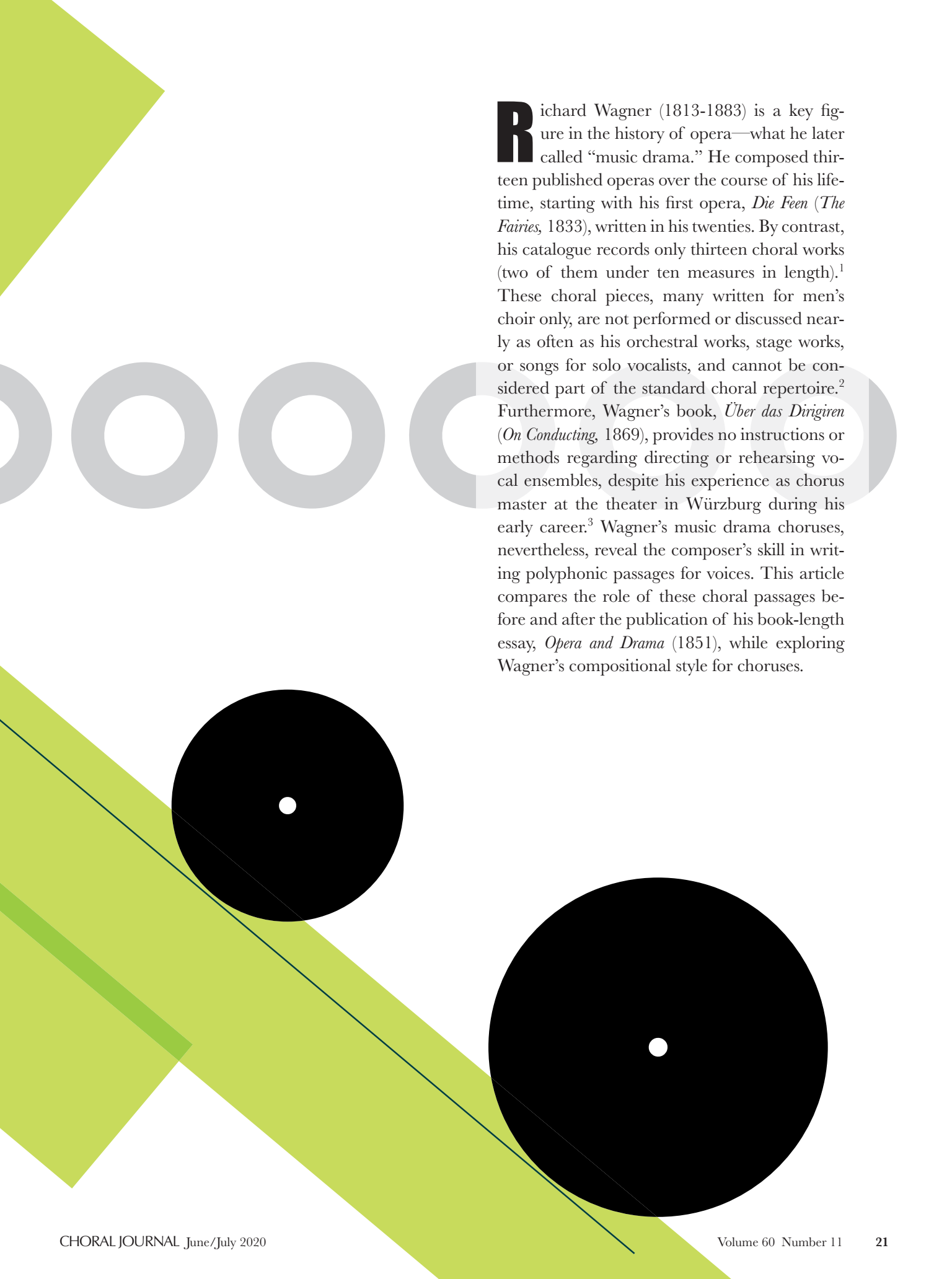


THE CHORUS AS A DRAMATIC FORCE IN WAGNER'S OPERAS

Y U N N - S H A N M A

Yunn-Shan Ma
Assistant Professor of Music Studies
Rochester Institute of Technology
Music Director, Taiwanese Choral Society of Rochester
Rochester, New York
ysmsgsl@rit.edu



Richard Wagner (1813-1883) is a key figure in the history of opera—what he later called “music drama.” He composed thirteen published operas over the course of his lifetime, starting with his first opera, *Die Feen* (*The Fairies*, 1833), written in his twenties. By contrast, his catalogue records only thirteen choral works (two of them under ten measures in length).¹ These choral pieces, many written for men’s choir only, are not performed or discussed nearly as often as his orchestral works, stage works, or songs for solo vocalists, and cannot be considered part of the standard choral repertoire.² Furthermore, Wagner’s book, *Über das Dirigieren* (*On Conducting*, 1869), provides no instructions or methods regarding directing or rehearsing vocal ensembles, despite his experience as chorus master at the theater in Würzburg during his early career.³ Wagner’s music drama choruses, nevertheless, reveal the composer’s skill in writing polyphonic passages for voices. This article compares the role of these choral passages before and after the publication of his book-length essay, *Opera and Drama* (1851), while exploring Wagner’s compositional style for choruses.

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Traditionally, grand operas feature a clear distinction between the writing for the lead singing roles and that of the chorus. The leading roles are the main characters of the work that carry the story of the opera. The lead characters may also combine to form trios, quartets, or other small vocal ensembles, either as the plot requires or at the end of a scene to build a climax. Often, these climactic scenes are backed by the massed singing of the chorus and usually the *tutti* orchestra. In such instances, the choruses do not perform any narrative function, but, rather, simply complement the plot while aiding in the achievement of a grandiose image on the stage. In *Opera and Drama*, Wagner declared the goal of the drama of the future to be poetic realization. Traditional arias, ensembles, and choruses in grand operas, he believed, should be dispensed with if the characters (those who form a group of singers) did not impart distinguishable meaning to the plot. Wagner's aim was not to completely exclude "group vocal singing," but rather the traditional commenting feature of the "chorus" derived from Greek drama.

Wagner's penchant for polychoral style was revealed in the earlier stages of his career. For a concert in Dresden in 1848, Wagner designed an astonishing program in which he conducted Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* and Bach's motet *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied* (BWV 225) between Mozart's *Symphony in D major* and Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony. Wagner intended to include these greatly heterogeneous works together on one program to underline their contrasting styles. Furthermore, Wagner edited the score of Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* performed in the concert, which is an important record of Wagner's interest in interpretation of the music from the Renaissance and Baroque eras. The main feature of both pieces is a double-choir texture. *Stabat Mater* was one of the few works in Palestrina's output utilizing double-choir style, and it was the work Wagner himself decided to edit with modern expression markings. Wagner might have found echoes of his own stylistic preferences, foreshadowed by the masters of previous eras.

Wagner's choral technique is unique: he preferred to arrange in multi-chorus style and to predominantly use *Männerchöre* (men's chorus). By highlighting the

individualities of the grouped singers, Wagner created what is likely the most complex vocal ensemble passages in opera up to that time. Following his argument in *Opera and Drama* that other types of choruses should be abandoned in operas, Wagner successfully provided his own examples of how an opera chorus served as a legitimate dramatic force.

There are numerous studies of various aspects of Wagner's operas including the historical background of the stories, staging, orchestration, musical style, and vocal *fächer* (categories) of Wagnerian opera singers (e.g., Heldenentenors). Fewer scholars have focused on Wagner's choral music or the choruses in his staged works.

A famous passage in *Opera and Drama* states: "Even the Chorus, as hitherto employed in Opera, and according to the significance there assigned it in even the most favorable cases, will have to vanish from our drama."⁴ In light of this remarkable statement, several scholars have examined how Wagner utilized the chorus in his operas after 1852. Alan Roy Anbari writes that Wagner did not succeed in relinquishing the use of a chorus in his later music dramas, even while he criticized the traditional use of choral passages as presenting "stock characters and stock character types," which he felt should be avoided.⁵ Similarly, Ryan Minor, in his article, "Wagner's last chorus: Consecrating space and spectatorship in *Parsifal*," aims to show how Wagner made good use of the choruses in *Parsifal* despite his apparent promise to abolish opera choruses.⁶ In fact, Wagner's music dramas post-1852 all include choruses or passages in which several characters sing together chorally.⁷ It seems highly unlikely that Wagner's ideal music drama should exclude choruses entirely.

Wagner's claim that the chorus would have to vanish from drama has been taken out of context. In earlier sections of *Opera and Drama*, Wagner explained the tradition of the chorus in the Greek tragedy:

Greek Tragedy, in its Chorus and its Heroes, combined the Public with the Art-work: the latter held before the Folk, not only itself, but also its own judgment on itself—as it were, a concrete meditation. Now the Drama ripened

into Art-work in exact measure as the interpretative judgment of the Chorus so irrefutably expressed itself in the actions of the Heroes, that the Chorus was able to step down from the stage and back into the Folk itself; thus leaving behind it only actual partakers in the living Action.⁸

Wagner then stated that Shakespeare's Tragedy unconditionally stands above that of Greece because of the new artistic technique applied to chorus:

With Shakespeare, the Chorus is resolved into divers individuals directly interested in the Action, and whose doings are governed by precisely the same promptings of individual Necessity as are those of the chief Hero himself. Even their apparent subordination in the artistic framework is merely a result of the scantier points of contact they have in common with the chief Hero, and nowise of any technical undervaluing of these lesser personages; for wherever the veriest subordinate has to take a share in the main plot, he delivers himself entirely according to his personal characteristics, his own free fancy.⁹

Following this statement, Wagner refined his objections and made room for exceptions. As Wagner states, the ideal Drama of the Future has:

no room at all for the exhibition of individualities so subsidiary in their reference to the drama [or plot] that they may be employed for the purpose of giving a polyphonic rendering to the harmony, through their merely symphonising share in the melody of the main personages.¹⁰

In other words, the choruses may exist if the characters forming the choir are mandatory to the plot and their narrative is crucial to delivering the action of the story. In Wagner's opinion, the vivid individualities of the Shakespearian theatre gradually lost their uniqueness in the dramatic art of his time. As for opera cho-

ruses, he was against their being merely "well-schooled masses" and "aspects of dumb pageant."¹¹ Wagner felt opera choruses were essentially stage machinery, given voice and set into motion to brighten up scenes and pivot around the main characters. Wagner objected to choruses that focused on individual characters who were subsidiary to the main drama,¹² and he determined that such choruses should be eliminated if their sole purposes was to harmonize the melodies of the main characters, or if they merely strengthened the identification of dramatic scenes.

Accordingly, Wagner declared that choruses should be abolished unless their presence was entirely warranted and necessary to a higher understanding of the drama.¹³ In Anbari's words, he allowed that "this is the only justifiable way a choral episode can be included in a drama."¹⁴ For Wagner, every role in the drama—even several characters forming a chorus—needed to contribute to the plot and the meaning of the story.

Wagner's first music drama following the publication of *Opera and Drama* was *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*, 1848-1874), with its four associated but separate dramas. The only "chorus" in the *Ring* cycle is created by the men and women of the Gibichung tribe, occurring in the latter half of *Götterdämmerung* (*The Twilight of the Gods*, 1876). There is no sign of a chorus *en masse* in the first three music dramas of the *Ring* cycle. Chorus-like passages, however, occur with different sets of important characters in the form of chamber ensembles. In the very first scene of the *Ring* cycle, set at the bottom of the Rhine River in *Das Rheingold* (*The Rheingold*, 1854), the three Rhinemaidens are the first characters to appear. The characters are given distinguishable personalities, including names, and they have sharply outlined responsibilities in the story as guardians of the Rhinegold. Woglinde sings, "Weia! Waga! Waft your waves, ye waters! Carry your crests to the cradle! *Wagalaweia! Wallala weiala weia!*" She is later joined by Wellgunde and Flosshilde, and together they joyfully establish the scene through a dialogue-like trio with each maiden singing independently.

Later, the three maidens tease the repugnant Alberich and teach him about the secrets of the Rheingold. Other passages, the most famous being the moment when they call out the motive of Rheingold,

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are in homophonic texture with all three maidens unifying their text (Figure 1). Thus, the Rhinemaidens are treated both as three individuals and as one set of characters with the same nature—the small ensemble who narrates the story together.

Another set of important characters are the nine Valkyries. Each Valkyrie has an individual name, and they interact as nine independent characters, including Brünnhilde. Following the Act III prelude of *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyrie*, 1870), eight of the Valkyries on stage are undertaking their duty of leading dead heroes to Valhalla. Sometimes, these eight characters sing to each other, just as we would normally chat with our colleagues in the real world. When Brünnhilde appears asking for their shelter, the other eight Valkyries become a unified group. Sometimes they sing in an interwoven, polyphonic texture as an octet (Figure 2 on page 25), but at other times they are divided into three subgroups singing in homophonic texture and thus forming a small chorus (Figures 3a and 3b on page 26).

Similarly, the chorus formed by Gibichung's men and women in *Götterdämmerung* superficially resembles a traditional opera chorus. The Gibichung's vassals, however, are essential to the drama and not just a part of the scenery to decorate the Gibichung's hall. In the third scene of Act II, Hagen calls the vassals and orders them to sacrifice animals as offerings to the gods. Through conversation with the vassals, represented by a men's choir, Hagen is able to lead the preparation for Gunther's upcoming wedding. Hagen's command

to the vassals that they should “serve [Brünnhilde] loyally: if she is ever wronged, be swift to avenge her” reveals the cunning scheme of Alberich's son.¹⁵ This scene could probably also be constructed as if Hagen were talking to himself in his monologue. Nevertheless, since it is about the wedding of Gunther as leader of the Gibichung tribe, it makes more sense to have Hagen's liegemen involved in the scene as witnesses. On the other hand, since Wagner completed the libretto of *Götterdämmerung* four years before the essay *Opera and Drama*, we can assume that the arrangement of the roles in *Götterdämmerung* is similar to the composer's older style.

The choruses in Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* (*The Flying Dutchman*, 1841) highlight another aspect of the composer's approach to opera choruses. There are three different groups of massed choruses in *Der fliegende Holländer*: the Norwegian maidens, the crew of Daland's vessel, and the crew of the title ship, *The Flying Dutchman*. The first scene of Act I starts with the sailors' chorus at work. The sailors speak only among themselves; their song identifies them as sailors and defines the scene as a voyage at sea, but it does not propel the narrative of the ongoing story since they are not speaking to any of the main characters. The second act of the opera contains the famous spinning chorus of the Norwegian maidens (SSAA). The women's chorus not only introduces the background of that particular scene but also reflects, responds to, and comments upon the conversation between the two primary

540

Rhein - gold! hei - a ja - hei - a! hei - a ja - hei - a!

Rhein - gold! hei - a ja - hei - a! hei - a ja - hei - a!

Rhein - gold! hei - a ja - hei - a! hei - a ja - hei - a!

The image shows a musical score for three voices, likely soprano, alto, and tenor, in homophonic texture. The score is numbered 540 at the top left. Each voice part has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "Rhein - gold! hei - a ja - hei - a! hei - a ja - hei - a!". The music consists of three measures, with each voice part having a similar melodic line, demonstrating homophonic texture.

Figure 1. Richard Wagner, *Das Rheingold*, Act I, scene i, mm. 540–542. Rhinemaidens singing in homophonic texture

characters: Senta and Mary. The maidens themselves, however, are not given distinctive personalities and are not mandatory characters in the plot. Wagner cedes a relatively large proportion of this opera to choruses. In the first scene of Act III, for example, the choruses of the sailors and maidens are on stage singing for more than fifteen minutes, and they are on stage again in the final scene of the opera. Yet, the significance of their

roles in the drama is minimal.

Wagner favored using choruses or ensembles as forces to build tension and drama. Many acts and scenes in his music dramas start and/or end with choral passages. The very first scene of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (*The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*, 1868) is set in the church of St. Katherine with the congregation (“*Die Gemeinde*”) singing a chorale. The final scene of the entire music

216

Brünnh. nach!

(Alle Walküren heftig erschreckend)

Helmw. Bist du von Sin - nen? Sa - ge uns! Wie? Flich'st du vor ihm? —

Ortl. Ha! Sprich! Ver - folgt dich Heer - va - ter? O sag'! —

Gerh. Bist du von Sin - nen? Sa - ge uns! Wie? Flich'st du vor ihm? —

Waltr. Ha! Sprich! Ver - folgt dich Heer - va - ter? O sag'! —

Siegr. Bist du von Sin - nen? Sa - ge uns! Wie? Flich'st du vor ihm? —

Rossw. Ha! Sprich! Ver - folgt dich Heer - va - ter? O sag'! —

Grimg. Bist du von Sin - nen? Sa - ge uns! Wie? Flich'st du vor ihm? —

Schwertl. Ha! Sprich! Ver - folgt dich Heer - va - ter? O sag'! —

Figure 2. Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre*, Act III, scene i, mm. 216–219.
The eight Valkyries (without Brünnhilde) in polyphonic octet

218

Brünnh.
Helmw. Gerh.
Sieg. Rossw.
Grim. Schwertl.

Der wil - de Jä - ger, wer wü - thend mich
Heer - va - ter rei - tet sein hei - li - ges Ross! ...
Heer - va - ter rei - tet sein hei - li - ges Ross! ...
Heer - va - ter rei - tet sein hei - li - ges Ross! ...

p *cresc.* *p* *p*

ped. *

222

Brünnh.

jagt, er naht, er naht von Nor - den! Schützt mich, Schwes-tern!

cresc. *f*

ped. * *ped.* * *ped.* * *ped.* *

Figure 3a. Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre*, Act III, scene i, mm. 218–224.

(die Walküren verlassen, in aufgeregter Bewegung, ihre Stellung, indem sie sich tiefer herabziehen.)

258

Helmw. Gerh.
Ortl. Waltr.
Sieg. Rossw.
Grim. Schwertl.
W.

We - - he! Weh! ...
We - - he! Weh! ...
We - - he! Weh! ...
We - - he! Weh! ...
bannt.

ff

ped. * *ped.* *

Figure 3b. Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre*, Act III, scene ii, mm. 258–260.

drama ends with the people (“*Volk*”) praising Mastersingers as practitioners of the “holy German art,” and the great Master Hans Sachs in particular. Likewise, Wagner’s earlier stage work, *Lohengrin* (1850), begins with a men’s chorus singing immediately after the prelude. Furthermore, every act in *Lohengrin* ends with choruses, some divided up to seven parts (SSATTBB).

Being praised as “the most German of all German operas,”¹⁶ *Die Meistersinger* is a story that revolves around a society of musicians as craftsmen and their intricate rules regarding performing and composing. Wagner also includes the actual historical figure Hans Sachs (1494-1576) in the drama; Sachs may have been a symbolic character intended to reflect Wagner himself, meant to justify reformative approaches and techniques in his compositions. Choruses and ensembles occupy a considerable proportion of this music drama as well. In the fifth scene of Act III, for instance, Wagner skillfully utilizes triple-choir texture for the three different groups of craftsmen: the shoemakers, tailors, and bakers. The primary voices in the choruses in *Die Meistersinger* are tenors and basses, which have the most complex settings of all the vocal ensembles: at the end of Act II, there are eighteen different vocal parts for seventeen male vocal parts and one female part interwoven in the plot (Figure 4 on page 28). Choral moments of seven parts, ten parts, or fifteen parts appear frequently. Wagner may well have been trying to give almost every actor on stage his or her own line to underscore their individuality. In the last part of the story, on St. John’s Eve, the characters involved in the disturbance are not just acting as a surrounding sonic backdrop; they are individuals taking active parts in the scene.

The choruses in *Parsifal* (1882), Wagner’s last music drama, are constructed in a more intricate way. *Parsifal*, like *Lohengrin* and *Die Meistersinger*, ends with choral passages. Even if *Parsifal*’s choruses do not carry much of the narrative, as Minor claims, both the flower maidens and the Knights of the Grail are indispensable to the drama.¹⁷ Minor discusses the meaning and function of the choruses in *Parsifal* and provides, along with detailed musical analyses, ideas on their musical and psychological meaning. He proposes that there is a “fundamental correlation between the treatment of the

chorus in *Parsifal* and the consecration which, Wagner insisted, the work performed [at the Bayreuth Festspielhaus].”¹⁸ Since *Parsifal* is Wagner’s last music drama, Minor furthered his argument as such:

Parsifal, according to the tenets in Wagner’s dramaturgical and aesthetic tracts, his last chorus also represents “the” last chorus; in *Parsifal*, what is a gain in the consecration of space is a loss in the communal autonomy of its inhabitants¹⁹

On the other hand, Anbari portrays Wagner’s “ideal use of chorus” through the complexity of the flower maidens’ passage:

The ensemble of the flower-maidens consists of two groups each containing three solo singers, and a double chorus of first, second and third soprano voices, which is again subdivided—probably Wagner’s ideal use of chorus. The most complex female chorus *divisi* give the chorus its acting function of the scene. It is clear that the characters which the choirs bear are essential in the drama rather than merely presenting the masses in the scene.²⁰

This most complex female chorus *divisi* consists of two groups, each containing three solo singers; and a double chorus, each subdivided into three parts. The flower maidens are responsible for luring Parsifal in the form of subdivided double-chorus with twelve parts (Figure 5 on page 29).

Wagner’s execution of choral writing in *Parsifal*, together with the choral moments in his earlier operas, shows his preference for composing voices in *cori spezzati* (split choirs), which are choirs separated by physical space. Besides the flower maidens and knights, Wagner arranged unseen treble voices to sing in the communion ceremony. It is noteworthy that the composer indicates the voices should sound from different heights of the temple. Wagner presents the very last communion scene with double choirs: the unseen voices (SSAA) and Knights of the Grail (TTBB). Each choir is further divided into another set of double choirs: the

Magd. Gott, er hält ihn noch!
 1 Va - ter! Der Va - ter! Ach, sie hau'n ihn tod! Pe - ter! So hö - re doch! Gott
 2 Stef - fen eins! Je - sus! Sie schla - gen mei - nen Jun - gen tod!
 3 Je - sus! Der Hans hat ei - nen lieb am Kopf! Hans! Ei, so hö - re doch!
 4 Gott! Wie sie wal - ken, wie sie wackeln hin und
 1 an! Jetzt geht's erst wa - cker an! Hei... Nun geht's Plautz,
 Alt. Nur im - mer mehr her - an zu uns! Hei... Nun geht's Plautz,
 Ten. Nur im - mer mehr her - an!
 Vogelg. Frau! Auf, scheert euch heim!
 Zorn. Geht's euch was an, wenn ich nicht will?
 Moser. Geht's euch was an, wenn ich nicht will?
 Eissl. Was geht's euch
 Nacht. Was geht's euch an, wenn ich nun grad' hier blei - ben will?
 K. O. Schickt! die Ge -
 Foltz. Schwarz. Frau! Schickt! die Ge -
 T. Macht Platz, wir schla - gen drein!
 B. Woll - tet ihr et - wa den Weg uns hier ver - weh - ren? Gürt - ler!
 Meist. Hau - se heim! Ei... so schlag' das Don - ner - wet - ter
 ff

Figure 4. Richard Wagner, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, end of Act II.
18-part vocal ensemble

1 O Weh! Ach,

2 O Weh! Ach, We - he!

3 Du dort! O! Wel - che

I O Weh! Ach, We - he! O Weh! Ach,

II Weh! — O Weh! Ach, We - he!

III Du dort! O! Wel - che

Erster Chor.

Du dort! Du dort! O! Wel - che

Du dort! Du dort! O! Wel - che

Was schufst du sol - che Not? O! Wel - che

Zweiter Chor.

Weh! — Du dort! Was schufst du sol - che

Weh! — Du dort! Was schufst du sol - che

Not? Was schufst du uns sol - che Not, ach! Wel - che

f *p* *cresc.*

Figure 5. Richard Wagner, *Parsifal*, Act II, scene ii.
Flower Maidens in 12-part subdivided double chorus

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unseen voices are indicated as becoming two groups, singing from the “extreme height of the temple” and “mid height of the temple”; the knights are scored for first choir and second choir (Figure 6).

Here, Wagner demonstrates his ability to compose theatrical music with a clear understanding of stage direction: the three-dimensional space of the stage allows a stage director to have different ideas on how to place the singers/actors of the choir in the scene. *Cori spezzati* was most notably used by Renaissance and Baroque composers in Venice, who adapted music to the architectural features of St. Mark’s Basilica. As a master of music drama, it is reasonable to assume that Wagner was fascinated by this compositional style, which naturally creates a stereo sound effect. Placing the unseen voices to sound from different heights in the temple, perhaps symbolizing angels or saints, Wagner transformed the theater into a convincing representation of a sanctuary. Similarly, in the fifth scene of the third act of *Die Meistersinger*, Wagner skillfully utilizes triple-choir texture for

the three different groups of craftsmen: the shoemakers, tailors, and bakers.

Another prominent feature in the choruses of Wagner’s music dramas is the use of separate men’s and women’s ensembles. The proportion of passages with full SATB choruses is relatively small. Adding to this, Wagner uses more grouped male voices than female. The chorus of Gibichung’s tribe in *Götterdämmerung*, for example, first appears with only the men singing up to seven parts responding to Hagen (see Figure 7a on page 31).

When the Gibichung’s women join the scene to prepare for the weddings, they are given only eight measures of singing, all in unison (see Figure 7b on page 31, *Frauen* part). Most of Wagner’s music dramas make more use of the tradition of the German *Männerchor*, an ensemble that was popular in the nineteenth century. As Karen Ahlquist states in the *Oxford Music Online Encyclopedia*, *Männerchöre* gained prominence around 1817 and became the main body of an extensive political network

The musical score for Figure 6 is arranged in six staves, labeled S1, S2, A1, A2, T, and B from top to bottom. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Aus der höchsten Höhe Höch - sten Hei - les" for S1 and S2; "Aus der mittleren Höhe Höch - sten Hei - les" for A1 and A2; and "Ritter Höch - - - - - sten Hei - les" for T and B. Dynamics include *p* (piano) for S1, S2, A1, and A2; and *pp* (pianissimo) for T and B. The score illustrates a poly-choral style with voices from different heights.

Figure 6. Richard Wagner, *Parsifal*, Act III, scene ii.
Poly-choral style
(Singing from “different heights” of the temple as indicated)

Musical score for Figure 7a, showing seven vocal parts for men (T1, T2, B1, B2) and three bass parts (B1, B2, B3) in 3/4 time with a key signature of three sharps. The lyrics are: "Das Trink-horn zur Hand,- wie hal-ten wir es dann?"

Figure 7a. Richard Wagner, *Götterdämmerung*, Act II, scene iii.
Gibichung's men responding to Hagen in 7 parts

Musical score for Figure 7b, showing vocal parts for Brünnh., Gutr., Frauen, and Mannen in 2/2 time with a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are: "rächt Ver-rath? An wem?"

Figure 7b. Richard Wagner, *Götterdämmerung*, Act II, sc. iv.
Gibichung's men and women

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during the Revolutions in 1848-49. This network, linked into federations, facilitated choral festivals, activities, and even political gatherings forbidden by the government.²¹ Some of Wagner's contemporaries, including Franz Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn, and Anton Bruckner, produced important output for *Männerchor*. Few composers of the time, however, placed emphasis on using *Männerchöre* in operas.²²

Conclusion

The ensembles and choruses in Wagner's music dramas after 1852, including the *Ring* cycle, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Tristan und Isolde*, and *Parsifal*, may be regarded as the composer's only legitimate choral moments, approved by Wagner himself. Wagner not only entrusted each singing role with the most difficult and independent parts, but also grouped and placed these roles in a three-dimensional stage design to heighten the theatrical impact of his *Gesamtkunstwerk* (*Total Work of Art*, a complete integration of music and drama). Wagner's output does not include extensive passages exclusively for choirs, but the passages he did produce clearly illustrate his intentions when including voices in his stage works. They stand as examples of Wagner's belief that the chorus must be a dramatic force in an opera. ◻

NOTES

¹ Barry Millington, *The New Grove Wagner* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 59.

² In Dennis Shrock's book *Choral Repertoire* (New York: Oxford Press, 2009), the author does not even make a list of Wagner's choral works, whereas he did for most of the other composers. In the paragraphs referring to Wagner's choral output, Shrock briefly talks about Wagner's biography and the chronological background of some of his music dramas and choral pieces.

³ Barry Millington, 1-7.

⁴ Richard Wagner, *Opera and Drama*, translated by William Ashton Ellis, 303-304.

⁵ Alan Roy Anbari, *Richard Wagner's Concepts of History* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 2007), 145.

⁶ Ryan Minor, "Wagner's Last Chorus: Consecrating Space

and Spectatorship in *Parsifal*", *Cambridge Opera Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (March, 2005), 1.

⁷ Wagner's operas after 1852 include the four operas in the *Ring*'s cycle: *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and *Parsifal*. As Minor said in his article, Wagner called *Tristan und Isolde* as a "Handlung" ("action" or "drama"); *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* a "music drama"; the *Ring* cycle a "Bühnenfestspiel" ("stage festival play"); and his last stage work *Parsifal* a "Bühnenweihfestspiel" ("stage consecration festival play"). Wagner intentionally avoided using the terminology of "opera" for his latter stage works. For purposes of consistency in this paper, Wagner's stage works before 1852 will be described as "operas," whereas his stage works after 1852 will use the designation "music drama."

⁸ *Opera and Drama*, 60.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 303.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 61-63.

¹² *Ibid.*, 303.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Alan Roy Anbari, 146.

¹⁵ The translation of the libretto is quoted from J. K. Holman's *Wagner's Ring: A Listener's Companion and Concordance* (Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1996), 94.

¹⁶ "Richard Wagner und das Kunstempfinden unsere Zeit: Rundfunkrede von Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels's *Völkischer Beobachter*, August 8, 1933.

¹⁷ Ryan Minor, 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Alan Roy Anbari, 126.

²¹ Karen Ahlquist, "Männerchor" in *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2088074> (accessed July 25, 2012).

²² Suzanne Snyder states in her article "The Indianapolis Männerchor: Contributions to a New Musicality in Midwestern Life" (collected in *Music and Culture in America, 1861-1918*, edited by Michael Saffle) that Wagner's works had the most frequent appearance at the 1908 Sängerkunst among works of Beethoven, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Puccini, Saint-Saëns, and Tchaikovsky.