I. Looking back to Das Rheingold and Die Walküre

N. Vazsonyi, Wagner (2010), 138, on Prelude to Rheingold: this “grandest aquatic example... almost biblically suggests: ‘In the beginning was the Sound.’”

Harmonic series:

Evolution in nature.
Hegel and Schelling; telos = goal (teleology).
Evolution in culture. Woglinde:

Weia! Waga!
Woge, du Welle,
Walle zur Wiege!
Wagalaweia!
Wallala weiala weia!

Alliteration (Stabreim). Contrast Lohengrin:

Nie sollst du mich befragen,
noch Wissens Sorge tragen,
woher ich kam der Fahrt,
noch wie mein Nam’ und Art!

Never shall you ask me
nor trouble yourself to know,
whence I journeyed,
what my name is, or what my origin!

Wagner, Opera and Drama (PW 2:271): soft consonants: G, L, D, W; “energetic consonants”: K, R, P, T; “strengthened” consonants: Schr, Sp, St, Pr (see e.g. Alberich “Stör’ ich eu’r Spiel, / wenn staunend ich still hier steh’?”)

J.J. Rousseau, Essay on the Origin of Languages (1753): “But for moving a young heart, or repelling an unjust aggressor, nature dictates accents, cries, lamentations. There we have the invention of the most ancient words; and that is why the first languages were singable and passionate before they became simple and methodical.”

Wagner, Opera and Drama (PW 2:224): “The most primitive expressive organ of man’s inner nature is the language of tone, as the instinctive mode of expressing some inward feeling motivated from without.”

Letter to Friedrich Nietzsche (12 June 1872; PW 5:297):
1. likens “Wagalaweia” to “Weihwasser” (“consecrated water”).

Wagner to Cosima (17 July 1869): “the movement of the waves in Das Rheingold... is, so to speak, the world’s lullaby.”
Irenaeus on Genesis 2 (Proof of the Apostolic Preaching 12): “the man was a little one, and his discretion still undeveloped, wherefore also he was easily misled by the deceiver.”

In the Prologue to Götterdämmerung the first Norn tells of this “dauntless god.”

Desecration of nature and culture.

1. Law of the Jews: Jesus “thunders against the Pharisees and the Law, against oppression and injustice” (Jesus of Nazareth, PW 8:291).

Wagner’s Jesus says “man and wife are one flesh, God (Love) hath knit them into one . . . So it was from the beginning, - i.e. this is the law of Nature. The first sin against this law would thus be a marriage without love . . .” (Jesus of Nazareth, PW 8:319, alluding to Genesis 2.24; Matthew 19.4-6).

Wagner as a Marcionite. His disdain for the Old Testament law is a clue to the nature of his anti-Judaism (that is his criticism of the Jewish religion) and his anti-semitism (his criticism of the Jewish people).

2. Law of the Roman imperial power.

Wagner at the barricades of Dresden with August Röckel and Mikael Bakunin.

II Looking forward to Siegfried and Götterdämmerung

Siegfried as anarchist (Bakunin).

Siegfried Act III Scene 2:

Mach’ dich jetzt fort! Be off with you now!
Sonst könntest du leicht Or else you could easily
das and’re auch noch verlieren lose the other one, too

The Ring as opposition of law (represented by Wotan’s spear) and nature (represented by Siegfried); or opposition between law and love.

Love between Siegmund and Sieglinde, although flouting “law”, is in harmony with nature.

Walküre Act I: the darkness of Hunding’s hut is overcome by the full moon which shines in (Siegmund: “Spring shines into the hall!”)

This could be seen as 1. “Easter” moment (spring and full moon); 2. return to nature.

Winterstürme wichen Winterstorms have waned
dem Wonnemondbefore Maytime,
in mildem Lichtein gentle light
leuchtet der LenzSpring is aglow;
auf linden Lüftenon gentle breezes,
leicht und lieblich,soft and lovely,
Wunder webendworking wonders
er sich wieght.he rocks himself.

“lind” = gentle (“Woglinde” from wogen (“to billow”) and lind (“gentle”)); “wiegen” = “to rock” (cf “Wiege” = “cradle”).