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Richard Wagner

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General preface

This is a series of studies of individual operas, written for the serious opera-goer or record-collector as well as the student or scholar. Each volume has three main concerns. The first is historical: to describe the genesis of the work, its sources or its relation to literary prototypes, the collaboration between librettist and composer, and the first performance and subsequent stage history. The history is itself a record of changing attitudes towards the work, and an index of general changes of taste. The second is analytical and it is grounded in a very full synopsis which considers the opera as a structure of musical and dramatic effects. In most volumes there is also a musical analysis of a section of the score, showing how the music serves or makes the drama. The analysis, like the history, naturally raises questions of interpretation, and the third concern of each volume is to show how critical writing about an opera, like production and performance, can direct or distort appreciation of its structural elements. Some conflict of interpretation is an inevitable part of this account; editors of the handbooks reflect this – by citing classic statements, by commissioning new essays, by taking up their own critical position. A final section gives a select bibliography and guides to other sources.

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Abbreviations

- ML* R. Wagner, *Mein Leben* (Munich, 1911; ed. M. Gregor-Dellin, 1963; trans. A. Gray, 1983)
SS R. Wagner, *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen* (ed. H. von Wolzogen and R. Sternfeld, Leipzig, 6th edn, 1914)
WWV J. Deathridge, M. Geck and E. Voss, *Wagner Werk-Verzeichnis* (Mainz, 1986)

Composition and performance details

The various drafts and copies of the text of *Die Meistersinger* are referred to by the nomenclature established by J. Deathridge, M. Geck and E. Voss (eds.), *Wagner Werk-Verzeichnis (WWV)* (Mainz, 1986), as follows (not every printing is listed).

Text I The prose draft of 1845. Reprinted *Die Musik*, 20/1 (1902), pp. 1799–809, including sketch, with commentary by R. Sternfeld; *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen (SS)*, XI (1911), 344–55; trans. in R. Rayner, *Wagner and 'Die Meistersinger'* (Oxford, 1940), 16–24; M. Soden, *Richard Wagner: 'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg'* (Frankfurt, 1983), pp. 144–57; trans. J. Ennis in *Wagner*, 8/1 (January 1987), pp. 13–22.

Text II The prose draft of 1861. Reprinted in Soden, *Richard Wagner*, pp. 159–87; *SS*, XI, pp. 356–78; trans. J. Ennis in *Wagner*, 9/3 (July 1988), pp. 106–15.

Text III Fair copy (1861), with some revisions, of Text II. Reprinted in *SS*, XI, p. 379–94.

Text IV First draft of libretto (25 January 1862). Facsimile in anon. [Bureau de dramaturgie de l'opéra national] (ed.), *Richard Wagner: 'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg'* (Brussels, 1985).

Text V Fair copy of libretto (31 January 1862). Facsimile in E. Voss, *Richard Wagner: 'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg'* (Mainz, 1983).

Text VI Second copy of libretto. Lost.

Text VII MS of five pages of drafts and alterations, principally concerning the Prize Song.

Music composed April 1862–September 1864 (with interruptions); January–March 1866; May 1866–24 October 1877.

First performance, Munich, Königliches Hof- und National-Theater, 21 June 1868, with Franz Betz (Hans Sachs), Kaspar Bausewein (Pogner), Karl Samuel Heinrich (Vogelgesang), Eduard

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x *Composition and performance details*

Sigl (Nachtigall), Gustav Hölzel (Beckmesser), Wilhelm Fisher (Kothner), Weixlstorfer (Zorn), Eduard Hoppe (Eisslinger), Pöppel (Moser), Franz Thoms (Ortel), Grasser (Hans Schwarz), Hayn (Hans Foltz), Franz Nachbaur (Walther), Max Schlosser (David), Mathilde Mallinger (Eva), Sophie Diez (Magdalene), Ferdinand Lang (Nightwatchman); sets Heinrich Döll, Christian Jank, Angelo Quaglio; conductor Hans von Bülow; producer Reinhard Hallwachs under the general direction of Wagner.