

Jarmila Gabrielová

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK AND RICHARD WAGNER*

Abstract: The essay deals with the relation of prominent Czech composer Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) to the personality and work of Richard Wagner (1813–1883). As opposed to the common opinions linking Dvořák's name with Wagner's ideological opponents and placing his 'Wagnerian' period in the early phase of his career only, our examination shows that Dvořák's interest in Wagner and his music was of deep and lasting nature and was significant for him throughout the whole of his life.

Key words: Antonín Dvořák, Richard Wagner, Dvořák's 'Wagnerianism', reception of Wagner in Czech music, Wagnerian influences.

Today, more than a hundred years later, it is hard to imagine what a tremendous influence the life and work of Richard Wagner had on the minds of his contemporaries, or his impact on at least the next two generations of composers and their audiences. Without exaggeration we can say that almost no important musicians of the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century remained indifferent to Wagner's legacy, without taking note of it—regardless of whether, in the period atmosphere of polarised opinions and values, they considered themselves 'Wagnerians' and continued consciously along the trail he had blazed, or whether they found themselves in the camp of the opposition as regards both art and views of the world. Everything indicates that Antonín Dvořák (born 8 September 1841 in Nelahozeves, died 1 May 1904 in Prague), whose name is often linked with Wagner's ideological opponents, was no exception in this regard.

Music historians and journalists who have devoted detailed attention to Dvořák's life have generally been in agreement in their view of his relation to Richard Wagner. They all place Dvořák's 'Wagnerian' (or 'New German') period in the early phase of his career, in the 1860s. They refer to a tendency toward expansion and loosening of form manifesting itself in his orchestral works from this period, i.e. in the first two symphonies and the A major cello concerto, and also point out what they take to be allusions to particular passages from Wagner's music, not

* *Editor's note:* The Czech version of this article has been published in the collection of papers *Richard Wagner a česká kultura* (ed. Pavel Petránek, Národní divadlo Praha, 2005, pp. 239–248, ISBN 80-7258-190-2). The article has been revised and slightly extended for publication in our journal. The American musicologist and Dvořák scholar David Beveridge has translated the main text into English.

only in Dvořák's operas *Alfred* (1870) and *Král a uhlíř* (King and Charcoal Burner, first setting, from 1871) but even in chamber works, namely the three string quartets without opus number in B flat major, D major, and E minor from 1868-70. Agreement prevails also in the notion that this 'Wagnerian' and 'New German' enchantment represents only a short episode in Dvořák's stylistic development, which ended definitively in the early 1870s.

Space does not allow a detailed analysis here, aimed at investigating the truth and justification of these interpretations. Instead I shall attempt to map and classify the available evidence as to when and where Dvořák may have encountered Wagner's works, what music by Wagner he may have known, and what his opinion was on this music and its composer.

I

If we start by seeking the source of the common opinions regarding Dvořák's 'Wagnerianism', we find with little difficulty that they undoubtedly came from the composer himself. However, he spoke of his relation to Wagner in his youth only many years later, in a biographical interview with the British journalist Paul Pry (about whom we have no information) during his third concert trip to England in the spring of 1885. More than twenty years after the fact, and more than two years after Wagner's death, Dvořák recalled very vividly the composer's visit to Prague (in 1863), saying 'I was perfectly crazy about him, and recollect following him as he walked along the streets to get a chance now and again of seeing the great little man's face.' In the same context he mentions Wagner's significant influence on the harmony and orchestration of his opera *Král a uhlíř* (first setting, from 1871), which however he says he later destroyed.¹

Another source of information about inspiration from Wagner is a letter Dvořák wrote to the Viennese critic and music journalist Eusebius Mandyczewski on January 7, 1898 in which at Mandyczewski's request he provides information on unpublished and unperformed works from his youth. In this case, however, he is considerably more reserved and only mentions briefly that he had written an overture in D flat - C (the overture to the opera *Alfred*), 'wo sich auch schon Wagner meldet'

¹ Enthusiasts Interviewed. No. XVII. „Pann“ Antonin Dvorak, in: *Sunday Times* (London), 10 May 1885, p. 6. Reprinted and commented in: David R. Beveridge (ed.): *Rethinking Dvořák. Views from Five Countries*, Oxford 1996, pp. 281-288. German translation and commentary in: Klaus Döge: *Antonin Dvořák. Leben. Werke. Dokumente*,² Zürich – Mainz 1997, pp. 316–328.

(where now Wagner, too, makes himself known'); by contrast he says his earlier symphony in B flat major (No. 2) from 1865 was marked by the influence of Schumann.²

Discussions regarding where the beginning composer might have encountered Wagner's music and which works he may have come to know before 1870 usually focus on the first public performances of Wagner's works in Prague, during the 1850s and 1860s. They almost always refer to the Prague premieres of the operas *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, and *Der fliegende Holländer* (The Flying Dutchman) presented between 1854 and 1856 in what was then called the Landestheater (now the Estates Theatre) by the conductor and composer František Škroup; on the other hand the Prague premiere of *Rienzi* in October 1859 is not usually mentioned. Also cited are concerts of the Cecilia Society of Prague given by Anton Apt, likewise in the 1850s, in particular a concert on February 27, 1858 that included a performance of Wagner's cantata *Das Liebesmahl der Apostel* (The Love Feast of the Apostles) as well as a concert on March 12, 1859 featuring Hans von Bülow as both conductor and pianist which included the prelude to *Tristan und Isolde*. And at the centre of attention stand three Prague concerts on Žofín Island conducted by Wagner himself on February 8 and November 5 and 8, 1863, which included excerpts from operas not yet published or performed on stage at that time: *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Die Walküre*, and *Siegfried*.

It goes without saying that Dvořák could not attend the Prague premieres of Wagner operas under Škroup in the mid-1850s, because he was not yet in the city at that time. However, theoretically he could have attended some of the reprises of those works as well as the later production of *Rienzi*. It must be said, however, that we have no evidence for this. In view of Dvořák's well-known financial difficulties during the time of his studies at the organ school in Prague (1857–59), we can probably assume that he did not get to the theatre very often then. And the above-mentioned interview in the *Sunday Times*³, which we have good reason to consider one of the most reliable sources of information on the first ten to fifteen years of Dvořák's residence in Prague, indirectly confirms this assumption: he vividly recalls how he longed at that time to see operas, especially, and how disappointed he was when for lack of money for a ticket he was unable to see a performance of Weber's *Der Freischütz*. Here he makes

² Cf. Milan Kuna et alii (ed.): *Antonín Dvořák. Korespondence a dokumenty* [Antonín Dvořák Correspondence and Documents]. Vol. 4. *Korespondence odeslaná 1896–1904* [Correspondence Dispatched 1896–1904], Praha 1995, pp. 112–113.

³ See footnote 1.

no mention of the Wagner operas referred to above that were performed in Prague before 1860. However, he recalls having heard *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* just before composing *Král a uhlíř* (first setting), i.e. in 1871; the Prague premier of *Die Meistersinger* is known to have taken place in the Landestheater on April 24 that year.

It also remains an open question whether Dvořák himself played, as is usually asserted in the literature, in the two Cecilia Society concerts featuring music by Wagner in February 1858 and March 1859 and in the concerts Wagner conducted in February and November 1863. The notion that Dvořák participated actively in these concerts rests on the allegation that soon after arriving in Prague, i.e. already in the autumn of 1857, he joined the orchestra of the Cecilia Society as a violist, and on the supposition that the orchestra of the Provisional (Czech) Theatre, of which Dvořák was a member, participated in those landmark concerts in 1863. Actually, however, it is impossible to determine reliably whether Dvořák performed in all the concerts of the Cecilia Society given from the late 1850s through 1865 when this institution was dissolved, or whether the orchestras for those three concerts in 1863 included members of the orchestra of the Provisional Theatre.⁴ If Dvořák played under Wagner's baton, that it seems strange to say the least that in his interview for the *Sunday Times*⁵ he says nothing at all about how Wagner struck him as a conductor or what impression Wagner's music made on him during those concerts. If he had really been a member of the orchestra in those concerts he would certainly have had sufficient opportunity to see the admired composer up close and perhaps even greet him and exchange a few polite words with him.

II

As mentioned above, biographers of Dvořák have by and large been in agreement that those 'Wagnerian' influences in Dvořák's music rapidly and permanently vanished early in the 1870s. And for this reason they do not trace various later occasions when he may have come into contact with Wagner's music. Perhaps it will be in place here to point out and summarise at least some of these occasions.

In regard to staged presentations of Wagner's works in Prague theatres, after the 1871 production of *Die Meistersinger* came a rather long break.

⁴ It was Miroslav K. Černý who was discussing this problem last; cf. Malá dvořákiana. Nové doplňky k životopisu Antonína Dvořáka [Little Dvořákiana. New Supplements to the Biography of Antonín Dvořák], in: *Opus musicum* 36 (2004), No. 3, pp. 2–6.

⁵ See footnote 1.

We know that the Czech Provisional Theatre intentionally avoided presenting operas by Wagner for the whole period of its existence (1862–1881/1883). However, starting in 1885, with the arrival in Prague of the zealous Wagner expert and advocate Angelo Neumann (born 1838 in Vienna, died 1910 in Prague), Wagner's works were presented systematically in high-quality performances in Prague's German theatres. From the beginning of 1888 these performances were given in the grand building of the New German Theatre, which was opened festively on January 5 that year with a new production of *Die Meistersinger*. Through the 1891–1892 season, i.e. up to the time of Dvořák's departure for the United States, all of Wagner's musical-dramatic works starting with *Rienzi* were performed there with the exception of *Parsifal*.⁶ We have no evidence that Dvořák attended these performances, nor that he attended the first Czech performances of Wagner's operas at the National Theatre, i.e. *Lohengrin* (opened January 1885) and *Tannhäuser* (six years later). Nor can we rule this out, however. If we are to believe a later recollection by Josef Kovařík, Dvořák's assistant and family friend during his stay in America, that when the conductor Seidl asked Dvořák in New York whether he knew Wagner's *Siegfried* he replied, 'I have seen it only once,'⁷ then this could only have been in the German theatre in Prague between 1887 and 1892.

From another recollection published by Josef Michl, who was Dvořák's pupil at the Prague Conservatory, we learn about composer's trip to Vienna for the purpose of receiving his state scholarship. On that occasion, Dvořák is said to have attended rehearsals for *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* at the Court Opera. If we are to believe this recollection, then this must have been rehearsals for Viennese premieres of both operas that took place in November and December 1875.⁸

⁶ Cf. Jitka Ludvová: Německý hudební život v Praze 1880–1939 [On German Music Life in Prague 1880–1939], in: *Uměnovědné studie* [Studies in Art History and Theory], Vol. IV, Praha 1983, pp. 53–180.

⁷ Cf. Michael B. Beckerman: *New Worlds of Dvořák. Searching in America for the Composer's Inner Life*, New York 2003, p. 215.

⁸ Cf. Josef Michl: Z Dvořákova vyprávění [What Dvořák told us], in: *Hudební revue* VII (1913–1914), p. 402. The opening nights for both operas were November 22 and December 15, 1875 respectively. (After Herbert Barth – Dietrich Mack – Egon Voss: *Richard Wagner. Leben und Werk in Bildern und Dokumenten*, Mainz – München²1982, p. 28.) In Josef Michl's version, Dvořák was observing Wagner during the rehearsal and wished to speak to him. However, he did not dare to approach him and introduce himself to him having in mind that Wagner was at the top of his fame while his own name was still almost unknown at that time. Actually, it is our assumption or hypothesis mentioned above (i.e. that Dvořák probably had not participated in Wagner's Prague concerts in 1863 and had not met Wagner in person at that time) that seems to be supported by this recollection. At the same time, it is strange that the

By the 1870s and 1880s Wagner's music had become a relatively normal part of programs in public concerts, represented by operatic and concert preludes and overtures, solo and choral excerpts from various operas and music dramas, and/or paraphrases and arrangements for piano or other instruments. This applied to Prague as well, where for example the cantata *Das Liebesmahl der Apostel* (The Love Feast of the Apostles) was performed again in a concert of the Hlahol Association on March 27, 1870, this time however in Czech under the title *Letnice* (Pentecost), and then the Philharmonic concerts included in succession the *Faust Overture* (November 27, 1870), the prelude to *Die Meistersinger* (December 12, 1869 and April 16, 1871), and the prelude and conclusion of *Tristan und Isolde* (April 27, 1873), all conducted by Bedřich Smetana. Two more important concerts, this time consisting exclusively of works by Wagner, were given on March 11, 1883 and March 16, 1884. They were led by Ludwig Slansky, chief conductor of the Landestheater, and included excerpts from all four operas of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*) as well as from *Die Meistersinger*, *Tristan*, and *Parsifal*.⁹

As in the case of the opera productions mentioned above, however, here again we generally have no evidence regarding which if any of these concerts Dvořák may have attended, and which of the works performed he thus actually heard. Exceptions are cases where Wagner's music was on the program of concerts that also included performances of Dvořák's own works, in some cases even premieres. The first such occasion was a Philharmonic Concert on Žofín Island on March 30, 1873 in which Dvořák's orchestral nocturne *Májová noc* (May Night) was played along with the prelude to *Tannhäuser* and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A major; the conductor was again Ludwig Slansky. Ten years later, on January 6, 1883, Siegmund's song from *Die Walküre* sounded along with Dvořák's overture to the opera *Dimitrij* (first version), Nocturne in B major, Op. 40, and Waltz in D flat major for piano, Op. 54, No. 4 in a concert given by František Broulík, a member of the corps of soloists of the Vienna Court Opera. The program for the thirteenth popular concert of the Umělecká beseda (Arts Society) on February 2, 1890 included the premiere of Dvořák's Symphony No. 8 in G major

name of Dvořák's later partisan and friend, Hans Richter, who was the conductor of the Vienna Wagner performances of 1875 (see below) is not mentioned in Michl's article at all. As a matter of fact, there are no other sources reporting of Dvořák's trip to Vienna in the mentioned space of time.

⁹ Cf. a.o. Vladimír Lébl and Jitka Ludvová: Pražské orchestrální koncerty v letech 1860–1895 [Prague Symphonic Concerts in the years of 1860–1895], in: *Hudební věda* [Musicology] XVII (1980), No. 2, pp. 99–138.

alongside the prelude and final scene from *Tristan und Isolde*. And finally the program for the Czech Philharmonic Concert on April 11, 1896, whose central number was Dvořák's Cello Concerto in B minor in its Czech premiere, opened with Wagner's *Faust Overture*.¹⁰

Also noteworthy in this regard are the programs of Dvořák's concerts in England. For example in the concert of the London Philharmonic Society on April 22, 1885 the world premiere of Dvořák's Symphony No. 7 in D minor was followed immediately by Walther's song (the 'Preislied') from Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*. The English premiere of Dvořák's cantata *Svatební košile* (The Spectre's Bride), in the first part of a concert at the music festival in Birmingham on August 27, 1885, was followed after the interval by excerpts from *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Walküre* among other works. And after the closing 'Agnus Dei' in Dvořák's *Requiem* in its world premiere at the festival in Birmingham on October 9, 1891 came the prelude to *Parsifal* and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7.¹¹

III

Dvořák's relations with orchestral and operatic conductors form a story in themselves, and constitute a remarkable link between him and Wagner. At least three of these conductors, who were among the top luminaries in interpretational art of the time and who played a major role in performing and disseminating Dvořák's works, were also, if not primarily, outstanding conductors of music by Wagner. In the first place we must name Hans Richter (born 1843 in Győr/Raab, died 1916 in Bayreuth), who devoted himself to Dvořák's music most systematically and who was linked with our composer by many years of artistic and personal friendship. In the late 1870s, when Richter met Dvořák for the first time and introduced his works to audiences in Vienna, he had already conducted productions of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* at the Vienna Court Opera in the autumn of 1875 shortly after assuming the position of chief conductor there, and most significantly the landmark first complete performance of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the Bayreuth festival in August 1876. Later he promoted Wagner—and also Dvořák—especially in London. Until 1912 he was also a regular conductor at the Bayreuth Festival. In letters Dvořák wrote to Richter in June 1898 and

¹⁰ Lébl and Ludvová (see footnote 9); Milan Kuna et alii (ed.): *Antonín Dvořák. Korespondence a dokumenty*. [Antonín Dvořák. Correspondence and Documents]. Vol. 10. *Dokumenty*. [Documents]. Chaps. X-XVI, pp. 181–182, 215, 220, 260.

¹¹ Milan Kuna et alii, Vol. 10 (see footnote 10), pp. 198–199, 202–204, 234–234, 250–251.

February 1902 he repeatedly stated his intent to come to Bayreuth and attend the Wagner festival, but he never did make the trip.¹²

Another in the gallery of great conductors was Hans von Bülow (born 1830 in Dresden, died 1894 in Cairo), conductor of the world premieres of *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger* in Munich. Works by Dvořák he later had in his repertoire included the *Hussite Overture*, which he conducted for the first time in November 1886 in Hamburg, and above all the Symphony No. 7 in D minor, which he led to extraordinary acclaim in two concerts in Berlin in October 1889. We know that this Berlin performance was an unforgettable experience for the composer himself from the title page of his autograph of the symphony, on which he pasted Bülow's photograph and wrote whimsically: *Sláva! Tys' toto dílo přivedl k životu!* ('Praise to you! You have made this work come to life!') Already two years earlier, late in 1887, Dvořák had dedicated his Symphony No. 5 in F major to Bülow as a token of gratitude and respect.¹³

During Dvořák's stay in the United States from 1892 to 1895 he became well acquainted with the conductor Anton Seidl (born 1850 in Budapest, died 1898 in New York), who in December 1893 introduced to the world Dvořák's most famous symphony, *Z Nového světa* (From the New World), in E minor. Seidl, who died tragically a few years later, was also an enthusiastic Wagnerian and an expert on that composer's music. In 1872 he had come to Bayreuth where he had served Wagner as an assistant for several years and helped in preparations for the first complete performance of the *Ring* in the summer of 1876. Starting in the late 1870s his positions had included conductor for Angelo Neumann's Wagner Society, and in 1882 he had conducted the first complete performance of the *Ring* in London. In 1885 he had collaborated with Neumann for a short time in Prague. (See above.) In the same year he was called to the Metropolitan Opera in New York, where before Dvořák's arrival he led the American premieres of *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger*, and individual operas of the *Ring*. According to the testimony of Josef Kovařík, Dvořák and Seidl met regularly in New York and had long and animated debates primarily about Wagner and his music. Allegedly Dvořák asked repeatedly about Seidl's experiences with Wagner at

¹² Cf. Otakar Šourek: *Antonín Dvořák a Hans Richter. Obraz uměleckého přátelství* [Antonín Dvořák and Hans Richter. The Image of an Artistic Friendship], Praha 1942; Dvořák's letters are published here in Czech translations on pp. 72 and 78–79. For original German versions, cf. Milan Kuna et alii, Vol. 4 (see footnote 2), pp. 133–134 and 238.

¹³ Cf. Otakar Šourek: *Život a dílo Antonína Dvořáka* [Life and Works of Antonín Dvořák], Vol. 2, ³Praha 1955, pp. 182–183, 231–232.

Bayreuth and listened to detailed stories about them. Kovařík's report is confirmed by a letter Dvořák wrote in New York on January 29, 1895 to his friend Jindřich Káan, director of the conservatory in Prague, in which—with his typical brevity and restraint—he mentioned that he often went to a coffeehouse where Seidl would tell him about Wagner and how he composed *Parsifal*, and that it all 'interested him tremendously'.¹⁴ Also evidently characteristic, however, is the fact that neither this explicit interest nor his friendship with Seidl persuaded Dvořák to attend performances of Wagner's operas at the Metropolitan Opera—with the exception of *Siegfried* early in 1894, which however he reportedly left after the first act.¹⁵

IV

Written sources from the last decade of Dvořák's life documenting his relation to the music of Wagner are only sporadic. In his article *Music in America*, Dvořák addressed Wagner together with C. M. Weber as 'national' German composers and, at the same time, declared *Die Meistersinger* for Wagner's 'most German' work.¹⁶ In his well-known article about Franz Schubert, he mentioned Wagner in several places, expressing appreciation for the fact that he 'condensed all his genius into ten great music-dramas', invented 'weird harmonies' for Ortrud's scenes in *Lohengrin*—which however he said were anticipated in Schubert's *Erkönig* and *Der Doppelgänger*—and 'struck the true ecclesiastical chord in the Pilgrims' Chorus of *Tannhäuser* and especially in the first and third acts of *Parsifal*.' However, because this article was written 'in cooperation with Henry T. Finck', a music critic and journalist who was undoubtedly responsible for the final wording – as was the former one written together with Edwin Emerson jr., we cannot guarantee the absolute authenticity of these statements.¹⁷

¹⁴ Cf. Milan Kuna et alii, Vol. 4 (see footnote 2), p. 371. Later recollections recorded by Josef Michl (see footnote 8, pp. 402, 404, 444–446), too, are consistent with Kovařík's memories as well as with Dvořák's own statement.

¹⁵ Cf. Otakar Šourek: *Život a dílo Antonína Dvořáka* [Life and Works of Antonín Dvořák], Vol. 3, ²Praha 1956, pp. 207–208. Further on, the whole story is recapitulated by Michael B. Beckerman (referring to Josef Kovařík); Cf. Beckerman (see footnote 7), pp. 214–218.

¹⁶ *Music in America*, in: *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, February 1895. Reprinted in: John C. Tibbets (ed.): *Dvořák in America 1892-1895*, Portland, Oregon 1993, pp. 370–382. Czech translation by J.E.S. Vojan, in: *Hudební revue* IV, 1911, pp. 418–426.

¹⁷ Franz Schubert, in: *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* Vol. 48 (New Series Vol. 26) Nr. 3, July 1894, pp. 342–345. Reprinted in: John Clapham: *Antonín Dvořák. Musician and Craftsman*, London 1966, pp. 296–305. A Czech translation

There is another brief mention of Wagner in a letter Dvořák wrote to Jaroslav Kvapil on August 22, 1900 pertaining to their collaboration on the opera *Rusalka*. Dvořák asked the librettist for a text for a duet of the Prince and the Foreign Princess in Act II, appealing to the fact that even Wagner ‘could not make do without this exception’ at the end of Act II of *Tristan*.¹⁸

Dvořák’s last documented encounter with Wagner’s music was his attendance at a performance of *Lohengrin* in the Municipal Theatre in Plzeň on September 24, 1903. This time, however, he was clearly not interested in Wagner’s work as such but in assessing the quality of the Plzeň operatic ensemble before entrusting it with performing his operas *Čert a Káča* (The Devil and Kate) and *Dimitrij*.¹⁹

* * *

From the above evidence—however incomplete and full of gaps—it is quite clear in my judgement that Dvořák’s interest in Richard Wagner and his music was not only a youthful vagary, and that it by no means ended with the 1860s but rather had a deeper dimension and was of a more lasting nature. Everything indicates that Dvořák’s knowledge of Wagner’s music was extensive and detailed. We shall probably never find out exactly by what paths and under what circumstances he came to acquire this knowledge, but we must not forget a manner of coming to know and absorbing music that played a decisive and irreplaceable role in the second half of the nineteenth century, namely via reading scores and playing them on the piano. Wagner had a privileged position among operatic composers of his time in this regard, in that all his principal operas and music dramas were published immediately after being completed, both in piano-vocal reductions and in complete orchestral scores. It seems more than probable that Dvořák acquired a major portion of his knowledge of Wagner’s music in this way.²⁰

of this article was prepared by Jaroslav Procházka (1953); reprinted in: *Opus musicum* 1983, No. 6, pp. i–vii.

¹⁸ Cf. Milan Kuna et alii., Vol. 4 (see footnote 2), pp. 192–193.

¹⁹ Cf. Jarmil Burghauser: *Antonín Dvořák. Thematický katalog* [Antonín Dvořák. Thematic Catalogue], ²Praha 1996, p. 758. However, Milan Kuna writes (without a nearer explanation) that it only was a rehearsal for that opera; cf. Milan Kuna et alii., Vol. 4 (see footnote 2), p. 245.

²⁰ This assumption is supported a.o. by Zdeněk Nejedlý, namely in his article *Z hovorů Ant. Dvořáka se Zd. Fibichem* [From Ant. Dvořák’s Conversations with Zd. Fibich], in: *Smetana II* (1912), pp. 52–53. I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Jiří Kopecký who has brought this material to my notice.

Everything attests to the fact that Wagner interested and fascinated Dvořák as a great creative spirit and extraordinarily productive and original composer, but also, to a certain extent, as a man—despite the fact (or for the very reason?) that he had no opportunity of coming to know him personally. On the other hand all the evidence indicates that Wagner's ideology, his theoretical and aesthetic conceptions, and also his philosophical or pseudo-philosophical opinions and the associated polemics of the time left him indifferent, or rather that they remained outside the sphere of his interest and his manner of thinking. What impressed him was primarily Wagner's compositional 'métier' – the inventiveness of his harmony, his work with orchestral sound, and various dramaturgical procedures in opera. For the time being the question of which among these observations and experiences were finally projected into Dvořák's own music, and what Wagnerian influences may be sought and found not only in his first attempts but also in mature and late works, remains open: answering it will require new and untraditional analytical and comparative approaches.

Јармила Габриелова

АНТОЊИН ДВОРЖАК И РИХАРД ВАГНЕР
(Резиме)

Данас, после више од сто година, тешко је замислити колико су живот и дело Рихарда Вагнера (Richard Wagner) имали огроман утицај на умове његових савременика, као и на најмање две следеће генерације композитора и на њихову публику. Све указује на то да ни Антоњин Дворжак (Antonín Dvořák, 1841–1904), најистакнутији чешки композитор касног XIX века, чије се име често повезује са Вагнеровим идеолошким противницима, није био у том смислу изузетак.

По општем мишљењу, обично се Дворжаков „вагнеријански“ период везује за рану етапу његовог стваралаштва, за 1860-те године. Преовлађује сагласност у констатацији да очараност „вагнеријанским“ и „новонемачким“ представља у Дворжаковом стилском развоју само кратку епизоду, која се дефинитивно завршава у раним 1870-тим. Чини се да је извор оваквим тумачењима био сам композитор, односно један интервју који је дао британском новинару Полу Прају (Paul Fry) 1885. године, као и писмо упућено Еузебијусу Мандичевском (Eusebius Mandyczewski) 1898. године.

У нашем проучавању покушавали смо да сачинимо преглед највећег броја концертних и оперских извођења Вагнерових дела којима је Дворжак могао присуствовати у Прагу, Великој Британији и САД-у (укључујући и оне догађаје током којих су на програму извођена и Вагнерова дела и музика самог Дворжака). Такође, покушали смо да укажемо и на релевантне

писане изворе који документују Дворжаков однос према Вагнеру, као и на његове блиске професионалне и личне везе са савременицима, Хансом Рихтером (Hans Richter, 1843–1916), Хансом фон Биловим (Hans von Bülow, 1830–1984) и Антоном Зајдлом (Anton Seidl, 1850–1898), диригентима који су важили за специјалисте за извођење Вагнера.

Супротно преовлађујућим мишљењима, наше истраживање показује да Дворжаково интересовање за Рихарда Вагнера није била само младалачка лудорија, већ да је имало дубљу димензију и било трајније природе. Све указује на то да је Дворжаково познавање Вагнерове музике било велико и детаљно. Вероватно никад нећемо тачно утврдити којим путем је Дворжак стекао то знање, али не смемо заборавити начин упознавања и упијања музике која је имала пресудну и незаменљиву улогу у његово време, а то је путем читања партитура и њиховог свирања на клавиру. Вагнер је, у том смислу, имао привилеговано место међу оперским композиторима тог доба, с обзиром на то да су све његове главне опере и музичке драме штампане одмах по завршавању, и то како у клавијирском изводу, тако и у комплетној оркестарској партитури. Чини се више него могућим да је и Дворжак на тај начин стекао највећи део сопственог увида у Вагнерову музику.

Све потврђује чињеницу да је Вагнер својим снажним стваралачким духом и неуобичајеном продуктивношћу и оригиналношћу фасцинирао Дворжака не само као композитор, већ и као човек – упркос чињеници да очигледно није био у могућности да се са њим лично и упозна. С друге стране, сви извори указују на то да је био индиферентан према Вагнеровој идеологији, његовим теоријским и естетским поставкама, а такође и његовој филозофској или псеудо-филозофској мисли и ондашњим полемикама у вези с тим; све то остало је изван сфере Дворжаковог интересовања и начина мишљења. Оно што га је импресионирао, био је првенствено Вагнеров композициони 'métier' – инвентивност његове хармоније, третман оркестарског звука и разнолики драматуршки поступци у опери. Утврдити који су се од ових разматрања и искустава коначно пројектовали у самој Дворжаковој музици, као и то које вагнеријанске утицаје можемо уочити и наћи не само у његовим првим радовима, већ и у зрелим и касним делима, питање је које засад остаје отворено: биће потребни нови аналитички и компаративни приступи да би се дао одговор.

(превела Јелена Михајловић-Марковић)

UDC 78.071.1 Dvorak/Wagner

78.035.01:172.15