



Udo Bermbach  
Blühendes Leid  
Politics and Society in Richard Wagner`s Musical Dramas  
370 pp., paperback  
EUR 39.95  
ISBN 3-476-01847-4  
2003

## Music

There is hardly an artist of the modern period who has emphasized more than Richard Wagner the connections between politics, society and art and who has commented on his own work so thoroughly in this regard. Against the backdrop of Wagner`s theoretical writings, the author of this monograph has gone in search of political and social aspects in Wagner`s works, from the early operas to Parsifal, and has explained them in the context of Wagner`s times. The question of anti-Semitism in Wagner`s great musical dramas is also answered in this book.

### About the Authors:

About the Author

Udo Bermbach, born in 1938, is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Hamburg. In addition to contributions to political theory and the history of theory, Prof. Bermbach also has numerous publications to his credit on the history of opera and particularly Wagner`s operatic works. He is also the dramaturgical consultant to Jürgen Flimm for the current new Bayreuth production of the "Ring".

### Key Features:

- A new interpretation of the political references in Wagner`s work

From the Press

Even for the lay person, this is a readable and exciting analysis of the political side of the genius of Leipzig.....  
Esslinger Zeitung

Bermbach keeps his discussion close to the topic, that is, he assesses Wagner`s sources primarily with the goal of being able to provide proof of the links to Wagner`s Weltanschauung. He succeeds at this across the board.  
Opernwelt

A strikingly formulated, but very readable book. Because of its captivating new view of Wagner`s musical dramas, Bermbach`s book Blühendes Leid is the most important Wagner book of the year, an obligatory alternative opera guide and a challenge to the theatre directors of the 21st century. nmz Bücher

From Bermbach`s perspective, Wagner`s development appears to be that of an imperturbable anarchistic

---

revolutionary whose enormous aesthetic strategies and results always target fundamental changes in man and society. It is not necessary to agree with the author on every point, but the quotes, which are often striking, speak for themselves. Bermbach`s most interesting book is primarily oriented towards texts; this was no mistake in looking at a very prolific author like Wagner. FAZ

