Lortzing's *Hans Sachs* as inspiration for Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*

Albert Lortzing (1801-51) wrote his comic opera *Hans Sachs* in 1840, and it was first performed that year at Leipzig. His best-known work, *Zar und Zimmermann* (*Tsar and Carpenter*) had had its premiere three years earlier.

For 150 years, Lortzing was, after Mozart and Verdi, the most performed opera composer in Germany.[1] In 1928/29 there were 843 performances of his works in German theatres, compared with 821 of Mozart's.[2] The decade 1955-65 saw 8,719 Lortzing performances, a number exceeded only by the operas of Verdi, Mozart and Puccini.[3] However, there have been fewer stagings of Lortzing's works in recent years.[4]

In modern times, *Hans Sachs* was performed at the Young Artists' Festival at Bayreuth in 1983, and since then it has been staged at Saarbrücken (1985), Heidelberg (1986) and Osnabrück (where it was also recorded) in 2001.

Lortzing was related by marriage[5] to August Röckel, Wagner's assistant at Dresden and fellow revolutionary, who spent thirteen years in Waldheim prison for his involvement in the 1849 uprisings. Röckel was the nephew of Hummel who was a pupil of Mozart, Clementi, Albrechtsberger, Haydn and Salieri, friend of Beethoven and Schubert and teacher of Mendelssohn and Czerny who, in turn, taught Liszt. It was a very small world, musically speaking in those days.

In his essay *A Communication to my Friends*, Wagner recalled that, in the mid-1840s, 'certain good friends' (including, no doubt, Röckel) had tried to persuade him to compose an opera in a lighter genre, for which Lortzing provided the obvious model.

And so, during a health cure at the spa at Marienbad in Bohemia in 1845 (a seminal year in the Wagner story) he began to think about Hans Sachs and the Mastersingers of Nuremberg as possible subjects for a lighter work. At Marienbad on 16th July 1845, he signed off on a long and detailed three-act prose sketch that was remarkably close to the drama we know today. 'I took Hans Sachs' he wrote later, 'as the final manifestation of the artistically creative popular spirit, and set him, in this sense, in contrast to the pettifogging bombast of the other Mastersingers; to whose absurd pedantry of *Tabulatur* and prosody, I gave a concrete personal expression in the figure of the "Marker." '[6]

Virtually all of the key ingredients of Wagner's finished work are to be found in that 1845 sketch, and at the end, added as an afterthought, is the couplet with its word play on 'Holy Roman Empire' and 'holy German art':

> 'Tho' the Holy Roman Empire dissolve in mist,
> yet for us will holy German art persist.'

Sachs's final words echo those of Schiller, written fifty years earlier. 'While the political empire totters' said Schiller, 'the spiritual empire has become increasingly secure and more perfect.'

However, there are interesting differences between the 1845 sketch and the finished version. Some are matters of detail such as the relocation of the action in Act One from the church of St Sebaldus, Wagner's first choice, to that of St Catherine although, in fact, St Catherine's wasn't used by the Mastersingers until the 17th century, long after the time of Hans Sachs. Other differences are of greater consequence and relate to the characters. Sachs is cynical, even calculating in the sketch; and the (unnamed) young knight is more prone to self-pity than self-confidence. The sketch also reveals that Wagner was in two minds as to how the Marker (unnamed) should get hold of the prize song. Should he steal it? Or should Sachs give it to him, passing it off as a work of his youth and thereby perpetrating a cruel hoax? In the sketch, the love-interest is fully developed in the first scene, whereas it is handled more tentatively and to better effect in the final score. Sachs' soliloquy in Act Three is not the philosophical reverie on folly and delusion that it became, but a discourse on the decline of German poetic arts. There is no reference yet to 'the sad tale of *Tristan und Isolde*' because Wagner hadn't considered this story in 1845. But there are references in the sketch to Siegfried, Grimhilde and Hagen, and to Wolfram's Parzival, characters who were already jostling for attention during that crucial holiday at Marienbad.

Die Meistersinger wasn't finished until 1867 - *Lohengrin*, most of the *Ring* and *Tristan* having intervened. However, the huge libretto was completed in January 1862, well before Bismarck came to office in Prussia, two years before Wagner met Ludwig II of Bavaria, four-and-a-half years before Prussia's victory in its war with Austria and Bavaria, and eight-and-a-half years before the Franco-Prussian War.

National pride in the 'old Thuringian spirit', 'the great Emperors' and the poetic wealth of 'our great German past' features in the 1845 sketch but not in the libretto, and there is a reason for this. The works that influenced Wagner in 1845, such as Lortzing's opera, the play on which it was based, and even the original writings of Hans Sachs, stressed love of the fatherland, and so he picked up this theme. However, by 1861 his ideas had matured and the finished work became a study in aesthetics and humanism. Any traces of those earlier influences were now directed firmly towards art.

We know that at the time of the 1845 sketch, Wagner was interested in the history of 'the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation' as it had been called since the late 15th Century. This thousand-year *Reich* that had begun with Charlemagne in 800 AD, was finally dissolved on 6 August 1806 at the behest of Napoleon. The empire had been in a long, slow decline and it took only a puff from Napoleon to blow it away. The constituent kingdoms and principalities then became attractive targets for the French. Wagner was especially interested in the empire's Ottonian dynasty (also known as the Saxon dynasty) that included King Henry the Fowler, immortalized as Kőnig Heinrich in *Lohengrin* (begun 1845), and the Hohenstaufen dynasty. The latter

featured in his 1843 plans for an opera to be called *Die Sarazenin* (The Saracen Woman) and 1846 plans for an opera about Friedrich Barbarossa. The Hohenstaufens were also at the centre of his *Wibelungen* essay of 1849, in which he sought to link history and myth.

Nuremberg had been a free imperial city from the 13th century, which meant it was governed by a powerful town council answerable directly to the emperor but not to other princes and rulers. It did not become part of Bavaria until 1806. The emperor at the time in which Lortzing set his drama, 1517, was Maximilian I. Maximilian was a keen supporter of the arts and sciences, and surrounded himself with scholars whom he appointed to court posts. His reign saw the first flourishing of the Renaissance in Germany. Maximilian appears on stage in Lortzing's opera, resolving conflicts and restoring harmony, as good monarchs should.

In *Die Meistersinger*, Sachs refers in his closing address to the threat of 'foreign mists and foreign vanities', a provocative phrase to modern ears but one that reflects an historical reality – the anxiety felt about the cultural alienation of the emperor from his people following the death of Maximilian in 1519. Maximilian's successor was Charles V of Aragon and Castile, who claimed that he spoke Spanish to God, Italian to women, French to men, and German to his horse. He was succeeded by his brother, Ferdinand I, who was emperor during the period in which *Die Meistersinger* is set, although neither he nor any other political figure appears in Wagner's drama - unlike Lortzing's.

Religion plays a more important role in *Die Meistersinger* than it does in Lortzing's *Hans Sachs*. Reformation, renaissance and renewal all find expression in *Die Meistersinger* through the recurring metaphor of baptism. The action is set at a time when Luther's Reformation was taking hold in northern Europe, and the Counter-Reformation was being launched by Pius IV, whose pontificate began in 1560 - the very year in which *Die Meistersinger* is set. How can we be so sure about this date for the opera when Wagner specified only 'about the middle of the sixteenth century' in his libretto? Because 1560 was the only year in which the historical Hans Sachs was a widower. He remarried the following year.

Lortzing's comic opera – *Singspiel* really, because it has a lot of spoken dialogue - had its first performance on 23 June 1840 as part of a Leipzig festival that celebrated the quadricentenary of the invention of moveable type. Amongst the other works in the festival was Mendelssohn's Symphony no 2, *Lobgesang* (Hymn of Praise), commissioned especially for the event. This symphony was concerned with mankind's progress from darkness to enlightenment through the dissemination of God's word via the Gutenberg Bible. The opera on the other hand was devoted to one of the most prolific users of words, who wrote over 6,000 works of various kinds including more than 4,000 mastersongs, disseminated through the agency of moveable type.

It seems unlikely that Wagner had seen a *performance* of Lortzing's *Hans Sachs* before he penned his own thoughts on the subject, since he was in Paris at the time of the 1840 premiere and was still there in 1841 when further

performances were given in Leipzig and in Detmold where Lortzing had once lived. He was fully engaged in his duties as Kapellmeister at Dresden when another performance was given at Detmold in May 1843, and he was preoccupied with *Tannhäuser* at the time of the revised staging at Mannheim in May 1845. However, there are so many coincidences between *Die Meistersinger* and Lortzing's opera that he must have been familiar with the latter, at least from the page. He refers to Röckel as having modest ambitions as a composer and 'with no higher purpose than to equal the achievements of his brother-in-law Lortzing'. So he knew what those achievements were. Perhaps Wagner didn't want people to think that *his* ambitions were also modest, or that he was cribbing another composer's ideas. He was similarly coy in admitting that his interest in the Tristan story had been kindled by Schumann's plans in 1846 for an opera on the subject - plans, incidentally, to which both Hanslick and Mendelssohn were privy.

We know that Wagner liked the score of *Zar und Zimmermann* because, years later, it was amongst the works he would play and sing for his own amusement – badly, one witness recalled, but with great vivacity and expressiveness.[7]

Albert Lortzing lived to be only 49, and in the period before his death he was under huge stress and deeply in debt. His wife and the surviving seven of their eleven children were left virtually destitute and, although friends came to their rescue, it was too late for poor Lortzing. His music was popular, but it was pirated with impunity in those days before adequate royalty arrangements, and this robbed him of income. He was treated badly by theatre managements and, in the end, was reduced to conducting vaudeville in Berlin. He was too ill to attend the opening performance of his last opera *Die Opernprobe*, too poor to pay for a doctor, and died the following day.

Lortzing's *Hans Sachs* was loosely based on the dramatic poem of the same name by Johann Ludwig Deinhard von Deinhardstein. This play was successful and was translated into other languages. It was certainly known to Wagner. Deinhardstein, in addition to being a writer and critic, was an official at the imperial court and teacher of aesthetics at the diplomatic academy in Vienna. He was literary manager and assistant head of the Hofburgtheater and a censor for the imperial police under Metternich. His play *Hans Sachs* was first produced in Vienna in 1827, and Goethe, no less, provided a prologue for a subsequent Berlin performance. In fact it was Goethe who had rediscovered Sachs in the course of his exploration of the world of the sixteenth century, and who had written a poem in 1776 (the bicentenary of Sachs's death) entitled *Explanation of an Old Woodcut Representing Hans Sachs' Poetical Calling*. Echoes of this poem can be heard in *Die Meistersinger*, especially in the *Wahn*-monologue and in Walther's evocation of the Muse of Parnassus. The Berlin performance of Deinhardstein's play was prefaced by Goethe's poem for which a special introduction had been written, and this was declaimed by the actor Eduard Devrient who was to become an associate of Wagner in Dresden from 1843 and whose advice led to the creation of the prologue to *Götterdämmerung*. So, not only did Wagner

have a connection with Lortzing through Röckel, he had another with Deinhardstein through Devrient.

In Lortzing's opera, set in 1517 when the historical Hans Sachs would have been 23, the action turns on Sachs's first courtship and marriage. He is a young master cobbler in love with Kunigunde, daughter of Meister Steffen (the equivalent of Wagner's Pogner), a goldsmith and status-conscious mastersinger who is elected Bürgermeister.

Steffen has chosen a prospective husband for his daughter in one Eoban Hesse[8], an Alderman from Augsburg, not far from Nuremberg. Steffen announces that his Kunigunde will be the prize at a singing contest open to everyone. But since he is unwilling to leave anything to chance, he secretly arranges for the masters to award the prize to Eoban. In *Die Meistersinger*, Beckmesser thinks he has a similar 'understanding' with Pogner. In due course, Eoban is declared the victor with a song about the death of King David's rebellious son Absolom, even though the spectators clearly prefer Sachs's song of love and the fatherland.

The Emperor Maximilian appears on the scene. Sachs's apprentice Gőrg (the equivalent of Wagner's David) had stolen one of his master's songs, intending to send it to his sweetheart Kordula (the equivalent of Magdalene) who is Kunigunde's cousin. But the song was lost and, by chance had fallen into the hands of the emperor who admires it and wants to know who wrote it. Eoban Hesse claims that it is his work, but when he is asked to perform it, he gets into a frightful muddle, confusing it with his 'Absolom' song, and everyone laughs at him. It is pretty clear where Wagner's treatment of Beckmesser came from. Eventually, Gőrg's confession leads to a dénouement which leaves Sachs and his Kunegunde to live happily ever after.

The historical Sachs did indeed marry a woman called Kunigunde Kreutzer who died in 1560, and he remarried the following year when he was 67. His second wife was called Barbara, and she was 29 when they married.

Amongst the other characters in Lortzing's opera is the 'First Marker' (historically, there were three Markers to scrutinize a performance) whose name is Meister Stott. Stotterer means 'stutterer', so associations between the marker and stuttering or stammering definitely pre-date Wagner.

There is further common ground between Lortzing and Wagner in terms of dramatic devices. We find a rudimentary use of leading-motives in Lortzing's score, with the theme of the emperor's admiration for Sachs handled in much the same way as the 'forbidden question' theme in *Lohengrin*. In both *Die Meistersinger* and *Hans Sachs* there is a full-scale dance of the Apprentices. In each work too, we are given a rhythmical cobbling song with nonsensical words used as a refrain between verses. In *Die Meistersinger*, Sachs sings 'Jerum! Jerum! Hallo halloe! Oho! Trallalei! Trallalei! Ohe!' In Act Two of Lortzing's opera, Gőrg sings: 'Juchhe! Juchhe! Jufalalalalalalala fallalei! Juchhe! Juchhe!' and so forth. The devices are similar, but while in *Die Meistersinger* we have a complex, dramatic situation built around the

attempted elopement of Walther and Eva, Gőrg's song is, by contrast, charmingly naïve.

In *Meistersinger*, as Sachs bellows loudly and strikes his hammer, he sings about Adam and Eve being driven out of paradise and treading painfully because they went unshod - which is why angels were the first cobblers. We hear the surprised and then resigned interjections of Walther and Eva, whose escape has been foiled, and the cantankerous mutterings of Beckmesser who, like the serpent, is there to tempt Eva with his serenading. There are references to Adam and Eve and the serpent in Goethe's poem on Hans Sachs.

Deinhardstein's play was a tragedy, but Lortzing turned it into a comedy with the help of his friends Philipp Reger and Philipp Düringer. The main contributions of Lortzing and his librettists were the singing competition, the outdoor celebration, the theft and garbling of a love poem, and the treatment of the populace as an important participant in the action – all features that were to be picked up and developed by Wagner.

In both the play and comic opera, Sachs is disliked by the establishment (personified by the Bürghers), and by his fellow guild members. In the play he is derided as being too smart for his own good, always wanting to be different and paying little heed to the *Tabulatur*. Beckmesser picks up this theme in *Meistersinger*. In Lortzing's opera, Sachs is patronized because of his lowly occupation – a humble *Schuster* (cobbler) – and lack of sophistication. But the townsfolk love him, and in his competition with Eoban Hesse they are definitely on his side, supporting him in defiance of the self-interested verdict of the middle-class masters.[9]

When Emperor Maximilian brings about the happy ending, he is carrying out the wishes of the people. Just as Sachs is the people's artist, so Maximilian is the people's emperor. 'Is he not the father of his people?' Sachs asks in Act One. 'Is there anyone in the empire who does not love the emperor?'[10]

Interestingly, Wagner advocated a similar role for the Saxon king during the 1848 upheavals, proposing that the existing power structure be swept away, but that the king should remain as father of his people and head of a crowned republic. This put Wagner squarely in the camp of those not to be trusted. The Minister of Culture at the Saxon court at the time was Baron Ludwig von der Pfordten, soon to become Prime Minister to the King of Bavaria and an arch-enemy of Richard Wagner. Undoubtedly, much of the hostility towards Wagner in Munich in the 1860s had its roots in his last few years in Dresden.

Lortzing and his librettists make use of an old 18th century piece of doggerel to the effect that Hans Sachs was a shoe-/maker and a poet too (*'Hans Sachs war ein Schuh-/Macher und Poet dazu'*). Wagner also uses this at the end of Sachs's cobbling song. In Act One of *Die Meistersinger* there is a variation of it (although it is usually lost in the din at the end of the Act) when Sachs says of Walther: 'If I, Hans Sachs, make verse and shoes, he's a knight and a poet too'.

Maximilian arrives at Sachs's workshop incognito and tells him that the emperor has read some of his verses and wishes to meet him. He has heard that a Bürgermeister in Nuremberg is offering the hand of his daughter as the prize in a singing contest, and asks if this is true. Sachs, overflowing with love for Kunigunde, confirms that it is. He had almost forgotten the song contest the next day. What should he sing about? Manly virtues or women's tenderness? Or the joy of love that makes the heart beat faster? What was it that made him turn to poetry? Love's happiness, and the fatherland.' This combination of love and fatherland is proclaimed repeatedly by Sachs, notably in his prize song. Sachs is overwhelmed by the realization that the emperor has him in his thoughts, and this becomes a recurring and consoling theme throughout the work.

The *Wahn*-monologue has a counterpart in Lortzing's opera in Sachs's Act One monologue: *'Wo bist du, Sachs? Hat mit ein Traum umfangen?'* (Where are you, Sachs? In the midst of a dream?')

Wagner's Beckmesser combines two of Lortzing's characters: the First Marker, Meister Stott, and Eoban Hesse, the opinionated, classically educated Alderman from Augsburg. Eoban arrives at Sachs's workshop with a pair of shoes that need mending (paralleling Sachs's mending of Beckmesser's shoes in Act Two of *Die Meistersinger*). He has all the qualities that we know and love in Sixtus Beckmesser, who is of course the only Mastersinger in Wagner's work to be classically educated, to have a Latin first name and to occupy an important official position. Eoban even *sounds* like Beckmesser, and can't accept the fact that his rival is a humble cobbler. '*Ein Ratsherr und ein Schuster*' ('an Alderman and a cobbler') – they are unlikely competitors. At one point Eoban mockingly says to the apprentice Gőrg: 'then you're also a shoemaker and a poet too', to which Gőrg replies: 'Most kind of you! But please! …A tombstone is the place for lines like these'.

There is no procession of guilds in either Lortzing's opera or Deinhardstein's play, since this feature was entirely Wagner's innovation. In fact, there were no craft guilds in Nuremberg after 1394, when an uprising led to their dissolution. Wagner got the idea of a procession of craftsmen when he was in exile in Zürich and witnessed the *Sechseläuten* festival, still held each year in April to drive out winter spirits and welcome the spring.[11]

In Act Two of Lortzing's opera, an unruly crowd gathers on the festival meadow for the song contest. *'Stille'* (be quiet') and *'Ruhe'* (calm down') people call out, in the manner of the cries of *'Silentium!'* from Wagner's apprentices, but no-one takes any notice. The choruses with their drawn-out vowel sounds anticipate Wagner's treatment of the 'bleating', 'stretching' and 'baking' of his guilds. We hear the stammering interjections of Meister Stott as he struggles to make his announcements and others impatiently finish his sentences for him.

Sachs is invited to perform his patriotic poem and song, which draws enthusiastic 'bravos' from the crowd. Eoban then performs his song,

provoking gales of laughter for his clumsy account of Absolom being caught by his beautiful long hair in a tree (and summarily executed). This anticipates Beckmesser's mangled, half-remembered lines: 'on airy paths I scarcely hang from the tree' and the crowd's aside that 'He'll soon hang from the gallows, the gallows!' Undeterred, Meister Steffen in his noblest 'Pogner' voice awards Kunigunde's hand to Eoban, much to the crowd's astonishment and Sachs's despair.

In Act Three, Eoban is obliged to perform before the Emperor the poem he had claimed as his own work. However, his bungled performance as he steals quick glances at the text and introduces scraps of his Absolom song, clearly anticipates the scene in *Die Meistersinger* when Beckmesser confuses Walther's 'morning dream' with his own ludicrous serenade from the night before.

Lortzing's Sachs then intervenes and declaims the poem properly. Eoban's disgrace in front of the Emperor is complete and he is sent packing. Lortzing actually goes further than Wagner in rubbing-in the fraudster's humiliation. Despite everything, Wagner's Sachs is still able to refer to the Marker as 'friend Beckmesser'.

In Lortzing's opera, class rivalry features prominently, with the rivals being the socially high-flying Eoban and the humble, non-conforming Sachs. But class has little or no place in *Die Meistersinger*. 'Whether lord or peasant doesn't matter here' says Wagner's Sachs, 'Here it is only a question of art'. Steffen is class-conscious in a way that Pogner is not. Indeed, Pogner's motivation for offering that which he values most – including his daughter - is not to acquire a socially acceptable son-in-law but to respond to the accusation that Nuremberg values its commerce more highly than its art.

Lortzing's opera concludes with the people praising the emperor, but Wagner replaces the figure of Maximilian with Sachs, and Sachs's roles as lover and artist are given to Walther. So, it is a poet, not an emperor – art, not politics - that brings about the happy ending of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Die Meistersinger is the *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Merry Wives of Windsor* of the Wagnerian canon, and much else besides. Its score is a miracle of musical invention and its libretto one of the great works of theatrical poetry. However, there is no doubt that Wagner owed more than a few dramatic ideas to Lortzing's *Hans Sachs* (as Lortzing did to preceding works). It is clear too that certain controversial features in the characterisation and treatment of Beckmesser have their origins in Lortzing's comic opera of 1840 and the theatrical traditions from which it sprang.

Peter Bassett

Postscript

Before Wagner and Lortzing there was Adalbert Gyrowetz, a Bohemian composer who, at the age of 71, wrote a 'Romantic, Comic *Singspiel* in Two Acts' called *Hans Sachs im vorgerückten Alter* (*Hans Sachs in Later Life*). This was completed in 1834, the year of Wagner's *Die Feen*. Coming from a musical family, Gyrowetz started life as a lawyer and linguist, which enabled him to acquire a post in the imperial bureaucracy in Vienna where he had special responsibility for the military archives. For a few years he was essentially a part-time composer, but in 1804 he accepted a post as Vice-Kapellmeister at the court theatres, and his course was set. Importantly, he nearly always had a paying job until his retirement in 1831, and he became one of the most revered figures in Vienna's musical life. He lived to be 87, and although his final years were rather lean financially, his friends, who regarded him as a living link with Haydn and Mozart, made sure that he didn't go short. One of his most generous benefactors was Meyerbeer. Today Gyrowetz is all but forgotten.

Gyrowetz developed a warm relationship with Mozart and befriended Beethoven. He was a pallbearer at the latter's funeral, and then survived him by twenty-three years. His career lasted so long that he himself began to feel like a visitor from another age – a kind of Beckmesser, keeper of the sacred flame of outmoded musical styles. Wagner makes no mention of Gyrowetz, although he must have known of him as the composer of some 30 operas, 28 ballets, 40 symphonies, 11 masses and a vast number of chamber works.

In his *Singspiel*, the fifty-year-old Sachs helps a younger man to win the lady, just like Wagner's Sachs. The younger man is a nobleman who has sought Sachs's help in becoming a Mastersinger – like Walther von Stolzing. One of Sachs's monologues anticipates to some extent the *Wahn*-monologue in *Meistersinger*.

What does Gyrowetz's *Singspiel* sound like? No recording has been made of it, and it hasn't been revived in modern times, but we do know that he modelled his composition style on that of Josef Haydn, whom he idolized and knew well. Indeed, one of his symphonies was mistakenly attributed to Haydn. He composed about 100 songs, and the 21 year-old Eduard Hanslick, who met him in 1846, wrote: 'I was thrilled to make the acquaintance of the venerable man who had been a friend of Mozart and Haydn and whose operas and ballets had flourished in Germany and Italy for decades. Every morning he composed a song, and he presented to me the latest egg, just new-laid, inviting me to a meal with him next day at midday sharp.' Hanslick, who was also a native of Bohemia, once remarked that musical history began with Mozart and culminated in Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms. So he would certainly have approved of Gyrowetz.

Hans Sachs in Later Life had been planned for Dresden in 1833 but doesn't seem to have been performed there until the following year. It would be nice to imagine Wagner coming across the score in the theatre archives when he

took up his post in 1842, but to date, no evidence has been found to support this.

A live recording of Lortzing's *Hans Sachs* is generally available in a digital remastering of a 1950 mono recording featuring Max Loy conducting the Nürnberger Singgemeinschaft and Fränkisches Landesorchester, and singers Karl Schmitt-Walter, Albert Vogler, Max Kohl, Friederike Sailer, Margot Weindl, Karl Mikorey and Richard Wölker. Notwithstanding the high quality of the performances, this is an abridged and adapted version by Max Loy and Willi Hanke (*Schauspielhaus* of the *Theater der Stadt der Reichsparteitag* in Nuremberg), prepared for the centenary celebrations of 1940 and tailored to Nazi propaganda interests.

Another live recording, in this instance using the complete 1845 text and score, was made in 2001 by the Osnabrück Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of the Metropolitan Theatre Osnabrück, conducted by Till Drömann, with singers Gerard Quinn, Michail Milanov, Kate Radmilovic, Marlene Mild, Ulrich Wand, Mark Hamman, Hans-Hermann Ehrich and Silvio Heil. The text and score for this recording were assembled from autograph sources by Antje Müller, Frieder Reininghaus and Erich Waglechner.

PB

[1] Jürgen Lodemann, *Lortzing, Gaukler und Musiker*, Steidl, 2000.

[2] Hugo Leichtentritt in The Musical Times, Vol. 72, No 1056, Feb. 1931, pp 160-161. In the Nazi years after 1933, when the number of Wagner performances actually decreased by more than a third in Germany, the number of Lortzing performances increased dramatically. It was the reassuring appeal of the *Volksoper* (the light opera tradition cultivated assiduously by the regime) that was most in tune with those times, not the Schopenhauerean world of Wagnerian music drama.

[3] Figures published by the Deutscher Bühnenverein, covering all the theatres in Germany, Austria and German-speaking Switzerland.

[4] Fewer than thirty performances are scheduled for 2008, in Germany and the United Kingdom.

[5] Caroline Henriette Charlotte Elstermann-Lortzing (1809-1871) married (Karl) August Röckel in December 1840. She was the foster-daughter of Johann Friedrich Lortzing (Albert's uncle and an actor and associate of Goethe). Her mother was Beate Elstermann. Wagner in *Mein Leben* refers to the composer Lortzing as Röckel's brother-in-law, which is not correct, but there was a family connection.

[6] *A Communication to my Friends*, 1851, tr. William Ashton Ellis, University of Nebraska Press, p.329.

[7] Berthold Kellermann, quoted in Ronald Taylor, *Richard Wagner, His Life, Art and Thought*, Paul Elek, 1979, p. 232.

[8] Deinhardstein's character was called Eoban Runge (tr. stake or supporter = pillar of society?). The historical Eoban Hesse was quite unlike his operatic namesake and was a poet of Nuremberg. He was a confidant of Martin Luther and accompanied him to Rome in 1519.

[9] Dieter Borchmeyer, *Drama and the World of Richard Wagner*, trans. Daphne Ellis, Princeton, 2003, pp. 189-190.

[10] ibid.

[11] ibid. p. 138.