

Contents

	<i>page</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>		
<i>Note on abbreviations of sources</i>		x
Introduction		I
1 Modes of heroism in the early nineteenth century		5
An anti-heroic age		5
The romantic hero		8
The epic hero		13
The messianic hero		16
2 Wagner and the early nineteenth-century theatre		20
Theatre and freedom		20
Limitations of the theatre		22
German romantic opera and <i>Die Feen</i>		25
Grand opera and <i>Rienzi</i>		29
3 Early music-drama: the isolated hero		37
The Flying Dutchman: vampire and wanderer		38
Tannhäuser: sexual transgressor and artist		47
Lohengrin: a glimpse of utopia		57
4 Heroism, tragedy, and the <i>Ring</i>		68
The <i>Ring</i> and tragedy		68
The <i>Ring</i> as heroic deed		74
The destruction of nature and the coming of fear		76
The prison of the past		80
The failed romantic hero		83
The new hero		86
A crisis in composition: who is the hero?		88
Compassion as a heroic force		90
Return to the <i>Ring</i>		92
Siegfried, the son of his father		94
Brünnhilde		98

viii

Contents

5	The last music-dramas: toward the messiah	102
	Last dramas	102
	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> : “the endpoint of romanticism”	103
	<i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i> : artistic utopia	115
	<i>Parsifal</i> : utopia found	128
6	Wagner’s heroism on stage	142
	Wagner, fascism, and anti-Semitism	142
	The mixed appeal of Wagner	146
	“The curse of ridiculousness”	149
	Clearing the stage: symbolism	153
	Dramas of greed and power	156
	Imagist and absurdist Wagner	161
	Wagner: post-spectacle	163
	<i>Notes</i>	170
	<i>Bibliography</i>	182
	<i>Index</i>	188