera until Mozart’s death. On 14th December 1784 Mozart is accepted as an apprentice into the freemason logia in Vienna. He is very active as a freemason which also reflects in the symbols in his music. The next opera that followed was *Der Schauspieldirektor*<sup>23</sup> (*The Impresario*, 1786).

In 1786 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart also composed an opera based on a play written by Pierre Auguste Beaumarchais’s (1732-1799) called *Le mariage d’ Figaro*, first performed in 1784 by Comedie Francaise after years of censorship, named *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The marriage of Figaro*). “The opera is an enormous advance on its predecessors: moving at heightened pace, it nonetheless explores situation and character more fully and whether in the beautiful set arias or in the great symphonic finales this riotous harlequinade never loses contact with each of the human being it creates” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 338). But Vienna accepted it with reserve, not prepared for the ingenuity and the message that was incorporated. By that time *Le mariage d’ Figaro* was already a famous play that started great debates in Paris and was renounced as a work of disgraceful and ill ideas in Vienna (Zlobec 2006). So the decision to create an opera from the probably most discussed play of the time must have been very appealing and at the same time frightening to Mozart and his librettist Lorenzo da Ponte (1749-1838). “Mozart realized, like his great predecessor Monteverdi that music drama could be the vehicle for a powerful message. By choosing to set this as an opera Mozart was deliberately caught in controversy and entering a political arena (Goodall 2000a: 0:19:39). Their work was perhaps criticized in Vienna, but in the mean time it became the biggest hit in Prague. At this point Mozart already had big financial trouble; he was constantly working and his works are successful but not enough for him to recover financially so Mozart accepted the invitation of the opera director Bondini to write an opera for the Italian opera company in Prague which was to be based on the tale of *Don Juan*. Assisted again by da

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<sup>22</sup> A romantic rescue-opera about the escape of the beautiful Constanze (named after Mozart’s wife, who he marries the same year) from the Harem of the Turkish Pasha.

<sup>23</sup> It talks about the rivalry in the showbusiness by presenting two primadonnas and the competition between them. Impresario is in the middle. It is sad to be based on the real rivalry between two operatic primadonnas which took place in London.

Ponte and by the famous Casanova he wrote *Don Giovanni*<sup>24</sup> that premiered in 1787. “Supposedly a grand spiritual thriller, though cheerfulness keeps breaking in, surpassed the intrigue and social realism of *Figaro*” (Mann 1982: 158). “Musically and dramatically it has a less satisfactory structure, revolving around the possessed central figure” (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980: 338). In *Don Giovanni* Mozart expresses the conflict between the good and evil, between religious and sexual. It was very well accepted by the crowd of Prague but again criticized in Vienna.

The next Mozart’s opera was commissioned again by Joseph II, *Così fan tutte*<sup>25</sup> (*Women are like that*) and was performed in 1790. No other work of Mozart was more criticized and disputed whether it was good or bad. Today most of musical world agrees that it is a quality work just different from the previous Mozart’s operas. It is a drama with “Mozart’s most subtle and magical music” (Mann 1982: 158). His next opera *La clemenza di Tito* (1791) was composed quickly for the imperial crowning in Prague. Its opera seria form is out of date in comparison to other of Mozart’s works, but it was made by request of the court. “This theme was perceived by the reactionary circles as very adequate as they wanted to present the monarchy in the best light” (Sivec 1976: 102). At the time, Mozart was also investing his productive energy in his last work *Die Zauberflöte* (*The magic Flute*, 1791). This is probably his strangest and best work. It is said that with this work Mozart turns toward spirituality but against religiosity (Zlobec 2006). It is full of ideas and symbols that derive from freemasonry, and had therefore been very debated. As a freemason he had been included in debates about the fundamental social change as promoted by the intellectual elite who gathered there. The Magic Flute is built around the idea of how humanity and knowledge can overcome the violent forces like light over darkness. “*The Magic Flute* is nothing more than an 18th century Masonic manifesto. // Masonic numerology runs through its veins. The powerful number three, for instance can be seen in the three mysteriously veiled ladies, three little boys, three slaves, three temples, the three flats at its key- E flat major, and the three big chords which begin the piece. // and Mozart’s choice of Egyptian temples for Tamino’s trials was by no

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<sup>24</sup> Don Giovanni is a seducer of women. On one occasion as he tries to seduce Dona Anna in disguise her Father, Commendatore appears and is killed by Don Giovanni. Donna Anna and her lover Don Ottavio decide to revenge her father but every time they almost succeed in capturing him he manages to escape. In the end Don Giovanni invites the statue of Commendatore to dinner, he really appears and drags Don Giovanni to Hell.

<sup>25</sup> Two officers agree to prove to Don Alfonso that their fiancées are true to them. They declare that they need to depart, but disguised as Albanian officers they return and start courting their fiancées. Eventually, the girls start to succumb to their persuasions, when their fiancées return. However, all ends happily.



means accidental (Goodall 2002b: 0:32:54). The *Magical Flute* is the greatest example of the so called *Zauberoper*, very popular in Vienna at the time.

Mozart died in December 1791 of exhaustion and not from poison as it was long speculated. He left the unfinished *Requiem*<sup>26</sup>, and over 600 other musical works. By uniting the Italian, French and German elements, which he learned on his travels Mozart was the first to produce opera that was all-European. We could say that the greatest musician of the Classicism was producing music which was understood all over the Continent.

By analysing at the ideas, particularly of his later operas, it is easy to connect them with Mozart's life and with the socio-political themes of his time. He fought for the German language to be accepted as appropriate for operatic production when Italian was promoted as the only true language for the opera to be written in. With *Figaro's wedding* he presented Vienna with the ideas of the French revolution just a few years before it happened. With *Don Giovanni* he comes in contact with sexuality. And with *The Magical Flute* he produces a Freemason manifesto, publicly revealing the ideas of the Loggia. With every one of these operas Mozart was also liberating himself of having to live with his persuasions in secrecy from the society. His work also functions as a sort of conscience to the ruling elite. As a boy he first revealed his musical genius to the elite, and as he grew up, he showed the elite its own reflection. To this day, his works remain in the center of debate about the meanings and the symbolism in music, which like the mysterious death of the author himself, keep an element of mystique for all those who come in contact with it.

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<sup>26</sup> Requiem is a mass for the dead. It was Mozart's last work and he said that he felt as if he was writing it for himself. According to Jagodič, Requiem has become political as it was played for the funeral of Adolph Hitler and due to the fact that it was written as sacred music. Mozart's requiem was composed for the mass for the deceased Ana von Walseg. Her Husband wanted to present it as his own.

#### 4.4 THE REVOLUTIONARY OPERA – BEETHOVEN AND VERDI

When Mozart died there was already a composer working in Vienna whose music was to become even more politically orientated. Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was also promoted as a wunderkind by his father, who hoped to make a fortune of him. But Ludwig was very stubborn and was often brutally beaten, which probably resulted in his later deafness. Beethoven unlike Mozart did not try to get a job on the court but lived of writing and transcribing music for the wealthy citizens of Vienna. Beethoven as a musician is often described as a revolutionary. Afterall, Beethoven was a great supporter of Napoleon Bonaparte and the ideals of the French revolution which were unacceptable to Vienna. He even dedicated his third symphony called *Eroica* to him, to show his support in the fight against the old regimes of Europe. But when Napoleon proclaimed himself as an emperor and Beethoven realized that he is the same as other tyrants he erased Napoleon's name from the score. However, just as contrary as his political convictions were to the traditional and conservative ideas, so revolutionary is his music in breaking the musical rules. *Eroica* is "the true expression of expectations on the political field. From the symphony come the feelings of hope, determination, and the start of a new social era that overcomes and subdues the old social order (Jagodič 2006: 55).

Beethoven only wrote one opera, *Fidelio, oder Die ehrliche Liebe*<sup>27</sup> (1806), for which music was written directly after *Eroica* and the opera itself was created at the same time as the fifth symphony, Waldstein sonatas, *Appassionata* and the quartets dedicated to Razumovsky. The story talks about the release of a good man from prison, with a generalized theme of liberalization that ends with a passionate hymn to freedom. *The starting part of the first act has characteristics of Haydn's or Mozart's singspiel, intentionally, so that the everyday people would be clearly differentiated from the main characters, Leonora and Florestan. Only with the occurrence of Leonora becomes the musical language expressively Beethoven's. With a beautiful quartet in canon we are transcended into deeper areas of spiritual experience (Sivec 1976: 107).*

Beethoven with this opera gave his music a political context one more time as he openly defended his political views and produced a work which is clearly inspired by the French

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<sup>27</sup> Florestan is unjustly thrown into jail by tyrannical governor Pizzaro, he is followed by Leonore, his wife who disguised as a boy. In jail the jailer's daughter falls in love with Florestan. Pizzaro decides to murder Florestan as the minister is coming to inspection. This is prevented by Leonore and all prisoners are released and Pizzaro arrested.

revolution which alongside with “the storming of the Bastille, triggered a whole wave of populist operas that have the recurring theme of escape and deliverance from unjust imprisonment” (Goodal 2000a: 0:27:01). The great difference between Mozart and operas after 1789 is that they now no longer function as the conscience of the elite but of the new Bourgeoisie society, therefore including members of all classes. Beethoven wrote for the final liberation of Florestan to be accompanied with a passionate hymn (*Wer ein holdes Weib errungen*) that was related with the fall of tyranny. Consequently, *Fidelio* was performed as the opening show all over Europe after the Second World War.

“With Beethoven the music of Classicism is brought to its “last and ultimate height” (Sivec 1976: 106), but he wrote only one opera, which some say is because he could not find adequate librettos. But still, he made a further step with it from Mozart, who incorporated elements and symbols that would promote ideas, with uniting the sung arias with the music that it appears as sound and voice are the same. On the other hand, Beethoven composed music that with its tunes clearly manipulates the perceptions and emotions of the public. Nonetheless, Beethoven witness’ Viennese opera at its height and fall as it lost its position as the capital of opera one more time to Paris.

If at the same time Italian opera is still strongly embedded into its long tradition it was in Paris where new ideas were being presented. At that time, many of the Italian composers moved to Paris and so by the early 1820’s a new kind of opera is born in Paris, called the Grand Opera. It typically has five acts that include elements of ballet and which strive to dazzle the audience with elaborate use of technological effects (to give the illusions of fire, earthquake) and with many actors to give realistic effect to battles or festivities. It therefore had a potential to overwhelm audiences and just three years after Beethoven’s death the opera lives up to its potential.

In 1830 the patriotic duet in the opera *La muette de Portici*<sup>28</sup> (The Dumb girl of Portici, 1828) by Daniel Auber (1782-1871), a typical example of Grand Opera induces the Belgian revolution. The inspired audience rushed outside of the opera house and immediately mobilized a crowd that rushed to a park where it confronted the Dutch army. After the violent conflict the Dutch withdrew and Belgium became a sovereign state. The opera *The Dumb girl*

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<sup>28</sup> The opera is based on historical events of the fishermen of Naples raised against their Spanish oppressors during 1647-1648 led by Thomas Aniello.

*of Portici* can be described as foreplay of the July revolutions in 1830 as its music began not only the revolutionary outbursts in France but also elsewhere such as Milan, Warsaw and Germany (Sivec 1976).

In the time of the revolutions of 1830 another European nation was thriving with the nationalistic aspirations of unification and liberation. After the Viennese congress, Italy was (1815) divided onto nine small states of which some belonged under Austro-Hungary and the rest were under the strong influence of the Holy Alliance. The demands of uniting Italians in a single country were ignored. Two years before, in 1813, Giuseppe Verdi, one of the most important composers of the twentieth century was born in Duchy of Parma and Piacenza. His talents were soon discovered and he was known as “little maestro” in his town where at the age of nine he already took over the duties of the church organist (Mann 1982: 216). After writing his first operas, *Roccester* (1836, lost), and *Un giorno di regno* (*King for a day*, 1840) which both failed, he was strongly effected by the death of his wife. He was persuaded by the La Scala impresario Merelli to work with a new libretto *Nabucodonsor*<sup>29</sup>. Verdi throws himself to work and in 1842 *Nabucco* (Short version of the name) becomes Verdi’s first great success while “*Va, pensiero*” becomes one of the most popular opera choruses of all time. Through his work a visible continuance of the legacy of Rossini, Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835) and Donizetti, Verdi represents the continuance of the development of the Italian opera. He continues to write operas and *I Lombardi all prima crociata*<sup>30</sup> (*The Lombards at the first crusade*, 1843) is also very well accepted by the public and its chorus “*Signore dal tetto nation*” also became very popular.

With *Ernani* (Based on Victor Hugo’s: *Hernani* (1830), 1844), Verdi starts entering Romanticism and develops his own characteristics. *Ernani* was again a great hit, followed by *I due Foscari*, *Giovanna d’Arco*, *Alzira* and *Attila*, all works that follow the ideal of *Nabucco* but do not have the same impact. In 1847 Verdi gives the Italian audiences a taste of a different kind of theme, as he presents *Macbeth*, his first work of Shakespeare which takes Verdi and the Italian opera in a new direction. Verdi starts focusing on details and giving more importance to the orchestra. This can be observed through *I masnadieri* (1847), *Il Corsaro* (1848), *La battaglia di Legano* (1849) and *Stiffelio* (1849) which all include great

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<sup>29</sup> It is a tale of the Hebrews being imprisoned by the Babylonians and the conversion of Nabucco to Judaism.

<sup>30</sup> In the time of the first crusade, brothers Arvino and Pagano fight over a girl. Due to the quarrel their father dies and Pagano is exiled to the Holy Land. There he is wounded in an attack on Jerusalem, and when dying he reveals himself to his brother who went on a pilgrimage, Arvino forgives him.

elements and trace Verdi's technical development but do not represent his best productions. This can be associated with sheer speed of their production as Verdi is being covered with commissions since the success of *Ernani*. He then traveled to Paris again where he met Giuseppina Strepponi one more time who he later marries and as said in his biographies Verdi finds personal happiness.

In 1851 he presents his first masterpiece, *Rigoletto*<sup>31</sup>, which proves that he is a genius and places Verdi away from the classical form of the Italian opera, bringing it to a new level. *Rigoletto* was premiered after tremendous problems with the censorship. It is namely based on a very provocative work of Victor Hugo *Le roi s'amuse*, after replacing the king of France with an imaginary duke of Mantua and changing its name from the original *La Maledizione* (the Curse) to *Rigoletto*. At its premiere in La Fenice in Venice *Rigoletto* was received ovations, especially for the aria *La donna e mobile*. His next opera *Il trovatore*<sup>32</sup> (The Trobadour, 1853) is said to be his last early period opera that had already been surpassed by *Rigoletto* and *La traviata* (The Wayward One, 1853), however, *Il trovatore* is still regarded as Verdi's most popular work. These three works represent his middle period, after which Verdi starts looking at the French Grand opera producing *Simon Boccanegra* (1857) and *Un ballo in maschera* (1859) in its spirit.

In 1859 a decade after the crush of the attempted revolution *il Risorgimento* was at its high. "Verdi turned Grand opera into a political propaganda" (Goodall 2000a: 0:30:37) and his operas became hymns to the revolution and even his name had been used as slogan by the Risorgimento movement as the initials of his name would stand for Vittorio Emanuele Re D'Italia. It is then that Napoleon III of France helps the Italians to fight the Austrians and the same time Giuseppe Garibaldi takes his "Redshirts" on a march of uniting the southern Italy. After the peace treaty is signed Italy is united losing a part of Venice to the Austrians, Nice and Savoy to France and Rome remains controlled by the Pope. As Verdi was a declared

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<sup>31</sup> The story is about a bad Duke of Mantua who disguises and seduces Gilda, the daughter of his court jester Rigoletto. After finding out, the latter employs assassins to murder the Duke, but when Gilda hears of this she saves the Duke with her own life.

<sup>32</sup> Play is set in the 15th century Spain civil war. Manrico and Di Luna are the leaders of opposing armies both in love with Leonora. They do not know that they are brothers as Manrico was kidnapped as a child by a gipsy Azucena to avenge her mother's death. After their fight Manrico is wounded and Leonora convinced he is dead wants to enter a convent but in the last moment the two lovers are reunited. On their return they hear that Azucena was kidnapped by Di Luna, and as Manrico wants to free her he himself is imprisoned. Leonora promises to marry Di Luna if Manrico is released and drinks a poison. When Di Luna finds Leonora dead in Manrico's hands he orders his execution. When Manrico is dead Azucena cries out: "Mother you are avenged" and the curtain falls (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980).

supporter of the revolution he became a member of the first Italian parliament when assembled in May of 1861. During his parliamentary career (1861-1865) he produced only *La forza del destino* (The Force of destiny, 1862) written for St. Petersburg theater. Verdi and his music are one of few things that had the most influence on the unification of the Italians as “the challenge of creating a sense of common Italian identity, particularly between the North and the South of the country, has endured until this day” (Mason 2005: 98).

After his resigning as a deputy in the national parliament Verdi returned back to music. The works made in his late period were now more sophisticated and in several cases, like *La forza del destino* written for foreign theaters. This is the case with the revised *Macbeth* (1865) and *Don Carlos* (1867) written for Paris and *Aida* (1871) written for Cairo. *Aida* is also one of the most recognized Verdi's works, especially for its music. After that Verdi returned to Shakespeare and created *Otello* (1887) and *Fallstaff* (1893) his last two operas that surpass even *Aida*. Verdi died in 1901 in Milan.

Through Verdi opera became the element of national unification of Italians, making Verdi a political composer who presented a political ideology through his ideas, work and name. It is the opera, which has been an element of Italian conscience since it was created in the Renaissance, one of the most magnificent times of Italian prosperity. But as opera spread across Europe its characteristics changed and particular types of opera were born. What they all have in common is they always played a role between elitist art and mass entertainment. Regardless of the fact that opera became popular practically over night, it went through a long evolution from reflecting ancient stories and ideals of the society in the seventeenth century, through responding to events of the eighteenth century, occupying a function of an elitist conscience. In the nineteenth century opera became more popular and available than ever, its ideas start to reflect the ideas shared by the general public. Popular culture according to Fiske (1989: 161) is “progressive, not revolutionary”, and I would agree, however, if there is no progress, things can only be changed through revolution. The great conservative forces of post-Napoleonic Europe wanted to restore the old situation. In such conditions popular culture was united with radical ideas and “Opera became a catalyst of political change” (Goodall 2000a 0:29:41). As opera represented popular culture it could use its mobilization capability and the potential of ideological dissemination. With the beginning of usage of these for political reasons we could predict what will be the ideological base of revolution.

## 5. THE CASE OF RICHARD WAGNER

Richard Wagner represents the Romantic era in its full form. He traveled through Europe most of the time running from his creditors and enemies. He was involved in a political revolution and he saw it fail so he decided to make a revolution through opera and with it reform and unite the German culture. He adopted the old legends of Northern Europe and used them to represent his ideas about the world. However, the great difference with other reformist composers was that his music was used in a revolution that took place long after Wagner was dead. And to understand the phenomenon of Richard Wagner we must first know his life.

Wilhelm Richard Wagner was born in 1813 in Leipzig to a family of nine but was brought up in Dresden by his mother and stepfather Ludwig Geyer, whose surname he had used until he was fourteen years old and of whom he later suspected he could be his biological father. Geyer has influenced Wagner by taking him to theater where he eventually even performed. Geyer died when Wagner was only eight. He was not well educated in music or brought up as a musical genius. But he persuaded his family to become a musician and was affected strongly by Beethoven and by the singing of Wilhelmina Schroeder-Devirent. She became his ideal for the ideal combination of opera and music. He wrote to her that when he heard her sing, he found the meaning of his life, and she inspired him to take on music, he was sixteen (Godefroid 1995).

In 1832 Wagner started his work on his first opera called *Die Hochzeit* (The Wedding), which was never completed. In 1833 he got a job as choirmaster in Wurzburg where he completed *Die Feen* (The Fairies), but which was never performed during his lifetime. *Das Liebensverbot*<sup>33</sup> (The Ban of love, 1836) was his first staged opera but it did not have any repetitions and caused the beginning of the financial problems which followed Wagner for most of his life. The Ban of love was influenced by Auber and Bellini and the ideas of the political movement “Young Germany”. Wagner was namely trying to write German operas that would, as written in the magazine *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (The new newspaper for music) enable the writing of national opera for a wide audience<sup>34</sup>. 1836 is also the year in

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<sup>33</sup> Based on William Shakespeare's Measure for measure.

<sup>34</sup> This means that Wagner was planning to create a type of art which would unite the general German population in the way that had been done by Opera comique in France or Ballad opera in England.

which Wagner marries his first wife Christine Wilhelmine "Minna" Planer. Together the young couple moves to Riga where Wagner gets employed as director of the Opera house. Minna soon runs away with an officer but comes back. During the following three years Minna and Richard Wagner fall in great debts and flee from Riga by a boat to London and then to Paris. The voyage probably inspired the opera *Der Fliegende Holländer*<sup>35</sup> (The Flying Dutchman, 1841). It is completed during his stay in Paris along with *Rienzi*<sup>36</sup> (1840). This is said to be Wagner's attempt to mimic and surpass the French Grand opera. The story "clearly indicates the glorification of a folk hero and social reformist the political mentality of the young Wagner" (Sivec1976: 184). When *Rienzi* is premiered in 1842 with great success in Dresden new hope comes for the Wagners. According to Godefroid (1995), *Rienzi* is the prototype of all the following Wagner's heroes. A year later *The Flying Dutchman* is premiered, which represents a great change in his work described by Wagner as "the greatest leap forward in the shortest time by any composer" (Warrack and West 1992: 751). In it he already shows individual characteristics of Wagner's opera. This way he "talks through music" with very suggestive composition describing the stormy sea, he uses leitmotifs and an important and very popular motif of the Romantic era that becomes his constant motive, redemption through love. Wagner moves to Dresden where he is offered a job as Kapellmeister and where *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*<sup>37</sup> (Tannhäuser and the Song Contest on the Wartburg) the name was soon reduced by Wagner to only *Tannhäuser*, 1845) is completed and successfully presented. For this piece he uses extended orchestral fluencies support to the melodic parts. That same year he began working on his next opera *Lohengrin*<sup>38</sup> which is completed three years later. *Lohengrin* again has the motive of redemption through music and the powerful contrasts between the physical manifestation and the inner conflict. It is also described that it represents the height of the German Romantic

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<sup>35</sup> The Dutchman is cursed for his blasphemy to sail the seas until redeemed by a faithful woman which he is to attempt to find only every seven years. He gets to know Senta in a Norwegian harbour and she jumps of a cliff to prove her love. They are then seen rising together toward heaven.

<sup>36</sup> Wagner writes the libretto based on the novel of E.L. Bulwer, speaking of the struggle of a Roman representative for democracy against the feudal nobility.

<sup>37</sup> Tannhäuser enters in a singing contest with knights and other guests at the Wartburg castle he sings in appraisal of Venus, and after protected by Elisabeth from the knights he promises to seek absolution from the Pope. He returns without the Pope's forgiveness just to find out that Elisabeth has died of a broken heart. He dies next to her. As the rest of the pilgrims returns with Pope's staff this sprouts leaves as a sign that God forgave Tannhäuser.

<sup>38</sup> The ward of King Henry the Fowler is accused of killing her younger brother Gottfried. She describes a dream in which a knight will come to defend her. A knight really comes on a swan-drawn boat, he offers to defend and marry Elsa under the condition that she will never ask him after name or origin. On the night of their marriage Elsa forgets herself and asks of the name of her husband. He decides to reveal his identity in front of all. On the banks of a river the court assembles and Lohengrin reveals that he comes from the temple of the Holly Grail and that his father is Parsifal. When the swan returns Elsa recognises him as Gottfried who really appears, Lohengrin prays on his knees and a white dove of the Grail flies down and draws the boat away.



opera. During his years in Dresden “he told his friend Kietz that he would write no more “grand operas”, but only fairy tales as that of a boy who does not know what fear is” (Newman1991: 415). The boy from this old German legend later becomes his Siegfried from *Siegfrieds Tod*, which was to be the first step toward what later became *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

In 1848 Marx’s Communist manifesto is issued and the year is also known for the “Spring of the nations” which brings revolutions sparking throughout Europe, and Dresden is not an exception. King Frederick Augustus II of Saxony namely turned down the new constitution, dissolved the parliament and the short lived May revolution is started. Wagner, inspired by Bakunin, supports those fighting for the social reconstruction. Wagner’s role in the uprising is disputed. Goodall (2002a) claims that he had an important role as the watchmen of movement of the Prussian army in a church tower. Some authors like Mann (1982) on the other hand just mention his involvement in the movement<sup>39</sup>. When the uprising is crushed, a warrant for his apprehension is issued.

To escape imprisonment Wagner is forced to flee again. He first escapes to Paris and from there to Zurich in Switzerland. This is the period described by his biographers as his time of clearing his mind and working out his ideas. For almost six years he does not compose any music but works on *Siegfried* and writes a series of essays regarding politics, aesthetics and art, amongst them *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (The work of art in the future, 1849), *Das Judenthum in der Musik* (Judaism in Musik, 1850) *Opera und drama* (Opera and drama, 1851) and *Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde* (A communication to my friends, 1851). Through these essays we can see what Wagner was thinking not only of his work and projects but of the social structure and its functioning. He claims that art has been spoiled by those who were producing it with the sole intention of making profit. For this he strongly blames the Jews of who he thinks as a nation incapable of art. ”According to the present constitution of this world, the Jew in truth is already more than emancipated: he rules, and will rule, so long as money remains the power before which all our doings and our dealings lose their force” (Wagner 1850:4). *Judaism in Musik* is where his anti-Semitic stands are presented in public and this is the text that has formed the base for him to be regarded as anti-Semitic.

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<sup>39</sup> This difference derives from the autobiography written by Wagner on request of King Ludvig II, where he avoids certain topics, like revolutionary activities and his marriage problems.

With the ideal sought after in the old Greek drama with similarities with the ideas of Vincenzo Galilei and others members of the Camerata, his solution is to create the so called Gesamtkunstwerk. It would be a form of a musical drama with poetry as support of the musical expression as for him, music started by Bach is music capable of individualized expression like a language.

*Bach's musical speech was formed at a period of our history when Music's universal tongue was still striving for the faculty of more individual, more unequivocal expression: pure formalism and pedantry still clung so strongly to her that it was first thought a gigantic force of Bach's own genius that her purely human accents (Ausdruck) broke themselves a vent. The speech of Bach stands toward that of Mozart, and finally of Beethoven (Wagner 1850: 12, 13). For Wagner, Bach, Mozart and Beethoven are the four music-heroes that need to be followed and music should be further developed as a form of language.*

*The Jews in Music provoked strong protests and also influenced many later reviews of Wagner's opera and writings. His anti-Semitic writing read like a constant exchange of attack and counterattack between himself and the music critics of the time. Here Wagner loses sight of the development of European Jewry in the second half of the nineteenth century and therefore increasingly too his sense of reality and humanity. So Wagner's art, in spite of all the brilliant innovations manifested in his first works staged in the Bayreuth Festspielhaus – The ring and The Parsifal- also became anti-Jewish or anti-art, and the Festspielhaus an anti-Jewish, anti-culture establishment (Wagner 2000: 65).*

Richard Wagner begins to develop his own musical expression in an attempt to put music before words. “Music drama would use such skills to support archetypal dramatic situations, with poetry fertilizing music in a new expressive context. Wagner gives instances of how certain modulations could express the content of the words and advocates the use of Stabreim<sup>40</sup>, to avoid the periodicity and cadential implications of end-rhymes” (Warrack and West 1992: 752).

In 1850 Lohengrin is produced by Liszt and after that Wagner starts the project of the Siegfried's death. As the material and the content of the work is so great he starts thinking of

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<sup>40</sup> Stabreim (German for alliteration) is alliteration of the key words to achieve cohesion of a verse.

it as work that would be performed through several days united under the name *Ring des Nibelungen* or shortly the *Ring*. Wagner has namely made a contract with Otto Wesendock, who paid all of his debts and sponsored him and in return he gave Wesendock the future copyrights. Wagner was now able to concentrate on his work.

*By the end of the year 1852 Wagner finished the libretto of the Ring, tetralogy, composed of musical dramas Rheingold, the eve in four acts that introduces the three “days” titled Valkyrie, Young Siegfried and Siegfried’s death- the final titles of the last two days Siegfried and Gotterdammerung, he chose only in 1856. He read the libretto publicly in February next year to a numerous audience (Godefroid 1995: 56).*

In 1857 he suddenly stopped writing music for the Ring and started a new work, *Tristan and Isolde*. Wagner namely came across the book by Arthur Schopenhauer titled *The world as will and representation*. He was so overwhelmed by the ideas that he started to analyze his works and to agree with his pessimistic ideas of human irrationalism and fatality. The Tristan and Isolde would reflect the ideas more than the other of Wagner’s works. Through the Tristan and Isolde we can find the idea of how only death can unite the two lovers. Unlike Romeo and Juliet who died accidentally, Tristan and Isolde must die to find happiness they could not find in life.

The Wagner’s lived next door to Otto and Mathilda Wesendock and were constantly visited by Hans von Bulow (who left his family and went in exile to learn from Wagner) and his wife Cosima, who was the illegitimate daughter of Franz Liszt. The families were living in constant contact and eventually a romance sprouted between Wagner and Wesendock’s young wife Mathilda. As described by Wagner’s biographers he was now “surrounded by three women; representing the past (Minna), the present (Mathilda) and the future (Cosima)” (Godefroid 1995: 59). Eventually, a scandal broke out and Wagner moved to Venice to continue his work, but was forced to leave due to pressure from Saxony. He returned to Switzerland where he was accepted back by Wesendock who enabled him to finish *Tristan and Isolde*<sup>41</sup> in 1859.

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<sup>41</sup> A story of two lovers, Isolde, Bride of King Mark and Tristan. After the discovery of the romance, Tristan is wounded and returns to his castle, but Isolde declares she will follow him. When Tristan is notified that her ship is coming he tears his bandages of excitement and dies in her arms. Mark is following with the intent to pardon Tristan. Isolde sings of how only through death she can find her love. This is the famous Isolde’s Libestod (Love death).

In 1861 Napoleon III accepts *Tannhäuser* to be produced in Paris, as the situation is very tense between the media and the emperor, Wagner lands in the middle. His essays are rediscovered and he is presented as anti-Semitic. The whole affair escalates on the night of the premiere when the members of the so called Jockey Club<sup>42</sup> make a riot regardless of the premiere's success and the presence of the emperor. This occurrence results in the removal of the opera after three shows and its failure "is one of the notorieties of the operatic history" (Warrack and West 1992: 751). The whole incident has the result that outside of Paris, Wagner is being presented as a victim and is immediately accepted again by the German audience. Consequently, in 1862 all charges against him are dropped and he is given a German passport again and his works start being performed. Unfortunately, *Tristan and Isolde* is perceived as too difficult and is not performed at that time. In April of 1863 Wagner organised the first public presentation of the Ring poem with a long preface "setting forth his plan and hopes for a "festival" performance in some new theater or other built specially for that purpose. From his fellow-Germans *en masse*, he said he did not expect much in the way of helping him to realise his ideal of music-drama but he cherished the hope that some German Prince or other might come to his rescue"( Newman 1991: 448). Wagner at that time starts to write *Die Meistersinger*, but he eventually he got into financial difficulties again and therefore starts going on tours, travelling as far as Saint Petersburg. On 3rd May 1864 Wagner's life is turned around when he is caught up by a special messenger of the young Ludwig II, King of Bavaria.

Ludwig had been an admirer of Wagner's work and he now calls for Wagner and the two become friends. The young King pays all of Wagner's debts and supports Wagner. Thanks to him *Tristan and Isolde* is finally premiered in Munich. The performance was a success and with *Tristan und Isolde* Wagner united the words and the music to express the deepest emotions in a way never seen before. Due to his growing influence on the King, his enemies attacking him more and more and in December of 1865 he is forced to leave again for Switzerland. It is then that Cosima Bulow decides to leave her husband and to follow Wagner with whom she already had one child and is pregnant again. Together they move into a house next to the Vierwaldstät Lake where he starts writing his memoirs. It is said that Wagner is trying to precisely reconstruct his life to fill the void left by the lack of information about his family, especially his father. Cosima soon becomes the main contact between Wagner and

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<sup>42</sup> The Jockey Club had reserved boxes in the theater, and as Wagner did not adopt the play according to their wishes, they boycotted the show.

Ludwig II. In this time Wagner gathers a group of friends again, among them also Hans Richter, who later became his secretary and a young philosopher by the name of Friedrich Nietzsche. In 1867 *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*<sup>43</sup> (*the Mastersingers of Nuremberg*) are completed and premiered by the decision of the King in 1868. The *Mastersingers* became the most successful opera after *Reinzi*. It is even declared as the Bavarian national opera. This would be the most optimistic of all operas written by Wagner.

In 1869 Ludwig II buys the copyrights from Otto Wesendock and even without Wagner's approval goes ahead with the production of *Das Rheingold* (The Rhinegold). The same happens a year later with *Die Walküre* (The Valkyrie) which became a great success and Ludwig now demanded *Siegfried* to be made. Despite His indignation with the King's self-will, Wagner was getting ready to realise his great vision.

## 5.1 THE BAYREUTH THEATER

Wagner was well aware of how strongly architecture and music are related, the acoustics of the space adds to the colour and the effectiveness of musical expression. Certain architectural styles demand specific music to be produced. Being aware of this fact and having problems with the realization of his works due to their complexity, he wanted to build his own theater. This idea already existed while he still worked in Dresden where he met Gottfried Semper, the architect who designed the Dresden Theater. His ideas and plans of a special theater where the Ring would be produced were the base for the plans. In search for the right place Wagner also thought of the old theater in Bayreuth. It is a small city near Nuremberg<sup>44</sup> where a Baroque opera house was build under the Margrave Fredrick von Hohenzollern in 1735. Richard and Cosima traveled there in 1871, a year after they were married and decided to stay there even if the old theater turned out to be inappropriate. The final planes for the theater were made by Otto Brückwald. Wagner became determined to build his theater there and on 22nd May 1872 the foundation stone was laid for the Fesestspielhaus (the festival theater). Beethoven's ninth symphony was conducted by Wagner in the old theater for the occasion. which would be repeated for several occasions, for example in 1951 for the grand reopening of the festival (Godefroid 1995).

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<sup>43</sup> The story speaks of how Walter finds out that his beloved and beautiful Eva will become the wife of the winner of the singing contest. Beckmesser also decides to compete and Walter and Eva decide to elope. They are prevented by Sachs and the competition takes place. Walter wins and Eva is now his to be wedded.

<sup>44</sup> For Wagner the city represented the heart of German culture.

Besides writing his operas Wagner was now occupied with raising the money for the building of the theater. He would travel around Germany searching for investors and for interpreters who could be employed. But the costs were too big for the money gathered by Wagner to suffice. In a “Deus Ex Machina” scenario King Ludwig II saved the project in 1874 by giving Wagner the necessary funds despite the opposition of the government. The costs for the theater were connected with Wagner’s obsession with perfection despite him writing on the plans for the theater to remove the decoration. Wagner wanted to create the theater in which all of the necessary elements would be combined to have the greatest effect and would offer the complete listening experience of his Gesamtkunstwerk. With this in mind, the Bayreuth Festspielhaus was created. “It has the central frequency range between 500 and 1000 hertz and the echo time of 1,55 seconds”(Beranek in Blaukopf 1993: 242). In other words, the latter stands for acoustics so great that the theater building primarily intended only as temporary was never drastically altered, let alone rebuilt.

Wagner also achieved this by hiding the orchestra from the audience in the so called “mystical pit” which had never been done before. The orchestra in the pit is hidden from the audience by two prosceniums. The positions of the first and the second violins have been exchanged for better acoustic effect and to minimize the noise the note racks have been fixed to the floor (Godefroid 1995). All this results in a unique hearing experience as the sound with the help of the acoustics of the space comes from all sides, adding to the power of perception and mysticism. He was also the first to demand the auditorium to be completely dark during the show, this way focusing the attention of the audience only on the stage. “The acoustic disposition matches Wagner’s ideology of the festival games, which wants to stimulate the unification of the audience into a community, and with architectural design of the theater hall of which the amphitheatric structure supports this unification”(Blaukopf 1993: 242). Wagner used all technology that was available to him and even stimulated invention of new elements that would enable him to make music the closest to what he wanted. In 1876, he suggests the design of the so called Wagner tuba for the Ring, which is “a valved brass instrument with conical bore and funnel-shaped mouthpiece, to obtain a tone quality between the horns, which he regarded as lyrical and romantic, and the trombones, which he regarded as solemn, dignified and romantic.//Particularly associated with Hunding in *Valkyre*” (Warrack and West 1992: 756). The heroes would turn toward their supporting players and not to the first row of the stalls, they would gesticulate less and act more »psychologically«” (Godefroid 1995: 94). When finished, the theater had the capacity of 1800 and with an

auditorium resembled a classical amphitheater (Rosenthal and Warrack 1980). “Wagner invented the modern opera theater with some new approaches to stage management that today may (theoretically) seem banal, but were revolutionary back then- and remained so for a long time.

The opening took place on 13th August 1876 with *Rheingold* which started the first complete Ring cycle ever. After the first festival was over he once said to Cosima that “every stone in that building is red with my blood and yours” (Newman 1991). But great financial loss made in the first year, made Wagner write a play made especially for the acoustics of the theater. For six years *Parsifal*<sup>45</sup> preoccupied Wagner, a work which is said to represent the essence of Wagnerian thought. It is full of symbols related to Christian religion and suffering of Jesus Christ, which resulted in it being named Bühnenweihfestspiel – sacred festival drama. Its spiritual importance was emphasized by Wagner himself. In a letter to King Ludvik, on 28th September 1880 he wrote: “I named my *Parsifal* a sacred drama. Therefore, I need to find an appropriate stage, but such is only in my theater in Bayreuth, which is lonely and far from the world. This is the only place where it will be permitted to stage *Parsifal*. No one shall ever be allowed to stage Parsifal on a different stage than in Bayreuth or just for the entertainment of the audience”. The King granted the copyright to the Bayreuth theater. Parsifal was premiered in 1882 for the reopening of the Fesestspielhaus. It turned out to be a great artistic and financial success. The perception of the work amongst the greatest of Wagner’s admirers as a true mass also resulted in the habit that there should be no applause during acts.

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<sup>45</sup> Gunermanz and two esquires are interrupted during prayer by the arrival of Kundry, carrying a balsam for Amfortas. Gunermanz explains that Amfortas had entered the magic garden of the magician Klingsor where he was seduced by Kundry. Klingsor wounded him and the wound could only heal if it were touched by the Sacred spear now possessed by Klingsor and only a fool made wise through pity can reclaim it. Meanwhile, Parsifal is brought in for killing a swan, he is brought to participate in a ritual of unveiling of the Grail by Amfortas. But Parsifal does not understand the meaning of it and is driven from the hall by Gunermanz. Klingsor recognises Parsifal as the only possible redeemer of Amfortas and instructs Kundry to seduce him. But when she kisses him, the situation is revealed to him, he becomes wise through pity. Klingsor tries to kill him by throwing the spear at Parsifal who catches the spear making with it a sign of the cross and Klingsor’s domain falls. Years later Parsifal returns dressed as a black knight. When he is recognised Gunermanz anoints him as the new King of the Holy Grail. They then go to the funeral of Tinturel, whose son Amfortas is to unveil the Grail, but when unable to do so he shows his wounds and asks the assembled knights to kill him. Parsifal approaches and heals him with the touch of the Spear. The knights accept their new king, Parsifal raises the Grail into the air, a white dove appears over his head and Kundry falls lifeless.

Picture 5.1.1



Source: Iannacone 1998: 85.

This vignette represents a group of eager fans of Wagner's music, first in ecstasy while listening to the disputed "endless melodies" after which they tire from affection and strain of listening.

Richard and Cosima traveled to Venice in 1883. There he started to work again on a sketch of a new opera but he abandoned it. Instead, he started writing a theoretical essay but it was also not finished. Richard Wagner died on 13th February 1883; his body was taken back to Bayreuth. The passage of the body in a gondola through the canal was remembered Franz List's *La lugubre gondola*. He was buried in the garden next to his house called Wahnfried, meaning "where my illusions find peace". After his death, Cosima became the theater director and the position has ever since been in the hands of the Wagner family.



## 5.2 THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG

Wagner had the idea of writing an opera based on the old tale of Siegfried since the time he was working in Dresden. He had been studying the Teutonic and Norse sagas and mythologies since 1840 and by 1848 his sketch for *The Nibelungen myth* and there are many differences between the first and the final version including the ending, which was to happen with *Siegfried's Death, a grand heroic opera in three acts*. Several changes are done within the first months of 1849 when in May he had to escape to Switzerland.

During the first years in Switzerland he does not compose music. He is occupied by writing the already mentioned essays and continuing the work on *Siegfried's death*, and as he realizes in 1851 there should be an explication of the beginning of the story. He starts working on this second part, the poem of *Young Siegfried*. In July that year he writes to Liszt how “ he should settle down to the musical part of his task by »next month«” (Newman 1991: 424) but by November he already expresses doubt if the story would be understood and at the same time admits he has been considering writing two other operas, *The Valkyrie* and *the Rhinegold*. He knew that the work he had set to do was too large and too complex for any theater to perform, but as written in a letter to Liszt he refused to worry about it and calculated that it will take him about three years to complete it. How was he to know that he would not complete his work until 1874 and its first complete performance would take place in his own theater house two years later.

In the spring of 1852 he started to make the first outlines of *the Valkyrie* and *the Rhinegold*. By 1853 he presented the four poems to his friends and expressed hopes of setting to compose the music in spring. The composition of *Rhiengold* took Wagner four months (from September 1853 until January 1854) but it took him several more months before the score was fully completed on 28th May 1854. *The Valkyrie* was converted to music by the end of 1854 and the score was completed by 1856. After making the contract with Otto Wesendock, Wagner was able to commit to his work with even greater dedication. He than started working on *Siegfried* and by July 1857 he had finished the first two acts. But on 9th September he stopped working on the Ring, “he left Siegfried in the middle of the woods and dedicated himself to Tristan and Isolde” (Godefroid 1995: 56). He continued writing the third act of

*Siegfried* on first of March 1869, completing the full score in February 1871. At the same time Wagner also started working on the *Twilight of the Gods*, finishing it on the 21st November 1874. *The Ring of the Nibelung* was completely staged for the first time on the 13th, 14th, 16th and 17th August 1876 in Bayreuth.

### 5.2.1 SUMMARY OF THE RING

The Ring consists of four separate dramas<sup>46</sup>, adding up to fourteen hours or more of music, enabling Wagner to explore in depth a range of issues which are central to a modern person's life: what is that he values most, and what sacrifices have to be made, if any, of some of those things if he is to have others? The two values which Wagner presents as equally tempting are love on one side and gold and power on the other.

#### 5.2.1.1 The Rheingold

Immediately at the beginning we are confronted with a conflict between love and power. The teasing and lovely Rhine-maidens (representing youth and life) are supposed to guard the gold which is alleged to give its owner power over the whole world. Alberich, a Nibelung in the form of an ugly dwarf (representing lust) desires them but is repulsed by them so he renounces love and steals the gold. He then forges the Rhinegold into an all-powerful ring. Wotan, leader of the Gods, needs the gold to pay off two giants – Fasolt and Fafner – who have built his new palace Valhalla, and to ransom Freia, goddess of youth, who has been held by the giants as surety for the debt. God of fire tells the story of how gold was stolen and the power that it possessed and if forged into a Ring “it will confer measureless might on its possessor and give him dominion over the world” (Newman 1991:467). Wotan steals the gold – including the ring and the mysterious Tarnhelm which has the power to transform or conceal the wearer at will. Therefore, Alberich curses the powerful ring so that all those who possess it (mortals and gods alike) are doomed. The Gods enter Valhalla in triumph, but Wotan's weakness and deceit will make it a hollow triumph.

#### 5.2.1.2 The Valkyrie

##### Act 1

Siegfried runs from his followers, exhausted he comes to a hut where he seeks shelter and encounters Sieglinde and her husband Hunding, who is one of his pursuers. Hospitality rules

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<sup>46</sup>Wagner insisted on “a trilogy with a preliminary evening”, he did not consider Rheingold equal to the three operas performed after it.

grant Siegmund one night of shelter. Siegmund falls in love with Hunding's wife, Sieglinde, not realising that she is his own sister (Wotan is their father). Sieglinde speaks to Siegmund of her unhappiness and he swears to free her from her marriage. She gives her husband a sleeping-draught. Sieglinde leads Siegmund to the tree round which the hut is built. Buried in it up to the hilt is a sword left by a one-eyed stranger (Wotan) who attended her forced marriage to Hunding. No one has been strong enough to withdraw it. Siegmund draws the sword from the tree. Sieglinde recognises their shared parentage and the first act ends as the transfigured couple embrace and make love.

#### Act2

Wotan is presented with a dilemma, should he stand by the wronged husband Hunding or by his own son Siegmund? Wotan decides to send his daughter Brunnhilde to defend Siegmund in the forthcoming fight with Hunding just as he is giving his orders to her, his wife Fricka (goddess of marriage) comes to the stage confronting Wotan. She thinks that incestuous love should be punished and Hunding's marriage should be defended. Wotan announces Siegmund's death and promises him eternal life among heroes in Valhalla. But Brunnhilde is overcome with sympathy for Siegmund and defends him despite her father's orders. Wotan intervenes, causing Siegmund's sword to shatter, and enabling Hunding to kill him. Disgusted with himself Wotan strikes Hunding dead.

#### Act3

Brunnhilde's sister Valkyries gather on a mountain top. Their task is to search for dead heroes and bring them to Valhalla where they are to join Wotan's army. Brunnhilde arrives with Sieglinde and tells her that she is pregnant with Siegmund's child, who is to become a great hero. Wotan is outraged that his daughter Brunnhilde tried to protect Siegmund against his wishes. He threatens to imprison his daughter for disobeying him, but she pleads with him. Wotan relents and puts Brunnhilde to sleep, surrounding her with a wall of fire, which only a hero can pass to free her.

#### 5.2.1.3 Siegfried

##### Act 1

The story continues in the future where we meet the young Siegfried, child of Siegmund and Sieglinde and grandson of Wotan. His guardian is a Nibelung, brother of Alberich, dwarf

Mime, who is a skilful and accomplished blacksmith. He is forced by Siegfried to reveal the identity of his parents. Demanding proof, Mime shows him the broken fragments of his father's sword. Mime is ordered to repair the sword for Siegfried but is unable to do so. Siegfried then heads off into the forest. Wotan, disguised as the Wanderer appears and engages Mime in a deadly game of riddles. The Wanderer asks “who will forge the sword fragments together again?”. Mime is unable to answer. The answer is “Only one who has never felt fear” and to such a hero Mime's head will be forfeited. To save himself Mime is determined to teach Siegfried fear. He will introduce him to the dragon Fafner who guards the ring, the Tarnhelm and the golden hoard. Siegfried returns and manages to repair the Nothung sword on his own, showing his potential as a hero. Mime now plots to get Siegfried to win back the all-powerful ring before getting rid of him...

Act

2

Alberich, the first owner of the ring is staking out Fafner's cave, hoping to retrieve the ring. The Wanderer appears and persuades Alberich to waken Fafner and warn him that he might shortly be murdered. In return he asks for the ring but is refused by Fafner. Siegfried and Mime arrive and Siegfried kills the dragon, taking the ring and Tarnhelm. Mime tries to poison Siegfried but the dragon's blood, which he tasted has given Siegfried the power to read Mime's mind and he kills Mime. Siegfried finds himself in the middle of the woods when he hears a Woodbird who tells Siegfried about Brunnhilde, who can only be claimed by a fearless hero and shows Siegfried the way to find her.

Act

3

The Wanderer (Wotan) summons Erda the Earth Goddess (and mother of Brunnhilde and the Valkyries) to ask her advice in slowing down the world's destiny inevitably bringing the end of the gods. She has no solution to offer. Siegfried arrives and the crucial confrontation between the enlightened but doomed god and the ignorant but vigorous young hero ends with Siegfried using his sword Notung to split asunder Wotan's spear (carved from the World Ash Tree and totem of his rule over the universe). With the twilight of the gods approaching the now powerless and despairing Wanderer leaves the scene for the last time. Siegfried sets off in search of Brunnhilde, reaches the Valkyrie rock but finds his way barred by its surrounding magic wall of fire. Siegfried jumps into the fire and is surprised by what he finds on the other side. It is Brunnhilde and after removing her armour she returns to life from. Her fears over

losing her fierce independence are overcome by the power of Siegfried's love, and the opera ends with their long duet.

#### 5.2.1.4 The Twilight of the Gods

##### Prologue

The opening scene begins quite symbolically in near-darkness on the Valkyries' rock where the three Norns (offspring of Erda) weave a rope of knowledge, representing a physical timeline. However, the timeline becomes unstable and they are powerless to prevent the rope from breaking, destroying the link between past and present. Siegfried and Brunhilde appear into morning light, stronger for the strength of their love and protected by Brunhilde's magic. Siegfried leaves her to seek new adventures but leaves the ring with her as a token of love. In return, she gives him her horse Grane.

##### Act1

Siegfried's Rhine journey brings him to the Gibichung Hall where Gunther and his sister Gutrune rule. Also at court is Hagen, their half-sibling and illegitimate son of the Nibelung dwarf Alberich. Hagen is plotting to recover the ring and suggests that Gunther should consolidate his power by marrying Brunhilde while Gutrune marries Siegfried. Hagen provides Gutrune with a drug which will make Siegfried forget other women. The trick works and Siegfried is bewitched by Gutrune, declaring his love for her. To prove his love Siegfried decides to try to win Brunhilde for Gutrune's brother Gunther upon which Gunther and Siegfried swear a blood-brotherhood. Meanwhile, Brunhilde's Valkyrie sister Waltraute visits her, bringing a request from Wotan that the ring should be returned to the Rhinemaidens. In order to lift the curse over the gods; Brunhilde refuses to give up the ring and the fate of the gods is sealed. There is a disturbance in the magic fire and Siegfried returns, using the Tarnhelm to deceive Brunhilde into thinking he is Gunther. She resists him but he tears the Ring from her and takes her to the Gibichung Hall.

##### Act2

Alberich appears to the sleeping Hagen, making him pledge to destroy Siegfried and recover the Ring. Siegfried arrives ahead of Gunther and Brunhilde to claim Gutrune. In the only chorus scene in the Ring operas (Newman 1991), Hagen summons his vassals with a call to armed battle and to their confusion instead of battle they are to welcome Gunther and his wife. Brunhilde is abject and humiliated but she sees the Ring on Siegfried's finger revealing the deception. Siegfried swears on Hagen's spear that it may pierce his body if he lies about

his identity. Hagen and Gunther plot against Siegfried but Brunnhilde tells Hagen that her magic does not protect Siegfried's back as he would never turn and flee an enemy with this Siegfried is doomed. To spare Guttrune's feelings his death will be contrived as part of a hunting accident. The Act concludes with the hollow anticipation of a doomed double wedding.

### Act 3

Siegfried loses the hunting posy and finds himself next to Rhine River. There he meets the Rhinemaidens who warn that he will die that day if he does not return the ring. He dismisses them and returns to the hunting party, regaling them with stories of his adventures. Hagen arranges for him to drink an antidote to the drug which has made him forget Brunnhilde and the truth of his relationship with her is revealed. This is Hagen's excuse to kill Siegfried which he does by tricking him into turning his back. Siegfried's body is conveyed to the Gibichung Hall in a solemn funeral march. Hagen kills Gunther in a fight over the ring but the dead Siegfried's arm rises to prevent him taking it. The enlightened Brunnhilde now takes command of the situation. She orders Siegfried's body to be cremated on a funeral pyre, she rides with her horse Grane into the fire to relieve the curse and join her husband in death. The waters of the Rhine overwhelm the Gibichung Hall. When Hagen sees that the Ring is being taken away by the Rhinemaidens he makes a desperate attempt to salvage the ring but the Rhinemaidens drag him into the depth, finally claiming the ring. The gods are glimpsed, assembled in Valhalla as the flames engulf them too "The Gods great ending dawneth at last" (Newman 1991:634). The Ring of the Nibelung concludes with the soaring motive of redemption by love (Notes 5.14) the same as presented for the first time in The Valkyrie.

The Ring of the Nibelung is the largest music-dramatic work ever written. It took Wagner twenty years to complete it and during this time he grew as a composer and changed as a person. All this is reflected in his work. The Ring clearly represents the catastrophic consequences of greed for gold and power. The Ring was to express the philosophical ideas. "To Wagner and many of his contemporaries, industrialist capitalism was the evil at the heart of society. Dark, evil machine that enriched few but enslaved many. The power and anger of much of the Ring reflect this oppressive and forbidding image of industrial might." In the Rheingold the story takes us to the depths of the goldmine. The mine is a metaphor for capitalism. Dwarfs, gods and giants stood for the real exploiters of humanity. "Wotan -

himself the »god of contracts«, who is supposed to protect the exchanges – tries over and over to break the rules that he set to get “something for nothing”. Opposite him Alberich appears fairer: something (love) exchanges for something else (might), obeying the principle symbolic law by which “we cannot have it all” (Žižek 1996: 7). At the end of the Ring Wallhala is destroyed in a firestorm that represents the end of the old order (despite the return of the Ring) and for humans, a new future based on love could begin.

### 5.3 LEITMOTIFS OF THE VALKIRA

While Max Weber was studying Wagner’s music and saw the big scores for the first time he said “I should have such writing technique at my disposal, and could finally – as I should – tell many things separately, one next to the other, but yet at the same time” (Baumgarten in Blaukopf 1993: 160).

The expressive power of music written by Richard Wagner comes from his use of leitmotifs. The leitmotif or leading motive is a musical idea or phrase which could be as simple as a two-chord unit or extended into a long line of music, which is associated with a concept, an idea, a character or an object. He was not the first to use leitmotifs (the “*idée fixe*”<sup>47</sup> in Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* might be described as one), but he brought their use to the highest level. Wagner used the first leitmotifs in the *Flying Dutchman* where they are used in the classical way, helping characters and things to be identified.

Wagner had written a great part of the text (but still no music) for the Ring before he encountered Schopenhauer’s work. He was so overwhelmed by the pessimistic ideas of this philosopher that he abandoned the Ring in 1857 and dedicated himself to writing *Tristan and Isolde*, an opera incorporating Schopenhauer’s ideas. To achieve this, Wagner began dismantling the harmonies, using them in a way they have never been used before and perfecting leitmotifs. In *Tristan and Isolde* the leitmotifs are presented in a form, developed by Wagner but their primary intention is still to reflect the action on the stage. When he starts writing the Ring again after so many years he is confronted with half of the work that does not correspond entirely with his new ideas, however, he decides to leave it as it is and use music as the instrument of unification of the two segments of the opera. It is in the *Rheingold* when Loge explains the story of the Gold that Wagner presents his grandeur and the real mastery of the new system of leitmotifs. “Now that the action becomes more subtilised, corresponding

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<sup>47</sup> *Idee fixe* is the label Berlioz gave to the main leitmotif of his work.

subtilisations of this thematic material are called for; and we see Wagner taking the first steps towards that psychological variation of the leading motives of the Ring that was to find its consummation twenty years later in the *Twilight of the Gods*” (Newman 1991:466). His leitmotifs can now be described as a musical cell, representing a certain meaning (philosophical, moral, descriptive, and emotional) through music without its representation through lyrics. It is therefore easily understood why it is said that in 1874 when *the Ring* is completed the modern age in music begins. It would be the first time that an attempt was made to express philosophical ideas through the words of music. Music was never the same again (Goodall 2002a: 0:16:35). With the romantic era the use of complicated chords became fashionable. They would be used by the contemporary composers of Wagner like Brahms or Verdi but in quite smaller scale. Chords with names like diminished ninth (Composed of C, Es, Ges, B, D) or dominant seventh (composed of C, E, G, B) give a sense of tension and a feeling of incompleteness. Wagner would use these chords to hold the sense of continual suspense and would avoid giving his audiences a perfect cadence to indicate the human incapability to achieve happiness and completion in life according to Schopenhauer’s philosophy.

There are approximately two hundred leitmotifs in the Ring altogether, many of which are variations of a basic motif and then set in context. Many times several motives would be combined to have parallel effects like a sudden change of mood or as warning. In *Valkyrie* there are more or less fifty leitmotifs and their variations, and most of the leitmotifs presented in it are repeated throughout of the Ring. I will present the fourteen motifs that are regarded as the most important in their expressiveness and meaning for the story.

1. Siegmund, the motive of the main character of this opera appears for the first time in the beginning just after the picture of storm. The third bar expresses his distress.

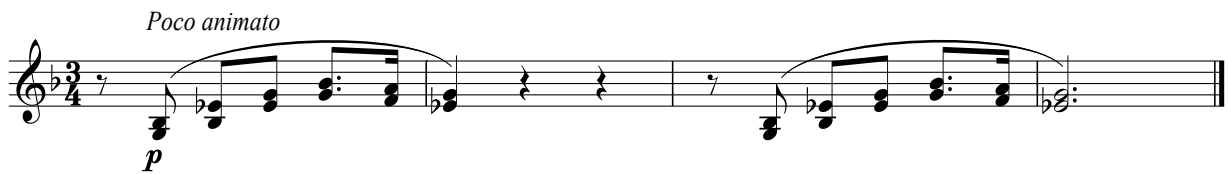
Example 5.3.1

Source: Newman 1991: 495.



2. Sieglinde, the picture of the storm calms down with the beginning of this motive which represents her tenderness, a variation of this motif is also the pity motive. When Siegmund sees her, his motive joins hers and Wagner creates a thematic counterpoint.

Example 5.3.2



Source: Newman 1991: 495.

3. Siegfried, the motive of the child born from the incestuous relationship between Siegmund and Sieglinde. It is presented in the last act of Valkyrie and is one of the most recognised motives of the Ring.

Example 5.3.3



Source: Newman 1991:532.

4. Wälsungen (The Wälsungs), the motif of the race doomed to suffering to which both Sieglinde and Siegmund belong.

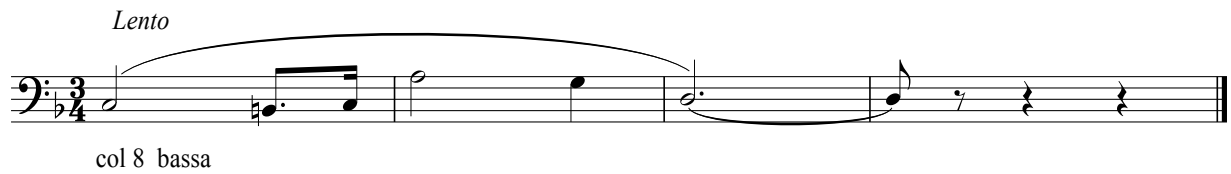
Example 5.3.4



Source: Newman 1991: 501.

5. Wälsungenleid (Sorrows of the Wälsungs) motif is presented as Siegmund expresses the ill fate and unhappiness that follow him to which Sieglinde responds: “No ill fate canst thou bring where ill fate has made its home!” (Newman 1991: 497).

Example 5.3.5



Source: Newman 1991:498.

6. The motif of the Walküren (The Valkyries)<sup>48</sup> is possibly the most famous leitmotif of the ring cycle. Its energy well reflects their turbulent flight to collect the fallen heroes as well as the passionate and rebelling personality of the Brunhilde.

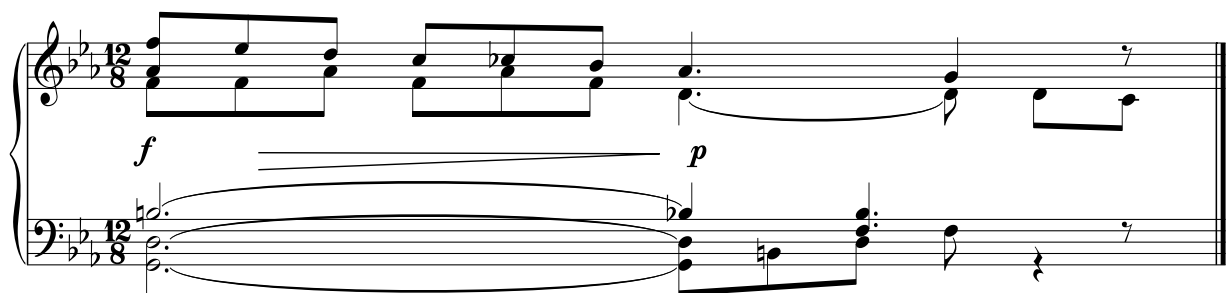
Example 5.3.6



Source: Newman 1991:512.

7. The motif for grief accompanies Siegmund's story, explaining why he is being hunted.

Example 5.3.7



Example 5.7 (source: Newman 1991: 501)

8. The motif for Hunding describes the personality of this dark character. Trough the tones we can perceive his negative role in the opera, also indicated by the double bass line and slow movement.

<sup>48</sup> Also known as »the Ride of the Valkyries«, which is as the concert peace played differently.

Example 5.3.8

Source: Newman 1991: 498.

9. The motif of *Geschwisterliebe* (Love for Brothers and Sisters). It is composed of two parts, A and B. Part B alone is generally recognized as motif for love. These two parts are the base for the great symphonic development, ending act one.

Example 5.3.9

Source: Newman 1991:496.

10. *Unmuth* (Dejection/Displeasure) is a motif that takes over in the scene where Fricka convinces Wotan not to protect Siegmund. In response to her passion the motif of Dejection takes over, played in complete silence.

Example 5.3.10

Source: Newman 1991: 516.

11. *Todesklage* (Death lament), presented within the long silence when Brunhilda is setting off to collect a hero on Wotan's demand. The crescendo and diminuendo in the last two bars stand as annunciation of death.

Example 5.3.11

Musical score for Example 5.3.11, Piano part. The score is in 4/4 time and D major. It consists of two staves. The right hand starts with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and features a melodic line with a slur over the first four measures. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The piece concludes with a *pp* dynamic.

Source: Newman 1991: 524.

12. Schicksal (fate, destiny), this motif follows the motive of death lament and is its modification.

Example 5.3.12

Musical score for Example 5.3.12, Piano and Violas parts. The score is in 4/4 time and D major. The piano part starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The violas part enters in the second measure with a melodic line featuring triplets and a slur. The dynamics for the violas part are marked as *dim.* (diminuendo).

Source: Newman 1991:525.

13. Sword or motif of victory enters when Siegmund draws the sword from the tree in which Wotan left it for him. In this scene it appears that the question of Siegmund's survival is resolved.

Example 5.3.13

Musical score for Example 5.3.13, Horn part. The score is in 4/4 time and D major. It consists of a single staff. The tempo is marked as *Moderato*. The horn part starts with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and features a melodic line with a slur over the first four measures.

Source: Newman 1991: 504.

14. Erlösung, Motif of redemption by love is the motif that we encounter in the Valkyrie as the announcement of Siegfried, the hero of the Ring when Brunhilde explains to Sieglinde that she is to have a son, who is to be a great hero and gives her the peaces of the Sigmund's Sword. This motif is repeated after the destruction of Walhall at the end of the

Twilight of the gods as the consolidation of the drama and is regarded “as one of Wagner’s most magical strokes” (Newman 1991: 631).

Example 5.3.14

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line. It is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 9/8. The music begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic marking. The melody consists of a series of notes: a dotted quarter note (G4), an eighth note (A4), a quarter note (B4), a dotted quarter note (C5), a quarter note (B4), an eighth note (A4), a quarter note (G4), and a dotted quarter note (F#4). The lyrics 'Herr lich - ste Maid!' are written below the staff, with 'Herr' under the first two notes, 'lich - ste' under the next four notes, and 'Maid!' under the final note. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Source: Newman 1991: 532.

The function of these leitmotifs is that as the audience becomes familiar with these musical signatures, it enables listeners to be subliminally prompted to recognize ideas, emotions, and acts, but also to discern what a character may be thinking about or influenced by when singing about something quite different. As we have seen, the leitmotifs can be very simple or very complex, depending on what they are expressing.

#### 5.4 WAGNER AND IDEOLOGY

Richard Wagner’s work has had great admirers for a long time and the first so called Wagnerian societies already existed in several cities around Europe at the time when the Bayreuth Theater was still being built. With its completion and the success of the Ring and Parsifal, the birth of the almost religious-like perception of Wagner by some was born. This religious context is what Wagner wanted to achieve and with it the perfection of German and worldly culture. Wagner was, as any true artist, convinced of the superiority of his work and his ideas and alongside the philosophers like Schopenhauer, Marx, Hegel or Nietzsche who believed their philosophy to be the ultimate, he defended his art in the same way. He wrote operas for large audiences, different than any other kind of opera. These came from a source previously unused in opera. The Teutonic mythology gave Wagner a source of stories and plots that he could adapt in his own way. He united various myths and stories to create a new German religion. With his usage of leitmotifs he added new layers to the personalities and scenes. Through them Wagner reflected ideas that became the core of the “Wagnerian metaphysics: death, blood, poison of lust, lost eternity, mindless violence, insanity, but also a silent echo of divine love (Godefroid 1995: 150). These alone represent a completely different set of problems and questions as previously explored by opera and music in general. This was caused by the time of the birth of capitalism and nationalistic tendencies throughout Europe which can be seen in the Ring. He presented the new industrialist society as something

threatening, the machines taking over human work, the exploitation of the working force. This new kind of social contract is reflected in the scenes of *The Rheingold* where in the depth of the mines the Nibelungs are forced to work by the power of the Ring owned by Alberich. The ring is a manifesto of the horrors of the capitalist society. At the end of the Ring cycle he claims how at the end the system in which the gods and other mythological creatures have the force over people will be destroyed and people will be free. They will be given the chance to choose love instead of power.

Wagner's political stands are well known from the texts he wrote, he was not tolerant and his views can be described as extremist, nationalistic, anti-Semitic and at the same time he confronts taboos of the societies. His operas openly deal with sexuality, incest, religion... Therefore, his works, which intentionally represent these views, were received with such mixed responses - rage and criticism on one side and glorification and admiration on the other. The fact is that Wagner did not hide his convictions but exposed what was debated in society.

*Wagner's celebration of Germanic heroes like Siegfried or Tannhäuser had an ugly racist undercurrent that was to have a powerful and predictable effect on the Nazis. Wagner became obsessed with the concept of Arian superiority over the other, so called degenerate races. He spent most of his adult life writing violently anti-Semitic articles. His hatred of the Jews was not confined to books and journalism, as many of his operatic villains are crude anti-Semitic caricatures too* (Goodall 2002a: 0:42:23).

There is no doubt that Europe's history is marked by anti-Semitism and that many people in Wagner's time were anti-Semitic. However, the way that he expressed his opinions were so radical that he was criticized for them in the time when first published. The paradox of any attacks on him like the ones in Paris is that as a consequence he was made almost a martyr<sup>49</sup>. With age his works are more and more marked with such ideology and Gottfried Wagner, Richard's great-grandson opposes performances of the anti-Semitic operas *The Ring*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Parsifal* (Wagner 2000). The problem with Wagner was that he knew he would not be able to realize his project if he would strictly cling to his persuasions. Many of musicians that he worked with were Jewish, he was sponsored by the rich capitalists and the

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<sup>49</sup> Most of opposition was made in France and as France was in conflict with Germany he was more easily accepted back home.

political elite of the establishment that he was so critical about. The Bayreuth Theater was far from the masses of average Germans and tickets were expensive.

It was these ideas that Adolph Hitler took from Wagner, he did the same, blamed the Jews for all the problems, called himself popular and socialist when in reality he was not supported by the masses of workers<sup>50</sup> but supported the capitalist concerns. Hitler was a great admirer of Wagner and almost married Wagner's widowed daughter in law, Winifred (1897-1980). Still, it would be untrue to say it was Wagner who inspired Hitler for Nazism. National-socialism is based on ideas preserved from the nineteenth century and some aspects of it can also be found in the work of Richard Wagner. By trying to create a perfect German work of art Wagner gave this movement the possibility to use it for mythological background and cultural base. The Nazis glorified Wagner the same way as Fascists glorified Verdi. "Mussolini quickly seized on Verdi's operas shame sly in his propaganda campaign. In a production of Aida under Mussolini it had black shirted troops masquerading as ancient Egyptians, marching off to conquer the supposedly racially inferior Ethiopians" (Goodall 2000a: 0:33:53 ). Like all totalitarian regimes they used artists who expressed their political ideas through media, the most capable of their dissemination.

The Nazis abused Wagner's music and stories through which he presented his socio-political perception made in the nineteenth century. These were applied perfectly to the ideology they promoted by a totalitarian regime in the twentieth century, forty years after his death. Also, a very important explication of how Wagner became so connected with the Nazi regime must be looked for with the people that were in charge of his legacy especially the Bayreuth Theater. This was controlled by Cosima Wagner who was a fierce defendant of Hitler's regime and ideology also after the Second World War (Wagner 2000). Bayreuth became the cultural epicentre of the Nazi Germany where Wagner was the synonym for cultural ideal and Parsifal was a religion.

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<sup>50</sup> The highest percentage that NSDAP got, before in January 1933 Hitler became chancellor was 37 at the Reichstag elections in July 1932 (Geary 1995: 43).

## 6. CONCLUSION

With *The Ring of the Nibelung* Richard Wagner created a gigantic musical saga that has no comparison in music, with its size and complexity it is undoubtedly his greatest work. It took him a quarter of a century to complete it, and it reflects all of the controversial questions Wagner had come across during this time. When he ended writing the script and was ready to write the musical part he had already changed, but despite a personal conflict of putting to music something that did not represent his new personal standpoints he left the text as it was and decided to express his new opinions through music alone. To do this, he perfected the technique of the leitmotif, which enabled him to express complex ideas that were in accordance with his personal philosophies.

If we are to understand all of the meanings of the leitmotifs in *The Ring* we need to dedicate ourselves to exact observation of various layers of Wagner's expressive system. There are things that we are told through the main story which shows the actions of the characters. The second element is the music, which describes and emphasizes these actions and works as a link between different leitmotifs. These have the most difficult role of explication and are the most difficult for the audience. The leitmotifs inform us of the personalities (motifs of Siegmund or Hunding) of the characters, their emotions (grief) and their thoughts (death lament). They also tell us what is happening beyond our sight (arrival of a character - Walkrie), what is about to happen (*The Wälsungs*) and of course through music they describe Wagner's main philosophical concepts (Redemption through love).

Wagner developed a complex system of signs and meanings which demands a certain level of knowledge or explication. This system was intended to promote certain ideas that were more or less commonly known at the time and he knew very well what kind of knowledge he could anticipate from its public. It is precisely the change in knowledge and political reality that caused the change in the perception of Wagner's work and even further radicalization of its symbols, all this for the sole purpose of political propaganda.



I believe that by looking at Wagner's life and his philosophical and political ideas I have proved that what he wanted to express through *The Ring* is his fear of new ways of exploitation of the people by the old elite. This was corrupt and based on greed for gold and power and as such its destruction is predestined. This brings new political order where people do not rule one another and strive to find love and not material goods. The origin of his controversy lies in the radical and anti-Semitic ideas that he had defended. These make Wagner's music describing the ideas of a social conflict from the nineteenth century, which became the core of the Nazi regime in the following century. With this I believe I can confirm my third hypothesis which states that leitmotifs are used by Wagner to describe the internal conflict of the characters through which he express the faults of the socio-political reality.

When Opera was towards the end of the 16th century born in Italy as a new form of art developed by the Camerata, no one could have imagined that less than a century later it will have become the entertainment for the masses, regardless if rich or poor all over Europe. This capability of opera to unite great crowds of people and bring them to listen to the expressive power of music made opera very influential. Composers soon realised it could be used for political purposes. It was Mozart with *The magical Flute* who introduced a manifesto filled with Masonic symbols and *La marriage of Figaro*, a work connected with political aspirations of the bourgeoisie. In the 19th century the mobilisation power of opera has been proved, and more and more subtle ways of hiding political messages had to be invented not to be censored or even banned. The political aspirations of the Italians and the Germans and the fierce fight against them by the conservative powers forced Verdi and Wagner to produce ambiguous works. Being an experienced revolutionary activist, Wagner went so far as to write his ideology in the musical score of his works. Taking all this into account, I believe that Romanticism was the time in which the most drastic actions were taken to try and disseminate revolutionary ideology through media under the control of the ruling elite. "Political ideologies have become music in the middle of the 19th century by giving emphasis to national characteristics, acting as representatives of nations and confirming the national principle everywhere" (Adorno 1986: 203). I believe that this confirms the opera developed into the media capable of transferring ideology of social conflict without the use of words in Romanticism, confirming my second hypothesis.

However, the second and third hypothesis both concentrate on how opera functioned at the peak of the political activities before the development of the mass media and through which

techniques were manifested despite the rigorous control of the censorship and political pressure in the nineteenth century. My first hypothesis is more general and I have attempted to be confirm or deny it throughout the thesis. Has therefore musical media been monopolized by politics and religion to represent and explain the existing social relationships?

In my opinion, if we think that music is an element of human development we can draw certain parallels between the liberal ideas and the development of music. These were shown with the individual development of the opera in individual states like Bach's music indicated a process of religious liberalization and all this time more or less the same socio-political relationships were maintained as long as the availability of music was somewhat dependant on the social class and was firmly under the authority and control of the ruling elite - "After all music is the credible metaphor of reality" (Attali 1983: 26) and controlling music meant controlling reality. When opera broke this mould and became available to audiences larger than ever before, regardless of class, cracks started appearing on the picture representing the perfect social order so carefully maintained until then. As soon as the monopoly over music could no longer be maintained ideas of social conflict started to emerge and as there was no will to resolve these issues and they were simply suppressed the pressure accumulated until it exploded into revolutions. Therefore, my first hypothesis is confirmed.

In this thesis I believe I have presented the gradual development of the expressive power of music to be parallel with the development of liberal values in society and the beginnings of the public opinion taking place. Its consequences are better education of the general public; more people could read not only newspapers but also music, and to understand specific messages incorporated through music we need to place ourselves in the position of the people of the time as I believe Wagner's message was different to the one seen by the Nazis and that if it would be listened to without knowledge of its context we would feel the energy that it has but its politics would remain hidden.

My final conclusion is that history teaches us how we can create a picture of social relationships and points of conflict within a particular society through ideas presented in music and popular art in general. If these issues are not dealt with, they grow until they spread through the majority of the population. When a crisis appears these issues can erupt and cause extreme ideology to take over. I believe that I have proved how music is the media through which these ideas and issues, which indicate a social conflict, can be traced. And if

we pay enough attention we can identify them and try to solve them before they get out of control.

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## GLASBA KOT MEDIJ DRUŽBENEGA KONFLIKTA

Diplomska naloga se ukvarja z odnosom med glasbo, politiko in družbo pred razvojem radia in televizije. Osredotoča se na glasbo kot medij za prenašanje političnih sporočil in kako se je ta sposobnost razvijala skozi čas. Za glavno glasbeno obliko, ki jo nameravamo preučevati kot sredstvo za prenašanje političnih sporočil, smo si izbrali opero. Ta se je namreč od svojega nastanka zelo hitro razširila po vsej Evropi, se v posameznih deželah prilagodila zahtevam občinstva in jezika ter postala glavna oblika zabave za množice, ki so se je udeleževali predstavniki vseh družbenih razredov. Pomembnost opere je povezana z množicami, ki so se je udeleževale, saj jih je združevala in vsem prikazovala iste zgodbe. Skladatelji so se hitro zavedli pomena prenašanja sporočil na množice, saj so v svojih delih lahko z uporabo dvoumnih sporočil opozarjali tudi na bolj resne vsebine. Opera je doživela svoj razcvet v devetnajstem stoletju, ko je postajala vse bolj dosegljiva, hkrati pa se je vse bolj spuščala v politične vode. Svoj politični vrhunec je opera doživela z delom Richarda Wagnerja, ki je dal s svojo glasbo politično in ideološko osnovo političnemu režimu, ki se v Nemčiji pojavil štirideset let po njegovi smrti.

V nalogi smo postavili tri hipoteze, katere naj bi nam pomagale prikazati razvoj glasbe do mesta, ki ga je zavzemala v devetnajstem stoletju. Ter ali lahko z njeno pomočjo pridemo do informacij o dogajanjih in konfliktih v družbi.

Hipoteza 1: Politika in vera sta pojasnjevali obstoječe družbene odnose z monopolom nad glasbenim medijem.

Za njeno utemeljevanje smo skušali poiskati zgodovinsko vlogo glasbe v družbenem delovanju. Zato smo se v prvem delu naloge osredotočili na pojasnjevanje funkcije glasbenega ustvarjanja in njenega razvoja v obdobju, ko se je glasba obravnavala kot nekaj nadnaravnega in nepojasnjene in kako se je le ta spreminjala s tem ko je glasba postajala vse bolj enakovredna jezikovnemu izražanju. Kako so to dejstvo izkoriščali vladajoči razredi, ki so glasbo, ki jim je ugajala spodbujali ostalo pa preganjali, ter kako so si glasbo lastili kot statusni simbol. Kdaj se je torej razvila njena sposobnost komunikacije z širšimi občinstvi, ter kako se je razvijala zmožnost njene manipulacije in nadzora skozi čas. Ta prikaz nam bo

omogočil vpogled v zgodovino razumevanja glasbe in nam bo služil kot uvod za razumevanje pomembnosti pojava opere.

Hipoteza 2: Z romantiko se je opera razvila v medij za prenašanje ideologije družbenega konflikta brez uporabe besed.

Za pojasnjevanje druge hipoteze smo se v drugem delu naloge osredotočili na opero. Opera je prav tako najprej nastajala v okvirih kot jih predpisuje oblast. Postaja je vse bolj dosegljiva in razumljiva za širše množice, ki lahko ob posameznih uprizoritvah že štejejo nekaj tisoč gledalcev. Poprej so se takšne množice zbirale zgolj ob verskih in državnih praznovanjih. Obdobje francoske revolucije je prineslo nove ideološke in politične izzive, kar se je kazalo tudi skozi opero. Vrhunec političnosti je opera dosegla z obdobjem romantike, ko ji obdobje velikih družbenih sprememb in revolucij po vsej Evropi pustijo krvave sledi. V tem delu diplome smo dokazovali, da se je v tem obdobju spremenila vloga opere iz opisovalca družbenega dogajanja v katalizator družbenih sprememb.

Hipoteza 3: Wagner je istočasno s prikazom notranjih konfliktov njegovih oseb s pomočjo leitmotivov izražal napake družbeno-politične realnosti.

Richard Wagner ni iznašel uporabe leitmotiva, vendar je njegovo uporabo izpopolnil in privedel do skrajnosti. To se kaže predvsem v njegovih zadnjih delih, ki so tudi najbolj problematična. Zanimivo je, da Wagnerjevi poznavalci ocenjujejo njegova zgodnja dela kot bolj politično orientirana, medtem ko njegova kasnejša dela kot bolj filozofsko zaznamovana in tista, ki jih je nacistična kulturna politika najbolj promovirala. Skozi uporabo leitmotivov je Wagner interpretiral socialno-politične ideje in jih razširjal med publiko. Moje mnenje je, da je uporaba leitmotivov najbolj učinkovita za prenašanje takšnih sporočil.

Da bi lahko pojasnili glasbo kot medij, skozi katerega je moč razširjati filozofske in politične ideje, smo se torej najprej osredotočil na raziskovanje vloge glasbe v različnih družbah skozi čas: kakšno je bilo njeno razumevanje ter kakšna je bila njena funkcija. Zato smo se v prvem delu posvetili primerjavi ugotovitev glasbenih raziskovalcev in teoretikov. Z njihovo pomočjo nameravamo pojasnjevati vpliv vere in politike na dojemanje glasbe in njen razvoj v družbah, ki so s svojim razvojem vplivale predvsem na zahodno glasbo. Glasba je ogledalo družbe in sprememba v glasbi nakazuje na spremembe v družbenih odnosih (Attali 1982).

Zvok in glasba sta med seboj povezana koncepta, kakor je glasba povezana s človekovim razvojem. S pomočjo zvoka smo se ljudje naučili uporabljati zvočne simbole, ki so izvirali najprej iz narave, nato pa so se skozi pesem razvili v jezik. Povezava med pesmijo in jezikom je razvidna še danes, ko poslušamo jezik, ki ga ne razumemo, saj lahko navkljub nerazumevanju pomena slišimo nekakšno spevnost. Glasba kot jezik imamo za tipično človeško, za nekaj, kar nas loči od ostalih primatov in živali. Glasba nam predstavlja zmožnost razmišljanja in čutenja, predstavlja znak človeškosti.

Ne glede na to, ali zagovarjamo pogled, da se je glasba razvila iz jezika ali jezik iz glasbe, nam je jasno, da je glasba vedno imela močan vpliv v družbenem delovanju. Glasba je našim prednikom predstavljala predvsem nekaj skrivnostnega in njena uporaba je od najzgodnejših časov povezana z verskimi rituali. Glasba je bila v daljni preteklosti razumljena kot oblika magije, ki je lahko povzročala pri poslušalcih stanje zamaknjenosti in celo transa. Kmalu se je pričela kazati uporabnost glasbe v »namene aktivne propagande pri inspiraciji celotnega plemena, morda k junaštvu v boju, in ne zgolj kot magični pripomoček v svetem ritualu« (Mann 1982: 14). Glasba namreč povzroča pri ljudeh na subtilen način odzive, ki so lahko emocionalni ali fizični. Glasba tako lahko sporoča in deluje kot komunikacijski kanal. Kot pri vsakem komuniciranju je potrebno, da je sporočilo oblikovano v kod, ki je razumljiv tako za sporočevalca kot prejemnika, kar zahteva enako zanje.

S potrebo po splošnem sistemu so se v glasbi začeli pojavljati različni načini uglaševanja. Kot najboljši sistem, na katerem temelji danes glasba se je izkazala Pitagorejska osemtonska lestvica. Ta temelji na osmih naravnih tonih, ki jih dobimo z delitvijo na četrtine. Da je ta sistem najbolj učinkovit, potrjuje dejstvo da so isti sistem razvili tudi na Kitajskem, kjer je še danes v izvorni obliki. Glasba se je doživljala tudi razvoj v obliko, ki jo danes imenujemo ljudski glasba, tu se je ustvarilo neko sporočilo z zgodbo v rimi, ki je lažje ohranila izvorno sporočilo, saj je bilo za pravega sporočila potrebno ohranjanje rime, ki je omogočalo neko trdnjšo obliko zgradbe sporočila in zato lažjega učenja le-tega. Tako so se prenašale in hranile zgodbe, ki danes predstavljajo narodno bajeslovje in ki v izvornikih morda delujejo nenavadno in nasilno, vendar je treba povedati, da so z njimi učili otroke o svetu in nevarnostih v njem. Primeri takšnih zgodb so ohranjeni še danes: pripovedke iz zbirke Matere Goske in bratov Grimm, v katerih lahko še vedno zasledimo čudežno moč glasbe (čarobni glasbeni instrumenti) in nekatere moralno-ideološke elemente (odnos do župnikov in Judov ter predsodki o njih). Ljudska glasba temeljila na igranju le nekaj prvih tonov v lestvici, ki so



bili urejeni v enostavne melodije s po enim tonom igranim naenkrat. Taka oblika se je v ljudski glasbi ohranila dosti dlje, kot do trinajstega stoletja ko se v cerkveni glasbi pojavijo prve harmonije. Nad glasbo so imeli najvišji sloji namreč monopol, kar se je ohranjalo skozi stoletja, zato je bila določena glasba dosegljiva zgolj določenim družbenim slojem. Glasba se je še v devetnajstem stoletju obravnavala kot materialno blago saj je bilo mogoče ekskluzivno lastništvo nad glasbenim delom, napisanim za določeno osebo, za določeno priložnost...

Da se v družbi dogajajo velike spremembe, je nakazala reformna glasba J. S. Bacha, ki glasbi dodeli enakovredno mesto kot jeziku. Do tedaj je glasba delovala kot spremljava ali v obliki plesne glasbe, vendar Bach pripelje sonato do popolnoma nove ekspresivne možnosti, kar postane očitno ob poslušanju njegovih koncertov.

V tem času se je po Evropi že začela pojavljati opera, zvrst glasbene drame, ki se je razvila na dvorih italijanskih mestnih držav. Na njenem primeru smo se odločili dokazovati drugo hipotezo. V nadaljevanju naloge smo se tako osredotočili na opero in njen razvoj. V zgodovinski analizi razvoja opere in njenih povezanosti z družbenimi spremembami smo se omejili na reformne spremembe v značilnostih, oblikah in rabi opere. Tako sem v analizo vključil nekatere najpomembnejše avtorje in njihova dela, ki so se pojavljala v zgodovini in imela različne vplive.

Kako skokovito je opera vdrla v javnost in postala del popularne kulture, je razvidno že v njenem začetku. Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643) napiše prvo operno uspešnico *Zgodbo o Orfeju* leta 1607, trideset let kasneje v Benetkah odprejo prvo gledališče – do njegove smrti jih je namreč samo v tem mestu delovalo devetnajst. Opera je nato z neverjetno hitrostjo osvajala najprej dvore po vsej Evropi v svoji italijanski obliki. Vendar je v deželah zunaj Italije postala atraktivna za širše množice, ko se je pojavila v narodnih jezikih in se v svoji formi prilagodila nacionalnim zahtevam. V Italiji, Franciji, Veliki Britaniji in v Nemških deželah se pojavijo *opera seria*, *opera buffa*, *opera comique*, *ballad opera* in *Singspiel*. Vsaka od teh opernih oblike je imela lastne zakonitosti in pravila ter se razvijala s pomočjo lastnih skladateljev, hkrati pa vzajemno vplivale na vsebino in razne rešitve.

Italijanski vplivi so se močno poznali na francoski izbiri naslovov, kjer so jih prirejali za francoske razmere. Handel je v Angliji razvil lasten operni slog, ki je izviral iz nemške doslednosti in italijanskih vplivov, vendar nato po vzoru francoske *opere comique* nastane

angleški *ballad opera*, katere najslavnejše delo je Beraška opera (*The beggars opera*). Ta vzpodbudi nastanek *Dreigroschenoper*, katere zgodba je prilagojena nemškemu občinstvu in pomeni podlago za nastanek *Singspiela*. Johann Adam Hiller (1728–1804) nato dodela *Singspiel* v polno enoto s pomočjo zgledov v *operi buffi* in *operi comique*. Opera nato v Nemčiji doživi zaton, obudi jo zopet šele romantika in Richard Wagner. V ostalih deželah opera vse bolj opisuje dogodke iz bližje preteklosti in vse bolj natančno izraža družbeno situacijo skozi predelave starih zgodb.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart pomeni razcvet opere v največji evropski državi, kjer je vladarico Marijo Terezijo nadomestil njen sin in še bolj reformni vladar Jožef II. Ta je bil velik oboževalec opere in je ustanovil *Nationalsingspiel* ustanovo, ki je podpirala produkcijo opere v nemškem jeziku. Mozart napiše nekaj svojih prvi oper v italijanščini, vendar po naročilu Jožefa II ustvari *Pobeg iz seraja*, napisanem v nemščini, kar do tedaj ni bila ustaljena praksa. Mozart v svojih delih združuje vse vplive, ki jih je nabral na dolgih potovanjih po Evropi od otroških let dalje. Leta 1786 na Dunaju premierno uprizorijo *Figarovo svatbo*, ki jo Mozart napiše po besedilu, ki je pretreslo Francijo. Opera je za današnje dni nekaj povsem normalnega, vendar so vsebinski elementi, ki razkrinkajo Barona kot goljufa in ženskarja ter ga prisilijo, da pred vsemi prosi odpuščanja baronese, nakazovali na ideje, ki se nato izrazijo v francoski revoluciji le dve leti kasneje.

Mozart napiše še dve operi, ki sta po svoji vsebini izzivali moralne in politične tabuje tistega časa. V *Don Giovaniju* razkriva življenje poklicnega zapeljivca in se podaja v svet tabujev spolnosti. Z *Magično piščaljo* se vrača v svet politike. V tej operi, ki se zdi kot velika pravljica, Mozart ustvari prostozidarski manifest. Ni naključje, da mora Tamino prestati celo vrsto iniciacijskih obredov v egipčanskih templjih. Podobno velja za pojavljanje števila tri, ki ga opazimo pri treh zakritih ženskah, treh sužnjih ali treh akordih na začetku opere.

Ideje, ki se pri Mozartu pojavljajo v *Figarovi svatbi* ter v *Magični piščali* so še bolj jasno in izrazito zastopane v *Fideliju*, edini operi Ludwiga van Beethovna (1770–1827). V njej se nazorno prikazuje rešitev poštenega človeka iz nepravičnega zapora. *Fidelio* vsebuje jasno predstavljene ideje o padcu tiranije in svobodi, ki se pojavijo po francoski revoluciji in ki jih je Beethoven zagovarjal tudi osebno. Simbolizem svobode v *Fideliju* je tako močan, da je večina evropskih opernih hiš po koncu druge svetovne vojne odprla svoja vrata ravno s to predstavo.

V devetnajstem stoletju se je začela romantika, ki je obdobje razcveta nacionalnih političnih idej. To posebej velja za Italijo in Nemčijo, ki se nista združili in osamosvojili v času pomladi narodov, ampak sta kljub vse močnejšim revolucionarnim gibanjem ohranili svojo staro obliko. Obema je bila skupna politična razdrobljenost njunih teritorijev na množico malih držav, ki so jim vladali lokalni plemiči, katerih odločitve so odredile velike evropske sile. Nacionalna gibanja so bila zatirana z vojaško silo in v obeh državah so se vse bolj odkrito kazale težnje po novem družbenem redu in narodnem združevanju.

Opera je v tem času doživljala vse večji razcvet, pomen kulture je bil vse bolj vezan na narodno zavest in prebivalstvo Evrope je bilo vse bolj izobraženo tudi v glasbi in politiki, saj se je hitro dvigovala stopnja pismenosti med revnejšimi sloji. Moč opere se tako končno dokaže leta 1830, ko med ogledom predstave *Nema iz Porticija* v Bruslju, domoljubna vsebina naredi takšen vtis na občinstvo, da to plane na ulico, kjer nastane velika množica, ki se spopade z nizozemsko vojsko. Opera tako začne belgijsko revolucijo in se predstavi v vlogi političnega medija s sposobnostjo mobilizacije občinstva za politična dejanja.

V Italiji je v tistem času ustvarjal Verdi, katerega glasba danes predstavlja enega redkih dejavnikov poenotenja Italijanov in ki je s svojo glasbo zaznamoval prevzem oblasti in združitev Italije. Že ime Verdi je politično obarvano in je pomenilo kratico za *Vittorio Emanuele Re D'Italia*. Opera je delovala kot nacionalna institucija in je navsezadnje od tu tudi izhajala. Verdi postane odposlanec v prvi italijanski vladi in njegova dela, kot so *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Simon Boccanegra* ali *Un ballo in maschera* predstavljajo danes najpomembnejši čas v ustvarjanju italijanske republike in se povezujejo z gibanji karbonarjev in risorgimenta. Verdijevo ime se povezuje z imenom Giuseppea Garibaldija.

V Nemčiji so se v tem času prav tako krepile nacionalistične ideje, vendar so gibanja, ki so bila gibanja, ki so skušala zanetiti prevratniške vstaje, hitro zatrta in njihovi predstavniki usmrčeni ali obsojeni na dolge zaporne kazni. Takšno realnost je izkusil tudi Richard Wagner, ki je po sodelovanju v neuspešni vstaji v Dresdnu moral zbežati v Švico. Analiza Wagnerjevega življenja, njegovih političnih idej in dela predstavlja tretji del diplome. V tem delu smo prikazali, kako težko in kompleksno je bilo življenje zaradi dolgov, ki so Wagnerja pestili skoraj vse življenje ter problemi in sovražniki, ki so mu stali na poti zaradi njegovih političnih stališč, ki jih je zagovarjal v esejih in jih trdovratno branil. Pri Wagnerju smo se osredotočili na njegovo največje delo *Nibelunški prstan*, ki s svojimi petnajstimi urami

gledališkega dogajanja predstavlja tudi največje odrsko delo vseh časov. V njem lahko vidimo Wagnerjeve poglede na svet industrijske revolucije in razvoja kapitalizma, ki se kažejo z zgodbo prvih dveh delov *Prstana*. Ker je Wagner potreboval kar dvajset let, preden je delo končal, se je do njegovega konca močno osebno spremenil in dovršil kot skladatelj.

Za Wagnerja predstavlja ogromno miselno spremembo delo Arthurja Schopenhauerja, ki s svojimi pesimističnimi pogledi na brezupnost človeškega stanja, ki ga pripravi do tega, da opusti pisanje *Prstana* in prične s *Tristanom in Izoldo*. S tem delom, v katerem predstavi svoje nove filozofske nazore, se Wagner zave, kako daleč mu je dosedanja zgodba *Prstana*. Vendar se odloči pustiti že napisano in se posveti skladanju glasbe, ki bo izrazila vse tisto, kar se z odrskim dogajanjem ne da prikazati. V ta namen izbere uporabo leitmotivov, ki smo jo prikazali na primeru *Valkire*. V *Valkiri* se namreč pojavijo vsi najpomembnejši leitmotivi *Prstana*, motive smo predstavili in jih pojasnili ter grafično prikazali. Ker sem si predstavo v živo tudi ogledal sem lahko ocenil ali je sporočila, kot si jih je zamislil Wagner res mogoče interpretirati in skozi njih želel sporočiti zelo kompleksne filozofske pojme in ideje.

V zaključku smo predstavili ugotovitve, ki se navezujejo na tri prej omenjene hipoteze. Prvo hipotezo smo potrdili, saj smo v prvem delu diplome prikazali zgodovinski nadzor nad glasbo s strani religije in države, ki sta tudi tako ohranjali in utemeljevali družbeno ureditev. Verska reforma po tridesetletni vojni se pokaže skozi glasbo J. S. Bacha. Ta hipoteza se nadalje potrjuje tudi v drugem delu diplome, kjer se jasno kaže spreminjanje družbeno-političnih situacij in hkratno obravnavanje teh tem v operi in glasbi.

Druga hipoteza je bila prav tako potrjena, saj se zaradi vse bolj natančnega nadzora, morajo tudi politične vsebine vse bolj prikrivati. Ta hipoteza je bila potrjena predvsem po zaslugi analize glasbe Richarda Wagnerja, ki v svojih operah gradi mitologijo združenega nemškega naroda in ki s svojimi kasnejšimi deli prične izražati zapletene filozofske pojme z uporabo leitmotivov. Način njihove kompleksne uporaba, skozi katerega delujejo ločeno od odrskega dogajanja predstavlja novo tehniko prenašanja sporočil – tako je lahko Wagner s poudarjanjem lastnosti in misli njegovih likov izrazil kar koli je želel. Težava v tem je, da je za njihovo dojetje potrebno predznanje in predanost poslušalcev ter dostopnost Wagnerjevih del, saj so njegova najbolj izrazna dela izredno težka za produkcijo ali pa so bila pod monopolom enega gledališča.