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Ruth L. Dewhurst PhD
Georgia State University

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UNISON AND HARMONY, DISSONANCE AND DISSOLUTION: GERMAN CHORAL
SOCIETIES IN AN AGE OF RISING NATIONALISM, MASS CULTURE, AND SOCIAL
CONFLICT, 1870-1918

By

RUTH LITTLE DEWHURST

Under the Direction of Joe Perry, PhD

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of choral societies, emotions, and German national identity during the German Empire (1871-1918). Using journals, memoirs, letters, lyrics, banners, postcards, and festival programs, I argue that singing creating overlapping emotional communities in spite of palpable social, economic, and political tensions that intensified in the late nineteenth century. The choral movement that originated in the early nineteenth century was heavily influenced by the early Romantics. Theories of the nation that were wrapped up in the ancient poetry and songs of the Germanic people led to the development of the *Lied*—an art form that was believed to represent the nation itself. The Romantics also prescribed an aesthetics of music that elevated it to the highest art form. An embrace of the *Lied* and absolute music fostered the notion that Germans were “the people of music.” Themes of myth, history, nature, and a synthesis of all

these with science and politics permeated the choral movement. Choral performances created unique bonds among singers but also drew in instrumentalists, conductors, audiences, and stage hands. Each performance created new emotional connections, and a movement that began in a narrow bourgeois realm gradually filtered into all layers of German society creating complex webs of connection. Over the course of a century, war and music created a German nation and a nation of Germans.

INDEX WORDS: Emotional community, Material Culture, Musicking, Bildung, Myth, Heimat, Romanticism, "People of music"

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2019

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Ruth Little Dewhurst
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RUTH LITTLE DEWHURST

Committee Chair: Joe Perry

Committee: Jared Poley

Nick Wilding

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

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DEDICATION

I cannot adequately express my appreciation to my family and friends for their support as I worked my way through seminar courses, language study, comprehensive exams, research in Germany, and hours spent writing. Betsy and Andy along with Katherine, Evan, Dylan, Megan, and Robyn; Geoffrey and Nida; Emily and Sean with Mia, and Lucy—you are the greatest blessings to me. My Supper Club friends were beside me all the way and let me off the hook many weeks! Abundant thanks are due to Brett and Katie Edwards (Lydia, Calvin, and Ruby); Matt and Jamie Ross (Mac, Cici, and Charlie); Bill and Diane Hrubik; and Tyler Proffitt. Brett and Tyler offered technical support at moments of despair, and Matt was a ready support for footnote sources. Katie and Jamie—I love you for your constant encouragement! My sisters Ann and Ginnie supported me when I doubted my argument about choirs bringing people together in community. Ann and I sang together in choirs during all our growing-up years; Ginnie sang under the direction of Robert Shaw in the Atlanta Symphony Chorus and offered anecdotal and published sources that were valuable for my research. My brother and sister-in-law (Paul and Dianne) have often provided hours of fun and relaxation from the stresses of writing.

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When all is said and done, it has been my own experiences singing in choirs which have served as the muse for this project. Therefore, I dedicate my dissertation to the Midway Presbyterian Church choir (under the direction of Judy Dodd) who teach me every week what it means to be part of a unique emotional community.

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1 INTRODUCTION

“The arts provide for the exchange of ideas or values otherwise uncommunicable by alphabets, or numbers, or equations or grants. The reason that our reaction to a Beethoven quartet cannot be described is that the Arts are not superfluous. They exist to convey that which cannot otherwise be conveyed.” Robert Shaw

Early in 1914 the *Gesang-Verein Liedertafel Langenzenn* (Men’s Singing Society in Langenzenn) sent out an invitation to neighboring towns: “Valued Singing Brothers! On June 28, 1914, our association will celebrate its 75th anniversary. We cordially invite your esteemed club to join us. Your presence would be a great honor to us, and we will endeavor to make your stay in our old, historic town quite pleasant.”¹ Within this simply worded invitation lies a rich story about music and about singing—about groups of people singing together in choirs. It is a story about how choirs of people singing together formed overlapping emotional communities that bridged social, economic, and political divides in ways that lie hidden under narratives of discord. Sometimes the emotional connections were fleeting as when dozens of singers gathered in a town like Langenzenn or thousands gathered at a national festival. For a couple of days they paraded their banners and flags, sang together, and then returned to their separate towns. Sometimes the connections were substantial: in towns and cities across Germany where choirs practiced together two or three times a week and put on regular performances for their citizens, music became part of the rhythm of local life. One of the key elements fostering these emotional communities was the choral repertoire for amateur singers that developed over the course of the nineteenth century. Traditional folk songs along with the genre of the *Lied*, with themes that privileged nature, history, and myth, laid a foundation for a national form of expression that reached a pinnacle in the mid-nineteenth century and spread across the entire spectrum of German society after the creation of the German Empire in 1871. Undergirding the web of overlapping communities was an education system that played a critical role in persuading ordinary citizens that they were the people of *Kultur* and of music. In spite of social

¹“Liebwerte Sangesbrüder! Unser Verein begeht am 28. Juni 1914 die Feier seines 75 jährigen Bestehens. Wir erlauben uns, Ihren geschätzten Verein hiez zu freundlichst einzuladen. Ihr werter Besuch würde uns zu hoher Ehre gereichen und es ist unser eifrigstes Bemühhen, Ihnen den Aufenthalt in unserem althistorischen Städtchen nach Möglichkeit recht angenehm zu machen.“ Archiv der Stiftung Dokumentations- und Forschungszentrum des Deutschen Chorwesens, Bestand Gesang- und Musikverein Feuchtwangen, Bestandssignatur B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 77

and economic differences, and the stresses of industrialization and urbanization, many Germans had in common a love of music and a belief in its power to express the soul of the nation.

Although “German music” is generally taken to mean the concert music, symphonies, opera, and chamber music forms that constituted elite or “high” culture and encompassed the composers of these genres—Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Brahms, or Wagner—my concern here is to examine musicians (singers, composers, directors) who were not individually renowned and are largely known today only as part of a “movement” made up of choral societies and associations. I argue that commonplace choristers like those in Langenzenn and their neighbors, generally assigned the lowest rung on the artistic social ladder, played a profound role in defining German national identity and provided the bedrock for the reputation of Germans as the “people of music.”² In the process they generated emotional communities that bound the nation together in ways that eluded competing political ideologies, religious beliefs, or economic forces. These singers nurtured a grass-roots narrative of national identity that transcended political and social circumstances in pursuit of an organic unity embedded in ancient myth and the early nineteenth-century Romantic ideals that were the cornerstone of an “*innere Nationsbildung*.”³ There was something earnest and unique about German choral societies—they emerged in the Napoleonic era, and their members subsequently believed they had a mission to fulfill as “carriers of a national culture of remembrance.”⁴ Early choral festivals frequently occurred in conjunction with celebrations of the Wars of

² It was Anton Rubenstein who in the nineteenth century proclaimed the superiority of a common appreciation for music in the German nation (as opposed to France, Britain, or other Western nations). For an excellent overview of how Germans acquired this reputation, see Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter, “Germans as the ‘People of Music: A Genealogy of an Identity,” in *Music and German National Identity*, ed. Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002): 1-35.

³ Michael Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg: Der Lutherchoral Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott zwischen Befreiungskriegen und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2014), 42. *Bildung* literally means “formation” so “*innere Nationsbildung*” can be translated as something like, “the nation formed within the individual.”

⁴ Dietmar Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte III*, ed. Etienne Francois and Hagen Schulze (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001): 392-407. Klenke describes the members of male choral societies as “Träger der nationaldeutschen Erinnerungskultur.” They considered it their duty to promote the idea of a “national” history in both local and regional choral festivals. Other European nations had choral societies, but the amateur German choral societies were unique in their “mission” to foster political unity and to express liberal-bourgeois ideals originated during the years of French occupation and perpetuated during the years of reaction to nationalism (1815-1860).

Liberation and opening speeches reminded the attendees that music represented a “higher idea” of the nation and created “a bond among different German lands.”⁵

A choir is a good metaphor for society as a whole and is particularly suited to that of the German states that evolved from the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire (1806) to the establishment of the *Kaiserreich* (German Empire) in 1871. In a choir, each singer’s voice is unique with its tone quality, timbre, range, and volume, and within the entire group, no matter its size, the separate voices come together to produce a unified sound made up of each individual voice. Although the choir is made up of individuals, it is also arranged in sections in which each section—sopranos, altos, tenors, basses—works as a single unit within the whole.⁶ Within their own section, singers are most attuned to their immediate neighbors. This is where the seed of unity begins because in attuning to the voices in your own proximity, a backdrop is established against which a harmonious sound grows and matures from within the entire body. In the process, the voice of each individual is never obliterated but blends with the whole, creating a unique choral sound facilitated by the conductor and accompanists. Bernard Lortat-Jacob, who spent time studying singers in a Sardinian monastery, claims “singing does not consist merely of producing notes and melodies, however beautiful, but rather first and foremost of entering into a relationship with another. Singing means being willing to share moments of great emotional intensity.”⁷ A similar challenge—entering into genuine relationship—faced Germans living in the *Kaiserreich* after 1871. Many formerly independent regions needed to come together and affect national unity without eliminating unique regional identifiers. Thus the German nation was not just the impersonal structures that governed politics, the economy, religion, education, and the military, but was made up of people who entered into relationships with one another, which created a complex entity made up of disparate parts. This process lends the story about Germans as the “people of music” a singular significance—ideas about national

⁵ Otto Elben, *Der volkstümliche deutsche Männergesang, seine Geschichte, seine gesellschaftliche und nationale Bedeutung* (Tübingen: Verlag der H. Laupp’schen Buchhandlung, 1855), 82-83.

⁶ All-male choirs were extremely popular in nineteenth-century Germany and sang in sections of first- and second-tenor, baritone, and bass voices (TTBB) rather than the soprano-alto-tenor-bass (SATB) used in my illustration.

⁷ Bernard Lortat-Jacob, “Concord and Discord: Singing Together in a Sardinian Brotherhood,” in *Chorus and Community*, ed. Karen Ahlquist (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 91.

characteristics emerged just as the political structure of the Holy Roman Empire dissolved, sparking a decades-long search for national unity. Germans who formed amateur choirs and choral societies played a decisive role in defining what the nation as a whole would value.

This dissertation is rooted in an examination of emotions in history, and I approach the choral movement from the beliefs and feelings generated about myth, language, poetry, and an aesthetics of music that were first articulated by a group of philosophical and literary figures known as the early Romantics (*die Frühromantiker*). If we agree that emotions have a history, that how people expressed joy, pride, sorrow, love, or fear was temporally and spatially contingent, then we need to begin this story with the early Romantics in order to determine what, per historian Barbara Rosenwein, nineteenth-century German choral members valued—or devalued.⁸ Intellectual theorist Isaiah Berlin claims that the movement known today as Romanticism was “perhaps the first moment . . . when arts dominated other aspects of life, when there was a kind of tyranny of art over life.”⁹ How did the ideals and beliefs that emerged from the philosophers and literary figures who gathered in Weimar and Jena at the turn of the previous century generate a *Weltanschauung* that endured for several generations and established the values that so many choristers found compelling? Romanticism is a broad topic and as Berlin noted, “literature on romanticism is larger than romanticism itself.”¹⁰ For my purposes I am interested first in the approach of Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) to language, poetry, and song; second, in the literary quest for not only a founding mythology, but equally important, an effort to use drama and music to mobilize ordinary citizens to action; and third, Ludwig Tieck’s (1773-1853) and E. T. A. Hoffmann’s (1776-1822) aesthetic of music. In the early nineteenth century, overarching concepts of freedom and of longing (*Sehnsucht*) proved essential to the founding circle of early Romantics—of whom Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) was a primary literary force, while

⁸ Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 2. Rosenwein notes that feelings can never be known out of context and that they take different forms and means of expression in different settings. She calls emotional communities “communities of emotional styles and/or norms” (259).

⁹ Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1999), xi.

¹⁰ Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism*, 1.

tangential figures like Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860) and Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) added their voices to an emergent sense of German nationalism.

Romanticism remains a slippery concept to delineate, but my foremost concern is music and how it became intimately linked to German national identity. Herder and Goethe first proposed that language, poetry, and music were the original expressions of the common people and the roots of all social existence. Thus, the recovery of ancient stories and folksongs exposed the seeds of German beliefs and values, and this belief launched a hunt for authentic folk songs and stories throughout the long nineteenth century.¹¹ Ancient folk tales and songs expressed the “true” nature of the German people because they were supposedly uncorrupted by foreign elements. French folk songs expressed the nature of the French, or Scottish songs that of the Scots people, and only the poetry, stories, and songs that originated from one’s own language could truly express the origins of that nation.¹² Musicologist Richard Taruskin writes that “Romanticism was nationalism’s natural ally and its most powerful stimulant.”¹³ Although German nationalism was born during the Napoleonic era, it flowered throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century after the publication of the Grimm brothers’ fairy tales (*Kinder- und Hausmärchen*) and later in Richard Wagner’s music dramas based on Nordic-Germanic myths.¹⁴ The “discovery” of the *Nibelungenlied*, which supplied many authors and musicians fodder for artistic expression was the

¹¹ In the realm of music there is debate about when eras of music began and ended—Renaissance, Baroque, Classic, Romantic, Modern, Postmodern. Because the symphony is considered the musical form most representative of Romanticism, and the exploration of the symphonic form was pivotal to the entire nineteenth and early twentieth century, I am using the term Romantic for the entire period. Historian Tim Blanning agrees that Romanticism in most of the arts was “dead and buried” by the mid-nineteenth century, but Romanticism in music prevailed until the early twentieth century. Tim Blanning, *The Romantic Revolution: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2010). For a different [point of view, see James Webster, “Between Enlightenment and Romanticism in Music History: ‘First Viennese Modernism’ and the Delayed Nineteenth Century,” *19th Century Music* 25, no. 2-3 (2001-2002): 108-126; Edward F. Kravitt, “Romanticism Today,” *The Music Quarterly* 76, no. 1 (1992): 93-109. For musical tropes that carried over from literature see Ingeborg Walther, “Goethe, Romanticism, and the German Lied: Developing Historical and Transcultural Literacies in the Undergraduate Curriculum,” *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German* 48, no. 1 (2015): 1-24.

¹² Johann Gottfried Herder, “On Music,” from *Kalligone* (1800), trans. Philip V. Bohlman in *Song Loves the Masses* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017): 267-278; and *Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music*, 110-111. Herder’s conception that word, tone, and gesture were closely related and a fundamental feature of national expression, was a basic tenet of the *Wandervogel* youth movement that emerged in the 1890s.

¹³ Richard Taruskin, “Nationalism,” *Oxford Music Online* (2001), 7.

¹⁴ Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 187-188 and 204-210. Wagner read Jacob Grimm’s *Deutsche Mythologie* for ideas for German operas like *Lohengrin*, and although the *Nibelungenlied* fell out of favor after the Napoleonic era, the characters from that tale were given new life after Wagner made them central themes of his *Ring Cycle*.

German equivalent of the founding myths of Homer's *Illiad* and *Odyssey*. According to Herder, these founding myths held the seeds of a people's national identity.

Although the German states were not unified into a single political unit for most of the nineteenth century, the early Romantics and their contemporaries embraced the theories of Herder and Goethe, and the effort to uncover ancient folkways and myths was a vital feature of the nationalist endeavor in the German states. In a very real sense the literary and philological work of the Romantics led them to ideals of freedom—each language group needed the liberty to grow and develop within its own geographic space. From 1806 when the Holy Roman Empire ceased to exist and 1815 when European representatives at the Congress of Vienna reorganized the German states into the German Confederation, the ideas formulated by the early Romantics about language, poetry, folkways, and freedom came to define the goals of German nationalists. In addition to the search for their own poetic and literary roots, an obsession with ancient Greece weighed heavily on the imaginations of the Romantics and their own conception of national identity. The Greek fusion of art, religion, and politics into a coherent whole offered a model for their own attempts at nation building.

Drawing his inspiration from the ancient Greeks, Friedrich Schiller used drama because he believed aesthetics held the answer to an ethical and excellent society: “It is only through beauty that man makes his way to freedom.”¹⁵ Most of the early Romantics were literary figures, but I have singled out Schiller as an exemplar because his historical dramas were meant to inspire his contemporaries to throw off the shackles of political and social oppression—a task that persisted throughout the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Schiller believed most Europeans were suffering from the tyranny of “petty oligarchs who treated their subjects like cattle,” and he set about searching for historic examples in which heroic figures resisted tyrants and then used their stories to foment a spirit of republicanism. Art was not meant for pure entertainment but for education and a motivation to action. The acquisition of an appreciation of serious drama or music however, required training. For Schiller, as for many of the early

¹⁵ George S. Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), 1, 8, 33, 50.

Romantics, the goal was “to arm Truth and Virtue with that victorious energy which brings hearts under its sway.”¹⁶ Thus the Romantics considered an acquisition of artistic taste an utmost goal of *Bildung* and the most appropriate tool for promoting societal and political reforms. While ancient Greece provided the tools for understanding a fusion of art and life, *Bildung* was a uniquely German feature of Romanticism and established the background against which not only intellectuals, but amateurs, could claim to be “the people of music.”

Bildung was a concept that grew out of the early Romantic fusion of empiricism with an inner acquisition of knowledge (*Innerlichkeit*)—between impartial analysis of an object and an affective appreciation of the object.¹⁷ The painter Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840) insisted that, “The artist should not only paint what he sees before him, but also what he sees within him.”¹⁸ In music venues as well, properly educated listeners sat in complete silence as they contemplated the deep and inexpressible nature of a musical performance. Philosopher Frederick Beiser calls *Bildung* (formation, education, development) the “fundamental ethical ideal” of the Romantics.¹⁹ A distinctly German class known as the *Bildungsbürgertum* emerged as connoisseurs and producers of music at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Roughly translated as the educated middle classes, for Dahlhaus they were the “taste-bearing stratum,” and historian George Williamson notes that this group “had no direct parallel” in other European states.²⁰ The amateur singers who formed the original choral societies and joined them in ever increasing numbers promoted the ideal that music expressed who they were as a nation.²¹ Over the course

¹⁶ Quoted in William Jones, “Friedrich Schiller and His Friends,” *Fidelio* 14, no. 1-2 (2005), 56. Also see Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life*, 54. Schiller believed the harmony between reason and feeling, between law and freedom could be realized through art.

¹⁷ Isaiah Berlin credits German Pietism, with its focus on “an intense inner life,” to the Romantic turn to inwardness. Berlin, *Roots of Romanticism*, 36-37.

¹⁸ Quoted in Blanning, *The Romantic Revolution*, 25.

¹⁹ Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 25-31. Both Beiser and Berlin stress that the early Romantics did not reject everything in Enlightenment thought but while accepting scientific principles and ideas of freedom, they rejected the idea that everything could be reduced to empirical explanations.

²⁰ Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 7; and Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 43.

²¹ Sponheuer, “Reconstructing Ideal Types,” 40-55. Sponheuer describes the two “ideal types” of German music as first, exclusively German and distinguished by its “depth, hard work and thoroughness,” and second, music that was “universal” and “synthetic”—a fusion of Italian, French, and German forms and expressions. Even in the universalist type, the German features of music prevailed as superior so that by the early nineteenth century, music

of the nineteenth century music festivals, public concerts, and especially the education system fostered a belief that *Bildung* was not merely a possession of the educated middle-classes but was something that could be acquired by anyone willing to cultivate an inner appreciation of the inexpressible and infinite qualities of German music.²²

Old German folk songs and the patriotic, anti-French songs written by Ernst Moritz Arndt, Theodor Körner, and others were only one piece of the national-musical picture that emerged as a defining feature of German identity; instrumental and *a capella* music came to define German musical excellence to the broader world. Efforts to define the nation in early nineteenth-century national hymns were not sufficient to fulfill the demands of *Bildung*. The cultivation of a national emotional community required in addition an aesthetic of music that elevated music's status to the level of literature or philosophy, a new understanding of the potential role of music and singing that was first articulated by Ludwig Tieck and E. T. A. Hoffmann, who generated an appreciation for instrumental music as something more than background music for aristocratic conversation. Music became a "language beyond language," capable of capturing the "Inexpressible" and "Unspeakable."²³ So-called "absolute music" was instrumental, but in choral music there was a parallel aesthetic that Tieck and Hoffmann assigned to *a capella* music—especially that written in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries.²⁴ Unaccompanied (or lightly accompanied) vocal music experienced a revival as part of the choral music movement so that in both orchestral and polyphonic choral music it was the "pure music" that spoke to attentive and educated

was considered the "most German art" and German musicians "entrusted with revealing the highest meaning of humanity."

²² *Bildung* encompassed more than just an understanding and appreciation of music, but that is my emphasis here.

²³ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 90-91. Dahlhaus quotes from Hoffmann's 1810 review of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. Hoffman's review became one of the founding documents of Romantic aesthetics in music. Hoffmann's analysis of the *Fifth Symphony* as a musical design that sprouted "from a single kernel" led to generations of listeners who were trained to grasp the structure, and the harmonic and thematic logic, of a work of music (Dahlhaus, 91). Hoffman and Tieck both used the terms "Infinite" and "Inexpressible" to describe music that transcended the language of words.

²⁴ James Garratt, "Performing Renaissance Church Music in Nineteenth-Century Germany: Issues and Challenges in the Study of Performative Reception," *Music and Letters* 83, no. 2 (2002), 199-200.

listeners and participants.²⁵ This music aesthetic became an essential feature of the narrative that Germans were the “people of music” and of *Kultur*—a narrative developed by the *Bildungsbürgertum* and disseminated by the education system. It was a value that became deeply embedded in German society over the course of the nineteenth century and had the emotional power to compel the attention of all social groups over the course of successive decades.

The acquisition of *Bildung* and national unity were not facile activities but required ongoing training and effort. The Romantic approach to life required creative energy directed towards national freedom, the arts, and historical change, but this could not be realized individually. A community of individuals, striving together within the natural world, could transform society and its institutions. One of the more influential Romantics for this organic theory of life was Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854). Schelling advanced a notion of the *Weltseele* (world soul) in which a “gentle bond” would unite people in a free society overcoming divisions between spirit and nature, the ideal and the real.²⁶ Isaiah Berlin describes Schelling’s doctrine as “an infinite striving forward [towards] something which is infinite, something which is inexhaustible.”²⁷ Inexhaustible was a term frequently used to describe the Romantics’ belief that not only the universe, but also a Beethoven symphony or a Bach chorale, was composed of elements that were unfathomable and that the longing to explore them, and the freedom to do so, should be relentless. The Romantic ideals of *Bildung*, freedom, unity, myth, and art provided the ideological foundation for the first generation of amateur choristers and for an aesthetic of music that endured into the twentieth century.

This sketch is a reduction of a complex intellectual and cultural movement explored in depth in the material that follows, but the figures involved had a profound impact on music—especially in elevating music to a sublime art and setting the stage for Germans to appropriate music as an essential feature of their national identity. By the decades of the late nineteenth century, it is difficult to imagine

²⁵ Bernd Sponheuer, “Reconstructing Ideal Types of the ‘German’ in Music,” in *Music and German National Identity*, ed. Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002): 36-58. Incidentally, male choruses often sang *a capella*—this was considered the best means of presenting older folk songs.

²⁶ Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 46-47; Roberts, *Romantic Conception of Life*, 114-15.

²⁷ Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism*, 101.

that either industrial workers or small-town tailors and house painters could articulate the ideas of Herder, Schiller, Tieck, or Schelling. But they were acquainted with traditional German songs and institutionalized choral singing, alongside the gymnastics movement started by Friedrich Jahn and the folktales resurrected by the Grimm brothers. The general education system exposed children to the rudiments of music, and although the choral societies and *Singakademien* were dominated by bourgeois singers with the leisure time to gather in the evenings to socialize and sing, across the nineteenth century more and more Germans participated in choirs and embraced a familiar repertoire that allowed them to take possession of a heritage as “the people of music.” The singers who gathered in the small Bavarian town of Langenzenn in 1914 were among those who claimed this legacy.

The question of what German musicians at the turn of the last century valued and what ordinary citizens were persuaded to treasure lies at the heart of what Barbara Rosenwein describes as emotional communities, or “groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value—or devalue—the same or related emotions.”²⁸ Rosenwein suggests that emotional communities are overlapping and that people belong to more than one emotional community over the course of their lives centered on family, school, church or religious affiliation, clubs, workplace or profession, age group, and many others. Rosenwein visualizes these as non-concentric circles—a large circle represented overarching national assumptions and values, and smaller circles within the large one that reveal the limitations of acceptable modes of expression or open up potential crossover.²⁹ German choruses were sometimes created with specialized interests in mind and thus represented discrete emotional communities, but the growing membership of regional associations and national organizations showed that individual singers could be incorporated into larger, all-encompassing collectives rooted in the shared experience of feeling. The values of history, myth, nature, and the *Lied* permeated all choral associations

²⁸ Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 2, 24.

²⁹ Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 24.

no matter their particularistic goals—these were themes that evoked a prescribed emotional response repeatedly revealed in the texts of music journals, newspapers, and song lyrics.³⁰

Emotions are not mere verbal or written expressions but come from what people *do*, and as Monique Scheer suggests, what people *do* emerges from their social environment; emotions are not just something we have but shared affects that emerge from human activity.³¹ Per Scheer, people “adhere to a learned repertoire” that places them in a specific socio-historical setting.³² In other words, people become habituated to act and feel in particular ways, and these daily repeated bodily activities generate emotions that are part of the social environment. Again the choir worked as a vivid example. A group of individuals used their collective bodies as musical instruments, emitting sounds that derived from vocal chords but also repeated bodily practices, which brought the singers into physical contact with one another and encouraged singers to internalize music-making. German choristers came together because it was an accepted norm within their society; they learned to coordinate breathing, match tone quality, articulate consonants and vowels, control the volume and phrasing of a song—all requiring repeated practice to produce beautiful sounds. The responses to the music were conditioned by not only the singers’ own bodily efforts but also by how a larger group of people received the music.

One example from German musical history works to show how the *Bildungsbürgertum* embodied musical expression and created emotional community. Fanny Mendelssohn sang with the *Berlin Singakademie* in 1829 on the occasion of the first performance of Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* in a hundred years—accorded by historian Celia Applegate as “one of the most famous performances in German music history.”³³ The members of the *Singakademie* had rehearsed for weeks, the event was

³⁰ A *Lied* is a song, and in a sense it is a rather generic term. But as a distinct expression of German-ness, it grew out of Herder’s and Goethe’s theories about poetry, language, and music as national expression. *Lieder* were German poems set to music, and in the nineteenth century, they became the most commonly performed works on choral music programs.

³¹ Monique Scheer, “Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion,” *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 193-220.

³² Scheer, “Are Emotions a Kind of Practice,” 199-201.

³³ Applegate, *Bach in Berlin*, 3.

publicized, tickets sold, and on the day of the performance the concert hall quickly filled up.³⁴ After the performance Fanny Mendelssohn wrote to Wilhelm Hensel (her future husband) describing her sense of the event. She explained that though crowds filled the concert hall it had “all the air of a church: the deepest quiet and most solemn devotion pervaded the whole, only now and then involuntary utterances of intense emotion were heard.”³⁵ The setting and the music caused the audience to react as though they were in church where quiet and solemn behaviors were expected, and one could occasionally let out a soft sound of awe or devotion. These learned practices emerged from societal mores and expectations—in this case about music and the message of Bach’s *Passion*. But in this performance, the mores of a *Passion* performed in a sacred setting were transferred to the secular environs of a concert hall.³⁶ Repeated practices or rituals learned from childhood and repeated rehearsals with the same group of people created emotional bonds and generated continuing beliefs in the value of these practices.

My exploration of German choral societies suggests that hidden emotions come to life when we excavate routine practices and the rituals of a performance. Musicologist Christopher Small uses the term *musicking* to describe the activities in which participants including musicians, audiences, and everyone else contributing to the performance form relationships that govern meaning beyond the composer’s score. “The fundamental nature and meaning of music lies not in objects, not in musical works at all, but in action, in what people do.”³⁷ Small adds to this that “performance does not exist in order to present musical works, but rather, musical works exist in order to give performers something to perform.”³⁸ How did nineteenth century singers create meaning come from the “works” they performed in a home town gathering or at a festival? In spite of efforts to instill a deep appreciation for musical works, for many nineteenth-century Germans it was performance that brought the notes on a page to life. In conjunction

³⁴ Applegate, *Bach in Berlin*, 36-37.

³⁵ Sebastian Hensel, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, *The Mendelssohn Family (1729-1847) from Letters and Journals*, trans. Carl Klingemann (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1881), 172.

³⁶ Blanning, *The Romantic Revolution*, 32. Blanning adds that the conflation of the concert hall with a divine service was a recurring feature of Romanticism. And after Richard Wagner’s festival theater was completed at Bayreuth in the 1870s, visitors most frequently commented on the church-like nature of attending a performance there.

³⁷ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 8.

³⁸ Small, *Musicking*, 8.

with the sound of the music, the setting of the performance, the objects that were part of it, the occasion set the tone for how the performance was received. Small asks, “What does it mean when this performance (of this work) takes place at this time, in this place, with these participants?”³⁹ Rosenwein’s emphasis on values—that is “emotions . . . often hidden in the texts”—demonstrates why Scheer’s and Small’s contributions about practices and rituals are useful for understanding the history of German choral societies. Hidden emotions come to life when we excavate routine practices and the rituals of a performance. For my purposes, one other theory about emotion works here as well—one that connects material culture to emotions.

While this is a story about singers, it is also a story about material objects and spaces—a concert hall in Karlsruhe or the *Turnhalle* in Feuchtwangen, the bus station and town square where singers gathered and then paraded to a festival hall, a local church or Wagner’s Bayreuth theater, in private homes, while hiking through the woods, and eventually World War I trenches, military hospitals, and railway stations. The categories of analysis developed by archeologists Oliver J. T. Harris and Tim Flohr Sørensen offer a productive way to anchor textual evidence, rituals, and practices in social space, and in reciprocal relationship between objects and emotions. “Emotions are produced through people’s material engagement with the world,” they write. “Emotions are productive of that engagement [and] these processes are inseparable from each other.”⁴⁰ They offer, as well, the following terminology. Networks of people and things generate emotions through affective fields, and when these networks attune to others and to the material world (noticing, perceiving, and recognizing moods and feelings), they generate an atmosphere against which affective fields emerge.⁴¹ The rituals of parades and choral performances evoked emotions and objects like banners, ribbons, hats, postcards, and massive festival halls were tangible products of the feelings. The analytical terms proposed by Harris and Sørensen mesh with

³⁹ Small, *Musicking*, 10-11.

⁴⁰ Oliver J. T. Harris and Tim Flohr Sørensen, “Rethinking Emotion and Material Culture,” *Archaeological Dialogues* 17, no. 2 (2010): 145-163.

⁴¹ Harris and Sørensen, “Rethinking Emotion and Material Culture,” 149-152.

Scheer's emphasis on practices and Small's on individual performances offering several means by which to unearth how emotional communities were created and sustained.

The approaches to emotions articulated by Rosenwein, Scheer, Small, Harris, and Sørensen complement each other, and I employ them throughout to uncover how German choristers created a network of overlapping emotional communities. Going beyond ways individual choirs created emotional community, I examine points of connection between groups who seemed, on the surface, to value entirely different things. All-male choral members created community around national memory and the *Lied*, and they created material objects (apparel, banners, mottos, a common repertoire) that expressed themes of nature, history, and myth. How did other layers of musical community fit into this narrative? The concept of emotional community supplies the terminology to situate choral societies in relation to one another. Common practices, rituals, and material objects provide the tools to flesh out what German singers valued and thus trace continuity and change.

Quite a few scholars (both musicologists and historians) have dealt with the nineteenth-century German choral movement and its role in establishing German national identity. German musicologists Carl Dahlhaus and Friedhelm Brusniak offer comprehensive accounts of the historical events which surrounded the development of amateur choruses and their place in the larger world of nineteenth-century music—Dahlhaus dealing with elite music culture more extensively.⁴² In a similar vein, historian Celia Applegate published a recent collection of essays in which she examines how music “organized” German society over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and suggests the importance of incorporating music more thoroughly into general history.⁴³ David Gramit's analysis of the emergent field of music journalism concerns itself with a shorter time span than the overviews offered by Dahlhaus, Brusniak, or Applegate but also explores identity formation in the German states. Gramit argues that late-

⁴² Friedhelm Brusniak, *Das Grosse Buch des Fränkischen Sängerbundes I. Teil* (Munich: Schwingenstein Verlag, 1991); and Brusniak, „Chor und Chormusik,“ *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik* (New York: Bärenreiter, 1994-2007): 766-823.

⁴³ Celia Applegate, *The Necessity of Music: Variations on a German Theme* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017). This book is a collection of essays that Applegate has written about music over the course of her career, and she argues that historians need to take more care to explain the contexts in which people make music and what this means to communities of citizens.

eighteenth/early-nineteenth century composers and instrumentalists used media to advance their worth to society as the patronage system began to disintegrate alongside the society of orders. The musicians did not do this cynically—they believed in the value of their art—but they needed to promote their skills as something essential to “cultivated society” and in order to assure their own preservation.⁴⁴

Other scholars focus on specific topics. Cecelia Hopkins Porter provides a wealth of information about the Lower Rhine Music Festival from its inception in 1818 to 1867.⁴⁵ This was the original, long-lived music festival that included orchestral and choral works and served as the model for other nineteenth-century music festivals. James Garratt also writes about mid-nineteenth century festivals and examines the socio-political import of the musical works written for these festivals.⁴⁶ Less political in nature but equally important to the amateur choral movement is Celia Applegate’s investigation of the performance of Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* in 1829. Applegate offers a wide-ranging approach to the March 11 performance that demonstrates how theories of aesthetics, music journalism, religion, and the amateur choral movement came together to enact a “national culture.”⁴⁷ Enriching the scholarship around this singular performance Applegate and Pamela Potter contribute an edited volume with a broad scope of topics about German music from the early-nineteenth century to the Cold War.⁴⁸ The participation of the educated middle classes (*Bildungsbürgertum*) features prominently in all these narratives. However, as an indication of the growing sense of worth accorded to music in German society more than one scholar notes that “middle-class” was a fairly flexible concept that encompassed “a willingness to embrace culture as a defining element of one’s identity” more so than a pure association with wealth or status.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 20.

⁴⁵ Cecelia Hopkins Porter, “The New Public and the Reordering of the Musical Establishment: The Lower Rhine Music Festival, 1818-67,” *19th-Century Music* 3, no. 3 (1980): 211-224.

⁴⁶ James Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform in the Age of Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁴⁷ Celia Applegate, *Bach in Berlin: Nation and Culture in Mendelssohn’s Revival of the St. Matthew Passion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

⁴⁸ Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter, *Music and German National Identity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002).

⁴⁹ Barbara Eichner, *History in Mighty Sounds: Musical Constructions of German National Identity, 1848-1914* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2012), 40. Gramit makes a similar point—the popularity of the amateur choral movement and the emphasis on the superiority of German music drew in participants from above and below the middle-class.

My own approach coincides most closely with that of two musicologists who deal with choral music and German national identity by employing a range of compositions written for choral performance. Both Ryan Minor and Barbara Eichner approach nineteenth-century choral music as a vehicle for identity formation and both rely heavily on musical scores as part of their textual evidence. Minor starts with the premise that choral singing was a ubiquitous feature of nineteenth-century German culture and argues that the amateur choral movement represented a “demand” by the people to participate more fully in the public sphere.⁵⁰ He demonstrates ways amateur men’s choirs did this by performing at festivals celebrating Gutenberg, Beethoven, and the new German Empire and uses lesser-known works by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, and Brahms to advance this argument. Unlike Minor who locates the beginnings of a bourgeois involvement in national identity formation to the early decades of the nineteenth century, Eichner takes 1848 as her starting point when composers of operas began to use historical figures and events “to make a (more or less obvious) statement about what being German meant.”⁵¹ Composers who used Hermann, Luther, Barbarossa, or mythical figures from the *Nibelungenlied* offered their audiences reaffirmation in what they believed were German values and characteristic qualities like manly unselfishness, heroic preparation to defend home, wife, and freedom, and the faithful wife who tended the home and cared for the children.⁵² Although Eichner relies primarily on opera, she does have one chapter about the amateur choral movement and says the men and women who participated in these choirs were “highly conscious of their role in history” reinforcing the notion that these participants believed they were “carriers of a culture of remembrance.”⁵³ While I find the arguments of Minor and Eichner helpful, their heavy reliance on analysis of musical scores makes their monographs less accessible to readers unfamiliar with music theory, and their narratives mute the “voices” of the

Also see, Vernon L. Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Lidtke challenges the narrative that workers were isolated in their own subculture but instead they developed their own associations and performed many of the same musical works that the bourgeois association did—but without adopting bourgeois values.

⁵⁰ Ryan Minor, *Choral Fantasies: Music, Festivity, and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-3.

⁵¹ Eichner, *History in Mighty Sounds*, 5.

⁵² Eichner, *History in Mighty Sounds*, 86 and 97.

⁵³ Eichner, *History in Mighty Sounds*, 228.

singers and other participants. And although Applegate approaches music as part of history (as I do) our approaches differ somewhat. While she focuses on art music, I find that entire programs of music (i.e. the selection of songs to be presented in a performance) offer an important key to what German choristers and their audiences valued—and the participants I investigate were often considered less “cultured.”⁵⁴

This dissertation moves beyond musical texts written by critically acclaimed Germans. Instead I explore the singers, directors, and composers who participated in the choirs of the German Choral Association, Brahms’s Hamburger *Frauenchor*, the Leipzig *Reidel-Verein*, the Berlin *Liedertafel*, workers’ choirs, the *Wandervögel*, and Academic Singers. Although some of the individuals who worked with these groups received national attention, the vast majority were ordinary men and women who enjoyed singing and believed in music as a national inheritance. Musicologists look at the structure of the music composition, the composer, characteristics of the time period, and reception history while historians tend to look primarily at political/social/economic aspects of the *Kaiserreich*. However, I maintain that choral music performed by the citizens of small and large towns, university students, workers, women, and young teens who hiked in the woods and mountains played an essential role in the self-assertion of a unique German culture, and their participation has been under-studied in the scholarship of the German Empire. Applegate and Potter admit that while we do not know so much about the “various subcultures” of German-speaking choristers there is reason to believe they found common ground in a “canon of musical greatness.”⁵⁵ Indeed, German-speakers from Switzerland, Austria, Germany and even America shared an appreciation for Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and others too numerous to list here. I further suggest that they found common ground in performance, rituals, practices, and themes of myth, nature, history, *Heimat*, and folksong to express a national identity and generate a vast web of overlapping emotional communities. In the process, the everyday musicians on the bottom rung of the artistic ladder created a solid foundation for the postulate that Germans were the “people of music.”

⁵⁴ Art music is music that implies a higher degree of formal structure and is associated with “cultivated” music as opposed to folk songs or popular music.

⁵⁵ Applegate and Potter, “Germans as the ‘People of Music,’” 16-17.

This dissertation is arranged in four “movements” each composed of several chapters in which each chapter takes a slightly different approach to how emotional communities were created and sustained. This organization hints at the symphonic form in which each movement of the symphony offers a new expression of the entire composition, but all the parts hold together as a unit. Symphonies dominated the nineteenth-century orchestral landscape, and composers beginning with Ludwig von Beethoven stretched the boundaries of the accepted forms and structures of the genre. That seemed a suitable metaphor for the choral movement. Singers began organizing within a fairly narrow segment of society and with a limited vision—thus introducing the overall theme (which might consist of only a few notes). Other singers began creating choral societies in both large and small towns and gradually they institutionalized the earliest practices. By the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century an entire network of choral societies had emerged—representing a richer, fuller development of the original theme. Taking the symphonic form as my inspiration, I begin in Movement I with an overview of the early choral movement—these singers established the “theme.” National expression and a love of music combined to give choristers a *raison d'être*. Throughout the decades before political unification, singers kept the dream of German unity alive and in the process generated an entire repertoire of songs for all-male choirs—some overtly patriotic and others that articulated German ideals rooted in the distant past, its myths, and its landscape. There are three chapters in this Movement. Chapter One traces a history of music in the German-speaking lands from the perspective of Otto Elben (1823-1899)—a leader in the choral movement both in his native Swabia and on the national stage. This history explains why names like Walter von der Vogelweide or Hans Sachs frequently appeared in songs, banners, and choral association letterheads or journal mastheads. Elben’s narrative also included valuable details about how choirs formed in the 1820s through 1850s, how a repertoire for all male-choirs developed, and how early festivals were celebrated. These were the singers who established a foundation for the future national organization, its memories, and practices. In Chapter Two I look more closely at the *Lied*—the form of musical expression that the all-male choral associations sought to preserve for the simple reason that they believed it was the purest expression of German-ness. While *Lieder* were meant to be poetry expressed

through song (per Goethe and Herder), there was quite a range of music that fit into this category, and I examine several different types of *Lieder* in this chapter.

While much of this dissertation deals with all-male choirs, there were also mixed choirs and women's choirs that participated in the choral movement. Chapter Three is inspired by several women's memoirs. The Schmalz, Ettliger, and Smyth memoirs offer an insight into German music culture by women who were not themselves well-known but were closely enough connected with important figures to give us an inside look into how musical circles interacted with one another.⁵⁶ More importantly, the women all sang in various choirs and their accounts of performances give us the emotional vocabulary that is missing from lists of *Lieder* on programs or in song collections. They also provide intriguing personal reflections about two of the most important German composers of the nineteenth century—Richard Wagner and Johannes Brahms.

Movement II focuses exclusively on the all-male choirs that made up the first amateur choral societies and joined together in the 1860s to establish the *Deutscher Sängerbund* (German Choral Association). Of course multiple layers of music culture existed in the German Empire, including orchestral music, symphonies, men's choirs, women's choruses, soloists, conductors, composers, and folk musicians, but the men's choruses dominated the amateur choral movement. Thousands of men participated from the mid-nineteenth century, and these singers sustained the ideal that history, myth, nature, and especially the *Lied* expressed a unique German identity. As well, their festival rituals became the model for every other choral organization. Chapter Four examines the rituals, practices, and material objects created by individual choral societies as well as the national organization. The entire repertoire of music written for men's voices as well as the rituals of festivals emphasized the significance of historical memory, and their parades, banner designs, regional costumes, and choral performances put the "nation" on display. Bringing together singers from all parts of German strengthened emotional communities as singers gathered every five or six years for a few days of singing and socializing. The archeological

⁵⁶ Ethel Smyth was the only one of the women who went on to publish compositions and make a name for herself—but that was after she returned to England.

approach of Harris and Sørensen works well as an analytic tool for these festivals—the material objects singers created and the spaces through which choristers moved take on richer meanings when we examine how emotions were generated through affective fields, atmosphere, and attunement rather than relying solely on journalists’ written accounts. However, the German Choral Association (DSB) published its own journal (*Die Sängerkhalle*) that provided many of the details about speeches, what works were performed, and who conducted the choirs. The use of both the archeological approach of Harris and Sørensen combined with Small’s theory of *musicking* gives a more complete impression of how emotional communities experienced and expressed shared emotions. The national festivals of the DSB were held from 1874 to 1912 and that time span provides a valuable lens through which to plot continuity as well as change in the men’s choral movement.

Chapter Five takes *Heimat* as its unifying theme and deals with small-town choirs in the region of Franconia. The German *Heimat* (homeland) is a more flexible way of approaching the modern German state than Benedict Anderson’s assessment that the nation-state is composed of citizens who are more or less impervious to each other while also “imagining” themselves in a deep horizontal relationship.⁵⁷ *Heimat* was both one’s own homeland whose customs, identifying geographic features, history, and songs treasured by a specific region, but every region’s *Heimat* could be embraced within the larger nation as well.⁵⁸ In small towns singers drew their families and neighbors into the emotional community of the town’s musicians, and local festivals created close connections between neighboring towns. I employ again Small’s concept of *musicking* in this chapter to explore how local performances included musicians but also the audience and local figures who enabled performances to take place. My primary source for this chapter is the choral records of the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein* (Singing and Music Society). This small town’s music society was one of the oldest in Germany; it regularly performed for the town’s citizens. Its members also participated in regional choral festivals and in the DSB national

⁵⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983).

⁵⁸ Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 12-16.

festivals. Singers and audiences grasped the value of acknowledging *regional* characteristics that contributed to their rich *national* culture all the while asserting a unique German character.

The overall theme of Movement III is dissonance. In the wake of establishing the German Empire the choral movement moved beyond the original choral societies. Now teachers, workers, youth, Catholics, and others formed their own choral associations to reinforce solidarity within these groups. Each of these choral associations had their own aims and goals but they also held many of the same values and practices already established by the original choral societies.⁵⁹ I use Arnold Schönberg's description of musical dissonance as a metaphor for German society after 1890. Dissonance represented a different degree of harmonic consonance but without rupture and isolation. To some extent Schönberg's analysis of dissonance is a musical equivalent to Confino's claim that *Heimat* defied social and political particularism. Dissonance challenged the confines of tonal structure in the same way *Heimat* challenged a notion of community in which the national state sought to create uniformity by means of centralized political/economic structures.⁶⁰ Both music and *Heimat* could be de-centered and yet cohesive. Each chapter in Movement III deals with different types of choirs, choral societies, and festivals that emerged after 1890. Some rejected the bourgeois values that characterized the first decades of the choral movement and challenged homogeneous emotional communities—even as they valued music as an expression of *their* own experience of German-ness.

Chapter Six deals with two large choirs—one in Berlin and one in Leipzig—and both stretched the boundaries of what had been accepted practices in the choral movement. Although *Lieder* with themes of history and nature were prevalent in their repertoires, they defied the stereotype that choral societies existed for bourgeois singers to socialize and entertain themselves. The traditional all-male choral

⁵⁹ For workers' choral associations, their practices, and rituals as they correspond to bourgeois choral associations see, Dieter Dowe, "The Workingmen's Choral Movement in Germany before the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 2 (1978):269-296; Gerhard A. Ritter, "Workers' Culture in Imperial Germany: Problems and Points of Departure for Research," *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 2 (1978): 167-189; Vernon Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Stanley Pierson, *Marxist Intellectuals and the Working-Class Mentality in Germany, 1887-1912* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

⁶⁰ Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 37.

societies reputedly offered an excuse for drinking beer and singing banal songs about the Fatherland; choirs like the *Berlin Singakademie* catered to men and women with the leisure to gather in the evenings for parlor music. By contrast, the *Berlin Liedertafel* that reorganized in the 1880s focused on performing quality choral music with a more inclusive group of singers—men invited to join for their ability. Similarly, the *Riedel-Verein* in Leipzig was formed by serious singers (both men and women) who took on the challenge of learning music from the Palestrina revival movement, and the *Riedel-Verein* thereby successfully bridged the Protestant-Catholic divide at the height of the *Kulturkampf*. Both choirs (*Berlin Liedertafel* and *Leipzig Riedel-Verein*) incorporated traditional folk songs alongside the works of sixteenth and seventeenth-century composers and earned accolades for singing quality music—music that was part of the traditional Catholic mass as well as music written for the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Lutheran church. A comparison of the use of music by Catholic choral associations (*Allgemeine Cäcilia Verein*) and those of the largely Protestant ones shows that music itself had an irenic quality. Rather than dividing singing along purely confessional lines, music had the ability to bring German singers together at a time when government policies sought to sow division.

Chapter Seven deals with festival culture once again but with festivals whose purpose was to cultivate an appreciation for the nation and its cultural roots in inclusive/exclusive ways. The 400th birthday celebration of Martin Luther conveniently coincided with the founding of the *Kaiserreich* and offered opportunities to celebrate the new nation as one with a Protestant identity. Throughout the nineteenth century Luther's persona had morphed from a religious figure whose main concern was theological to the ideal bourgeois family man, patriot, freedom fighter, champion of individual liberty, and civic hero. His most memorable chorale, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," became a rallying cry for national pride and cultural superiority. On another point of the national-religious spectrum, Richard Wagner took up the challenge of employing ancient Nordic-Germanic myths to create a "new mythology" that would revitalize the German people. His temple to a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art) at Bayreuth fulfilled many of the early Romantics' aspirations about a union of myth, the arts, history, and the nation. Bayreuth represented a new kind of festival carefully engineered by Wagner and one that was

simultaneously polarizing and mesmerizing. Both Luther and Wagner represented the redemptive possibility of music and a rather narrow sense of national belonging. Wagner's "new mythology" was a counterbalance to and a compromise with Luther's Christian-Protestant point of view. Rituals, practices, and emotions were deeply rooted in these "new" festivals and engaged Germans who were part of other communities and paradoxically other religious confessions. Both Luther and Wagner transcended local identities and represented a national aspect of culture and religion, and they represented Germany to the broader world.⁶¹

Chapter Eight broadens the scope of German musical participation and privileges the role of education in promoting a national musical agenda. Teachers were prominent participants in the movement for national unity from the days of Ernst Moritz Arndt and Friedrich Ludwig Jahn. The German education system required teachers to play the organ, piano, and violin, to give children a rudimentary knowledge of music, and in small towns, teachers were church cantors and organists, as well. Consequently teachers bore a heavy burden for cultivating the ideals of *Bildung* and training villagers to participate in *Kultur*. With the onset of industrialization and urbanization education reforms were required, and in the decades preceding World War I a vigorous discussion took place concerning the role of music in teacher training and in the general education system. Although these reforms were not fully implemented until the 1920s, the debates over the role of music in German culture had an impact on the emergence of choral associations distanced from the all-male German Choral Association whose practices and rituals were the primary concern of Chapters Four and Five. Workers created a thriving choral movement to rival that of the DSB—but with many of the same rituals and practices. Together with a repertoire dependent on German composers and *Lieder*, the rituals supplied links that joined singers across political-economic divides. Emotional community was undoubtedly tenuous between workers and their bourgeois counterparts, but there were points of connection. The value members of different religious confessions,

⁶¹ Anthony J. Steinhoff, "Embracing the Grail: *Parsifal*, Richard Wagner and the German Nation," *German History* 30, no. 3 (2012): 372-394.

workers, and educators placed on German music even during a period of rapid economic and social change reflected the enduring influence of the Romantics.

Education also ties music to a youth movement that emerged in the 1890s and early years of the twentieth century. Young people who took to the woods to hike, play guitars, sing, and search for local folkways represented another challenge to bourgeois music culture. They rejected what they considered the petrified *Hausmusik* and bourgeois festival culture of their parents in favor of an anthropological approach to folk culture that Herder had espoused a century earlier. Both workers and turn-of-the-century youth rejected many of the values of their bourgeois counterparts, but they nevertheless found ways to express themselves by using music—and often by employing the same genres and themes that had been cultivated by the original members of *Singakademien* and *Liedertafeln* dating back to the early nineteenth century. In general the challenges to the original bourgeois choral movement represented responses to the rapid changes brought about by industrialization and the anxieties of modern life. Musicking, practices, and rituals offered a sense of continuity in the midst of rapid change.

The two chapters in Movement IV (1914-1918) deal with the final years of the German Empire. Most scholars abandon an examination of the choral movement during the war years, but there are some useful observations about continuity and emotional community that can be made. The German Choral Association continued to function throughout the war years; singers who fought on the front lines of battle formed choirs; military planners included musical performances on both the Eastern and Western Fronts to boost morale and remind soldiers that they were defending German *Kultur* as well as the homeland. Communities of singers were disrupted but they were not dissolved—Germans who had spent years singing together formed new webs of connection during the war years. Publishers and military authorities understood that musical themes were highly effective for war propaganda and singing a valuable source of communal comfort. Friedrich Schiller's model of historical examples proved especially meaningful in the early months of World War I—hundreds of Germans marched off to war with visions of Napoleonic era heroes in mind, and the songs of Ernst Moritz Arndt and others in hand. Mythological figures, heroes of old who resisted foreign enemies, exhortations to defend *Heimat* and the

Rhine River, allusions to Wagnerian dramas, and the ancient strength of famous fortresses populated propaganda postcards, posters, and newspaper illustrations. Young men trained for battle using the gymnastic exercises developed by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn and marched to war in 1914 singing songs written by Theodor Körner in 1813.

Chapters Nine and Ten are not strictly chronological, but as there was a break in the war mood at the end of 1915-1916, I approach the use of music differently in each chapter. Chapter Nine focuses primarily on the early months of the war when singers could draw on historical parallels between the Napoleonic era and their current circumstances. The music and imagery of Schiller, Arndt, Körner, and other early patriots proved fruitful a hundred years after the Wars of Liberation. After 1916 there was more of an emphasis on courageous endurance, and Chapter Ten examines ways music served to comfort the suffering and to remind Germans that their homeland was worth fighting for. The themes of history, myth, nature, *Heimat*, and song survived, and these were employed as visual images in war propaganda—postcards, posters, newspapers and choral journals. Musical allusions resonated with readers who believed they were “the people of music.” Although the choral societies remained intact throughout the war, their activities were severely curtailed as singers went to the frontlines. There were no choral festivals during the war years, but benefit concerts took place on the home front, and there was a concerted effort to keep German *Kultur* alive at the fronts of war. Collective suffering and grief presented a new arena in which music served to bind people together in somber emotional communities. Johannes Brahms composed *Ein deutsches Requiem* fifty years before World War I—a choral work written to offer comfort for the living. The *Requiem* was not festival music, and it was not appropriate for a parade or a Christmas program. Its comforting words, sung to hauntingly solemn music, still had power to comfort and tie many Germans together in a national community.



Nearly all scholars who deal with nineteenth-century German choral societies point to their role in establishing and defining German national identity. My argument is that this identity took on substance

as a result of the beliefs and postulates of the early Romantics and then carried forward by ordinary Germans who enjoyed singing in choirs—an activity that meant more than entertainment. The early Romantics fostered the idea that the German people had deep roots in a common culture. Language, poetry, music, ancient stories and myths created a rich history out of which a national community could emerge if only enough people would embrace that vision. Elevating the arts, and especially music, to a place equal to that of philosophy, law, theology, literature, and drama positioned music to take a dominant role in German culture. Political events inevitably shaded ideology—the French Revolution and Napoleonic conquests positioned France as a natural enemy of German national interests; the reactionary governments that suppressed civil liberties and national unity after 1815 gave choral members a means of expressing in music what was often suppressed in speech or the press. Thus singers gradually developed the belief that they were the bearers of a national identity. These assumptions have been thoroughly examined and established. However, the role of music in German society after 1871 has not been integrated thoroughly enough in light of the numbers of men, women, and children who participated in choirs and choral festivals. As a result, historians have often overemphasized the fissures in German society from 1871-1918 without exploring ways Germans spanned those fissures.

Since much of the literature about choral societies focuses only on the music and finds it lacking in quality, the movement itself is generally dismissed as trivial or banal—especially after 1870. Choral singing, however, involved more than lyrics and notes. Lortat-Jacob, quoted earlier, continued with his observations about monks singing together in a Sardinian monastery: “The emotional dimension of song only makes sense within a context of social interaction, and it feeds off of interpersonal relations that have rich histories. This is where it becomes clear that a voice doesn’t just produce sound. In every performance, the resulting sound depends on pre-existing relationships. . . . Singing together amounts to seeking a state of harmony that is all the more precious in that it can never be taken for granted, and because it is rare indeed.”⁶² My interest is in those relationships among singers, and among singers and everyone involved in a performance. This total experience created webs of connection and overlapping

⁶² Lortat-Jacob, “Concord and Discord,” 95-96.

emotional communities. Lortat-Jacob describes how practice and ritual, combined with shared values, created the individual emotional communities I explore. My argument goes farther and examines the ways these communities expanded and embraced a common identity—Germans were the “people of music.” Just as the nation grew from roots of language, poetry, and music into a sophisticated organism in which the people strove for a wholeness and unity among the parts, choral societies emerged from a homogeneous group of people who created rituals and texts that framed their lived experience and created shared meanings and values. Webs of connection grew out from these and created overlapping emotional communities all rooted in collective practice and communal culture. These entangled emotional communities produced a kind of national harmony that was all the richer for its sometimes dissonant and atonal structure.

2 MOVEMENT I UNISON AND HARMONY

There is no past that one can re-create: there is only something eternally new which is formed by the past. Perpetual longing produces something ever newer and better. Goethe

The choral movement that emerged in the German states in the early nineteenth century was inspired and defined by two men, Hans Georg Nägeli (1773-1835) and Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758-1832). Nägeli was a Swiss educator and musician who conceptualized the choral movement as a way to train and educate a broad swath of German speakers to express a national identity and participate in the public sphere. Zelter’s original motive was rooted in a desire to reform church music which he thought had descended into sentimental mediocrity. Zelter was most influential in Berlin where he took over the leadership of the *Berlin Singakademie* in 1801 and founded the *Berlin Liedertafel* in 1809. These two choirs became the prototypes for all bourgeois choirs. *Singakademies* were composed of both men and women and sang the works of masters like Bach, Handel, and Haydn. A *Liedertafel* was an all-male chorus, and over the course of the nineteenth century these singing clubs (*Vereine*) encompassed a more diverse group of singers than those of the *Singakademies*--from small-town, petite-bourgeois craftsmen, clerics, and teachers to big-city businessmen and government officials.

Nägeli's vision of the choral movement was more democratic than Zelter's. He believed that people singing a piece of music together were intrinsically democratic, and he did not want to restrict this to a small elite group.

Take hordes of people, take them by hundreds, by thousands, bring them into human interaction . . . and interaction where each is at liberty to express his personality in feelings and words, where he receives at the same time like-minded impressions from all the others, where he becomes aware in the most intuitive and multifarious way possible of his human self-sufficiency and camaraderie, where he radiates and breathes love, instantly, with every breath—and can this be anything other than choral singing?⁶³

Each singer added their individual voice to the collective to create a unified sound, each listened and tuned his voice to those surrounding him, and each worked to create harmony—not cacophony. Each member was equally essential to the experience of practice and performance. Nägeli exerted his efforts to directly connect education and choral singing with the spread of democracy. The choral movement attracted thousands of Germans and thus fostered emotional communities that facilitated unity in the midst of diversity.

The First Movement is meant to give an overview of some beliefs and practices of the members of amateur choirs that took firmer shape in the decades after German unification in 1871. I argue that the original choirs and singing clubs generated individual emotional communities and these did not remain isolated from one another but began to form webs of connection as early as the 1820s. By the 1860s an entire repertoire of music, festival rituals, and a historically influenced way of thinking defined the movement. The members of the men's choral movement in particular considered themselves “carriers of a national culture of remembrance,” and those memories fed a version of nationalism that helped define the new German Empire.⁶⁴ The choral movement linked Germans across the states of the German Confederation, kept the dream of unification alive from 1815-1871, and continued to assert unity through singing the *Lied* for over a hundred years. German musicologist Friedhelm Brusniak lists four basic trends of the German nineteenth-century choral movement: 1. It helped develop the people's

⁶³ Quoted in Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 47.

⁶⁴ Dietmar Klenke, „Der Gesangverein“ in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte III*, eds. Etienne François and Hagen Schulze (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001), 393.

understanding of democracy; 2. It was a means of patriotic and/or revolutionary agitation; 3. It was a means of representing the bourgeois class as well as fostering sociability within that class; 4. It was an aesthetic, historical, or religious means of “escape.”⁶⁵ Carl Dahlhaus called the choral festivals and celebrations that emerged in conjunction with the choral movement “musicopatriotic events”—they were not meant to be occasions exclusively for artistic expression or even socializing but were also collective expressions of national identity.⁶⁶

The first Movement is made up of three chapters that deal with distinct aspects of the choral movement. Chapter One examines the movement’s historical roots and how its leaders created a particular narrative of German culture that elevated the value of history, mythology, nature, and song as fundamental features of a national identity. This chapter is centered on Otto Elben’s (1823-1899) account of that history. Elben was a co-founder of both the *Swäbische Sängerbund*, the largest regional choral association in Germany, and the *Deutsche Sängerbund*, the largest choral organization in the world at the end of the nineteenth century. In the 1850s he wrote a history of the choral movement that detailed the forerunners of nineteenth-century musicians, the roles of Nägeli and Zelter in reviving amateur choirs, and the development of a repertoire for the men’s choral movement. He was particularly interested in linking the music of the past to nation building—the revival of singing was a means of training the people and “creating” the nation.⁶⁷

In Chapter Two we explore the *Lied*. More than a pleasant tune with poetic words, *Lieder* were fundamental to how German choristers envisioned the nation. The nation was the combined expression of the people—an expression rendered most powerfully through song. Every German composer wrote

⁶⁵ Friedhelm Brusniak, “Chor und Chormusik,” *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik* (New York: Bärenreiter, 1994-2007), 775.

⁶⁶ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 103.

⁶⁷ Otto Elben, *Der volkstümliche deutsche Männergesang, seine Geschichte, seine gesellschaftliche und nationale Bedeutung* (Tübingen: H. Laupp’schen Buchhandlung, 1855). The titles of the last three chapters in Elben’s book are: “The Folk Song as a Means of Popular Education” (*Der Volksgesang als volksbildendes Mittel*), “The Social Significance of German Men’s Singing” (*Die gesellschaftliche Bedeutung des deutschen Männergesangs*), and “The National Meaning of German Men’s Singing” (*Die nationale Bedeutung des deutschen Männergesangs*).

Lieder because there was a common belief that this genre was the most authentic expression of the *Volk*.⁶⁸

When the regional and national choral organizations were founded in the 1860s, one of their stated goals was to preserve the *Lied* in order to cultivate the German folkways and protect the German spirit.

Although men made up the majority of singers who organized into formal choral associations, women also participated in Germany's musical culture.

Chapter Three concerns women who sang in choirs and were also closely associated with important musicians of the nineteenth century. Clara Schumann was the only German woman who achieved the same fame as men like Felix Mendelssohn or Johannes Brahms. However, there were many women who sang in choirs, played instruments, wrote music and otherwise participated in all facets of bourgeois music culture. They were an integral part of the emotional communities fostered by the choral movement, and the memoirs of three women, Suzanne Schmaltz, Anna Ettlinger, and Ethel Smyth, offer fascinating insights into social and religious tensions, rivalries and factions in the music world, as well as personal glimpses of figures like Johannes Brahms, Richard Wagner, and Hermann Levi.

Although virtually all the participants in the nineteenth century choral movement were from the educated bourgeois class, there were distinct and overlapping emotional communities as we can see from Elben's historical account of the movement and the women's narratives. Elben valued Nägeli's broad vision of singing as an inclusive mission versus the narrower elitist version of the *Singakamies*. Anna Ettlinger was from a prominent Jewish family in Karlsruhe; Susanne Schmaltz was from a family of Lutheran pastors; Ethel Smyth was British but studied composition for many years in Leipzig. Taken together these four narratives (Elben's, Schmaltz's, Ettlinger's, and Smyth's) represent different geographic regions, religious confessions, and national points of view. Otherwise, there were a number of strands that united these singers, their families, and acquaintances, because in one way or another, their lives were defined and/or entwined with music. The nineteenth-century choral movement did not represent bourgeois musical *unison* as much as *harmony*—many voices came together, became aware of

⁶⁸ George S. Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 33.

both differences and similarities, and attempted to forge a national identity. The emotional communities they created in individual choirs gradually overlapped and intersected as the movement grew and singers from distant places gathered more purposefully to express German-ness in song.

2.1 Chapter 1 German Singers

Song loves the masses, it loves to take shape from the common voice of the multitude: song commands the ear of the listener and the chorus of voices and souls. Johann Gottfried Herder, 1778

On a July afternoon in 1904, almost six thousand singers from the Franconian Choral Association gathered in Würzburg for the Tenth Franconian Choral Festival. They represented sixty-nine clubs and made a striking appearance (*markanten Erscheinungen*).⁶⁹ The organizers of this event planned a musical program that was chronologically organized—first a Beethoven overture, then a Mendelssohn arrangement for men’s choir and brass orchestra, and finally four works by composers from the early-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries.⁷⁰ The program was designed to demonstrate the bond that existed between the early years of the men’s choral movement and the “modern” period by showcasing folksongs and “*das volkstümliche Lied*” (songs written in the manner of the folk).⁷¹ The themes were historical events, national pride, the physical world, religion, and the fleeting nature of life and love. Even more striking than the song choices was the parade whose theme was “The Evolution of German Song,” and this evolution was portrayed through a series of floats (*Festwagen*). The first and last floats depicted allegorical representations of German *Heimat* and of Würzburg, the host city—and in particular it was a celebration of the musical life of Franconia and Bavaria.⁷² The following themes were represented: 1.

⁶⁹ Friedhelm Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch des fränkischen Sängerbundes: Ansbach, Bamberg, Fürth, Schwabach, Schweinfurt, Würzburg* (München: Schwingenstein Verlag, 1991), 150.

⁷⁰ Beethoven died in 1827 and Mendelssohn in 1847. Of the composers featured on this program they were the most famous. Works by Carl Maria von Weber and Conradin Kreutzer followed—both from the Napoleonic era. The next two composers (Silcher and Abt) were mid-nineteenth century musicians who wrote some of the most enduring *Lieder* for the men’s choral movement. The late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century composers featured in the last eight presentations are little known today.

⁷¹ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 150.

⁷² Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) and Alon Confino, *German as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). *Heimat* was a general conception of what Confino describes as “the ultimate German community—real and imagined, tangible and symbolic, local and national—of people who had a

Bavaria and Franconia; 2. Germanic peoples (*Germanen*) and Bards; 3. Kriemhildens Rosengarten; 4. Minnesingers; 5. Meistersingers; 6. Wars of Liberation and Theodor Körner; 7. *Das Volkslied*; 8. Richard Wagner; 9. *Das "Kirchlein";* 10. Valentin-Becker-Gruppe: 1845-1848 and the First German Singing Festival and Biedermeier period; 11. Wirceburgia; and 12. Winzer.⁷³ As if to reinforce the themes of the choral works on the program of the Franconian festival, the floats themselves showcased important events from German history, the development of German song, and themes of nature and religion. *Lieder* were meant to express the heart and soul of the German people—the popularity of folk songs lay in their innate ability to express the whole nation and its regional peculiarities. Reinforcing the music, the parade floats were a visual display of the local and national—what Alon Confino calls “a common denominator of variousness” which can also be an effective metaphor for folk songs—the genuine old songs that originated in different regions of Germany or newly composed songs written in the *style* of the folk all represented an aural version of *Heimat*.⁷⁴ I argue in this chapter that myth, history, nature, and folklore expressed through song formed the backbone of the choral movement. Singers thus defined a specific national identity through their repertoire, and these values came to define the entire nation in the decades after political unification.⁷⁵

Singing and national identity were bound together in the bourgeois male choral movement, and the leaders of the movement spent the early years of the century defining that union as

particular relationship to one another, sharing a past and a future” (Confino, 35). The parade featured an idealized version of every Germans’ hometown as well as the host city, Würzburg. Franconia was incorporated into the Rhineland during the Napoleonic era and after 1815 into Bavaria but it continued to have a sense of regional pride separate from Bavaria. Applegate notes that the nation could be a source of pride while the “locality” became a source of distinction. You did not have to give up regional characteristics to become part of the nation (16). The Franconian Choral Association was one of the first regional groups to organize and remained one of the strongest groups in the national choral organization.

⁷³ Kriemhild was the wife of Siegfried and a major figure in the German epic poem, *Nibelungenlied*; “The Little Church” was a common theme for *Lieder*, and Brusniak reproduced a sketched image of this float. On a wagon drawn by four horses a little church on top of a hill was constructed. A path led down from the church where the figure of a priest prayed under a cross at the bottom—forming the front of the float. Valentin Becker founded a choir in Würzburg in 1847 and he led it for thirty years. Wirceburgia was a student organization/fraternity that originated in Würzburg, and Winzer (the last float) means Vintner—Würzburg was/is an important wine-growing region in Franconia. Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 151.

⁷⁴ Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance*, 38.

⁷⁵ George Williamson proposes something similar in *Longing for Myth in Germany* but focuses on literature and intellectual history.

something rooted in a unique German history. They were influenced by Johann Gottfried Herder who rejected the rationality of the eighteenth century and believed Germans had absorbed too many foreign influences on their language, literature, and music—leaving those mere artificial devises. Instead he encouraged Germans to rediscover the folktales and music of the past so they could interiorize the essence of the nation. In his introduction to *Alte Volkslieder* (Ancient Folk Songs) Herder asserted, “The language, sound, and content of the old songs shape the way a people thinks, thereby leaving its mark on the nation.”⁷⁶ German historian Dietmar Klenke adds that the feeling of having a shared national origin was strengthened by symbols that every German could relate to, and these were cultivated over the course of the nineteenth century.⁷⁷ Significantly, nineteenth-century chorister and journalist Otto Elben’s historical account, *Der volksthümliche deutsche Männergesang*, depicted a parallel understanding of the history portrayed in the Würzburg parade floats. Facets of German history from the first century to the nineteenth century were crucial to the emergence of the amateur choral movement whose members believed they were “carriers of a national culture of remembrance.”⁷⁸

The choral movement that began with Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758-1832) in Berlin and Hans Georg Nägeli (1773-1835) in Switzerland would not have taken the nationalist turn it did without the corresponding events of the Napoleonic era. Elben’s history was not a personal memoir, but he was a product of the times in which he lived and in many ways a prototypical example of early German nationalists. He was born in Stuttgart in 1823 and studied law at Tübingen where he was a member of the *Burschenschaft* (fraternity) Walhalla. Like many young men who were involved in the *Burschenschaft* movement, he was an enthusiastic gymnast and singer. The movement originated in 1815 at the university in Jena, and as the Jena poet Christian Eduard Dürre recounted, “Polyphonic male singing had up to this point been almost exclusively heard in operas, so that the Jena student choir which had formed in 1815

⁷⁶ Johann Gottfried Herder and Philip V. Bohlman, *Song Loves the Masses: Herder on Music and Nationalism* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 50.

⁷⁷ Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” 393.

⁷⁸ Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” 393.

within the Jena fraternity, attracted general attention.”⁷⁹ The statutes of the *Burschenschaften* enshrined singing as a function of these fraternities that flourished as a result of the *Freiheitskriegen* (Wars of Liberation). Although Elben was born after the Napoleonic battles of 1812-13, he was part of a generation that was strongly influenced by those events. The failure of the German princes to defend Germans from Napoleon was a particular sticking point for the liberal-minded, bourgeois singers before 1850. They took 1813 as the point when the nation undertook a project of rebirth and in the decades after 1820 choral members were part of an ongoing struggle for national unity and wholeness. An essential part of this mission was bringing the national-historical message to the common people by means of song, myth, history, and attendant symbols.⁸⁰

A strong thread of continuity ran through the men’s choral movement from the Napoleonic era until 1918, and the 1904 parade float themes of bards, *Nibelungenlied* heroes and heroines, Minnesingers, Meistersingers, and nineteenth-century poets exemplified the way these contributed to the historic narrative embraced by German nationalists. Otto Elben’s historical account of the choral movement (*Der volkstümliche deutsche Männergesang, seine Geschichte, seine gesellschaftliche und nationale Bedeutung*) described in words the message the Tenth Franconian Choral Festival proclaimed musically and visually. The adjective “volkstümlich” in Elben’s title is difficult to translate into English while still retaining a sense of the meaning it had for Elben and his readers. Folksy, popular, folkloric, folk-like are among the terms given by a dictionary.⁸¹ The term, *Volkstum*, was originally coined by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn—the founder of the gymnastics movement—and was closely associated with the *Burschenschaften*. Elben used *Volkstum* in the sense of the “folk spirit.” Performances of dramas, *Lieder*, and folk tales not only represented the folk spirit but also nurtured it.⁸² Combined with Herder’s conception of folk songs as a means of recovering the ancient ways of the people, and we get some sense of how Elben used the

⁷⁹ Quoted by Brusniak in “Chor und Chormusik,” 786.

⁸⁰ Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” 396-7.

⁸¹ *Wörterbuch: Englisch-Deutsch; Deutsch-Englisch* (Neckarsulm: Mixing Medienproduktionen GmbH, 1999), 1050.

⁸² Cati Coe, “The Education of the Folk: Peasant Schools and Folklore Scholarship,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 113, no. 447 (2000): 20-43.

word. He was attempting to uncover the common, folk-like roots of the German men's chorus and connect those to his present—with the purpose of connecting a German mythology to the entire German-speaking world.⁸³

The Würzbug floats depicting historic eras were framed by those representing local and national characteristics. Although we do not know exactly what the floats looked like, we can imagine some of them. The first one represented Bavaria and Franconia and presumably displayed coats of arms, flags, or other symbols of these two regions.⁸⁴ The second float displayed the earliest known German singers—the bards. Elben's written history began with a tribute to the German bards who composed epic poetry and songs proclaiming the heroic deeds of tribal warriors.⁸⁵ Passed down orally from one generation to another, these bardic songs were collected and preserved in the *Singschule* (singing schools) founded by Charlemagne. After the time of Charlemagne, these ancient “folk” songs were silenced, and the only singing that could be heard was that of monks in the cloisters. Theirs were “song in an alien tongue.”⁸⁶ Elben lamented the use of Latin as an inauthentic expression of the people.

Modern-day church musician and scholar Paul Westermeyer offers another perspective on why music retreated into monks' cloisters and away from the common folk. While Charlemagne was collecting the bards' songs and creating singing schools, scholars at those schools began to notate the Gregorian chant—creating a system where the tones to be sung were written in such a way that anyone who knew the system could replicate the sounds. The monks' use of musical notation, polyphonic music, and Latin in the liturgy, as well as special schools to train singers, meant that only a few people were skilled to sing the music written for the Catholic liturgy. In addition, the medieval quadrivium included music with arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy as “advanced mathematical arts” fostering the notion

⁸³ Herder, “Alte Volkslieder,” in *Song for the Masses*, 52.

⁸⁴ Franconia was historically its own governing region; after 1815 it was incorporated into Bavaria. Nuremberg was the capital of Franconia and the headquarters of the Franconia Choral Association.

⁸⁵ The best example of this is Hermann (or Arminius) who defeated the Roman Army at Teutoburg Forest in 9 C.E. One example of the popularity of this theme was Richard Strauss' *Bardengesang* composed in 1905. It was written to be sung by a men's chorus with an orchestra accompaniment and was based on a poem, *Hermanns Schlacht*, written by Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock in 1769.

⁸⁶ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 2-3.

that music was a cosmological phenomenon inaccessible to the uneducated.⁸⁷ Thus choral music became something reserved for a specialized stratum.⁸⁸

After Elben dismissed the music of the cloisters, he picked up his narrative with an era of history that became idealized by nineteenth-century German Romantics in their quest for an authentic German mythology. Poets and literary scholars discovered what they believed was “the cultural patrimony of the German nation.”⁸⁹ Elben described it thus: “But the heyday of the middle ages approached and the beautiful legends of the old warriors’ deeds were sung in the *Nibelungenlied*, the pinnacle of German glory under the powerful Kaisers. From the castles of the nobles, songs of love and sounds of harps rang out as the knights dedicated themselves to the sweet songs of the minstrels.”⁹⁰ Elben extolled two contributions here: the epic poem *Nibelungenlied*, and the songs of the Minnesingers. Although the poetry and music of the Germanic myths and knightly singers had artistic worth, much of their appeal lay in the value accredited to the medieval period. It represented a high-point of the Holy Roman Empire—politically and culturally. Germans like Elben who lived in the post-Napoleonic era mourned the demise of empire and had only faint hopes of its resurrection. Longing for national unity was echoed by a longing to recover an authentic musical past.

Although the provenance and religious significance of the *Nibelungenlied* was hotly contested by nineteenth-century German scholars, they did not doubt that it represented a genuine German epic—in the same category as Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.⁹¹ German Romantics were fascinated with Greek mythology, and that led them on a search for their own myths believing they would thus uncover the true

⁸⁷ Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 94, 107, 115-117.

⁸⁸ Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann, *Das Buch der Weihnachtslieder* (Mainz: Schott Music GmbH & Co., 1982). In this book which is specifically about Christmas music, she makes the point that notated music from the medieval period was primarily written in Latin and meant to be sung in church. However, she also says that these songs were also sung in German, sung in homes, and perhaps passed down by word of mouth. See pages 10, 29, and 68. However, she ties singing in German to unpublished *Volkslieder* and later to Luther’s Reformation.

⁸⁹ Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 76. In Chapter 6 of this dissertation I go into more detail about the significance of ancient myths and their use in nineteenth-century *Lieder*.

⁹⁰ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 3.

⁹¹ For an extensive discussion of this topic, see Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 84-92.

roots of the German people. As Herder had said, “Every nation blossoms like a tree from its own roots.”⁹² Although a number of composers and writers utilized the Nordic-Germanic mythological characters and stories of the *Nibelungenlied* in dramas or operas, they reached a peak of expression in Richard Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (or Ring Cycle)—a purely German operatic form.⁹³ When Elben wrote his history of German singers, Wagner had not acquired the significance he would by the end of the century. His works (choral and instrumental) were frequently included in performances of the men’s choruses, and allusions to the mythology made popular by his operas needed no explanations for members of the educated classes.

Equally relevant to the medieval period and song were the Minnesingers. They were a lower order of knights who travelled from one castle to another singing love songs to married noble-women. They flourished in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries—the period of courtly love—and the period in which castles and courts replaced monasteries as centers of culture. Medieval German lyrics were divided into two forms: one, the song (*Lied*) and the other, a short poem to be recited. *Singen und Sagen* (to sing, and to say) was the technical term for these two forms. Songs were composed and performed by a single individual (accompanied by a stringed instrument), and it was considered in poor taste to mimic the style of another Minnesinger. The earliest songs of this type were never more than one verse, but later a three verse version characterized the genre—the first two verses developed a theme, and the third verse summed up the first two verses.⁹⁴

The style and form of Minnesinger songs as well as the historic setting was one of several lasting inspirations to nineteenth-century Germans. Early nineteenth-century Romantics were fascinated with medieval society because they thought their corporatist and pluralistic structures represented an ideal

⁹² Johann Gottfried Herder, *Against Pure Reason: Writings on Religion, Language, and History*, trans. Marcia Bunge (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 105. This is from Herder’s “First Dialogue Concerning National Religions.”

⁹³ Richard Wagner wrote the four works that made up the *Ring Cycle* between 1848 and 1874. Unlike many composers Wagner wrote the libretto as well as the music for his music dramas. He worked first on a prose version of each story, later setting them to poetry and music. I will deal with Wagner’s reception later. For more about his contribution to German opera, see Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 180-233; Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

⁹⁴ Walter Alison Phillips, *Selected Poems of Walter von der Vogelweide, The Minnesinger* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1896), 4.

balance.⁹⁵ In addition, honoring medieval heroes and their way of life was a means of overlooking, or glossing over, confessional differences—there was only one Christian confession in the medieval period. The most famous Minnesinger was Walter von der Vogelweide (1170-1230). Vogelweide composed love songs, nature songs, and a number of political songs addressed to rulers and religious figures. Some collections of Minnesinger ballads endured until the nineteenth century, and the one here poignantly described the life of a Minnesinger and valued elements of their songs. This one is entitled, “To King Frederick.”

Rome’s Lord, Apulia’s King, have pity upon me,
 Who, rich in art, am yet thus plunged in poverty
 By my own hearth I long to sit, might it but be!
 Ho! How I then would sing of wild birds as of yore,
 Of heather and of flowers how I then would sing!
 How sweetly would fair ladies thank me when I bring
 The glow of rose and lily to their cheeks once more.
 Now I come late, and early ride: a guest, alas!
 Let them who have a home sing of the flowers and grass.
 Relieve my need, most gracious King, that your own need may pass.⁹⁶

While the song reflected the lowly status of the Minnesingers, it nevertheless demonstrated their ability to put their case before a higher authority. Here Vogelweide opined that if he had a home of his own, he could sit by his hearth singing songs about the beauty of his own fief rather than wandering from place to place to earn his living as a “guest.” The title and words denoted an appeal to the king to alleviate the position of these lowly knights. There were parallels with nineteenth-century musicians and nationalists in Vogelweide’s appeal to Frederick. As the patronage system that had traditionally supported musicians was replaced by public performances in concert halls, nineteenth-century musicians found themselves moving from place to place to gain paying positions—just like the Minnesingers. And just as Vogelweide expressed his political appeal in song, early nineteenth-century choristers often used songs as political speech.⁹⁷ The German states (and the Minnesingers) fell into a decline after Frederick’s reign just as the

⁹⁵ Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 39.

⁹⁶ Phillips, *Selected Poems of Walter von der Vogelweide*, 78. The translation is Phillips’s.

⁹⁷ James M. Brophy, *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere in the Rhineland, 1800-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Brophy argues that the expression and formation of political opinions were not confined to

German states were thrown into social and political confusion after the Napoleonic period. Nineteenth-century nationalists thus found inspiration in the events of the thirteenth century. Decline led to recovery in past centuries, and Germans could therefore hope for their own political and artistic renewal.

Frederick II stood in a line of historic heroes that Germans looked up to in the nineteenth century. He was the last of the Hohenstaufen kings and the grandson of Frederick I (also known as Barbarossa). It was Barbarossa who emerged in the nineteenth century as the ideal medieval emperor and, as legend had it, was still sleeping in a cave in Thuringia's Kyffhäuser mountain range waiting for the right moment to awaken and unite Germans. A monument built there in 1890 showed Barbarossa sleeping on a stone throne, and nearby the first Kaiser of the newly formed German Empire sat proudly astride a horse.⁹⁸ The greatest medieval emperor's resting place was guarded by the emperor of a newborn German Empire—a juxtaposition of an ideal type of society with one not yet proven, but hoped for.

The mighty Hohenstaufen dynasty fell into decline along with the Minnesingers, and the next group of singers generally acknowledged by musicians and historians were the Meistersingers. Like the Minnesingers this group of artists emerged as a result of changing political and economic conditions. Elben lamented that the singing knights were silenced in the "Zeiten des Faustrechts" (Time of Fist Rights).⁹⁹ They put down their lute strings and took up feuding among themselves fracturing the princely territories into dozens of rival states. Centralized power floundered and towns became the loci of wealth as trade and commerce expanded resulting in the emergence of powerful guilds. The Masters of the Guilds ruled the towns politically, socially, and economically although they were not from the traditional ruling class. As the wealth of the burghers grew, they sought to emulate their social superiors. Wealthy burghers collected and preserved the music of the Minnesingers and created societies (similar to the craft

the bourgeois public sphere but also encompassed the "common classes" (roughly three-quarters of German society), and they did this through print culture, singing, Carnival, protests, and religion.

⁹⁸ "Barbarossa, the Red-Bearded Hero, a Symbol of German Unity" (August 24, 2011). <https://p.dw.com/p/12M8Z>

⁹⁹ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 5. *Faustrecht* translates to "law of the fist" and roughly covers the period 1245-1452. Frederick II had allowed the more powerful German princes to acquire virtual independence within their own territories. After he died in 1250, there were long periods during which there was no Holy Roman Emperor and the lesser nobility feuded constantly among themselves leading to a state of near anarchy. At the same time the number of towns grew tenfold and town dwellers established their own hierarchies, rituals, and systems of justice.

guilds) to train singers for social events and festivals. The music of cloisters, castles, and royal courts moved into civic society.¹⁰⁰ Elben listed Nuremberg, Strasbourg, Colmar, Mainz, Memmingen, Ulm, Heilbronn, and Augsburg as cities in which the Meistersingers (Master Singers) were accorded favor and honor (*Gnade und Ehre*). As a mark of this honor, the singing guilds were given the right to have their own emblems or crests (*Wappen*) in 1378.¹⁰¹ The Meistersinger movement gradually spread over southern Germany and into Silesia and Bohemia.

The high point of the Meistersingers coincided with the Protestant Reformation, and the majority of these guildsmen saw themselves as preservers of religious and moral principles, rather than minstrels to courtly love. Because they considered music a “craft,” they created training programs, encouraged the composition of new tunes, and held singing competitions. Meistersingers established rules for musical compositions, and the status of “master” was only conferred on a composer who had produced a song that conformed to their standards. The legend of Tannhäuser (made into an opera by Wagner) dealt with just such a singing competition. The setting was the Wartburg Castle in which renowned Minnesingers Walter von der Vogelweide and Wolfram von Eschenbach competed with Tannhäuser (also called Heinrich). The singing competition was marred by Tannhäuser’s arrogance and unfaithfulness (he had been seduced by Venus) but in the end, it was a story of forgiveness and redemption. As with many legends, there are some spatial and temporal conflicts, but for nineteenth century Germans this story tied myth and song, Minnesingers and Meistersingers, Luther’s Wartburg castle and Wagner together in a satisfying way—representing a nineteenth-century Romantic fusion of history, myth, and religion.

Richard Wagner was a master of blending the arts with romantic, religious, and political themes. The most famous Meistersinger, and the subject of another Wagner music drama, was Hans Sachs (1494-1576).¹⁰² Wagner’s *Der Meistersinger* portrayed Sachs as a wise scholar who embodied the ideal

¹⁰⁰ Irving Godt, “The Meistersingers’ Hidden Heritage,” *The Musical Times* 144, no. 1885 (2003): 35-37.

¹⁰¹ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 6. In Chapter 2 we will see that many of the material objects used by nineteenth-century choral societies were borrowed from the early modern practices of the Meistersingers. Identifying emblems were an essential part of these later festival rituals.

¹⁰² Richard Wagner’s opera, *Der Meistersinger*, portrayed Sachs as a wise scholar who embodied the ideal bourgeois values of respect for honest work and self-discipline.

bourgeois values of respect for honest work and self-discipline. Sachs was born in Nuremberg and spent most of his life there. His father was a tailor but had Hans apprenticed to a shoemaker. During Sachs's *Wanderjahre* (travelling apprenticeship), he became interested in music and the singing guilds, and shortly after passing the requirements to be a master shoe-maker he submitted a music score that certified him as a Meistersinger. A close contemporary of Luther, Sachs was sympathetic to the Reformation and wrote a number of tunes that were later used in Protestant hymns. In all, Sachs wrote 4,275 *Meisterlieder* although few of them survived until the nineteenth century.¹⁰³ His themes covered a wide range of topics, and while adhering strictly to accepted Meistersinger rules of composition, they were generally ballads.

Music that was formally composed and sung outside of royal courts or the church became a leisure activity connoting status and wealth for town dwellers that were not part of the nobility. Music professor Irving Godt offers an insight into the Meistersingers explaining their connection with the *Bildungsbürgertum* (educated middle class) and nineteenth-century German music culture. "More lasting than any of their songs, was the social status that music acquired in the Germanies mainly as a consequence of the Meistersinger example. Thanks to them, for the first time in history, serious music-making spread among the upper middle classes. They made singing a fashionable leisure activity outside of the church."¹⁰⁴ Because cities had acquired greater status in the Holy Roman Empire than in most other European states, they facilitated the rise of a culture that valued music and could support musicians independent of royal patronage. Meistersingers existed in some German cities well into the late eighteenth century, and in the city of Ulm they did not disband until 1839.¹⁰⁵ Therefore they nurtured the cultivation of music and presaged its importance to the *Bildungsbürgertum*, the class that dominated the choral societies in the nineteenth-century German-speaking lands.

Music, politics, and religion often followed parallel lines in German society, but music also offered an escape from the tensions of reality. Musicologist Christopher Small suggests that "in times of

¹⁰³ "Hans Sachs" in *The Drama: Its History, Literature and Influence on Civilization* Vol. 10, ed. Alfred Bates (London: Historical Publishing Company, 1906):17-21.

¹⁰⁴ Irving Godt, "The Meistersingers' Hidden Heritage," *The Musical Times* 144, no. 1885 (2003), 36.

¹⁰⁵ Godt, "The Meistersingers' Hidden Heritage," 36; Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 8.

great change or crisis . . . myth and ritual are most urgently evoked, and the kinds of myth and ritual that are called upon will be closely linked with the ways in which those in power, as well as those who are seeking power, respond to the crisis.”¹⁰⁶ The nineteenth century presented Germans with a series of crises beginning with Napoleon’s invasion of the German states and the Wars of Liberation, then revolutions in 1830 and 1848, and finally the wars that culminated in the unification of Germany in 1871. From the beginning of the century, the singers planted the idea that national unity was a question of historical fate. By encouraging the development of myths and symbols that every German could relate to—oak trees, the Rhine, ancient heroes, folktales, and the *Lied*—German singers took on a role as carriers of a “national culture of remembrance.”¹⁰⁷ There were seeds of more than political unity here. On the one hand there was a longing to create a unified nation-state, but alongside that aspiration was one to create an idea of what it meant to be a distinct people. That became a complex, multi-layered endeavor.

The men who sang in nineteenth-century choruses did so not only for the joy of singing (and camaraderie) but also to preserve their ancestry. There was no existing repertoire for four-part men’s choirs, so they looked for inspiration from bards, medieval troubadours, early modern guildsmen, and the songs of the *Volk*. German poet Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) began his work on German mythology thus: “In Westphalia, the former Saxony, not all that is buried is dead. When one wanders through the old oak groves, one hears the voices of the *Vorzeit*.”¹⁰⁸ The search for a German mythology was partly an attempt to find a common mystical ground between the German Christian confessions as well as to create, or recreate, rituals that would express a common identity. Myth was a tool with differing strengths in the ensuing decades. But its meaning for music was powerful—as manifested most vividly in the operas of Richard Wagner. Friedhelm Brusniak claims that the choral movement was an aesthetic, historical, or

¹⁰⁶ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 101.

¹⁰⁷ Dietmar Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” 393.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 114. (*Vorzeit* means pre-history). The Romantic poets were particularly interested in Greek mythology, but their search for a Germanic founding myth led them to the *Nibelungenlied* and an embrace of a Germanic pantheon of gods. Williamson quotes from Heine’s *Elementargeister* and notes that Heine posited a German mythology that linked ghosts, fairies, and witches with the elements earth, air, water, and fire. These notions are exhibited in Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

religious means of “escape.”¹⁰⁹ Wagner’s vision of German opera and of music drama offered the ultimate means of escape, belonging, and controversy. Before turning to Wagner, however, we must deal with the genre of music valued by all Germans in the nineteenth century—the *Lied*.

2.2 Chapter Two The Lied

Do not only practice your art, but force your way into its secrets. For it and knowledge can raise men to the Divine. Ludwig von Beethoven, 1812

The men who joined the choral movement in the first decades of the nineteenth century believed in the value of recovering myths, folk tales, and especially folk songs. Preserving these became a continuous mission that represented layers of meaning beyond mere song. In May of 1912 a men’s choir from Ansbach celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of their founding. The name of their choir was *Harmonie* and the first song on their program was “Hymn to Music.”

„Hymne an die Musik“ by P. Lachner

O Kunst, o Kunst! du heiliger Tempel der Welt!	Oh Art, oh Art! You holy temple of the world!
An deinen Stufen knieen die Meister	At your steps masters kneel
Und falten die Hände.	And fold their hands.
Des Lorbeers grünende Zweige schlingen um	Branches of green laurel entwine around your
deine Säulen sich	pillars
Und ranken die Blätter um jegliches Haupt.	And their leaves entwine around every head.
Musik ertönt!	The music sounds! ¹¹⁰

As the men’s concluded the first verse in praise of music, they continued to the next verse describing the sounds of an organ, trumpets, and flutes stormily rising to heaven and proclaimed that music stirred human hearts and brought tears to one’s eyes—*Musik! Die göttliche Kunst!* (Music! The divine art!). The hymn to music demanded a rendition in song, and in this chapter we will examine the *Lied*—a genre nineteenth-century Germans considered most representative of the nation. Music in all forms was a “divine art,” and music expressed through the *Lied* was a means of transmitting a national identity.

¹⁰⁹ Brusniak, “Chor und Chormusik” 775. In the Introduction to Movement I, I listed what Brusniak named as the four basic trends of the nineteenth-century choral movement. The one quoted here is the fourth of those.

¹¹⁰ Archiv der Stiftung Dokumentations- und Forschungszentrum des Deutschen Chorwesens, Bestand Gesang- und Musikverein Feuchtwangen, Bestandssignatur B 71 (1.1.2) (90.5) 75 (subsequently ZFC-Arch, B 71); “Hymne an die Musik“ by P. Lachner 19. Mai 1912.

The German word *Lied* means a song, and as in English, it can have a broad meaning—a carol, a tune, a ballad, a hymn, and so forth. Simply put, a *Lied* is a poem set to music. However, there was more to the impetus for nineteenth-century *Lied* composition than a desire to have new songs. Otto Elben's history of the choral movement that we looked at briefly in Chapter One had as much to do with nation-building as it did with singing. It is one thing to say that Germans valued history, myth, nature, and song and another to determine how these tenets were perpetuated as a national project. This was an outgrowth of political events and cultural responses. On the one hand poets and thinkers like Goethe, Herder, Schiller, Tieck, Hoffmann and others laid the groundwork by proposing that Germans had a unique national character rooted in their land and their history and expressed in folk tales, myths, and song.¹¹¹ Nägeli and Zelter, who were the pioneers of the amateur choral movement, were contemporaries of the Romantics, and when Napoleon's armies invaded the German states and destroyed the Holy Roman Empire, a confluence of national pride and poetic-musical expression launched the choral movement into a position to articulate what it meant to be the German nation—and to continually communicate this over the course of several decades. My argument here is that *Lieder* became the vehicle to perpetuate the notion that Germans shared common national values that bound them together. Songs about Hermann or the Wars of Liberation, Spring or Autumn, forests and birds, the Rhine, Swabia, Hamburg, Berlin, or *Heimat* represented the common, particular, and enduring features of the nation. As well, Romantic tropes like night, wind, forests, fog, spirit, and death permeated poetry and song. This chapter is about songs but chiefly about the men's choral movement and their ambition to embed the lyrics and tunes of German *Lieder* into the national psyche thereby establishing and perpetuating the German nation.

Chapter Two is concerned with a number of songs that were composed specifically to be sung by male choirs and were examples of folk songs (*Volkslieder*) or art songs. Musicologist Lawrence Kramer explains that “the lied by definition has no voice of its own. . . . it represents someone else speaking.”¹¹² A folk song expressed the voice of the common people—such as songs of love, saying good-bye

¹¹¹ Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism*, ed. Henry Hardy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

¹¹² Lawrence Kramer, *Song Acts: Writings on Words and Music*, ed. Walter Bernhart (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 148-9. The art lied is a distinct genre that parallels Romantic poetry.

(*Abschiedslieder*), walking through woods, or longing for spring. These were presumed to be songs that grew naturally out of the lives of the common people. Setting the written expression of a *poet* into a musical composition brought about a new creation in which one heard “not the poet’s persona but the composer’s.”¹¹³ Both forms made up the repertoire of the men’s choral movement and became its *raison d’être*. Musicologist Carl Dahlhaus makes a useful distinction between the ballad, the aria, and the *Lied* as a matter of “tone” rather than compositional structure. A ballad singer tells a story to an audience who attends to them as the *messenger*, whereas in an aria, singers are not meant to be noticed for themselves, but for the person they represent--they are acting a part. Then Dahlhaus explains, “In a lied, it is the *composer* who is speaking [and it] . . . is an utterance that is not directed ostentatiously at an audience but, in a manner of speaking, is overheard by the audience. Listeners are essential to the ballad, but incidental to the lied.”¹¹⁴ Just as common people sang in the fields or in their cottages for the pleasure of musical expression, choristers gathered in a home or a public house and sang *Lieder* together to socialize. These songs, meant to grow naturally out of the experiences and poetry of the people, became the core of the amateur men’s choral repertoire and exposed a desire to sing together, not perform.¹¹⁵

The continuous attempt throughout the nineteenth century to discover the authentic music of the common people was a result of Herder’s assertion that language and music evolved together as vocal expression. To recover the songs of the *Volk* was to unearth the true nature of the nation.¹¹⁶ It is important to recognize that as choirs of amateurs began to organize in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the music that was appropriate for them--men and women who learned music as part of their bourgeois up-bringing--were oratorios or cantatas. These were specifically written for a choir and soloists

¹¹³ Edward T. Cone, *The Composer’s Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 19.

¹¹⁴ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 105. Emphasis added.

¹¹⁵ In the first decades of its existence the *Berlin Singakademie* rarely put on public performances; they met together and sang for the enjoyment of learning music. The women’s choruses that we will look at in Chapter 3 followed the same pattern.

¹¹⁶ Johann Gottfried Herder and Philip V. Bohlman, *Song Loves the Masses: Herder on Music and Nationalism* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017). In the Preface of *Alte Volkslieder* Herder had conflated song with the emergence of a nation. “There could hardly be a more patriotic wish than to gather the bards that Charlemagne had gathered. What a treasure for the German language, poetry, customs, thought, and the awareness of the past this could be (45).” And in *Nordic Songs* he wrote, “All nations that have yet to be organized around political systems are a *singing people*: by whatever means their songs come into being, that is how they *remain* (57).” (Herder’s emphasis).

usually using boys for the soprano and alto parts. With the emergence of the amateur choral movement, choruses like the *Berlin Singakademie* or *Liedertafel*, the *Burschenschaften*, or numerous small-town singing clubs, a new body of songs needed to be written specifically for them, and a form they favored were folk songs in German.¹¹⁷ Because many of the old ones had not been preserved or notated, it was necessary to create new ones. When it was impossible to find authentic folk songs, German composers merely created “songs in a folklike spirit.”¹¹⁸ There was also a distinction between the art *Lied* in which a composer purposefully set a poem to music and *Volklieder*--music that came from, or had been adopted by, the common people. Collections of these such as those sung by Minnesingers or Meistersingers were valuable but rare. In the case of the Minnesingers, there *were* authentic collections of their poems, but they were not notated. Elben concluded that the Minnesingers probably used popular folk melodies, and there were some extant in the nineteenth century. German musicians could sometimes match an old tune with the words of a Minnesinger song.¹¹⁹ Johannes Brahms wrote over 200 *Lieder* and represents this approach well. “Child of his own times, he lived when many poets and musicians made cult of collecting folklore and using the old tales as inspiration for art, as grist to their own mills.”¹²⁰ Composers were not scrupulous about the authenticity of their sources but merely wanted to perpetuate a genre they believed represented the spirit of the German people.

Living poets also represented the German spirit and these became sources for much of the nineteenth-century choral repertoire. Wolfgang Goethe’s, Friedrich Schiller’s, and Heinrich Heine’s poetry were popular choices to set to song, and well-respected composers like Franz Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn, or Johannes Brahms often found musical inspiration in their words. Some of the successful pairings of poet and composer from the early nineteenth century were: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Carl Friedrich Zelter; Carl Theodor Körner and Carl Maria von Weber; Max von Schenkendorf and Hans

¹¹⁷ Most of the church music of the medieval period or the Renaissance was written for all-male choirs (young boys sang the treble voice line) but this body of music was polyphonic and difficult for amateurs to sing.

¹¹⁸ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 109.

¹¹⁹ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 4. The source Elben cites is a small collection of tunes from Provençal troubadours “in Burney’s history of music: Laborde essai sur la musique; Chansons du Chatelain de Couci par Fr. Michel, en notation moderne par M. Perne, Paris 1830.”

¹²⁰ Sophie Drinker, *Brahms and his Women’s Choruses* (Merion, PA: Musurgia Publishers, 1952), 99-101.

Georg Nageli; and Ludwig Uhland and Conradin Kreutzer. Their contributions matched German poetry with quality music composition, and their *Lieder* continued to be performed throughout the century.¹²¹ Before looking at their specific compositions we will look more generally at three distinct types of *Lieder*—traditional folk *Lieder*, *Lieder* “composed in a folk-like manner,” and the art *Lied*. Each style was popular and considered essential to German identity, but the worth of any particular song was often dependent on the setting of the performance or the skill of the singers. When a lyricist penned a poem, the range of interpretations was extensive. But when setting the poem to music, the composer narrowed that range, and when the *Lied* was sung, this range was limited even further—it took on the whim of its conductor and performers.¹²² Thus a simple folk song might have a powerful effect or a complex art *Lied* fail due to a lack of skill on the part of the performers.

I examine the oldest type of *Lied* first—those that represented Herder’s attempt to discover the authentic voices of the German people. The *Lied* below is from the category of “departure” or “farewell” songs (*Abschiedslied*). It is not unusual to find recently published books of German folksongs, and this one is from a little collection entitled *Deutsche Volkslieder*. The theme of departure was one that stood the test of time—Germans who marched off to war in the nineteenth century and in World War I were accompanied by *Abschiedslieder*.¹²³ However, the emotions associated with leaving home and loved ones were not limited to war or economic necessity. We often envision people moving from place to place with the modern world, but we have already seen examples of wandering minstrels like the Minnesingers, or a *Wanderjahre* as part of the apprenticeship of a craftsman in the guild system. When Hans Sachs had finished his basic training as a shoe-maker, he spent a year traveling from place to place offering his skills. A closer look at the entire system of raising children reveals that it was not unusual for medieval/early modern parents to send their children off to live in another family when they reached adolescence. There seemed to be a prevailing idea that children could learn something from strangers that

¹²¹ In the record of the songs included in the repertoire of the *Berlin Liedertafel* for 1884, Goethe is the most-used source for composers, along with Friedrich Schiller, Joseph Eichendorff, and Uhland and Schenkendorf. There are also dozens in the record listed merely as *Volkslied* without a known poet or composer.

¹²² Kramer, *Song Acts*, 90.

¹²³ In fact, the *Abschiedslied* I am using here was sung to departing soldiers in World War I.

they could not in their own homes—and poor families often needed to send children away so that there was more food available for the ones at home.¹²⁴ From this perspective, the *Abschiedlied* reflects not only a basic feature of pre-modern life, but also the harsh reality of the modern era when millions of Germans immigrated to England or the Americas, thousands went to war, and there was a mass movement of people from the countryside to the cities. Berlin’s population rose from 966,859 in 1875 to 2,071,257 in 1910—a growth rate of 114.2%. Hamburg and Leipzig experienced growth rates in the same period of 251.8% and 363%, respectively.¹²⁵

The departure song below was written in the late sixteenth century and was not merely nostalgic, but still resonated—especially in small towns where young people were more likely to leave for larger cities. It was written by Heinrich Isaac (1450-1517), a Franco-Flemish composer who had a great influence on German Renaissance music. “Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen” is his best known song and was especially popular in nineteenth-century Germany where enthusiasts of *Volkslieder* eagerly sought its German roots.¹²⁶

“Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen”

Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen,
ich fahr’ dahin mein Straßen
in fremde Land’ dahin.
Mein’ Freud’ ist mir genommen,
die ich nit weiß bekommen,
wo ich im Elend bin.

Groß Leid muss ich ertragen,
Das ich allein ihn klagen
Dem liebsten Buhlen mein.
Ach, Lieb, nun lass mich Armen
Im Herzen dein erbarmen,
Dass ich muss dannen sein.

Mein Trost ob allen Weiben,
Dein tu ich ewig bleiben,
Stet, treu der Ehren frumm.

“Innsbruck, I must leave you”

Innsbruck, I must leave you,
I go down my street
into a strange land.
My joy is taken from me,
which I never can acquire
where I am wretched/miserable.

I must endure great suffering,
and can to him alone complain
who is my dearest love.
O, Love, in your mercy
leave your heart in my arms,
as I must be away.

My comfort is that above all other women
You will forever remain,
steadfast and true, faithful to your honor.

¹²⁴ William Kremer, “What medieval Europe did with its teenagers,” March 23, 2014. www.bbc.com/news/magazine-26289459

¹²⁵ Forging an Empire: Bismarckian Germany, 1866-1890. Population Growth in Large Cities (1875-1910), German History in Document and Images Vol. 4 germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org

¹²⁶ “Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen,” www.bach-cantatas.com/Lib/Isaac-Heinrich.htm

Nun muss dich Gott bewahren,
In aller Tugend sparen,
Bis dass ich wiederkumm.¹²⁷

Now, God must keep you,
and spare your virtue,
until I come again.

Here, the singer expressed his sorrow over leaving Innsbruck, but his primary sorrow was leaving the object of his love behind. He trusted that she would remain faithful to him until he returned. The beauty of a folk song was that it expressed unchanging sentiments, and this *Volkslied* was the type especially valued by Germans because it was one that had been preserved from the early modern period. “Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen” had a simple little tune with a distinct Renaissance feel to it with its dance-like, syncopated melody. The melody was subsequently used in the Lutheran chorale, “O Welt ich muss dich lassen,” and later incorporated into works by J. S. Bach and Johannes Brahms.¹²⁸ It connected the past with the present through its theme, its original composition, and each permutation over space and time demonstrated the worth of *Lieder* to the *Volk* as Herder had postulated.

The scarcity of traditional folk songs fed a market for songs “written in a folk-like manner”—the second type of *Lieder* I examine. In an article that appeared in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* (*AMZ*) in June of 1882, the *AMZ* reported about a festival held in a small town not far from Hamburg--the Second West Holstein Music Festival (*Zweites Westholsteinisches Musikfest*). The region had a number of small towns and villages where “people enjoyed any occasion to sing,” so a music professor had taken it on himself to get all these groups together into an association (*Vereinigung*) and have them put on a festival. It was a difficult undertaking because the villages were so far apart (and therefore could not practice singing together), and there was no suitable hall for this type of performance. The writer went on to say that the singers performed simple *Lieder* well but not longer, more sophisticated pieces. He attributed this to the fact that they had few opportunities to attend performances in cities like Hamburg where they could have become familiar with important works of music, famous composers, and concert halls. On the West Holstein program were a couple of orchestral pieces which failed to impress either the

¹²⁷ *Deutsche Volkslieder*, (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun. GmbH & Co., 2001), 122-123. My translation.

¹²⁸ “O Welt ich muss dich lassen,” www.bach-cantatas.com/CM/O-Welt-ich-muss.htm. Luther’s original tune to “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” had a similar dance-like quality as this Isaac piece. The steadier, march-like beat that is associated with it today is a result of J. S. Bach’s reworking of Luther’s original.

reporter or the music director. The rest of the program was made up of compositions written by Robert Franz, Johannes Brahms, Carl Reinecke, and Robert Schumann interspersed with eight *Volkslieder* which the combined choirs sang. This was an ambitious program, but the most successful performances were those of the simple songs with which they were more familiar.¹²⁹ A study of various programs put together for local and national choral events shows that art *Lieder* made up the minority of the works, and the form most valued was the simple *Volkslied*—songs of nature or daily life that expressed the heart of the German people. We will look at one of the pieces that was successfully performed in the little town of Itzehoe where the West Holstein festival was held. This one is an example of a *Lied* written in the *style* of the common people—it was not actually a song recovered from the distant past. The text was by Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798-1874), but he set it to an old Silesian folk tune.

“Es blüht ein schönes Blümchen”

Es blüht ein schönes Blümchen
auf unserer grünen Au
sein Aug’ ist wie der Himmel
so heiter und so blau
es weiß nicht viel zu reden
und alles, was es spricht
ist immer nur dasselbe
ist nur: Vergiß mein nicht

Wenn ich zwei Äuglein sehe
so heiter und so blau
so denk ich an mein Blümchen
auf unsrer grünen Au
Da kann ich auch nicht reden
und nur mein Herze spricht
Du meines Lebens Wonne
O Lieb, vergiß mein nicht¹³⁰

“A Beautiful little Flower Blooms”

A beautiful little flower blooms
in our green meadow
its eye is like heaven
so cheerful and so blue
it does not have much to say
and everything, that it speaks
is always the same
is only: Do not forget me

Whenever I see two little eyes
so cheerful and so blue
then I think about my little flower
in our green meadow
I do not have much to say either
and only my heart speaks
You, the delight of my life
Oh Love, do not forget me

While we might think of this as a love song between a man and a woman, it is also the type of song a parent might sing to a young daughter or schoolgirls to one another. One explanation comes from the scholars at the *Volkslieder Archive* in Freiburg where thousands of German folksongs have been preserved. Their notes for Fallersleben’s song above explain that it was popular in Prussia before World

¹²⁹ *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, 28. Juni 1882, 409-11.

¹³⁰ „Es blüht ein schönes Blümchen,“ www.volksliederarchiv.de/es-blueht-ein-schoenes-bluemchen-vergissmeinnicht/

War I as a kind of teaching tool and was recommended for young school girls going into the fifth or sixth class. The words demonstrated that it was a song suitable for ten- to twelve-year old girls, because (according to another interpretation) blooming flowers always represented the fertility of young women.¹³¹ There was an eternal quality to the song—parents, children, friends, and lovers walking through a country meadow, enjoying the wild flowers, and expressing love for one another was timeless and universal. At the turn of the century, a period of rapid urbanization and industrialization, the simpler life of the countryside was emotionally appealing. Even though this was not an old folksong that the men of West Holstein grew up singing, it was one that had words and a style they were familiar with, and their performance of this piece was favorably received by the more learned city musicians.

The final type of song I examine is the art *Lied* which, as might be discerned from its name, was the most respected form for concert performance. These musical interpretations of a poetic expression generally represented works by well-known poets and composers as we saw from the West Holstein program above where works by Brahms and Schumann seemed essential to the festival even though they were difficult to perform. Otto Elben considered Felix Mendelssohn one of the best of the mid-century composers of four-part *Lieder* and claimed that Mendelssohn had “brought the art genre [of the four-part men’s song] to a hitherto unknown height.”¹³² Though this was not Mendelssohn’s *oeuvre*, the works he wrote for men’s voices remained popular choices into the twentieth century. The art *Lied* offered as an example here is Mendelssohn’s “Festgesang an die Künstler” (Festival Song to the Artists) and was a setting of Friedrich Schiller’s poem that Mendelssohn set to music for a song competition at the *Deutsche-flämische Sängesfest* (German-Flemish Song Festival) in Cologne in 1846. This festival was one of the most significant of the pre-1848 song festivals both because of the location and the goals of the

¹³¹ Sophie Drinker, *Music and Women: The Story of Women in Their Relation to Music* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1948), 32. Drinker said “maiden songs” made use of illusions to young women as buds waiting to bloom under the warmth of love, or in other songs young women looked longingly at meadows in anticipation of weaving a wedding wreath.

¹³² Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 246.

organizers.¹³³ The political climate of Cologne favored pro-German, anti-French nationalism (sentiments endorsed by Prussian and Austrian authorities) as well as democratic idealism (decidedly not endorsed by those two conservative states). Liberals and radicals, Catholics and Protestants had learned to coexist in the Rhineland, and the majority of Cologne's liberal Catholics favored a government like that of its neighbor—Belgium. The name of the festival (German-Flemish) reflected this political orientation and its organizers included business leaders and the editor of the *Kölnische Zeitung*—men who believed that a broad spectrum of cooperation could bring about liberal (i.e. anti-Prussian) reforms. However, the festival could not overtly promote this political agenda, and to that end, the choice of Mendelssohn as composer and conductor was “crucial to the festival's aesthetic claims.”¹³⁴

Mendelssohn had reached the peak of his career by 1846 and was considered a “figurehead for the aspirations of the middle classes.”¹³⁵ From a prominent Jewish family that had managed to assimilate into Berlin society, Felix and sister Fanny were early members of the *Berlin Singakademie*, and Felix Mendelssohn, aside from his genius as a composer and musician, made his reputation when he conducted the revival of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in Berlin in 1829. As popular in Britain as he was in Germany, he had the musical clout to premier a choral piece that represented the interrelationship of art and politics and embodied the aims of the Cologne festival. In general, these were the goals of the entire early choral movement whose history Otto Elben endeavored to preserve. Although Elben does not directly say it, it was likely that he was present at the Cologne festival. He lived in the Rhineland, and his involvement with choral societies (and the fact that he was also a newspaper editor) favors this conclusion. Mendelssohn directed a 487-voice choir accompanied by an eighteen-piece brass orchestra, and Elben recorded in *Volksthümliche Männergesang*, “It is a festival song in the noblest sense.”¹³⁶

¹³³ James Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform in the Age of Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 123.

¹³⁴ Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform*, 124.

¹³⁵ Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform*, 124.

¹³⁶ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 248. For a modern rendition, try [youtube.com/watch?v=95oEI45jTcw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95oEI45jTcw)

Mendelssohn's musical version of Schiller's poem is a lengthy *Lieder* composition running just over seven minutes in performance. It is through-composed, meaning that singers would need to learn a more complicated score than one whose tune was repeated over and over through several verses.

“Festgesang an die Künstler”

Der Menschheit Würde ist in eure Hand gegeben,
Bewahret sie!
Sie sinkt mit euch! Mit euch wird sie sich heben!
Der Künste heilige Magie
Dient einem weisen Weltenplane,
Still lenke sie zum Ozeane
Der großen Harmonie!

Von ihrer Zeit verstoßen flüchte
Die ernste Wahrheit zum Gedichte,
Und finde Schutz in der Camönen Chor.
In ihres Glanzes höchster Fülle,
Furchtbarer in des Reizes Hülle,
Erstehe sie in dem Gesange
Und räche sich mit Siegesklänge
An des Verfolgers feigem Ohr.

Der freisten Mutter freie Söhne
Schwingt euch mit festem Angesicht
Zum Strahlensitz der höchsten Schöne,
Um andre Kronen buhlet nicht.

“Festival Song to the Artists”

The dignity of humanity is placed in your hands:
Preserve it!
It sinks with you! With you it will arise!
The sacred magic of the arts
serves a wise world plan,
which guides it to the ocean
of lofty harmony.

When truth is cast out by its age
It takes its flight to poetry,
And finds refuge in the Muses' choir.
The fullest wealth of its splendor,
More fearful through its charming veil,
Rises aloft in song
And avenges itself with tones of victory
On its persecutor's craven ear.

Arise, free sons of the freest mother,
Arise, and turn with firm resolve
To the radiant source of loftiest beauty,
Striving after no other crown.¹³⁷

Mendelssohn described this as a *Volkslied* but by his choice of poet, he also engaged with the political and aesthetic idealism proposed by the early Romantics. The themes of the “dignity of humanity,” freedom, and arts serving a “world plan” were all part of the ideal that art would lead to a more perfect community. By combining Schiller's aesthetic ideal of freedom and art with the “common” *Volkslied*, Mendelssohn grounded Romanticism with the democratic principles that arose out of the French Revolution and were now embraced by German nationalists.¹³⁸ Mendelssohn rejected trivial patriotism and the music that often represented it, and offered instead a song that would demand the best of the musicians' skills and thoughts.

¹³⁷ This is taken from Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform*, 125, and is his translation.

¹³⁸ Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform*, 124-126.

“Festgesang an die Künstler” remained popular and was performed at the German Choral Association’s fifth national festival in Stuttgart in 1896 where 14,300 singers participated. Several years later, the twenty-four member men’s choir in the small Franconian town of Feuchtwangen performed the piece as part of their *Frühjahrs-Produktion* (Spring Production) on April 24, 1904, and it was sung again at the Tenth Franconian Choral Festival—the festival mentioned at the beginning of Chapter One.¹³⁹ For at least sixty years, choirs of twenty-four men up to over 14,000 sang Mendelssohn’s “Festival Song.” While we have no way of knowing how successful any one of these performances was in comparison to others, a case can be made here for Christopher Small’s assertion that it is the performers who bring a work of music to life.¹⁴⁰ We know that most of the Feuchtwangen choir participated in the Stuttgart national festival, so they had previous knowledge of the work, but their local performance was more intimate. In Stuttgart it was the mass effect that prevailed—both for the singers and the observers. As an individual singer in the middle of 14,000 other singers, you were primarily aware of the few men in your immediate vicinity while also perceiving that you were part of a huge crowd—one that symbolically represented all of Germany. For the audience, there was a similar sense that they were part of a great crowd, and being caught up in the sound, they participated in the entire emotional community. Beyond those spatial and personal aspects of the performance was the music itself. The Stuttgart organizers were assuredly looking for a piece of music with historic significance and lasting value as a work of art. The Mendelssohn piece fit those qualifications. But it also had enough of an impact to inspire a small-town choir to attempt it. Mendelssohn’s compositions for men’s choirs retained their popularity throughout the *Kaiserreich*, and in the 1920s, an article in the newspaper for the German Worker-Singers (*Deutsche Arbeiter-Sänger-Zeitung*) extolled Mendelssohn’s compositions: “Hearing (or singing) a Mendelssohn

¹³⁹ *Die Sängerkirche*, 27. August 1896 reported on the Stuttgart festival. An earlier edition of the paper (July 2) reported that 59 regional choral associations (representing a total of 1,030 individual choirs) had registered for the Stuttgart festival, and 14,300 singers were expected to participate. For the Feuchtwangen *Frühjahrs-Produktion*, see ZFC-Arch, B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 61. There were sixteen men from the Feuchtwangen chorus (out of a total of twenty members) who attended the national festival in Stuttgart.

¹⁴⁰ Small, *Musicking*, 13.

piece is like taking a morning walk with pleasant company and drinking cool, fresh, water.”¹⁴¹ In spite of late nineteenth-century/early twentieth-century prejudices that ostracized Mendelssohn’s compositions, his music maintained a place of honor for some singers.¹⁴²

The two festivals mentioned above (1882 Second West Holstein Music Festival and 1846 German-Flemish Song Festival) demonstrated how different types of *Lieder* were incorporated into the amateur men’s choral repertoire. Mendelssohn’s “Festgesang an die Künstler” was an art *Lied* in which he chose a poem by Friedrich Schiller and consciously created music to match the theme of the poem. The brass instrumentation was part of the entire choral composition and created an effect of celebration—art and political aspirations joining in potent symbolism. The West Holstein Music Festival was less ostentatious but equally meaningful to its participants. Singers from small towns were given the opportunity to come together and perform and their festival was written up in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*—one of the premier music journals of the nineteenth century. Despite the differences in talent, location, and notoriety, the festivals also indicate continuity on several levels. The first German choral festivals took place just after 1815 and in the succeeding decades represented both local sociability and national unity. The early members of the choral movement saw music as a means of political expression, and that was a sentiment that carried over to larger festivals where each local choir displayed its banners alongside the German tricolor. Just as importantly, the festivals were a means of expressing German cultural identity through the genre of the *Lied*—whether they were simple folk songs or music composed for a competition. The concept of a specific genre of music which expressly revealed the national character linked Germans in a unique fashion. It was not always the quality of the performance but the fact that you participated in an ongoing ritual that mattered.

¹⁴¹ Dr. Ernst Zander, “Felix Mendelssohn,” *Deutsche Arbeiter-Sänger-Zeitung*, 15. Januar 1927.

¹⁴² Richard Wagner denounced the skills of Jewish composers (especially Felix Mendelssohn and Giacomo Meyerbeer) in “Das Judenthum in der Musik” (Judaism in Music). First published under a pseudonym in 1850, Wagner republished it in 1869 under his own name. Wagner’s second publication coincided with growing antisemitism in Europe, and Mendelssohn’s works fell out of favor partly as a result of this but also because his works were considered old-fashioned.

After having looked at the history of the German choral movement (from Otto Elben's perspective) and the genre of the *Lied*, I conclude this chapter by examining the first post-unification national festival of the German Choral Association. The purpose of the Second German Choral Association Festival held in Munich in 1874 was to celebrate the new German Empire, and the program included German compositions from the sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century. Songs written for the *Befreiungskriege* (Wars of Liberation) and those celebrating the new empire were showcased representing the final completion of a goal amateur choristers had clamored for since 1813—freedom and unity.¹⁴³ The choice of Munich for the first national festival after unification cannot be overlooked. Bavaria was a Catholic region, and although Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* was aimed at limiting the power of that church, the choral movement had historically been more inclusive. Quite a few of the original members were representatives at the Frankfurt Parliament which met in 1848-49 to write a Constitution for a unified Germany in which rights like equality under the law, freedom of expression and the press, freedom of religion, and representative government were guaranteed to all Germans.¹⁴⁴ By locating the 1874 choral festival in Munich, the organizers were consciously emphasizing the inclusive nature of the choral movement. A representative of the German Choral Association gave a speech in which he expressed the following sentiment:

We have become a united nation, from the green meadows of our Alps to the dunes of the North Sea. Now we may all openly and joyfully confess that the same sense of home is bound up with the German soil; that, like language and custom, there is an indissoluble bond about us; that in the north and south, in the east and in the west, we have an equally melodious expression for everything—the German song.¹⁴⁵

The themes highlighted by the speaker—geographic variety, as well as a sense of a common homeland, language, and customs—testified to unity amidst diversity, and the most notable expression of German-ness was song. Music represented a bond more powerful than regionalism.

¹⁴³ The First National Choral Association Festival was held in Dresden in 1867 in anticipation of political unification making the Munich festival the second national festival.

¹⁴⁴ *Constitution of the German Empire*, 28 March 1849. <http://www.documentarchiv.de/nzjh/verfdr1848.htm>

¹⁴⁵ “Das Zweite Deutsche Sängerbundesfest in München,” *Die Sängerkhalle*, 3. Sept 1874, 129.

The program from Part I of the festival concert (May 10, 1874) was printed in the German Choral Association's bi-weekly publication, *Die Sängerkirche*. The choices and organization of the music, in addition to the Munich location, reveal what festival organizers believed about their ongoing role as "carriers of a national culture of remembrance."¹⁴⁶

Day 1, First Festival Concert

Part I

1. "Motette, Psalm 111" by Orlando Lasso (b. 1520)
2. "Bacchuschor aus dem Alexanderfest" by Händel
3. Overture, *Iris und Osiris* (from *Magic Flute* by Mozart)
4. "Das Lied vom Rhein" (words by Max von Schenkendorf; music, H. G. Nägeli)
5. "Weihelied" aus König Stephan (music, Beethoven)
6. Gebet: "Hör' uns, Allmächtiger" (Theodor Körner, music, C. M. von Weber)
7. Siegesbotschaft: "Es war so trübe" (L. Uhland; music, C. Kreutzer)
8. Trinklied "Kommt, Freunde, trinket froh mit mir" (Körner; music, Fr. Schneider); and "Lorelei" (H. Heine; music F. Silcher); and Kriegslied von 1813 (A. Methfessel, 1784)
9. Motette "Auferstehen wirft du mein Staub" (Klopstock; music, B. Klein, b. 1794)

The selections performed in the first portion of this festival were chosen to represent a chronology of German music stretching back to the sixteenth century—without an overt emphasis on the protestant Reformation.¹⁴⁷ The first and oldest piece was a sixteenth-century motet followed by a Händel choral work first performed in 1736. Following these choral works was an overture from Mozart's *Magic Flute* that premiered in 1791. But the heart of the first days' program consisted of Napoleonic era compositions: "Das Lied vom Rhein," the Schenkendorf-Nägeli work, the "Weihelied" (Dedication Song)

¹⁴⁶ Klenke, "Der Gesangverein," 393. Referenced previously on page 22.

¹⁴⁷ Aryeh Orin, "Orlando di Lasso" (Bach Cantatas, 2006) www.bach-cantatas.com/Lib/Lasso-Orlando.htm Lasso was from the Franco-Flemish school of Renaissance music. He studied composition in Rome and Naples before returning to the Netherlands where he published extensively. In 1556 he joined the court of Albrecht V of Bavaria and remained in Munich for the rest of his life. Emperor Maximilian II granted him nobility status and Pope Gregory XIII knighted him—these were rare honors for musicians of the period. Rather than choosing a Luther chorale for the first choral presentation, the organizers chose Lasso's motet. In Chapter 6 of this dissertation I deal with Renaissance church music in more detail—it was the genre most closely associated with the Roman Catholic church. A word about the spelling—*Mottete* is the German version of the English "motet."

set to music by Ludwig von Beethoven in 1811, “Hör uns, Allmächtiger” by Körner and von Weber, and “Siegesbotschaft, Es war so trübe” by Uhland and Kreutzer. These pieces all fall into the category of art songs because the composer intended to give the poem musical expression. In the midst of these Napoleonic era pieces art songs, three songs representing a folk tradition were included—a drinking song (“Come Friend, Enjoy a Drink with Me”), Heinrich Heine’s “Die Lorelei,” and a soldier song—although they represented songs written in a “folk-like manner” more than genuine folk songs. The final piece from Part I was an eighteenth-century motet—a nice bookend to the opening number.¹⁴⁸ At this first national festival after unification the organizers highlighted German history, beloved poets and composers, the early years of choral societies in which the Napoleonic era featured prominently, and the historic role of singers in bringing about German unification. The DSB officials also chose music that signaled unity amidst diversity. Lasso, Mozart, and Beethoven were all Catholics, and their music was interspersed with the Napoleonic era pieces in which Protestant Prussia emerged as the state that forged political unification.

The titles and composers reveal something about the importance of history and German music, but I want to go further and analyze the songs from the program that were written during the Napoleonic era (numbers 4-7). These not only expressed a desire for national freedom but did so in the language of the early Romantics. Written in the first decades of the nineteenth century, singers still treasured them in the 1870s. One of the best-known poets of the period Germans called the *Befreiungskriege* (Wars of Liberation) was Max Schenkendorf (1783-1817). His brother died fighting French invaders in 1807, and the death of his brother inspired Schenkendorf to volunteer in 1813 to fight at the Battle of Leipzig. There Napoleon’s army was decisively defeated, and Schenkendorf’s poem “Das Lied vom Rhein” (Song from the Rhine) was published when French were entirely driven out of German territory in 1814. The Rhine River was considered the traditional boundary between France and Germany, but the entire Rhineland had

¹⁴⁸ A mottete (or motet) is a short piece of choral music which is polyphonic and generally unaccompanied. The form originated in the thirteenth century and is generally challenging for amateurs.

been annexed by Napoleon in 1801 and made a *departement* of France. When the French were driven across the Rhine in 1814, the river was “liberated” along with the German people.

“Das Lied vom Rhein” was a long poem (to sing) with nine stanzas. The first ones extolled the river—the mere sound of its name gave joy and conjured thoughts of freedom and patriotism. It was a holy river. Then the poem continued for several stanzas as a lament in which the Rhine represented Germany itself—robbed of dignity, stripped of power, freedom, and of ancient German rights. Finally there were several verses that referenced the epic poem, the *Nibelungenlied* (in which the Rhine played an important role), and compared the French to raging foes who would be drowned and washed away by the Rhine itself. The final two verses:

Erfüllt ist jedes Wort:
 der König ist nun frei,
 der Nibelungen Hort
 ersteht und glänzet neu!
 Es sind die alten deutschen Ehren
 die wieder ihren Schein bewähren:
 der Väter Zucht und Mut und Ruhm
 das heil'ge deutsche Kaisertum!

Every word is fulfilled:
 Now, the king is free,
 the Nibelungen stronghold
 arises and shines anew!
 It is the ancient, honorable Ones
 who once again prove their brilliance:
 the breeding, courage, and fame of the fathers
 of the holy German Empire!

Wir huldgen unserm Herrn,
 Wir trinken seinen Wein.
 Die Freiheit sei der Stern,
 Die Losung sei der Rhine!
 Wir wollen ihm aufs neue schwören,
 Wir müssen ihm, er uns gehören.
 Vom Felsen kommt er frei und hehr,
 Er fließe frei in Gottes Meer.¹⁴⁹

We pay homage to our lord,
 We drink his wine.
 Freedom--be our star,
 Rhine--be our watchword!
 We want to promise ourselves to him again,
 We must, for he belongs to us.
 He breaks nobly away from the chains,
 He flows freely into God's sea.

Throughout the poem the Rhine was anthropomorphized as the German people, the Holy Roman Empire, a living representation of long-past heroes, kings, and lords. Freeing German territory from Napoleon's armies represented a restoration of Germany itself, and the Rhine remained an important symbol of German freedom—especially when that freedom was threatened by France during the Rhine

¹⁴⁹ Max Schenkendorf, „Das Lied vom Rhein,“ <https://www.volksliederarchiv.de/es-klings-ein-heller-klang-das-lied-vom-rhein/> The song appeared in *Allgemeines Deutsches Kommersbuch* (1858); in *Deutsches Armeeliederbuch-Deutscher Sang* (1903); and *Deutsches Lautenlied* (1914). The translation here is mine. Some of these songs can be found on YouTube. There is a shortened solo version of the Schenkendorf/Nägeli “Das Lied vom Rhein” at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3dDr51VLgE

Crisis of 1840, the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), and World War I. The poem demonstrated the intertwining of mythology and history that increasingly characterized a distinct sense of German-ness.

Numbers 5 and 8 from the Munich festival program are shorter than the Schenkendorf song, but echo Schenkendorf's theme in which Germans were continually confronted by French foes attempting to take their land and destroy their freedom. Theodor Körner (1791-1813) was also a poet who fought in the Wars of Liberation. He enlisted in the *Lützow Freikorps* in 1813 and died in battle shortly thereafter.¹⁵⁰ His father gathered the best of his patriotic poems and had them published in 1814 as *Lyre and Sword*. His "Hör uns, Allmächtiger," ("Hear Us, Almighty") appeared in several military songbooks over the course of the nineteenth century and in a *World War Song Collection (Weltkriegs-Liedersammlung)* in 1926.

Hör uns, Allmächtiger!
Hör uns, Allgütiger!
Himmlicher Führer der Schlachten!
Vater, Dich preisen wir!
Vater, wir danken Dir
daß wir zur Freiheit erwachten.

Hear us, Almighty!
Hear us, source of all kindness!
Heavenly leader of battles!
Father, we praise you!
Father, we give you our thanks
that we woke up to freedom.

Wie auch die Hölle braust
Gott, Deine starke Faust
stürzt das Gebäude der Lüge.
Führ uns, Herr Zebaoth
führ, dreiein'ger Gott
führ uns zur Schlacht und zum Siege!

Even if Hell roars
Your strong fist, God,
topples the building of lies.
Lead us, Lord Sabaoth
Lead, three-in-one God
Lead us to battle and to victory!

Führ uns! – Fall' unser Los
auch tief in Grabes Schoß:
Lob doch und preis Deinen Namen!
Reich, Kraft und Herrlichkeit
sind Dein in Ewigkeit!
Führ uns, Allmächtiger! Amen.

Lead us! If our lot falls
deep in the graves' bosom:
Praise and glory to Your name!
The kingdom, power and glory
are Yours to eternity!
Lead us, Almighty! Amen.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Adolf, Freiherr von Lützow was a Prussian general who in 1813 was granted permission to organize a corps of volunteer infantry- and cavalry-men to fight in the Wars of Liberation. The group eventually numbered about 3000. Approximately one-third of the volunteers were educated, middle-class young men from urban areas east of the Elbe River. The Lützow Freikorps was not particularly successful in the field, but they were highly successful as a symbol of German nationalism. The black-red-yellow colors of their uniform became the colors used on banners waved by nationalists during the Restoration and Vormärz and eventually the colors of the German flag.

¹⁵¹ "Hör uns Allmächtiger" <https://www.volksliederarchiv.de/hoer-uns-allmaechtiger-gebet-vor-der-schlacht/> My translation. The lines, "Reich, Kraft und Herrlichkeit sind Dein in Ewigkeit," are from *Vater Unser* (the Lord's Prayer).

This was a simple prayer, but it followed the three-stanza form of a Minnesinger song where the first two verses stated a theme and the third stanza tied these together. The poem dwelt on certain aspects of God that a soldier going into battle might value—God himself was a leader of battles with the power to lead to victory, to face hell, and to overthrow it. While the first two stanzas anticipated the action of battle and the hope of victory, the third stanza admitted that God might lead them to a different fate—to the grave. Nevertheless, the soldiers believed in eternity. According to Otto Elben, Carl Maria von Weber who composed the music for “Hör uns Allmächtiger” gave the men's choir “a splendid gift: he composed six of the songs of the noble singer [Körner], who had sealed his enthusiastic devotion to his fatherland with death.”¹⁵² Weber (composer, pianist, guitarist, and opera director) was best known for *Der Freischütz*—considered one of the first genuinely German operas—and he, like Körner, died at a young age.¹⁵³

The third Napoleonic era song included in the DSB Munich festival had a different tone than Körner's simple prayer and alluded to death within the context of Germanic mythology. Ludwig Uhland (1787-1862) was born in Württemberg and studied law at Tübingen, but his true interests lay in German Romanticism—its poetry and medieval literature.¹⁵⁴ His most famous poem, “Ich hatt' ein Kameraden” (1809), was chosen by German soldiers of World War I as their favored song, and is still played at German military funerals and on *Volkstrauertag* (German Remembrance Day).¹⁵⁵ Uhland's “Die Siegesbotschaft” had a less universal theme. It was written in 1813 and represented features of mythology and romanticism as well as German patriotism.

“Die Siegesbotschaft”

Es war so trübe, dumpf und schwer,
Die schlimme Sage schlich umher,
Sie krächzte, wie zur Dämmerzeit
Ein schwarzer Unglücksvogel schreit.

“Victorious Tidings”

It was so sunless, dull, and leaden,
The terrible legend prowls around,
It caws, as a black bird of misfortune
Cries at twilight.

¹⁵² Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 220.

¹⁵³ Weber's opera was based on folklore and drew on inevitable images of village life, the forest, and the supernatural. It departed from French and Italian forms and made Weber a German hero. Weber and Beethoven were the greatest influences on Richard Wagner's musical career.

¹⁵⁴ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, “Ludwig Uhland” www.britannica.com/biography/Ludwig-Uhland

¹⁵⁵ Aibe-Marlene Gerdes, “Soldatenlieder als Volkslieder-Volkslieder als Soldatenlieder: John Meier und das deutsche Soldatenlied,” in *Populärer Kriegsliteratur im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Nicolas Detering, Michael Fischer, Aibe-Marlene Gerdes (Münster: Waxmann, 2013), 199.

Die schlimme Sage schlich im Land
Mit schnöder Schattenbilder Tand,
Sie zeigte Zweitracht und Verrat,
Zernichtung aller edeln Saat.

The terrible legend slinks in the land
Amidst a filthy, black, flimsy sham,
It reveals discord and betrayal,
Destruction of all that is noble.

Des Bösen Freunde trotzen schon,
Sie lachen hämisch, sprechen Hohn,
Die Guten stehen ernst und still
Und harren, was da werden will.

The evil friends celebrate already,
They laugh and mock villainously,
The good ones stand serious and still
And wait, for what will be.

Da schwingt sich's überm Rhein empor
Und bricht den düstern Wolkenflor:
Ist's stolzer Adler Sonnenflug?
Ist's tönereicher Schwäne Zug?

There! Soaring upward over the Rhine
And breaking the dark cloud cover:
Is it the proud eagle flying towards the sun?
Is it the rich sounds of the swans' flight?

Es rauscht und singt im goldenen Licht:
Der Herr verläßt die Seinen nicht,
Er macht so Heil'ges nicht zum Spott.
Viktoria! mit uns ist Gott!

It rustles and sings in the golden light:
The Lord does not abandon his own,
He does not mock his holy ones.
Victorious! God is with us!¹⁵⁶

To fully appreciate Uhland's poem one needs to read it aloud—in German. He used words to not merely express thoughts, but to affect sounds and emotions. The words in the first line, “trübe, dumpf und schwer,” are rich with consonants. The words can each be translated as dull or heavy, but by using all of them, Uhland emphasized the unrelenting dark, grim nature of battle and the dull thump of lead balls while overhead the screaming birds circled in the twilight. Uhland used the phrase, “Die schlimme Sage schlich umher/Die schlimme Sage schlich im Lande,” in both the first and second stanzas. Again the alliteration adds something to the actual words, but these lines are puzzling. The literal translation of *Sage* is “legend” or “myth.” How does a myth creep “around” (*umher*) or “into the country” (*im Land*)? This is my interpretation which I think represents the fascination Uhland and other Romantics had with mythology.

The birds are the central figures in the poem, and the black birds which circled and screamed were both harbingers of death and heralds of victory. Ancient people used symbols to express ideas and Herder and his contemporaries believed that comparing mythologies (i.e. Greek and Teutonic) revealed

¹⁵⁶ Johann Ludwig Uhland, “Die Siegesbotschaft,” www.lieder.net/get_text.html?TextId=48776 The Kreuzer composition was published as *Drei Lieder* op. 72 no. 3. This is my translation—with assistance from Christine Scheffler Vieira.

human reasoning about God, creation, human nature, destiny, and purpose.¹⁵⁷ This understanding helps to decode Uhland's use of the birds. Lines three and four conjured the image of black birds, and in Greek mythology ravens or crows were often associated with death and were considered ill-omens or symbols of bad luck. Combining that imagery with the Norse god Odin (or in German mythology, Wotan) we find that Wotan was always accompanied by two ravens, Huginn and Muninn, who represented Thought and Memory. Wotan sent them out daily as scouts to report on the doings of humanity. The circling birds in "Siegesbotschaft" were sent to observe events from above, and from below their appearance foreshadowed death. Lines six through ten referenced the evil friend, that is, the French. They were depicted as shallow, duplicitous, false, and tawdry. The ravens reacted to the French slinking westward across German territory by shrieking at their betrayal of national boundaries and their treachery in dissolving long-existing political entities.¹⁵⁸ Their inescapable fate was defeat.

Exactly at the midpoint of the poem the focus shifted to the Germans who are "the good ones," and the imagery of the last two stanzas is especially rich. The birds named are an eagle and swans. The eagle was a symbol of Prussia and the last phrase of the poem, "Gott mit uns!" was used in Prussian heraldry from the early eighteenth century. The use of swans reflected Uhland's interest in the Romantic movement. Swans were associated with love, music, and poetry, and in the Greek tradition the swan was often pictured singing to the music of a lyre like the Bards, Minnesingers and Meistersingers.¹⁵⁹ There was a further significance to the swan which was more profound at the time of German unification than when Uhland penned the poem. A swan was the heraldic bird of the Wittelsbach family—the ruling family of Bavaria. Uhland's imagery of an eagle and swans rising together symbolized the two largest German states rising in victory over France. The juxtaposition of several birds—messengers of death (the ravens), a warrior (the eagle), and musicians (the swans)—told a story that encapsulated mythic imagery

¹⁵⁷ Herder, *Against Pure Reason*, 80.

¹⁵⁸ A book about Uhland's poetry published in 1863 suggested that the lines referred to the French betraying the terms of a peace treaty, but it is difficult to pin this to a specific event. The main point is that the French were not to be trusted and while pretending to be liberators they destroyed German freedom. Friedrich Notter, *Ludwig Uhland: Sein Leben und seine Dichtungen*, (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler'schen Buchhandlung, 1863), 139.

¹⁵⁹ Frederick M. Ahl, "Amber, Avallon, and Apollo's Singing Swan," *The American Journal of Philology* 103, no. 4 (1982): 373-411.

and the desolation and havoc wreaked by Napoleon's armies. The ability of the eagle and swans to soar up into the light against the earlier image of something fateful creeping into their land created a sharp contrast between Germany and France. Germany was rising, and there was the ubiquitous inference that God was on its side. The popularity of this song throughout the nineteenth century demonstrated that the members of the German Choral Association continued to view the French as the enemy, and there was also a reminder that in the 1870s the Catholic French were a greater threat than German Protestants.

The three songs examined above are all considered *Lieder* (German poems set to music) and were written during the critical years when the seed of German unity was first planted. There was not a uniform structure to these poems, and when set to music each song followed the pattern of the poem. In other words, a *Lied* is not bound to the strophic form.¹⁶⁰ In composing music for a poem, it was crucial to match the mood of the poem with the notes to be sung. It was a common belief among nineteenth-century critics and composers that music carried the text, not the other way around.¹⁶¹ The singers' voices were the means by which the text imparted its message; therefore, the composer's role was vital to the overall effect. While we can analyze the words and appreciate their historical significance, something essential to my overall argument is missing. How did these songs *sound* when they were performed? There must have been a cumulative stirring of emotions both for singers and the audience as one after another allusion to French aggression rang out—primarily since the Franco-Prussian War was a recent memory. For some participants it would have the effect of a memorial service.

Elben provides us with some descriptions of the above songs in his account of German male choruses. In *Volksthümliche deutsche Männergesang* he wrote not as an observer of the 1874 festival but was commenting on earlier performances of the same works. The first song, "Das Lied vom Rhein," was set to music by Hans Nägeli who Elben praised for his compositions that had "robust, characteristic rhythms" (*kräftige, charakteristische Rhythmus*). The Schenkendorf-Nägeli piece Elben described as having "the pattern of a genuine choral piece, quite simple in its popular melody, artless, but full of

¹⁶⁰ Strophic form is more common today—all verses/stanzas sung to the same tune and generally separated by a refrain.

¹⁶¹ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 341.

powerful sound, full of fire and momentum, perhaps Nägeli's most excellent song.”¹⁶² Elben lived in the generation after the poets of the Napoleonic era so his remarks reflected how the music sounded in his own time; he was a long-time member of male choruses, so he may have performed this work. Elben analyzed the music not merely as words and notes on a page, but as music he had performed. He gave a stirring description in which he emphasized the rhythm, momentum, and powerful sound of Nägeli's musical setting of a song about the Rhine River—and freedom. The emotions of the singers and audience were moved not only by the words but by what the music added to the text. To add a modern voice to Elben's personal account, neuroscientist Daniel J. Levitin explains that a regular pulse in music is comforting to the listener because it assures us that we are moving forward. “In order to be moved by music (physically and emotionally) it helps a great deal to have a readily predictable beat.”¹⁶³ Once that beat is established, your brain can detect deviations and those “violations of expectations” evoke emotional responses to the music.¹⁶⁴ Elben's use of the terms, “full of powerful sound, full of fire and momentum,” offer anecdotal evidence for Levitin's clinical findings.

The composer wants to mirror the mood of the poet's text and can do this by the beat or the tone—carrying musicians and listeners along. Nägeli used the text of Schenkendorf's poem to vary the predictability or deviations of the song's beat. In the last verses of “Das Lied vom Rhein,” the meter in the first and the third four lines (verses) followed a 6-6-6-6 pattern (in the German, each line has six syllables). Now look at the second and the last four—both these stanzas had something different. First, 9-9-8-8 and then, 10-9-8-8. A composer could alter the words of the poem to fit a repeated tune or it could be written in such a way to emphasize these metrical differences. A composer could thus elicit emotions purely through the music by *varying* the expected pulse. Changing the tone or key of the music is equally effective, and here we can look at “Die Siegesbotschaft” in which the mood of the poem changed at its midpoint. The composer who set Uhland's poem, “Die Siegesbotschaft,” to music was Konradin

¹⁶² Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 216.

¹⁶³ Daniel J. Levitin, *This is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession* (New York: Dutton, 2006), 170.

¹⁶⁴ Levitin, *Brain on Music*, 172.

Kreutzer, and Elben singled out his ability to mirror a poem: “He stands tallest as a composer of songs because of the compositions that he created for so many of Uhland’s: he found the right tone for the poems of his great countryman, having a kindred, poetic mind.”¹⁶⁵ I cannot prove this point from the Uhland/Kreutzer piece, but a key change halfway through the song would be quite effective. The opening, threatening lines of “Siegesbotschaft” in a minor key followed by a transition to a major key at the midpoint would communicate through the music what Uhland communicated through words and images. The dark despair of the first half of Siegesbotschaft changed to hope when the soaring eagle and swans broke through the clouds. The observations of Daniel Levitin are helpful again as he assures us that we remember things that are tied to our emotions.¹⁶⁶ The first poets and composers who emerged during the Napoleonic era invented not just a style of music but specific songs that were repeatedly resurrected. Germans repeated Napoleonic era songs because they lived through that experience, and they wanted to pass these memories down to their children and grandchildren. The songs of this era were a particularly effective means of doing this, and in the years following German unification, it was important to tie national emotions to the memories of both 1806-1813 as well as 1870-71. Emotional communities were created and re-created through repeated exposures to national history, German mythology, and significant physical features like the Rhine.

I want to include an examination of one final song from the early nineteenth century—Ernst Moritz Arndt’s “Was ist des deutschen Vaterland?”¹⁶⁷ Arndt’s *Lied* was not on the program of the 1874 Munich DSB festival but was a national song written at the same time Schenkendorf and Körner composed the works examined here. Elben said of Arndt’s song that it “was famous everywhere, sung at all song festivals, and has often been described as a German national song.”¹⁶⁸ The question of which

¹⁶⁵ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 232. Unfortunately, this is one of the few songs for which I can find no current recording. It was performed repeatedly in the nineteenth century, but the theme is one that does not have the same enduring popularity as some of the others.

¹⁶⁶ Levitin, *Brain on Music*, 231.

¹⁶⁷ The poem was written in 1813 and originally set to music by Johannes Cotta. Gustav Reichardt wrote a new melody for it in 1825, and his became the favored version.

¹⁶⁸ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 224. Several songs were considered unofficial national anthems throughout the nineteenth century including Fallersleben’s “Lied der Deutschen” and Luther’s “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.” Fallersleben’s

German states should make up a unified Germany was hotly debated at the Frankfurt National Assembly which met from May 1848 to June 1849. Arndt had always believed, like Herder and Goethe, that language determined nationality, and his poem reflected that view.¹⁶⁹ “Was ist des deutschen Vaterland?” had nine stanzas; the first five followed the same format asking the title question, “What is the German’s Fatherland?” The stanza below was the first one:

Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?	What is the German’s Fatherland?
Ist’s Preussenland, ist’s Schwabenland?	Is it Prussia? Is it Swabia?
Ist’s, wo am Rhein die Rebe blüht?	Is it where the vines blossom on the Rhine?
Ist’s, wo am Belt die Möwe zieht?	Is it where the gulls move on the Belt? ¹⁷⁰
O nein! nein! nein!	Oh no! No! No!
Sein Vaterland muss grösser sein!	Our Fatherland must be bigger! ¹⁷¹

The next four stanzas asked successively, Is it Bavaria, Styria, Pomerania, Westphalia, the land of the Swiss, Tyrol, or Austria? Here we see the poetic inspiration for the German Choral Association’s, “green meadows of our Alps to the dunes of the North Sea,” and it was Arndt who used the phrase, “Is it where the sands of the dunes blow?”—a phrase repeated in the 1874 speech at the national festival in Munich.

In stanzas six through nine, Arndt answered his question by saying that the German’s Fatherland extends as far as the German language was spoken and the *Lied* was sung—two important features extolled by German singers throughout the nineteenth century. He described the character of any German as loyal and brave, warm-hearted and trustworthy (“where oaths are sworn with a handshake”). Arndt’s poem was written in 1813, so he included the sentiment that every Frenchman was an enemy in the German Fatherland while every German was a friend. The words of the final stanza, like those of the entire poem, were very repetitive. Rather than using literary allusions, as in the Schenkendorf poem or the

eventually won out but not without controversy. See Jost Hermand, “On the History of the ‘Deutschlandlied’” in *Music and German National Identity*, ed. Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002): 251-268.

¹⁶⁹ Brian E. Vick, *Defining Germany: The 1848 Frankfurt Parliamentarians and National Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002). See especially 127-28, 193. How to define German-ness was one of the frequent topics of debate at the Frankfurt Parliament, and language played a prominent role in delimiting that privilege.

¹⁷⁰ The “Belt” is a strait between islands in the Baltic Sea which was considered the northern border of German territory at the time Arndt wrote this poem.

¹⁷¹ “Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?” <https://www.volksliederarchiv.de> The translation comes from Lisa Feurzig, *Deutsche Lieder für Jung und Alt*, (Middleton, WI: 2002), 69-70.

alliteration and imagery employed by Uhland, Arndt relied on repetition and on characteristics of German-ness.

Das ganze Deutschland soll es sein!	It should be the whole of Germany!
O Gott vom Himmel, sieh darein!	Oh God from heaven, look therein!
Und gib uns rechten deutschen Mut	And give us proper German courage
dass wir es lieben treu und gut!	that we love it faithfully and well!
Das soll es sein!	That's what it should be!
Das soll es sein!	That's what it should be!
Das ganze Deutschland soll es sein!	It should be the whole of Germany!

The German Choral Association perpetuated the dream of inclusion, and the sentiment articulated in the opening speech at Munich (“from the green meadows of our Alps to the dunes of the North Sea”) was not just an empty phrase. The national festivals that took place over the next decades were held in Hamburg (far north), Vienna and Graz (in Austria), Breslau (far east), Stuttgart (far west), and the last festival of the German Empire was held in Nuremberg—a nod to Meistersinger Hans Sachs.

In Chapter Four I examine the festivals of the German Choral Association and of its member societies more thoroughly and return to the 1874 Munich festival. My purpose here was to demonstrate how historical themes gave rise to mottos, slogans, images, and symbols that reinforced beliefs about what it meant to be part of the German nation. Why were groups of people singing together more appealing than if the same groups recited poetry together or painted a landscape? There was something about music that had the power to connect people in group expression more forcefully than other forms of art. Speaking German, uncovering a common mythology, and restoring the music of the folk created an ideal of what a unified, reborn German Empire should look like—at least for bourgeois participants in associational life. An entire corpus of music was created in the early part of the nineteenth century that became a part of a common heritage.

While choral societies are generally, and correctly, associated with the bourgeoisie, this changed over the course of the nineteenth century. The events of the French Revolution and the ensuing wars with France exposed Germans to music as political speech. Historian James Brophy argues that the common people became politicized during the Napoleonic era and claims that, “The act of singing oppositional songs cut across class and spatial lines, constituting a political community larger than either the

bourgeoisie or the laboring classes.”¹⁷² The songs composed by Uhland, Körner, Schenkendorf, and Arndt were the types sung in taverns as well as in national choral festivals. Fallersleben, who wrote the song about the little flower, is best known for composing “Das Lied der Deutschen” the third stanza of which is now the German national anthem. Song brought bourgeois businessmen, farmers, laborers, and rulers together. In fact, the German *Bildungsbürgertum* (educated middle class) served as a kind of vortex that pulled both the upper classes and the lower classes into a distinct culture of music over the course of the nineteenth century.¹⁷³ Male choruses dominated the second part of the nineteenth century, and these singers celebrated the German *Lied* when they gathered for festivals. Otto Elben mused, “It was reserved for our century to develop multi-part, and especially four-part vocal works, as an independent art genre. The earlier creations which were discovered for men’s voices were partly isolated incidents, and partly, the first sprouts of a new genus of art. Today, this bloom has fallen into our hands.”¹⁷⁴

In the first two chapters of Movement I, I have laid a foundation in order to offer a starting point from which we can measure continuity or change. Germans belonged to many different emotional communities, and not all were mutually exclusive. These communities also had points of intersection such as a common history and a common mythology. Over several decades, amateur choirs and associations created strong threads of cohesion. While the men’s choruses were the most common throughout the century, composers also wrote *Lieder* for solo women’s voices or for women’s choruses (*Frauenchor*). I examine the role of women as members, observers, and critics of German music culture and German society in the final chapter of Movement I.

¹⁷² James M. Brophy, *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere in the Rhineland, 1800-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 101 and 104.

¹⁷³ David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). See especially 20-21, 64-66, 125-134.

¹⁷⁴ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 206.

153453

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's Werke.

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Figure 1 Felix Mendelssohn's Festgesang an der Kunstler

2.3 Chapter 3 Women's Narratives

She regulates her house, and neither thinks of the public nor of the musical world, nor even of music at all, until her first duties are fulfilled. Felix Mendelssohn

We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams. Arthur O'Shaughnessy

For centuries there had been no role for women in choral performances, young boys or castrati sang the treble lines. With the emergence of the amateur choral movement in the late eighteenth century, women began to participate alongside men. The Berlin *Singakademie* was made up of men and women

from its inception, and in 1791 offered a performance in the *Marienkirche* in which men and women sang together publicly—a rarity prior to the nineteenth century.¹⁷⁵ After 1850 women joined mixed choruses in increasing numbers and there were a number of *Frauenchöre* (Women’s Choirs), but these never formed choral associations like those of the all-male choirs. Women primarily learned music at home and participated in choirs as a leisure activity. They were expected to play the piano (and possibly the harp), but positions in orchestras, as conductors, and/or composers were jealously guarded by men.¹⁷⁶ Over the course of the nineteenth century women slowly made inroads into this male-dominated world. There are three things I want to highlight in this chapter: the role of women in nineteenth-century German music culture, observations and critiques of that culture, and ways overlapping emotional communities formed, evolved, conflicted, and co-existed. I argue that women were deeply integrated into the emotional communities delineated by choral music, and their experiences demonstrate how music facilitated a common narrative of what it meant to be “German” in the late-nineteenth century.

My sources for this chapter are primarily women’s memoirs in which the women did not intend to write purely about music, but rather music was an intimate part of their lives. Ethel Smyth and Anna Ettlinger were representative of many women who came from bourgeois families and learned music as part of their general education. Their published memoirs filled with anecdotal reflections offer insights into how music bridged differences and pulled disparate groups of people into the same emotional space. Smyth and Ettlinger each shared a musical memory—one that was perhaps not so unusual among the *Bildungsbürgertum*. On Good Friday 1879, Ethel Smyth, who was studying music composition in Leipzig, took part in the annual performance of Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*. “I despair of giving an idea of the devoutness of the audience. . . . You felt as if the *Passion* itself, in that heart-rending, consoling

¹⁷⁵ Karen Ahlquist, “Men and Women of the Chorus: Music, Governance, and Social Models in Nineteenth-Century German-Speaking Europe,” in *Chorus and Community*, ed. Karen Ahlquist (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 268 and 287.

¹⁷⁶ Clara Schumann was an exception, but she only began to earn money as a performer after her husband Robert died. Excluding women from professional positions in orchestras and the stage was a financial consideration as much as a misogynistic one. See David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) for changing roles of professional musicians after the eighteenth century and their role in bringing music to a wider audience through education, music criticism, and print.

portrayal, was being lived through as at no other moment of their lives by every soul in the vast congregation. This is the divine part of listening to such music in company with people who have known and loved every note of it ever since they were born, whose natural language it is.”¹⁷⁷ Anna Ettlinger who lived most of her life in Karlsruhe took part in a separate performance and recorded her reaction: “When I think of the *St. Matthew Passion*, and reflect on the things that were especially moving to me, I realize they are endless. To participate as a member of the choir in this tremendous work was always a joy for me and my younger sisters, one which cannot be put into words.”¹⁷⁸ The two accounts above are intriguing because one performer was an English visitor, and the other was German, but Jewish. Seemingly outsiders to the newly formed and self-affirmed Protestant German nation, their bourgeois status gave them *entrée* into its music culture and they shared a bond with every German choir who sang Bach’s *Passion*. I plan to work through the memoirs of Ethel Smyth, Anna Ettlinger, and Suzanne Schmaltz and highlight their personal reflections on singing, music, Johannes Brahms, Richard Wagner, nationalism, and the German Empire. I can find no evidence that the three women knew each other, but they had mutual friends and acquaintances. While many of their values and experiences overlapped, they also had unique experiences that demonstrated how community was forged from diversity.

I begin with Susanne Schmaltz’s story as she represents the quintessentially German-Lutheran-bourgeois society of nineteenth-century Germany. As well, her membership in a women’s choir created by Johannes Brahms in the 1860s gives a unique view of how women participated in the amateur choral movement. The youngest of nine children, she was the only one born in Hamburg (1838-1934). Her father, Moritz Ferdinand Schmaltz, was a Lutheran pastor who led congregations in Vienna and Dresden, before coming to Hamburg in 1833. Both her parents were interested in the arts and relished life in the

¹⁷⁷ Ethel Smyth, *Impressions that Remained: Memoirs*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923), 246. The *St. Matthew Passion* was composed by J. S. Bach in the eighteenth century, but Bach’s music had fallen out of style by the end of that century. The 1829 performance of the *St. Matthew Passion* marked a revival of Bach. The *Berlin Singakademie* offered three performances (led by Felix Mendelssohn) and Johann Gustav Droysen, one of the participants, afterwards proclaimed that Bach’s music represented something “essentially German.” The elevated, intellectual music of Bach took its place alongside *Volkslieder* as national music. For the complete story, see Celia Applegate, *Bach in Berlin: Nation and Culture in Mendelssohn’s Revival of the St. Matthew Passion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

¹⁷⁸ Anna Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen* (Kleine Karlsruher Bibliothek, 1920), 114.

artistic atmosphere of Dresden, and she recalled, “All my brothers and sisters were musical and filled the air with songs. By age five I was singing myself, ‘Reich mir die Hand, mein Leben,’ . . . from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*.”¹⁷⁹ Her interest in *Don Giovanni* sprang from her exposure to the Hamburg opera house, but she was equally fond of the afternoons when sitting with her mother she listened to stories from the Bible. Susanne Schmaltz described her father as “passionate and God-fearing, freethinking but pious and kind,” and since he was an acknowledged scholar, his weekly sermons were published.¹⁸⁰ The family had a city house across the street from Hamburg’s St. Jacobi church and a summer house in the country. Family, church, school, piano lessons, and the theater made up the rhythm of her childhood. As a teenager, she and her friends sometimes staged musical dramas to entertain family members and guests.¹⁸¹ Schmaltz’s mother died when she was sixteen, and she subsequently spent some months with a married, older sister in Leipzig where she sang in the *Gewandhaus* chorus—the *Gewandhaus* was one of the most prestigious concert halls in the world in the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁸² She also continued her piano lessons and gushed, “Leipzig offered an extraordinary variety of interesting things.” She frequented coffee houses, social evenings and balls and made the acquaintance of many of the acclaimed musicians who lived there—Ignaz Moscheles, Ferdinand David, and Julius Rietz. She remembered it as a beautiful time, “full of joy and hope.”¹⁸³

After some months in Leipzig Schmaltz returned to Hamburg, because as the only unmarried sibling, it was expected that she would care for her father and manage his household. She remembered

¹⁷⁹ Susanne Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances 1838-1925: The Life of a Sunday’s Child*, trans. Inge Kistler (Evanston, Illinois: Evanston Publishing, 1994), 3.

¹⁸⁰ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 2.

¹⁸¹ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 11.

¹⁸² Felix Mendelssohn was the Leipzig Gewandhauskapellmeister (music director) from 1835 until his death in 1847. Mendelssohn established precedents that transformed the way music is presented—he was the first conductor to stand with his back to the audience and face the orchestra from center stage, the first to use a baton to lead the orchestra, and he established a canon of performance music which is still the standard. These innovations made Leipzig the center of western music culture for the rest of the nineteenth century. Wagner’s *Meistersinger Prelude* and Brahms’ *Violin Concerto* both made their world premier at the Gewandhaus, each conducted by the composer (1862 and 1879 respectively). A unique feature of the Gewandhaus Orchestra was its dual function as city orchestra and the orchestra for Leipzig’s two main churches—St. Thomas Church and St. Nikolai Church. The Kapellmeister of the Gewandhaus was also in charge of the music for these two churches. “The Gewandhausorchester: From Town Band to Institution of International Renown,” www.gewandhausorchester.de/en/orchester/history/

¹⁸³ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 9-10. Moscheles was a composer and piano virtuoso; Rietz and David jointly succeeded Mendelssohn as Kapellmeister at the Gewandhaus after Mendelssohn’s unexpected death in 1847.

that time, however, as one in which she gave herself totally to her music. She primarily meant her piano lessons, but she also frequented symphony concerts with two friends, Franziska and Camilla Meier. She recounted that on one occasion they decided to sneak into a symphony rehearsal: “It happened that the great violinist, Joseph Joachim, was there not only as soloist but also as conductor. He was rehearsing the *First Serenade* by Johannes Brahms, who was still very young at that time. I had as yet no idea how deeply he would touch my life.”¹⁸⁴ Not long afterwards, her brother-in-law’s uncle offered to pay for Schmaltz to take piano lessons with the young composer, and twice a week they worked together in Brahms’s home. Schmaltz offered this description: “Brahms was short, blond, and had big, expressive blue eyes. He was usually very quiet. . . . Basically, I was quite afraid of him.”¹⁸⁵ At about the same time, a small women’s chorus was formed with Brahms as director, and Schmaltz and her friends were asked to join. Brahms had published only a few compositions before 1858; his relationship with Joachim, and with Robert and Clara Schumann to whom he was introduced by Joachim, transformed his career.

At the time Schmaltz met Brahms (1833-1897) he was a struggling young pianist, but her acquaintance with him coincided with his emergence onto the national stage. Brahms became one of the premier musicians of the nineteenth century, and he played a key role in the lives of Susanne Schmaltz, Anna Ettlinger, and Ethel Smyth—a detail that demonstrated how tightly bound circles of musicians were throughout the century. Brahms was born in Hamburg, received his earliest music training from his father, and made his public debut as a pianist in his hometown in 1848. From the age of thirteen, he earned a living by teaching piano lessons and playing at theaters and taverns. Hamburg had been a “free city” of the Holy Roman Empire and retained that status after the German states were reorganized at the 1815 Congress of Vienna. Following in the footsteps of early nineteenth-century Berlin the Hamburg *Liedertafel* was founded in 1823, and a symphony orchestra and chorus soon followed—the *Philharmonische Konzertgesellschaft*. Hamburg was a major port city with a long tradition of trade, commerce, and self-government—the 1860 constitution guaranteed separation of church and state,

¹⁸⁴ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 15. Joseph Joachim was considered the premier violinist of his day.

¹⁸⁵ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 16. By the time Susanne and Brahms both left Hamburg, they had become close friends, and he refused her last payment.

freedom of the press, assembly, and association, and the city retained self-rule after German unification in 1871. At that time the population stood at about 265,000, and while the city boasted several theaters and a newly remodeled concert hall, it could not compete financially with the subscription concerts offered by the Berlin Wolff agency.¹⁸⁶ In spite of the fact that two of the premier nineteenth-century German composers, Brahms and Mendelssohn, were born in Hamburg, neither formed lasting artistic ties with the city, and no leading musicians chose it as a permanent residence at the end of the century. Brahms did form personal relationships in Hamburg and composed some of his earliest *Lieder* there. So in the same way composers like Mendelssohn or C. M. von Weber composed *Lieder* as part of an endeavor to create a repertoire for men's choirs, Brahms composed a number for women's voices.

Susanne Schmaltz was one of several women who sang in Brahms' *Hamburger Frauenchor*, and Schmaltz's memoirs and her friends' diaries or notebooks illuminate how women came together to sing and how they formed a choral "club" (*Verein*). Sophie Drinker, an American writer, historian, and amateur musicologist, collected many of the memoirs, notebooks, and photographs from the women who sang for Brahms and in 1952 published a history of the *Hamburger Frauenchor*.¹⁸⁷ Fragments of the women's memoirs, drawings from their notebooks, and the women's own musical notations are twined with letters between Brahms and some of his associates. From these, Drinker gives a more detailed account of how the *Frauenchor* was formed. Friedchen Wagner, another young woman who took piano lessons from Brahms, was the inspiration for the choir. Drinker defined the social standing of Wagner, Schmaltz, and the Meier sisters as upper middle class and offered this sketch.

As a group, these people were both industrious and prosperous, spending much of their leisure time in cultivating the arts. They sang part songs and played instruments at home. They founded choral societies by the score. Their familiarity with musical terms and idioms enabled them to

¹⁸⁶ *German History in Documents and Images Volume 4. Forging an Empire: Bismarckian Germany, 1866-1890.* germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org; and Heinz Becker and Lutz Lesle, "Hamburg," in Grove Music Online (2001). Subscription concerts became popular as a means of ensuring financial stability for both musicians and program organizers. A series of concerts with guest performers and conductors was advertised and season tickets sold. However, by lining up the choice musicians ahead of time it shut out smaller markets from competing with cities like Berlin or Munich.

¹⁸⁷ Sophie Drinker, *Brahms and his Women's Choruses* (Merion, PA: Musurgia Publishers, 1952). The Preface to this book says that Brahms's "peculiar technique in writing for vocal ensembles, his interest in the skillful combination of womens' voices, his deep love for the folksong found expression in his compositions and arrangements for the little chorus."

appreciate the skill of professional performers and to understand contemporary composition. With their informal music and public concerts, they made Germany the Mecca of musicians the world over.¹⁸⁸

Drinker's description encapsulates the sense in which the *Bildungsbürgertum* (educated middle class) captured the aspirations of a broad swath of Germans as well as other Europeans and Americans. They made up a relatively small proportion of the German population, but the things they valued—the arts, hard work, associational life, and a serious understanding of music—permeated German society.¹⁸⁹

On the other hand, knowledge of Brahms's socio-economic background is somewhat murky. He was not from the upper middle class, but by most accounts he was from a respectable Hamburg family, and his talent opened doors to associate with wealthier Hamburgers.¹⁹⁰ As a young man Brahms was known primarily as a pianist, and his first compositions were piano sonatas. But he also had a keen interest in German folksongs, and Drinker records that at the time he began working with the Hamburger women he was “steeping himself in the[ir] rich treasures.”¹⁹¹ In the mid- to late-1850s, he was a frequent visitor to the Wagner home (described above) and one morning Friedchen Wagner asked him if he would compose music for some folksongs for her and her sisters to sing together. Brahms was working on his *28 Deutsche Volkslieder* at this time, and ten of these were arranged for three women's voices—presumably a result of Friedchen's request.¹⁹² Wagner went on to disclose that she began to invite other young women to come sing with them, and in a letter from Brahms to Clara Schumann in July 1859, he reminded

¹⁸⁸ Drinker, *Brahms*, 10. To sing “part songs” means that singers sing in harmony rather than singing a single melody line. Women sing soprano or alto; men sing tenor or bass; and each part can be further subdivided into “first soprano,” “second soprano,” and so forth.

¹⁸⁹ David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). Gramit argues that in the period he covers, music became part of a “project” to bring education and cultivation to the masses.

¹⁹⁰ Peter Clive, *Brahms and His World: A Biographical Dictionary* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2006). George S. Bozart and Walter Frisch, “Brahms, Johannes,” *Oxford Music Online* (2001). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/f10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.51879>

¹⁹¹ Drinker, *Brahms*, 11; and “Johannes Brahms,” *The Oxford Dictionary of Music 6th Edition*, eds. Tim Rutherford-Johnson, Michael Kennedy, and Joyce Bourne Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

¹⁹² Drinker, *Brahms*, 11-12. This was Drinker's conclusion.

Schumann, “Friedchen Wagner is the principal founder of my *Verein* here and we sing at her house.”¹⁹³

Once Susanne Schmaltz and the Meier sisters joined, there were twelve members.

Three groups of women eventually made up Brahms’s *Hamburger Frauenchor*: the “full choir” made up of about forty women rehearsed on Monday evenings; the “smaller” choir was Wagner’s group of close friends that Brahms originally worked with and for whom he wrote *Volkslieder*; there was a “still smaller one” made up of the four best singers who sang Brahms’s solos and quartets. Brahms described this arrangement in a letter to Clara Schumann in September 1859, and he included this sentiment: “I tell you that one of my most endearing memories is this ladies’ choir.”¹⁹⁴ In spite of the fact that Brahms commonly used paternalistic language to describe his “dear girls” or “my girls,” he genuinely admired their enthusiasm and their skills.¹⁹⁵ Schmaltz’s account of her life in Hamburg was brief, and she summed up several months by describing that after gathering in the Wagner’s home to sing with Brahms, the entire group often walked home together. Several of the women recorded singing together as they walked home from practices, and Brahms himself wrote that “we usually have a lot of fine singing and serenading on the road. My girls, for instance, will walk quite calmly into a garden and wake the people up at midnight with their singing.”¹⁹⁶ Brahms began by setting folksongs to music for the small group of twelve women to sing for their own enjoyment, but within a short time, he began to compose more challenging types of music for them.

The impetus to compose new music for the women in the Hamburg choir came from a visit to Göttingen in 1858 where Brahms spent the summer. His friend Julius Otto Grimm was the founder and director of the *Cäcilia Verein* in Göttingen--a mixed chorus with ninety members, some of whom also

¹⁹³ Drinker, *Brahms*, 9. A *Verein* is a social club or organization, and although the Women’s Chorus was fairly short-lived, they did have a written “constitution” with rules about practices, membership, and penalties for arriving late, but from the women’s memoirs it was obvious that the rules were taken fairly lightly.

¹⁹⁴ Drinker, *Brahms*, 43-44. Drinker makes extensive use of her primary sources, but her documentation is difficult to follow. This letter is dated 30 September 1859 and is from a collection of Brahms’ letters made by Litzmann.

¹⁹⁵ Drinker, *Brahms*, 43 and 51. Clara Schumann was impressed enough with Brahms’ *Frauenchor* to invite them to sing with her twice when she performed in Hamburg in January and November of 1861.

¹⁹⁶ Drinker, *Brahms*, 51. Letter to Clara Schumann dated April 2, 1860 in the Litzmann collection of letters between Brahms and Schumann.

sang in a women's chorus.¹⁹⁷ After listening to Grimm's choir Brahms grasped the potential of writing songs beyond simple *Volkslieder* for his own women's chorus. As a consequence, he immediately composed two pieces with themes he considered especially suitable for women. The *Brautgesang* (Bridal Song) was not well-received, but his *Ave Maria* "was a success from its conception."¹⁹⁸ The text of his *Ave Maria* was from the Latin liturgy which combined two biblical passages and a portion of the Roman Catholic catechism written at the Council of Trent.¹⁹⁹ Brahms took a prayer to Mary enshrined in Roman Catholic doctrine from the time of the Catholic Reformation and composed music for it with his Protestant Hamburg women in mind. Drinker remarks that Brahms broke with tradition by clothing the words of this song in romantic idiom and by offering the composition to a female lay choir. She describes Brahms' *Ave Maria* composition saying that it is "like a tableau, or a little drama. The women answer each other in antiphonal choirs, as if different groups of worshippers were in reality approaching the image of the Virgin."²⁰⁰ Drinker adds that Brahms's music for women's voices was especially effective because it was not overly sentimental. He wrote works that combined the romantic and classical styles and that expressed themes related to their everyday experiences--love, marriage, lullabies, work, and dirges.²⁰¹ Here, Brahms choice of text, a Roman Catholic prayer that featured a biblical figure honored by Catholics and Protestants alike, made it not only popular for female voices, but also demonstrated the ability of song to overcome fine points of theology. In addition to *Ave Maria*, Brahms sustained this theme when he wrote six *Marienlieder* in 1859. This collection of *Lieder* grew out of historical circumstances. Stories and songs about Mary were popular throughout the medieval and early modern

¹⁹⁷ It was common to have a large mixed chorus from which a smaller women's chorus was formed. The Cecilia Association was part of a larger movement that began in 1848 when a congress of German Catholics met in Mainz with the goal of founding local Catholic associations throughout the German states. The Allgemeiner Cäcilien-Verband für Deutschland (General Association of the German Cecilians) was officially organized in 1868 and was an organization for choral singing within the Catholic Church. *New Advent Encyclopedia* www.newadvent.org/cathen/04242a.htm

¹⁹⁸ Drinker, *Brahms*, 13-16.

¹⁹⁹ Drinker, *Brahms*, 90. The biblical passages were the salutation from the angel Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:28) and the greeting from Elizabeth to Mary (Luke 1:42). The Ave Maria (Hail Mary) was accepted in the Roman Breviary of 1568.

²⁰⁰ Drinker, *Brahms*, 87.

²⁰¹ Drinker, *Brahms*, 86-87.

period, and she was depicted as a heroine in all kinds of everyday adventures.²⁰² Although prayers to Mary (or saints), are not part of Protestant worship, this problem was submerged in the quality of the compositions and the subsequent emotions generated by performance. This was but one example of the irenic possibilities of music.

Armed with his new compositions, Brahms returned to Hamburg to introduce these and more to Friedchen Wagner, Susanne Schmaltz, and their friends. In 1859 the *Hamburger Frauenchor* began rehearsing the new pieces Brahms had written for them, and he arranged for them to give two performances in St. Peter's Church. Schmaltz left few details about these performances, but her friend Franziska Meier left a longer report about the September 19, 1859 event. Rather than describing the singing, however, most of Meier's comments had to do with where the women stood to sing, how Brahms needed to position himself in order to be seen by both the choir and the organist, and how poorly the organist performed in accompanying them. Confusion about logistics indicated that the women were not accustomed to performing in a public setting. Brahms's mother, father, and sister attended along with Franziska and Camilla Meier's mother and one of Schmaltz's sisters and brothers-in-law, and the reception was enthusiastic. "The wonderful *Ave Maria* pleased everybody. All were beside themselves."²⁰³ Prior to this performance the women sang in the Wagner's home or as they strolled home after practice. The setting of a church with an organ accompaniment created a different atmosphere than a private home or a walk through evening streets. Not only the acoustical effect but expectations were altered. Germans entered a church anticipating a familiar liturgical service that included music, scripture, and a sermon. The high ceilings, hard benches, the layout of the church, all contributed to a feeling of solemnity rather than the casual walks through the streets and gardens of Hamburg. Here, women were expected to play a relatively passive role as opposed to waking up the neighbors with their serenades. The

²⁰² Drinker, *Brahms*, 21. German folksongs were known by the title plus the first line of the song. Often the first line distinguishes songs with the same title from each other. Here are the titles and/or first line of Brahms' Six Marienlieder: "The Angel's Greeting," All hail to thee, Mary, thou blest among women; "When Mary went to Church;" "The Hunter," A hunter went a'hunting; "Prayer to Mary," O Mother of God, we cry to Thee; "Magdalena," Early on that Easter morn; "Praise to Mary," O, Mary, joy of Heaven bright.

²⁰³ Drinker, *Brahms*, 36-41. Drinker includes a drawing of St. Peter's Church (page 36) and a photograph of Brahms' sister, who although she knew members of the chorus, never sang with them (page 37).

bond created during the weeks of singing together and learning new compositions carried over to the church performance and drew the audience into their joy in making music together. The trend over the course of the century was to take sacred music out of churches and perform it in concert halls—this went hand-in-hand with the emergence of amateur choral societies. Here, the opposite took place. A women’s lay choir performed in a Lutheran church and sang part of the Catholic rosary—and it was the public premiere of this composition. According to Franziska Meier, it not only pleased everyone but evoked a stronger emotion—they were “beside themselves.”

Drinker noted that at mid-century it was quite unusual for a women’s chorus to perform in public. The most common venues for them were private homes, a concert in a music Conservatory, or a Protestant church--the *least* likely of the three choices.²⁰⁴ But a week later, on September 26, the *Frauenchor* performed in St. Peter’s Church again, and the women all wore black dresses to express their sorrow that Brahms was leaving shortly to attend to his court duties in Detmold. Brahms wrote to Clara Schumann: “But on Monday in the church, what a touching farewell it was! Everything was sung twice over and the audience could not help being pleased with such a concert. When I got home in the afternoon, I found a little box and, in it, charmingly hidden among flowers, a silver inkstand inscribed with the words: ‘In memory of the summer of ‘59 from the girls’ choir.’”²⁰⁵ Susanne Schmaltz added in her memoir that after the women performed in the Petri church they were each given a medallion with the inscription ‘Hamburger Frauenchor,’ and she added that these were “considered sacred.”²⁰⁶

These material objects were tokens of something unique and meaningful, and the emotions of the months singing together, as well as the public performances, were sealed with tangible objects. Brahms’s inkstand and the women’s medallions could be placed in a special spot, handled, packed to move from one home to another—a continuous reminder of the happy times they spent singing together. The women gave Brahms an inkstand to remind him to write more music! And the medallions were, as Schmaltz said, considered “sacred.” Their experience as part of a group was first of all for their own pleasure, secondly

²⁰⁴ Drinker, *Brahms*, 68.

²⁰⁵ Drinker, *Brahms*, 43.

²⁰⁶ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 19.

with a sense of belonging, and only tangentially with public acclamation. Brahms himself may have inverted this formula. He wrote to Clara Schumann: “The clear, silver tones please me exceedingly and, in the church with the organ, the ladies’ voices sound quite charming.” And then, “I long for nothing more than to have my things performed.”²⁰⁷ Naturally, as a composer his goal was to hear his compositions brought to life, and a formal performance gave them more validity than when the women sang together in one or another of their homes or as they walked through the streets. For Brahms the Hamburger *Frauenchor* was a pleasant experience but also a means of advancing his career; for the women it was a natural outgrowth of their friendship with one another which was enhanced by singing together and performing. The published compositions, the inkstand, and the medallions preserved the temporary connections for years afterwards and offered the women a chance to regale their families and friends with stories of singing with Brahms before he was famous.

. Sophie Drinker discovered in her research that there were more *Frauenchor* in Germany than once believed. Julius Otto Grimm who formed his women’s choir from the mixed chorus he worked with in Göttingen and composed some songs for them, was not unique. This was the pattern whereby most women found an opportunity to participate in musical life. What hindered the creation of more all-women’s choirs was the dearth of music written specifically for them, and Brahms seized the opportunity to fill that gap. His friendship with Clara Schumann gave him a further opportunity to showcase his compositions for women’s voices shortly after the two performances in St. Peters Church. Schumann was impressed enough with Brahms’s *Frauenchor* to organize a public performance in Hamburg on January 15, 1861 in which she and Joachim were the featured performers, and Brahms’s *Frauenchor* sang several new compositions he had written. The printed program gave the particulars:

CONCERT
by Clara Schumann
with the kind cooperation of a Ladies’ Chorus
and
Messrs, Joseph Joachim, Johannes Brahms, Nicolaus Schaller (harp)
Programme

²⁰⁷ Drinker, *Brahms*, 23 and 46.

1. Sonata for piano and violin Beethoven Op. 47
Clara Schumann and Joseph Joachim

2. Songs with harp and two horns J. Brahms
 - a. Es tönt ein voller Harfenklang (Fr. Ruperti)
 - b. Komm herbei, Tod (Wm. Shakespeare)
 - c. Der Gärtner (J. von Eichendorff)

The Hamburger Frauenchor

3. Symphonic Etudes R. Schumann Op. 13
Clara Schumann
4. Andante and Variations for Two Pianos R. Schumann
Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms
5. Barcarolle and Scherzo for violin Spohr
Joseph Joachim
6. Songs for Women's Chorus J. Brahms
 - a. Minnelied (J. Voss)
 - b. Der Bräutigam (J. von Eichendorff)
 - c. Gesang aus Fingal (Ossian) with harp and horns

The Hamburger Frauenchor

7. Nocturne Fr. Chopin
Gavotte J. S. Bach
Clara Schumann²⁰⁸

Clara Schumann was the featured artist, but there was an interchange of performers and genres of music. Schumann performed works by Beethoven, Robert Schumann, Chopin, and Bach accompanied by Brahms (on piano) and Joachim (on violin).²⁰⁹ In this renowned company, the Hamburg women were featured in two parts of the program. As a result of this performance, people became familiar with Brahms's newly composed *Harfenlieder* (2a, "Songs with harp and two horns" listed above, plus 6c, "Gesang aus Fingal") and other "art Lieder." Another singing teacher in Hamburg had her students

²⁰⁸ Drinker, *Brahms*, 67.

²⁰⁹ Janina Klassen, "Schumann, Clara," *Forschungsprojekt an der Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg* (2008): 1-8. mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/en/artikel/clara_schumann.pdf Schumann was an accomplished musician in her own right—she first performed in public at the age of nine. She was responsible for bringing the works of Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms to public attention in Germany and England and made Beethoven more approachable for the average listener. After the death of Robert Schumann, Clara supported her family through her piano concerts and teaching.

perform these a few months later (in April 1861), and they were subsequently published as Op. 17.²¹⁰

One of the *Harfenlieder* (Harp Songs) was inspired by Joseph von Eichendorff's (1788-1857) poem, "Der Gärtner." Originally published in 1817 as part of a collection titled, *Frühling und Liebe* (*Spring and Love*), Eichendorff's poems were popular with composers like Mendelssohn, Schumann, and later Richard Strauss. The poem Brahms chose here demonstrated the reality of nature and love; it was not overly sentimental even though it elicited a poignant sense of sorrow in unrequited love.

Der Gärtner

The Gardener

Wohin ich geh und schaue,
In Feld und Wald und Tal,
Vom Berg hinab in die Aue:
Viel schöne, hohe Fraue,
Grüß ich dich tausendmal.

Wherever I walk and gaze,
Through valley, wood and field,
From mountaintop to meadow:
I, lovely gracious lady,
Greet you a thousand times.

In meinem Garten find ich
Viel Blumen, schön und fein,
Viel Kränze wohl draus wind ich
Und tausend Gedanken bind ich
Und Grüße mit darein.

I seek out in my garden
Many fine and lovely flowers,
Weaving many garlands
Binding a thousand thoughts
And greetings with them too.

Ihr darf ich keinen reichen,
Sie ist zu hoch und schön,
Die müssen alle verbleichen,
Die Liebe nur ohnegleichen
Bleibt ewig im Herzen stehn.

I cannot give her a garland,
She is too noble and lovely,
They would all perish,
But love without compare
Remains forever in my heart.

Ich schein wohl froher Dinge
Und schaffe auf und ab,
Und, ob das Herz zerspringe,
Ich grabe fort und singe
Und grab mir bald mein Grab.²¹¹

I appear to be of good cheer
And continue busily through my work,
And though my heart may break,
I shall dig away and sing,
And shortly dig my grave.²¹²

The poet Eichendorff, like Schenkendorf and Körner that I introduced in Chapter Two, was one of several German poets who joined the *Lützow Freikorps* in 1813 to fight against Napoleon's armies and liberate

²¹⁰ Drinker, *Brahms*, 68. Opus means work and a composer's first published work is Opus 1 (Op. 1). This indicates the order of publication, not the order in which a composer wrote various pieces. Brahms had 122 published works including those for orchestra, orchestra and chorus, chamber music, piano and organ, as well as 200 songs. You can see from the Opus number here that Brahms had published only sixteen pieces before the *Harfenlieder*. He did not achieve widespread fame until after his *German Requiem* premiered in 1867.

²¹¹ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Joseph von Eichendorff," 2018.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Joseph-Freiherr-von-Eichendorff>

²¹² English translation is by Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder*, (Faber, 2005).

<https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk/song/1132>

German territory. Eichendorff's own family had lost much of their property and went into an economic decline as a result of the years of French occupation. The nostalgic tone of much of his poetry was attributed to these events. The poem above depicted a young man who loved a woman above his station. He could only offer her the flowers that he grew while realizing at the same time the ebbing possibility of love, or of life.

We remember from the previous chapter that a *Lied* composer was meant to match the words of a poem to the music and that the music “carried” the words. Brahms's composition however, was not melancholy—it had a sprightly tempo with a lilting quality to both the voices and the harp accompaniment. However, the poem was sad—the flowers that faded and wilted as a gift would also wither atop his grave. Brahms had to consider how to handle the music. He matched Eichendorff's words exactly with the sung notes except that the last line of each verse was repeated three times—each time there was a crescendo and decrescendo to match the notes that ascended and then descended on the scale, and in each final repetition, there was a dramatic *ritardando* (slowing down). Thus Brahms put the drama of each verse (and ultimately the entire song) in the words of the final line. Although Drinker expressed the opinion that a man's love song was not the best fit for a women's chorus, an earlier history she wrote, *Music and Women: The Story of Women in Their Relation to Music*, actually offers a rationale for its suitability. She explained that “primitive” women were instrumental in their societies because they created music to commemorate cycles of life and death, and it was most often their role to sing the laments or dirges that accompanied funeral rituals.²¹³ With this in mind, Brahms's setting of Eichendorff's poem in which the gardener is acutely conscious of death—the death of the flowers, the death of love, and his own death—suited the women's voices as harbingers of life and death. The tempo and waxing-and-waning of the music matched the fleeting nature of life.

The Brahms composition sung by the Hamburg Frauenchor was clearly a piece that evoked emotions of sorrow—the performers and audience could all relate to the emotions connected with death.

²¹³ Drinker, *Music and Women: The Story of Women in Their Relation to Music* (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1948), 54-61.

The other works listed presumably elicited emotions as well. There is evidence that the performers felt an emotional bond because they left records in letters or diaries. Beyond that, how can we deduce emotional responses or connections formed by this performance? Archeologists Oliver Harris and Tim Flohr Sørensen contend that one way of decoding emotions is to analyze how “things that are handled and spaces that are moved through” both reify and generate emotions.²¹⁴ In the 1861 Hamburg performance, spaces, objects, and shared affective fields added to the words. There was a common ritual that performers and audience members engaged in—knowing where to sit, when to stand, when to applaud, how to acknowledge each other—in short, there was a kind of reciprocal knowledge of how to move through the space of a concert venue and dignify it. This not only generated emotions but sustained the expected emotions.²¹⁵

The printed program, however, suggests something more intimate about emotional communities than an audience’s casual interest in the performance or a desire to see Clara Schumann. The event was organized by Schumann and Brahms and among these musicians there was a close bond. The principals were not merely accomplished musicians hired to present a concert for Hamburg music enthusiasts but a close circle of friends. Further, Schumann and Joachim were mentors to Brahms. He was much younger than they and within their group there was a familial bond. Talent, technical skill, and a love of music created a comfort level generated by performing with close friends. These artists repeated the same concert the next day in nearby Altona, and Schumann commented in her diary: “Johannes made my stay very pleasant by his kindness and his often beautiful playing. . . . Joachim came on purpose to play and Johannes also played some pieces for two pianos with me. Besides these, the Ladies Choral Society sang [some of Brahms’ songs]. They are pearls. . . . I can well put up with concerts of this kind. *Then* it is a joy

²¹⁴ Oliver J. T. Harris and Tim Flohr Sorensen, “Rethinking Emotion and Material Culture,” *Archeological Dialogues* 17, no. 2 (2010): 145-163.

²¹⁵ Monique Scheer, “Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and is that what makes them have a history)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion,” *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 193-200. Scheer argues that repeated behaviors (use of language, engagement with objects or the environment, interactions with people) not only generate emotions, but represent emotions.

to have music.”²¹⁶ Schumann felt a unique pleasure in performing with these Joachim and Brahms, and by extension, with the women’s choir. Her pride in Brahms’s efforts with the women was obvious—the fact that their chorus sang beautifully was a result not just of their fine voices or Brahms’s compositions. Schumann understood the effort that went into practice and would have concurred with twentieth-century American conductor Robert Shaw’s assessment of the behind-the-scenes work that went into a performance.

A chorus in performance is an overwhelming, apparently spontaneous, combustive unison of hearts, minds, physical energies and sound. Such spontaneity is a lie. . . . The real explanation is the week after week tenacious, restless search for discipline in rehearsals. In art, as in a good many other affairs of men, miracles don’t just happen. They’re earned.²¹⁷

In choirs across Germany, in small villages and large cities, in a local performance or a national performance, emotions were generated week after week as people gathered to sing for the pure joy of singing, (but also to struggle with the notes and inflections), as they socialized afterwards, and as they developed rituals and material objects that reflected their common goals and aspirations—no matter how humble or lofty. The process involved a commitment of time and energy and a common pursuit of excellence.

The public performances with Schumann and Joachim marked the end of Brahms’s career in Hamburg, and the activities of the Hamburg Women’s Chorus could be taken as a quaint isolated episode in the life of a composer who was poised to cross the threshold as successor to Bach and Beethoven. But if we look at it as one piece of a bigger picture, we can trace some of the threads that not only created one emotional community but connected this community to others. The women in the *Frauenchor* were friends, or friends of friends, a number of them took piano lessons from Brahms, they had grown up in Hamburg, and they had enough knowledge of music to copy out their own voice parts from Brahms’s as

²¹⁶ Quoted by Drinker, *Brahms*, 68. From B. Litzmann, *Clara Schumann: An Artist’s Life*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1913), 189. Brahms met Joachim in 1852 and was subsequently introduced by him to the Schumanns. Robert Schumann died in 1856, and Brahms and Clara maintained a close relationship throughout their lives.

²¹⁷ Robert Shaw, *The Robert Shaw Reader*, ed. Robert Blocker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 22.

yet unpublished manuscripts.²¹⁸ Brahms himself was a native of Hamburg and knew the families of his choristers. When Friedchen Wagner asked whether Brahms might write some *Lieder* for her and her sisters to sing, it was not an extraordinary request. It was a normal occurrence for the Wagner sisters to sing together and for them to ask some of their friends to come sing with them. What made this situation more unusual was that Brahms gradually realized this group offered him a chance to compose songs specifically arranged for women and to have them published.

The *Hamburger Frauenchor* lost its original members as women married or moved away, but the experience with the women's choir and Brahms's music stayed with them. Meier married and moved to Cuxhaven not long after the Schumann performances. She formed a choir that met in her home, and they sang the songs Brahms had written for the *Frauenchor* in Hamburg. Sophie Drinker got in touch with Franziska Meier's daughter years later when she was researching her book about Brahms's women's choruses. The daughter wrote that her mother never let her choir sing in public and wrote all the music for the women out by hand because they were not familiar with musical notation. They eventually learned this, however, as they became more skilled in singing by sight. Meier's love of music was such that she founded a second chorus in the 1880s in which all her daughters sang.²¹⁹ Franziska Meier lived out a typical nineteenth-century life as a wife and mother, but the joy she experienced singing with Brahms and her friends inspired her to make singing with other women a part of her life—even if the latter part was more obscure. When her daughters heard or sang Brahms's songs, they surely felt a connection to the women who first sang them years before. Susanne Schmaltz had originally joined Brahms's Hamburger choir with Franziska Meier and her sister, Camilla. Camilla Meier was artistic as well as musical, and she created some endearing sketches to accompany her song collections from the *Hamburger Frauenchor*—a drawing of the medallion the women received, depictions of the themes of songs, and some comical

²¹⁸ Drinker, *Brahms*, 28 and 57. Brahms was continually composing new pieces for the women to sing and none of these had been published. He would distribute his hand-written manuscript for each part, first and second soprano, and first and second alto. The women would pass the manuscript around and write their parts in their own notebooks--the *Stimmenhefte*. Drinker was able to acquire several of these for her research.

²¹⁹ Drinker, *Brahms*, 76-79.

references to the escapades the Meier sisters and Schmaltz took part in.²²⁰ Franziska Meier passed these images and stories on to her daughters and her friends, and in this way, the music of Brahms's *Frauenchor* linked several generations across space and time.²²¹

Like the women who sang with Brahms in Hamburg, Ethel Smyth's and Anna Ettlinger's memoirs were rooted in particular places and in their circles of friends. Their stories were written in a consciously reflective style rather than as a mere recounting of events, and they each included a rationale for writing. Ethel Smyth: "The point of memoirs—so it seems to me—is to relate what you saw yourself, not what other people, books, or subsequent reflections tell you."²²² And Anna Ettlinger: "I have experienced in myself and in others that memories of life which give a picture of past times are often more direct and stimulate a more lively interest than many historical synopses. As a supplement to cultural history, and even in a limited sense as sources, they have, I believe, something attractive—even when the reader has no personal connection to the writer."²²³ There are limits to memoirs as they are inherently biased and restricted to the writer's own experiences, and both Smyth and Ettlinger tangentially acknowledged this. But they also offered rare insights into German music culture in a way that by-passed standard musical or historical text. By that I mean that neither of these women intended to write a book about the technicalities of music or political and economic developments. Their memoirs were laced with their own family histories and personal involvements with the musicians with whom they were acquainted, performances they heard or participated in, the role of women in bourgeois circles, the rise of nationalism, the unification of Germany, and the emergence of the German Empire as an economic and political powerhouse. Their backgrounds mirrored those of Schmaltz and her friends in many ways, but distinct national and religious dynamics ultimately shaped their experiences. Unlike Susanne

²²⁰ Drinker, *Brahms*, 76 and 79.

²²¹ At the conclusion of this chapter you can see two of Camilla Meier's drawings from her *Stimmenhefte*—the notebooks the women kept for their voice parts.

²²² Smyth, *Impressions that Remained*, 241.

²²³ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 9.

Schmaltz who wrote primarily to capture her incredibly variegated personal adventures and the people whose paths she crossed, Smyth and Ettlinger approached their narratives more deliberately.²²⁴

The men who composed, conducted, organized concerts, dealt with publishers (or the publishers who decided what music to print), edited newspapers, and channeled musical taste through their critiques and reviews, have generally taken center stage in the historical record. As we have seen, Otto Elben and the members of Brahms's *Frauenchor* were typical of the German bourgeoisie described by Carl Dahlhaus as "preconditioned by notions of education, culture, and good breeding—in short, *Bildung*," to sustain the musical spirit of the age.²²⁵ But Ethel Smyth and Anna Ettlinger represented something of an outsider point of view to that which took shape during the *Kaiserreich*. Smyth was British and Protestant—seemingly she had much in common with the German bourgeoisie. But she never fully assimilated into the music culture she so admired. Her assessments of late nineteenth-century Germany were generally filtered through her British lens. Ettlinger was from a well-to-do German family who were enthusiastic amateur musicians, but she was also Jewish—an identity that became increasingly problematic at the turn of the century. I weave their perspectives together and allow Susanne Schmaltz's voice to re-enter the story along the way.

A typical bourgeois German family was rooted in a particular place and generated a large group of interconnected personages with similar outlooks and prospects. Anna Ettlinger was born in 1841 in Karlsruhe, Germany and was the ninth of thirteen children—mostly girls. The children were raised on German poetry, drama, and folksongs. "There was a lot of music in our house. . . We participated in all the music education programs for children, in which choral singing and theory was taught."²²⁶ The father Veit Ettlinger was a lawyer—one of the first Jewish lawyers to be appointed to a civil post by the

²²⁴ Suzanne Schmaltz actually left Hamburg before the Schumann-Joachim performances in which the *Frauenchor* took part. Her father had died and she took a position in an English boarding school as a teacher of music and German. She later spent twenty years in St. Petersburg in the court of Grand Duchess Helene. The Grand Duchess was German and most of the members of her court were as well. This was where Schmaltz first encountered Richard Wagner and heard his *Ring Cycle*. She became a great fan of Wagner's music and a close friend of Therese Malten—a soprano who was Wagner's original choice for the part of Kundry in *Parsifal*. Schmaltz lived in Dresden from 1916 until her death in 1925.

²²⁵ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 160-161.

²²⁶ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 74.

government of Baden—but he took a cautious position in relation to the complete emancipation of Jews, believing that after years of oppression and persecution, a too rapid legal equality would be less favorable than a gradual process in which Jews could demonstrate their own power to assimilate as Germans.²²⁷

Veit Ettlenger obtained his position because of his exceptional intellect and as a consequence of his position as a court jurist, the family was accorded unusual status in Karlsruhe's social life. Anna Ettlenger's is an important voice for the Jewish experience throughout the period although her bourgeois status and place of birth offered her certain privileges.

Ettlenger lived most of her life in Karlsruhe—a location unique in political and musical possibilities. The city was the seat of government for Baden—a Grand Duchy in southwest Germany created in 1806 by Napoleon. Although the ruling family was Protestant, 66% of the inhabitants were Roman Catholics and 1.5% Jewish. Baden was considered the most liberal of the German states in the nineteenth century, and the Jewish population was more favorably positioned than in some other regions of Germany. They could purchase land, enter trades, send their children to Badenese schools and, according to historian Dagmar Herzog, many of the Jews in Karlsruhe “were prosperous and at least partially integrated into the local educated elite.”²²⁸ Ettlenger's memories revolved around family, friends, and music and although Karlsruhe never had a population to compete with Hamburg, Leipzig, Munich, or Berlin, it could compete with any of them in attracting leading German musicians. Franz Liszt, Joseph Strauss, and Richard Wagner all conducted major works in the city—partly in conjunction with several music festivals held there during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Ettlenger family became acquainted with Liszt when he conducted Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* as part of an 1853 music festival. Anna Ettlenger was only twelve years old at this time, and when she penned her memoirs, she remembered that her sister Emilie was chosen to present a wreath to Liszt; in thanks, he kissed her on the forehead.²²⁹ A high point for the city, and for the Ettlenger family, was the appointment of twenty-five

²²⁷ Ettlenger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 43-45.

²²⁸ Dagmar Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Baden* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 5-9.

²²⁹ Ettlenger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 77.

year old Hermann Levi as *Hofkapellmeister* (court music director) in 1864.²³⁰ His reputation as a conductor drew performers like Clara Schumann and Brahms to the city.

In the 1850s and 1860s Brahms was a frequent guest in the Ettlinger home, but the musician with whom Anna and her sisters were most intimately associated was Levi. His Jewish heritage, his intelligence, and his talent endeared him to the Ettlinger family. Levi and Brahms were close friends at this time, and Levi was responsible for bringing many of Brahms's compositions before the public—both in Karlsruhe and later in Munich. Ettlinger's relationship with Brahms dated from her childhood, and as a teenager, she and her sisters socialized with him, Levi, and Julius Allgeyer whenever that trio of friends happened to be in Karlsruhe.²³¹ She described their times together:

Whenever Brahms, Levi and Allgeyer spent an evening with us in the Zähringerstraße, the conversation was always very interesting. Brahms's conception of things was always peculiar, [involving] every strange school of thought, and he was full of humor. Levi was one of the most educated men whose soul-life was capable of the finest vibrations, and he and Brahms masterfully understood how to get the reticent Allgeyer to talk. What he said then was mostly the result of serious thought work. . . . Often we were fortunate enough to hear four-handed play by Brahms and Levi, the Hungarian dances with such enchanting fire as I never heard again, and the love songs, even without someone singing, with delightful grace.²³²

Time and again in the women's memoirs we read similar stories. The bourgeoisie had the time to sit in the evenings and entertain one another with music and conversation, and they had the education to appreciate one another's gifts. Ettlinger's comment about the Hungarian dances being played with "enchanting fire" not only gives us a sense of the mood of the evening and demonstrates what we would consider an extremely unusual familiarity with this type of music—but not for Germans raised to appreciate instrumental music from their childhoods. Musicians like Brahms and Levi travelled extensively, met and

²³⁰ Levi directed the *St. Matthew Passion* performance that Anna participated in referenced in the opening paragraph of this section. Hermann Levi like Felix Mendelssohn and Joseph Joachim was Jewish, but unlike Mendelssohn or Joachim he was never baptized as a Christian. See Laurence Dreyfus, "Hermann Levi's Shame and 'Parsifal's' Guilt: A Critique of Essentialism in Biography and Criticism," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 2 (1994): 125-145 for a complete discussion of ways German Jews from the time of Moses Mendelssohn assimilated into German society by cultivating the arts. Dreyfus used Ettlinger's *Lebenserinnerungen* as one of his sources to argue that Wagner's antisemitism was more of a philosophical stance than a lived experience—a topic that will be pursued in greater detail in Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

²³¹ The Ettlinger memoir has a photograph of the three men taken in 1864 at a time when Anna says they were "bound in a close friendship." 110-11.

²³² Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 126.

interacted with like-minded members of society, and created both lasting as well as transitory emotional communities. The Ettlinger sisters' familiar and affectionate association with Brahms ended when Brahms and Levi parted ways—a split that had to do with Levi's own shifting alliances when he chose to work with Richard Wagner rather than maintain his association with Brahms—a severance Ettlinger attributed to misunderstanding and a difference in personality rather than true hostility.²³³ The Wagner-Brahms angle featured prominently in all the women's memoirs and was a defining feature of mid- to late-nineteenth century German music culture—something I examine more closely in Chapter Seven.

As seen from the memoirs of Schmaltz and Ettlinger, bourgeois German families were composed of members who sang and played instruments, attended concerts, and entertained budding musicians as a matter of course. The memoirs of Ethel Smyth reinforced this stereotype and offered keen insights into late nineteenth-century German culture. Smyth was born in 1858 in Sidcup, Kent, England. She was the fourth of eight children, six of whom were girls. Her mother was musical, but from Smyth's memoirs it was evident that music was considered a hobby among the British gentry—alongside sports and horseback riding. Her father “went out to India at the age of fifteen,” and spent his career in the British Horse Artillery. Smyth characterized him as devoutly Anglican, conservative in his political beliefs, and an “unqualified admirer of the British Constitution” with a “delightful old-fashioned respect for Royalty.”²³⁴ 1870 was a pivotal moment in time for Edith. She recalled that a new governess who had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory joined the family, and she heard classical music for the first time. “A new world opened up before me, . . . and I then and there conceived the plan, carried out seven years later, of study at Leipzig and giving up my life to music.”²³⁵ Smyth was only twelve years old at the time, and she counted as the second milestone along her road to musicianship her introduction to a local instructor, Alexander Ewing. Ethel recalled Ewing as “one of the most delightful, original, and whimsical personalities in the world.” He composed a popular hymn, “Jerusalem the Golden,” which made him

²³³ Ettlinger said this specifically on page 115 of her memoirs, but she also reflects on that relationship frequently. After Levi died, Anna helped his widow organize his private papers and she was able to read the correspondence between Levi and Brahms. She based her thoughts on those letters and on her personal association with the two men.

²³⁴ Smyth, *Impressions*, 30-32.

²³⁵ Smyth, *Impressions*, 74.

somewhat acceptable to her father, and she was allowed to study music composition and piano with him.²³⁶ Accompanied by the Ewings, she heard on separate occasions, Clara Schumann, Brahms, and Wagner when they performed in London. Smyth was not “carried away” by Wagner, but after hearing Brahms she recorded that “his genius possessed me then and there in a flash.”²³⁷ Later she would temper this opinion, but at the time, she returned home resolved to make it to Leipzig. In spite of her musical talent, she had to vigorously oppose her father in order to be allowed to travel to Germany and continue her studies.

Leipzig was the center of the world in terms of western music culture in the nineteenth century. It was first settled during the eighth to ninth centuries and granted a city charter in 1165. Musically it is famous as Johann Sebastian Bach’s home from 1723 to 1750 and that of Felix Mendelssohn who lived there from 1835 until his death in 1847. The city was quite famous in the nineteenth century as the site of the 1813 Battle of Nations—which was coincidentally also the location and year of Richard Wagner’s birth. Leipzig was an important publishing center, and in the 1860s, a central locale of the nascent German labor movement. As early as 1865, August Bebel had established the *Arbeiterbildungsverein* (Workers’ Education Society) which offered lectures, “good books,” and a men’s choir.²³⁸ The Leipzig City Museum touts the nineteenth-century trade union community as one that was “multifaceted” and had various “cultural associations, singing societies and sports clubs.”²³⁹ The periodical, *Volkstaat* (later known as *Vorwärts*), the central organ of the Social Democratic Party, was printed in Leipzig from 1872. It was a city that experienced tremendous population growth at the end of the nineteenth century. When Ethel arrived to study music composition in the 1877 the population stood at 127,387; by the time she left in 1890, the population had grown to 295,025.²⁴⁰ I include this information about rapid population growth and the labor movement both to illustrate that music was not confined to the bourgeoisie, and because this

²³⁶ Smyth, *Impressions*, 97-100.

²³⁷ Smyth, *Impressions*, 106, 108.

²³⁸“August Bebel und die ersten Männerchöre der Gesangsabteilung des Leipziger Arbeiterbildungsvereins,” 15. Dezember 1925, *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, 217-218.

²³⁹ This is a quote taken from the museum display when I visited in June, 2017.

²⁴⁰ German History in Documents and Images, “Population Growth in Large Cities (1875-1910),” germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org

was a facet of life about which Smyth never commented in her memoirs. She went to study music, and her life revolved around that.

One of Smyth's frequent observations concerned music as a self-evident feature of everyday life in Germany as opposed to England where it was primarily a hobby. Smyth arrived in Leipzig in 1877 and looked forward to studying at the Conservatory founded by Felix Mendelssohn. Years later she recalled it as a "golden time . . . nothing less than a lingering bit of the dear old Germany of Heine and Goethe, doomed presently to vanish under the stress of Imperialism."²⁴¹ Note that she did not say, under the stress of industrialization or urbanization. Summed up in this sentence are both Smyth's romantic adoration of Germany and her own sense of British superiority—she frequently criticized German imperialism while never acknowledging the imperialistic aims of her own nation. She was only nineteen and promptly became acquainted with members of Leipzig's musical society.

One of the first families she was introduced to was that of the Röntgens--Engelbert Röntgen was the concertmaster of the Gewandhaus orchestra--and Smyth announced: "I had found an answer to the question: 'What went ye out for to seek?' In those walls was the concentrated essence of old German musical life, and without a moment's hesitation the whole dear family took me to their bosom."²⁴² The Röntgen family was related to the Klengel family and Smyth composed a lovely description of Julius Klengel playing the piano with his mother--one that encapsulated the emotional value of creating music with someone with whom you share an emotional bond:

To see Julius and his mother playing pianoforte duets was a sight that would nearly overwhelm strangers, the motions of their spirits being reproduced by their bodies in dramatic and absolutely identical gesture . . . At the tender parts of the music they would smile the same ecstatic smile to themselves . . . in stately passages their backs would become rigid, their elbows move slightly away from their sides, and their necks stiffen; at passionate moments they would hurl themselves backwards and forwards on their chairs. . . . It was all so natural and sincere that though you could not help smiling sometimes, it never interfered with your enjoyment, once you knew them well enough.²⁴³

²⁴¹ Smyth, *Impressions*, 134.

²⁴² Smyth, *Impressions*, 142. Ethel said that the Klengel family could create a piano quintet among themselves, and together with the Röntgens, a small orchestra.

²⁴³ Smyth, *Impressions*, 142-43. Julius Klengel was a composer, violinist, pianist, head of a music academy, and conductor.

This scenario is reminiscent of Brahms, Schumann, and Joachim performing together, or of the Hamburg women singing together as they walked home, and is a further illustration of how music bound individuals together emotionally. The smallest emotional community is a family, and Smyth painted a lasting word picture of the bond between mother and son. Did that bond dissolve when the music ended, or did it lubricate points of friction in other areas of life? Julius and his mother surely did not mimic each other's emotions in every facet of life, but when they created music together, they embodied the same tenderness, stateliness, passion—the music pulled them to the same place. Smyth, who stood and watched, was neither German nor a member of these families, but she participated in the performance emotionally, and when she remembered it years later, separated from these friends by the tragedy of war, she could still say of the *music*: “that is the tender grace of those dead days!”²⁴⁴

The Klengel and Röntgen families were only one example that astonished Smyth when she settled in Germany. She recounted incidences of taking long walks with new friends and singing *Volkslieder* in parts, or travelling and finding fellow travelers to sit and informally make music together. “That’s what is so nice about Germany; almost everyone you meet can take a part in a vocal quartett”; and she was astonished that all waiting rooms and restaurants in Germany had a well-tuned piano.²⁴⁵ This aspect of German culture continued to enchant her during the fifteen years she spent there, and the fact that she repeatedly made these observations demonstrated a contrast between the England she knew and Germany—which she frequently referred to as a “musical country.”²⁴⁶ But she also made some rather critical (and astute) remarks about Leipzig society, which she observed was divided along “fairly sharp division[s]” into the burgher aristocracy, the professorial set, and the artists.²⁴⁷ Because she was English, she was accepted into all these groups and made friends among them. After her first year at the Conservatorium (among the artists), she left to study privately with the (aristocrat) Heinrich von

²⁴⁴ Smyth, *Impressions*, 144.

²⁴⁵ Smyth, *Impressions*, 142, 206, and 195-6.

²⁴⁶ See Smyth, *Impressions*, 188, for one example. Once when she was home visiting England, her mother wanted to introduce her to a new neighbor because she was “very musical.” Ethel wrote, “Knowing what ‘very musical’ amounts to in England, expectation did not run high,” 256.

²⁴⁷ Smyth, *Impressions*, 162. Note that Ethel did not acknowledge anyone below the aristocratic or bourgeois classes.

Herzogenberg and Smyth acknowledged his wife Lisl as “the perfect musician.”²⁴⁸ Elisabeth Herzogenberg was one of the few women Brahms truly admired. Her close friends called her Lisl, and Smyth became a part of the Herzogenberg family for a number of years—spending part of every day with them. It was through the Herzogenbergs that Ethel came to know Clara Schumann, Joseph Joachim, and Johannes Brahms who were frequent guests in their home. The women who sang with Brahms in Hamburg, seemed to universally adore him. Susanne Schmaltz visited him in Vienna in 1869 and summed up her feelings about him by saying, “He remained the modest, and yet so great person, for great he was and remained beyond the grave.”²⁴⁹ Smyth provides us with a different perspective.

The relationship between Smyth and Brahms reveals much about women in nineteenth-century German society and in the field of music. Anna Ettlinger recorded that her sister Emilie had a beautiful soprano voice, but no one ever thought about her training seriously for a career in the theater or concert hall. In higher bourgeois family circles women were expected to get married; art was valued as an enrichment and adornment to life, not a means of existence.²⁵⁰ This observation was verified by Smyth’s experiences. Her explanation about the value of a memoir quoted earlier, was written to introduce several pages of commentary on Brahms. She said that she had “worshipped” his music but did not particularly admire his intellect, and what chiefly angered her were his views on women. “Brahms, as artist and bachelor, was free to adopt what may be called the poetical variant of the *Kinder, Kirche, Küche* axiom, namely that women are playthings.”²⁵¹ She admired the relationship he had with Clara Schumann and her daughters, with Lili Wach (Mendelssohn’s daughter), and especially with Lisl Herzogenberg, but those were exceptions. And she concluded her assessment with these remarks: “To me personally he was very kind and fatherly in his awkward way [because of her friendship with his friends] . . . ; but after a very slight acquaintance I guessed he would never take a woman writer seriously, and had no desire, though

²⁴⁸ Smyth, *Impressions*, 170

²⁴⁹ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 63.

²⁵⁰ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 77.

²⁵¹ Smyth, *Impressions*, 234-5. Women should attend to church, children, and the kitchen.

kindly urged by him to do so, to show him my work.”²⁵² Several times Smyth’s friends gave Brahms one or two of her compositions to look at, and although he first commented favorably, became patronizing when he realized they were written by a woman. Upon being introduced to Smyth, Brahms remarked, “So this is the young lady who writes sonatas and doesn’t know counterpoint!” Another time he condescendingly called her a “dear child” and dismissed her composition accordingly.²⁵³ How do we reconcile Smyth’s remarks with those of Ettlinger or the Hamburg women? First, Brahms was a fierce patriot and after he gained widespread recognition, he refused to travel to Britain to perform. Secondly, Smyth aspired to become a published composer on equal footing as Brahms--a possibility that was inconceivable to him and his circle of colleagues. She wrote to her mother in August 1877: “I know though that years and years, perhaps, of hard work are before me, years in which little or nothing I do shall be printed. . . . But the end is worth the uphill struggle.”²⁵⁴ Opportunities for women to train as professional musicians were extremely limited, if not non-existent. Composers and conductors were almost exclusively male, and even for men, having one’s work published was a key feature of success. For women, this was extremely rare.

Ethel Smyth’s passion was to compose music and in her teen years she fought her father and the conventions that constrained women to marriage in order to study music composition in the Mecca of western music—Leipzig. On the other hand, Ettlinger did not aspire to become a musician but a teacher, and she achieved some success with this. But the conflicts she faced at the turn of the century went beyond those of gender. Ettlinger’s youthful memories included not only the musical training and education mentioned earlier in the biographical paragraph—the kind of childhood training that enabled Germans to sing *Volkslieder* in parts and take part in vocal quartets—but also two themes that resurfaced throughout her memoirs: her Jewishness and her German national pride. She first encountered anti-Semitism at school and it was inconceivable to her that even though her parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents were born in Germany, spoke German, thought German and had “developed” within

²⁵² Smyth, *Impressions*, 239.

²⁵³ Smyth, *Impressions*, 158 and 239.

²⁵⁴ Smyth, *Impressions*, 189.

German culture they would be “spoken against” (*absprechen*).²⁵⁵ On the eve of German unification in 1870, she was out walking with her father and they heard cannons thundering from the direction of Strassburg (Karlsruhe being close to the French border). Her father was deeply moved and said to her, “I am happy to be able to experience this time of German unification, and if I were younger, I would go off to fight in the field.”²⁵⁶

Hundreds of miles from where Anna and Veit Ettliger listened to the roar of French and German cannon, Susanne Schmaltz lived in St. Petersburg at the court of Grand Duchess Helene (German by birth). All the Germans (and German-Russians) in St. Petersburg followed the events between France and Germany closely, and Schmaltz reported that many of “our Prussians” left as soon as war was declared. Schmaltz’s youngest nephew was killed a few weeks after the Prussian victory at Sedan in the autumn of 1870.²⁵⁷ When news arrived in St. Petersburg a few months later that the war was won and the German Empire was officially established, Ettliger was in Berlin. She described the celebration festivities—tickets to the official events were too scarce and expensive, so she and her friends had their own private celebration during which “something like a Rhineland joy of life came over us.”²⁵⁸ The Germans, whether Jewish or Protestant, observing events close-up or from a distance, reveled in the creation of the German Empire. In Ettliger’s reflections on the 1890s, she began by describing her grief over the dismissal of Bismarck who she called the hero of German unity, its founder, and the guardian of the new Reich.²⁵⁹ The experiences and emotions that Schmaltz’s family and friends experienced in the events of German unification mirrored exactly those of the Ettliger family—confessional difference temporarily set aside.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁵ Ettliger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 62-63.

²⁵⁶ Ettliger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 53.

²⁵⁷ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 89-90.

²⁵⁸ Ettliger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 183. “Etwas von rheinischer Lebensfreude kam über uns.”

²⁵⁹ Ettliger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 316.

²⁶⁰ Susanne Schmaltz was never bothered by religious difference. She worked for British, French, Hungarian, and Romanian families, as well as in Russia, without expressing any prejudice against other confessions—except when she left the service of a British family because the father was too narrow-minded in his Anglican evangelical beliefs. More than once she expressed concerns about growing antisemitism in Germany. She was possibly unusual, but not unique in holding these views.

Smyth had a somewhat different opinion of the new German Empire—her sense of English superiority frequently surfaced in her memoirs. In 1880 she was at a dinner party and “heard Pan-Germanism talked for the first time.” An older gentlemen first apologized to her (“the charming young foreign lady”) and then went on to announce that England was now in decline just as previous great powers like Spain, Holland, or France.²⁶¹ She considered his views “too ridiculous to get angry about.”²⁶² Smyth gladly acknowledged German pre-eminence in music, but when it came to politics or non-musical pastimes like hunting, tennis, or ballroom dancing, she was affronted by German gravity, its burgeoning imperialism, and what she perceived as a “primal strain of nationality.”²⁶³ Smyth’s deep friendship with the Herzogenbergs crumbled under this strain and as a consequence of differing ways of approaching social relationships and music. The last pages of her memoir were filled with new friendships, a rejection of some of the conservative attitudes of Leipzig society, and her decision to return to England. Ettlinger’s bemoaned the Dreyfus Affair and antisemitism. Their final reflections encapsulated their outsider positions despite the difference in national identities. At the turn of the century, Smyth returned to England, and Ettlinger faced increasing prejudice from fellow Germans. Both had spent decades in an attempt to establish themselves as independent women within their bourgeois circumstances and in spite of some sense of alienation, both felt an enduring affinity with Germany’s music culture.

Nineteenth-century women participated in German music culture, but only tangentially. Opportunities to take an active role were limited—which was one of the principle reasons Smyth returned to England where she did achieve a measure of fame as a composer.²⁶⁴ Sophie Drinker, who wrote the history of Brahms’s women’s choruses, asked why western women did not create the kind of music the

²⁶¹ Smyth, *Impressions*, 248. The gentleman was a Dr. Simson who she described as a “wise, polished old Jew, President of the Imperial Court of Justice.”

²⁶² Smyth, *Impressions*, 248.

²⁶³ Smyth, *Impressions*, 365-66.

²⁶⁴ Ethel Smyth continued with her music in England composing *Mass in D*, *Der Wald*, and *The Wreckers* which were all critically acclaimed. She joined the Women’s Suffrage Movement in 1910 and composed “The March of the Women” which became their anthem. She began to go deaf after 1913 and turned to writing rather than music composition. In 1922 she was awarded Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her work as a composer and writer.

men did. She attributed it to “taboos.”²⁶⁵ Her study *Music and Women* combined history and anthropology, and while she used language rooted in the nineteenth- and early-twentieth centuries, she claimed that because “primitive” and “peasant” women were more in tune with nature and with cycles of birth and death, they recorded the stories of their clans and tribes through music that expressed these themes. *Theirs* were the creative voices and they preserved historical accounts through songs passed down over time. As Christianity spread through the Roman Empire, women were banned from singing or playing instruments because these practices were associated with pagan religions.²⁶⁶ Eventually, the music that was confined to the church and cloisters (as Elben told us) was dominated by priests and monks, and even music that was written with a treble line was sung by young boys or castrati.²⁶⁷ Therefore, women (certainly European women) were relegated to the sidelines. At the turn of the century there were only a few German women who managed to create careers in music.

It was more usual for women to participate in music as a hobby or social activity—a theme that came across clearly in each of the women’s memoirs. Women were expected to play out their roles, per Brahms, with the children, in church, or in the kitchen (*Kinder, Kirche, Küche*). The Mendelssohn quote that heads the beginning of this chapter iterated this clearly and further illustrated the dilemma faced by Ethel Smyth. Mendelssohn wrote to his mother in 1837 about his sister Fanny and the impossibility of her becoming a successful composer. Fanny, by all accounts, was as gifted as Felix, and he frequently consulted with her about his own work. But as he explained to his mother, the task of becoming an established musician required successive publications of one’s compositions and was out of the realm of possibility for women who were expected to maintain a household and care for their children.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ Drinker, *Music and Women*, 54-61.

²⁶⁶ Drinker, *Music and Women*, 178.

²⁶⁷ As an interesting side note, it was Napoleon who outlawed castration, thus ushering women back into choirs.

²⁶⁸ *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, From 1833 to 1847*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy, trans. Lady Wallace, (Boston: Oliver Ditson and Co., 1863), 113. Further proof about the problems for female composers comes from Clara Schumann’s life. She wrote a few compositions before Robert Schumann’s death, but when she needed to make a living for herself and her children, she pursued performance and teaching rather than publication.

There were however, German women who managed to publish *Lieder* and have careers in music. Nineteenth-century musician Anna Morsch compiled a small volume of biographical sketches of female composers, soloists, instrumentalists, and music teachers in 1892. She was a composer herself and offered this description of women musicians in nineteenth-century Germany: “It seems to be a peculiarity of female composers that they enjoy practicing their art in silence, shying away from it in public; the pressure of prejudice may also contribute much.”²⁶⁹ Morsch compiled her biographies for the Chicago World’s Fair, and her patrons for this endeavor were Princess Marie Anna of Anhalt-Dessau (married to Prussian Prince Friedrich Carl) and Princess Alexandrine (niece of Wilhelm I). Both women had an interest in music, and Marie Anna was the patron of the *Deutsche Frauenabteilung* (Department of German Women). In that capacity, she sponsored benefit concerts and commissioned Morsch to document German women who were: 1. Composers and Writers, 2. Opera and Concert singers, 3. Virtuosos on Piano, Harp, Violin and other instruments, and 4. Directors of Conservatories, Music and Singing institutions. Morsch described Princess Marie Anna as musically gifted—she played the piano and sang beautifully. Because of her elevated position in society, however, the public was not permitted to appreciate her talent.²⁷⁰ The other princess, Alexandrine, had a particular interest in *Lieder* and had composed some. Her uncle Wilhelm I had chamber music soloist Mathilde Mallinger give a concert of Alexandrine’s compositions for an “intimate gathering in the court.”²⁷¹ But again, her talent could only be displayed within the confines of a selected audience—never on a public stage.

Morsch understood the difference between women who composed to pay homage to their muses and the men who performed in the large festivals. Men had opportunities to compose for widespread publication and could guide the artistic direction of the times. Women formed emotional communities among themselves in their *Frauenchöre*, as well as in overlapping communities when they sang in mixed choirs or cultivated a love of music within the family circle. Like Franziska Meier, women might train

²⁶⁹ Morsch, *Deutschlands Tonkünstlerinnen*, 67.

²⁷⁰ Anna Morsch, *Deutschlands Tonkünstlerinnen. Biographische Skizzen aus der Gegenwart*. Gesammelt und herausgegeben von Anna Morsch (Berlin: Stern und Ollendorff, 1893), in Dedication.

²⁷¹ Morsch, *Deutschlands Tonkünstlerinnen*, in the Dedication.

other women to sing and read music thus perpetuating the notion that Germans were the “people of music.” Only a few gained the kind of renown attributed to their male counterparts. In this context, Morsch endeavored to highlight the careers of more than 100 women musicians in her little World’s Fair book, and each story was fascinating. I chose Agathe Plitt to conclude this chapter about women and their role in nineteenth-century German musical history. Plitt was born in 1827 in Thorn but spent her adult years in Berlin. Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm IV’s wife, Elisabeth, noticed Plitt’s musical talent and gave her the means for further training. Plitt became a composer, pianist, and teacher and combined these talents to lead a large women’s chorus (*Frauenchor*). Her first *Lieder* brought her to the attention of Carl Friedrich Rungenhagen, a director of the *Berlin Singakademie*, but few of her works were published because she did not have the “means” for this. At any rate, Morsch summarized her life saying that she used her art to bring music to others—the needy, the poor, and the sick—and gave more than fifty benefit concerts in churches, hospitals, and orphanages. Her fiftieth benefit concert on May 14, 1892 included five of her own compositions.²⁷² Plitt’s biographical information offers us an opportunity to see that not all German musicians of the nineteenth century were well-to-do. She was able to receive an education because her talent brought her to the attention of the Prussian queen, and she lived the end of her life by means of a pension from the Prussian royal family. Talented women only occasionally achieved the attention men did—Clara Schumann was the exception, and her fame owed much to her marriage to Robert Schumann.²⁷³

The role of women in Germany’s musical culture is a valuable lens through which to observe the role of women in society more generally. During the first half of the nineteenth century as women retreated to the private sphere, the choral movement was not only more inclusive politically and confessionally, but it drew women into choirs to sing with men for the first time. The *Berlin Singakademie* offered women a voice in decision-making and by the 1820s their board of directors

²⁷² Anna Morsch, *Deutschlands Tonkünstlerinnen*, 40-41.

²⁷³ Morsch, *Deutschlands Tonkünstlerinnen*, 15. Morsch showcased Clara Schumann first in her biographical sketches and praised her for her own talent and gifts, but equally for keeping Robert Schumann’s works before the public eye.

included three men and three women with equal voting rights.²⁷⁴ However, the subsequent cultivation of a body of music written specifically for men’s choruses (and exclusively for women’s voices) altered the nature of choral music that echoed the public/private divide. The German Choral Association followed Nägeli’s lead and fostered democracy—but only for men. Women were welcomed into *Singakademies* and other mixed choirs but excluded from music professions—when women did lead choirs, they were *Frauenchor*. The common role for women throughout most of the nineteenth century was as a “supporting cast.” Eventually the entire choral movement became more inclusive at the turn of the century largely as a result of the revocation of the Anti-Socialist Laws and education reforms. That is a story we will pick up in Chapter Eight.

Otto Elben, Susanne Schmaltz, Franziska Meier, Anna Ettlinger, Anna Morsch, or Agatha Plitt may not be representative of all Germans, or all choral members, but they do provide some means of understanding what music meant to Germans and what it meant to sing in a choir. Perhaps Ethel Smyth offered us the most spontaneous reaction about what these emotional communities valued when she repeatedly described Germans as “musical people.” Otto Elben was the quintessential German representative of the nineteenth-century bourgeois musicians Smyth admired, and the amateurs who sang and organized choral associations in the early nineteenth century were originally more inclusive. It was not a homogeneous group of performers—although that was the idealistic goal Elben expressed on behalf of pre-unification musicians. “Song was not meant to be owned by a closed social group, but rather it was the highest and most comprehensive means of training and refining the spirits and hearts of all classes of society to bring about both the common good and pleasure of all.”²⁷⁵ Otto Elben and his cohort *may* have understood they were the power brokers, but ultimately they believed singing, with all its accoutrements, empowered all Germans. Johann Gottfried Herder’s ideas about music, language, and national identity influenced a score of poets, musicians, and nationalists like Elben, and Herder’s sentiments about choral

²⁷⁴ Karen Ahlquist, “Men and Women of the Chorus: Music, Governance, and Social Models in Nineteenth-Century German-Speaking Europe,” in *Chorus and Community*, ed. Karen Ahlquist (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 268.

²⁷⁵ Elben, *Volksthümliche Männergesang*, 97.

music rang as true a hundred years after his death as when he penned them in 1800. “The power of choruses, especially at moments when they join together and then join again together, is indescribable. It is indescribable how lovely voices are when they accompany one another. They are both one, but they are not one; they move apart, search for, pursue, contradict, struggle with, strengthen, and destroy one another, and they awaken, give life to, console, flatter, and embrace one another again and again, until finally they fade into a single tone.”²⁷⁶ Herder’s shrewd description of choruses (plural) was a fitting description of the many voices that came together to make up the new German nation created in 1871. Whether the voices of the nation faded into a *single* tone is questionable, but the beauty of the emotional communities Herder described resulted from struggle, tension, and effort—a sound that was more complex than pure unity.

Historic memory, memoirs, associational life, and Lieder offered ways of examining how emotional communities came together and functioned. The story did not end in 1871 and the next Movement deals with practices and rituals of performance during the Kaiserreich. Choral festivals evolved into mass celebrations of the German nation from 1870 to 1914. These became highly ritualized both in practices and displays of material objects and took place in spaces imbued with meaning. The members of the “Fatherland” described in Ernst Moritz Arndt’s song gathered from north and south, east and west. Figure 2 Drawing made by Camilla Meier for her Stimmenhefteest to parade regional banners through the streets and sing programs of Lieder. These are the subject of the following two chapters and offer another way to re-capture the values enunciated by choruses of German singers.

²⁷⁶ Herder, *Kalligone* (1800), Part 2: “Von Kunst und Kunststricherei,” in *Song Loves the Masses*, 272.



Figure 2 Drawing made by Camilla Meier for her Stimmenhefte



Figure 3 Camilla Meier's illustrations of favorite Lieder

3 MOVEMENT II RITUAL OF PERFORMANCE AND FESTIVALS

I love to hear a choir. I love the humanity to see the faces of real people devoting themselves to a piece of music. I like the teamwork. It makes me feel optimistic about the human race when I see them cooperating like that. Paul McCartney

Just as the *Berlin Singakademie* was the model for all other amateur choruses and the *Berlin Liedertafel* was the model for the men's choral movement, the general music festival was the model for the choral festivals that became so popular over the course of the nineteenth century. These fostered far-ranging emotional communities. The first music festival took place in Frankenhausen in 1810 and featured Haydn's *Creation* oratorio and Beethoven's *First Symphony*. There were no amateur choruses at this time so singers were recruited for the oratorio from the school choirs of nearby cities. The success of this festival convinced Georg Friedrich Bischoff (1780-1841), its founder, to repeat it the following year. The third of these festivals was held in conjunction with the commemoration of the *Leipziger Schlacht* (Battle of Nations) in 1815, and from this humble beginning, a number of other festivals were organized; the most famous and long-lived was the Lower Rhine Music Festival. Nineteenth-century singer and historian Otto Elben spoke for many of his fellow choristers when he wrote that a "higher idea" grew out of these performances—the belief that music could serve the purpose of training and educating people. More importantly, "one recognized the calling of music to bind the Nation together."²⁷⁷ In this Movement I argue that the rituals and practices of choral festivals nurtured emotional communities that transcended local boundaries, and over time festival rituals and practices bound the citizens of the German Empire more firmly into a nation.

People gathering from near and far to sing and hear beloved works of German music in festival settings launched an entire century of celebrations in which music featured prominently. The earliest festivals established patterns that were copied over the course of the entire nineteenth century and into the twentieth. First, there was the schedule of the festival itself: Day One—everyone arrived, there were official greetings, the assembled choirs sang a few pieces together, ate a meal, toasted one another and then retired for the night. Day Two was for the main performances which became longer and more elaborate over time. The first festival of this type that acquired the status of "national" was the Lower

²⁷⁷ Otto Elben, *Der volksthümliche deutsche Männergesang, seine Geschichte, seine gesellschaftliche und nationale Bedeutung* (Tübingen: H. Laupp'schen Buchhandlung, 1855), 83.

Rhine Music Festival.²⁷⁸ Other local and regional festivals emulated the same schedule of events established by the Lower Rhine Festival. Over time parades were added that featured choirs dressed in regional costumes and carrying identifying banners through streets festooned with garlands of greenery. By the 1860s the large festivals of the German Choral Association included a third day for singers to socialize together as they went sightseeing or shopping. Festivals are the focus of the chapters in this Movement, and I examine the rituals and practices that nurtured not only regional but also national webs of emotional communities.

Movement II is organized as two chapters, and Chapter Four deals primarily with the large national or regional festivals of the German Choral Association. Regional associations came into existence as a result of informal “singing days” as organizers intentionally located an event in towns where there was no *Liedertafel* in order to inspire the locals to create their own choruses. This process fostered regional bonds and yearly festivals proliferated.²⁷⁹ Regional associations like the Swabian Choral Association or the Franconian Choral Association joined together more formally in 1861, wrote detailed statutes for governance, and in 1862 joined together to create the national organization—the German Choral Association (DSB). Regular choral festivals were mandated by their statutes because they believed these were essential to their mission of “cultivating German song and thereby refined the customs and traditions of the Volk and promoted the German spirit (*Sinn*).”²⁸⁰

Chapter Five is concerned with a single town (Feuchtwangen) located about forty-five minutes southwest of Nuremberg where the same rituals, practices, and performances described in Chapter Four took place, but on a smaller scale. Small German towns created more frequent celebrations both within their own boundaries and importantly in conjunction with their neighbors. In these ways, emotional webs of interaction were woven that were more intimate and personal than when meeting other singers only

²⁷⁸ Cecelia Hopkins Porter, “The New Public and the Reordering of the Musical Establishment: The Lower Rhine Music Festivals, 1818-67,” *19th-Century Music* 3, no. 3 (1980): 211-224. Here, 212. For ways the LRMF evolved over the decades to become a three-day festival with more appearances by professional musicians, see pages 220-221.

²⁷⁹ Elben, *Volksthümliche*, 84. Brusniak, *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 787.

²⁸⁰ Akten des Gesang- und Musikvereins in Feuchtwangen ZFC-Arch B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 71.

briefly and occasionally at a national event. The *Gesang- und Musikverein* (Song and Music Club) in the small town of Feuchtwangen kept yearly records that allowed me to explore their hometown performances. Their records contain, as well, invitations from nearby towns and offer a point of comparison between national festivals attended by thousands and regional ones with a fraction of that number. The national, regional, and small town music programs and festivals offer an opportunity to recover what German singers valued and ways *Heimat* enfolded the local into the national.²⁸¹

Most importantly, I examine how rituals informed all these festivals and performances. Christopher Small claims that ritual is primarily action; it is performance. “Its meaning lies not in the created objects that are worn, or exhibited, or eaten, or performed, or otherwise used, but *in the acts of* creating, wearing, exhibiting, eating, performing and using.”²⁸² The music and the objects take on meaning as they are created and imagined as part of the ritual of performance. Scholars dealing with material culture claim that objects tell us about ourselves, what we value, how we create a sense of belonging, and even carry the potential for enchantment, but the objects, apart from the performance and performers mean little.²⁸³ Besides the material objects created, exhibited or used, I consider the architectural spaces through which musicians moved or in which they performed and ways these generated collective emotions. The objects and spaces varied according to the groups I sketched out above. The small-town German *Marktplatz* or *Turnhalle*, Leipzig’s St. Nicholas Church, and the huge Breslau festival hall built for the Sixth National German Choral Festival affected visitors differently, but not less skillfully. The training of the musicians, the size of the choir, the physical surroundings, the choral works, and the objects worked to draw performers and audience together into a general atmosphere in which they were not strangers but part of the same emotional community.

²⁸¹ Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

²⁸² Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, CN: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 108. Emphasis added.

²⁸³ Arthur Asa Berger, *What Objects Mean: An Introduction to Material Culture* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2009) and Oliver J. T. Harris and Tim Flohr Sorensen, “Rethinking Emotion and Material Culture,” *Archaeological Dialogues* 17, no. 2 (2010): 145-163.

The Second Movement is meant to be somewhat temporally defined, but the boundaries are permeable. The period 1871-1890 offers a distinct bracket for music *and* politics. It was a period distinguished by the careers of Brahms and Bismarck both of whom died shortly before the turn of the century. Politically, the foundational years of the *Kaiserreich* were marked by a degree of *exclusion* signified by the *Kulturkampf* and the Anti-Socialist laws. In the decades before the First World War, the festivals of the German Choral Society became massive events in which the sheer numbers of singers precluded a superior quality of performance but drew together a wider scope of participants than in the pre-unification years. “Mass culture” altered the early nineteenth-century conception of music as a tool of the educated bourgeois class. So in one sense, this is a period of transition from the early years of unification to the more “anxious” Wilhemine period. Festival life reflected some degree of change while offering continuity—a bridge between the centuries and the factions.

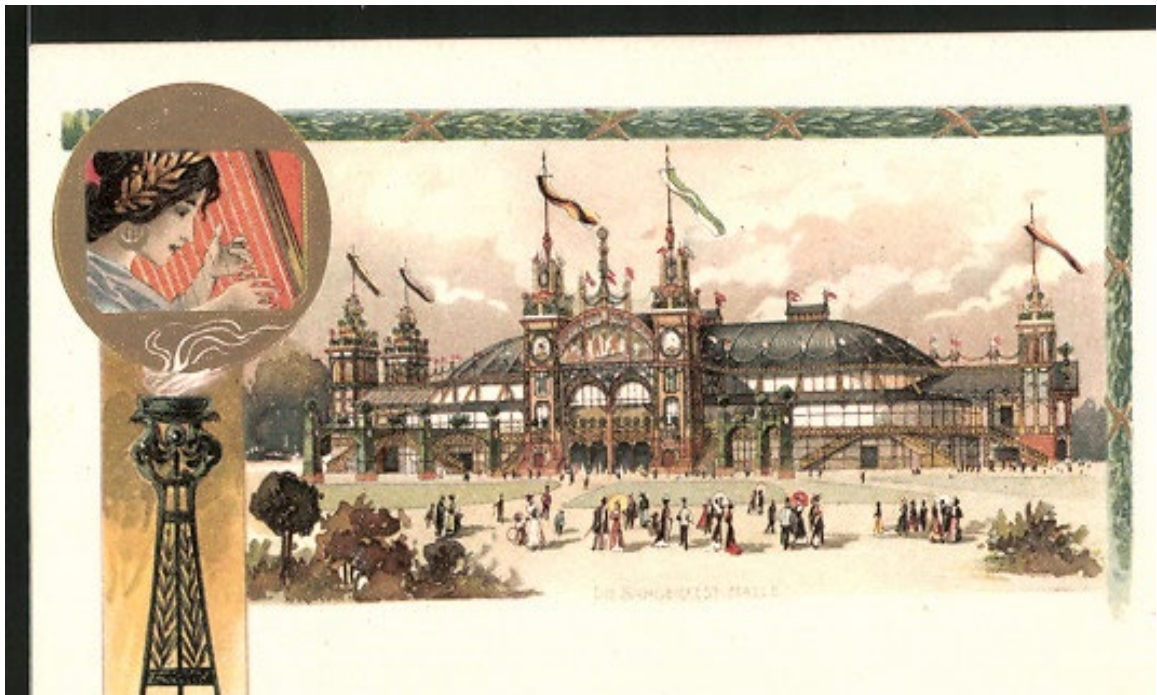


Figure 4 Postcard of the Graz festival hall

3.1 Chapter 4 Making a Joyful Noise: Festivals Large and Small

Then the singing enveloped me. It was fury and resonant, coming from everyone's very heart. There was no sense of performance or judgment, only that the music was breath and food. Anne Lamott, 2000

The Fourth Franconian Singing Festival, held in August of 1877, was reportedly less remarkable for its music than for the enthusiasm expressed for the new Kaiser and Reich. Carl Gerstner, the chairman and a founding member of the Franconian Choral Society, gave the festival speech and asked what role the choral movement still had to play now that political unity had been achieved.

My Friends! There is a great power in German song. . . .What was the endeavor that brought us together decades ago? It was the urge to bring the Germans together, to recognize each other as brothers; the prejudice that individual German tribes and German states held against each other disappeared. These are the consequences of the German song! We did not fight on bloody fields of battle, but we did what we could with *our* army. When the German general Moltke said, 'what we have won with the sword in half a year, for fifty years we will have to defend,' then we know the end of the German song has not come, we must continue with those men who are at the head of the German state.²⁸⁴

At this festival held six years after the creation of the German Empire, singers were still thinking about their mission. The founders of the choral movement believed they had planted the seeds for a democratic society, and after years of participating in a struggle for unity and freedom they embraced Gerstner's exhortation to continue fighting for the freedom of national existence by singing the *Lied*. Principally they did this by organizing dozens of festivals on the regional and national level. The Franconian Choral Association (FSB) was the second largest regional group in Germany. In 1877 when they celebrated their Fourth Singing Festival, 95 individual choruses with a total of 2,848 singers participated. By 1912, those numbers had more than tripled—340 choruses with 11,410 singers.²⁸⁵ Headquartered in Nuremberg, the FSB's governing body played a strategic role in planning the last national festival of the German Choral Association (DSB) in which approximately 38,000 singers took part, shortly before the start of World War I. The experience of travelling to a distant city, joining with hundreds of other men from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and even America, and standing in a crowd of thousands of other singers generated more enthusiasm with reference to the entire experience than the quality of the singing. I consider

²⁸⁴ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch des fränkischen Sängerbundes: Ansbach, Bamberg, Fürth, Schwabach, Schweinfurt, Würzburg* (München: Schwingenstein Verlag, 1991), 139. My translation.

²⁸⁵ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 131.

problems with the choral repertoire as part of festival music, but music was only one facet of the entire festival experience, and it was the relationships between singers in combination with the entire festival experience that created emotional communities.

Choral festivals developed over the entire course of the nineteenth century as German singers, who saw themselves as bearers of a national culture of remembrance, set about to create complex landscapes of memory through festival rituals.²⁸⁶ Musicologist Christopher Small describes performance rituals as events in which people physically came together to perform a series of acts in which they use “the language of gesture . . . to articulate relationships among themselves that model the relationships of their world as they imagine them to be and as they think (or feel) that they ought to be.”²⁸⁷ Rituals and their accompanying objects reify emotions, and archeologist, Edward Swenson, adds to Small’s definition that rituals are always contingent on specific historical, political, and experiential contexts.²⁸⁸ For musicians of the *Kaiserreich* that meant singing *Lieder*, performing the music of beloved German composers (both well-known and less well-known), celebrating the anniversaries of victorious battles, commemorating German historical figures or contemporary political figures, all the while asserting national pride in their newly created nation-state with objects bearing signs of the historical past. Singers and poets spent decades laying out parameters for German values and symbols. Did that mean that each member of the chorus (or nation) embraced the entire complex of myths, legends, and ideals? Swenson goes on to claim that the genius of nineteenth-century sociologist Emile Durkheim lay in “having recognized that ritual builds solidarity without requiring the sharing of beliefs. Solidarity is produced by people acting together, not people thinking together.”²⁸⁹ Members of the DSB established certain

²⁸⁶ Dietmar Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte III*, ed. Etienne Francois and Hagen Schulze (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001): 392-407; Eamon Duffy, “The End of it All: The Material Culture of the Late Medieval Parish and the 1552 Inventories of Church Goods,” in *Saints, Sacrilege and Seditious: Religion and Conflict in the Tudor Reformations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 110.

²⁸⁷ Small, *Musicking*, 94-95. Small’s definition of ritual is not contingent on a musical performance but is essential to his own argument about the meaning of performance.

²⁸⁸ Edward Swenson, “Emotion reified: Lessons from the archeology of ritual,” *Archeological Dialogues* 17, no. 2 (2010): 176-183.

²⁸⁹ Quoted by Swenson in “Emotion reified,” 179. He is quoting D. I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

practices that would later be taken up by workers and youth organizations—even though they were, in principle, rejecting bourgeois values. The goal of this chapter is to establish the norms.

Every music festival included greetings at an arrival point, speeches, parades, banners, performances, and opportunities for socializing. Festivals were not unique to German singers; other clubs and associations held festivals, too, but choral festivals offer a unique window into ways emotional communities were created and nurtured. As singers came together from all parts of German-speaking lands they established relationships and reinforced a common identity. They sang both new compositions and old favorites and these performances required cooperation, companionship, mutual effort, and support. They sang songs associated with particular locales, as well as songs deeply rooted in German myth and history, and took the experiences and music back to their own hometowns. This process, repeated on a regular basis, brought singers from their homes to a festival and back to their homes again every few years.

In this chapter I look primarily at the DSB national festivals: Munich, 1874; Hamburg, 1882; Vienna, 1890; Stuttgart, 1896; Graz, 1902; Breslau, 1907; Nuremberg, 1912. There were also some large regional festivals and I use these for points of comparison. The large festivals, in which thousands of men took part, created a visual effect more than an artistic one. They were meant to be a demonstration of German-ness, and as a visual display of the nation they were highly effective. The long-lived Lower Rhine Music Festival (LRMF) established the precedent for music festivals, but they were not organized by the men's choral societies and therefore did not feature *Lieder* in the same way the DSB festivals did. In most ways the Lower Rhine festivals featured more “elevated” music whose musicians were of higher standing than those who directed the DSB festivals. Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms took several of the women from the Hamburg Women's Chorus to the LRMF in May, 1860 where they sang some of Brahms' compositions for women's voices, and Clara arranged for them to give a private recital to “a large group of distinguished people” who were “delighted.”²⁹⁰ This instance demonstrates one way the LRMF changed—it began as an amateur event, but by mid-century it was increasingly dominated by

²⁹⁰ Sophie Drinker, *Brahms and his Women's Choruses* (Merion, PA: Musurgia Publishers, 1952), 59-60.

professionals like Schumann, Brahms, and their distinguished friends.²⁹¹ In contrast, the DSB festivals, and the regional festivals of their member associations, remained amateur events throughout the life of the Kaiserreich. In an era in which rapid transportation became common and the middle class more expansive, festival life flourished in many venues and the rift between high culture and mass culture emerged.

I plan to “unravel” the elements of festivals in order to isolate separate threads and see what mattered to German singers and their audiences. Music mattered to a wide range of Germans and these elements were not uniform in scale but were commonly understood. In this chapter, I focus primarily on the DSB festivals because of the sheer numbers of men who participated and because of the unique rituals embedded in them. Why did singers design banners and parade them through the streets? What do the designs tell us about the time and place in which they lived? Ultimately, how did these demonstrate what it meant to be a peculiar people—Germans? Daniel Miller exhorts us to “strive for understanding and empathy through the study of what people do with objects, because that is the way the people that we study create a world of practice.”²⁹² The objects and spaces that were central to festival rituals gathered meaning from one event to another, from one town or city to another, and mirrored practices that were common to German society during the *Kaiserreich*.

The emergence of amateur choirs and choral associations was characteristic of the nineteenth century and an emergent public sphere, but in creating an entire festival culture to showcase German singers and musicians, participants drew on older traditions. Pierre Nora remarked that: “Tradition is memory that has become historically aware of itself.”²⁹³ As we will see, some of the elements of a choral festival were inspired by medieval or early modern traditions—centuries during which public festivals

²⁹¹ Karen Alquist, “Men and Women of the Chorus: Music, Governance, and Social Models in Nineteenth-Century German-Speaking Europe,” in *Chorus and Community*, ed. Karen Alquist (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006). Alquist traces the evolution of the mixed chorus in both large oratorio performances and smaller choral works like Brahms’ *Schicksalslied* and uses the Lower Rhine Music Festival as one of her vehicles of demonstrating change over the course of the nineteenth century. The chorus was increasingly composed of more women and more professionals. This partly explains the increasing popularity of amateur men’s choruses in the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century.

²⁹² Daniel Miller, ed. *Material Culture: Why Some Things Matter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 19.

²⁹³ Pierre Nora and Lawrence D. Kritzman, eds. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Vol. II Traditions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), xvii.

were closely tied to the church calendar and, in Germany, local conditions. But the nineteenth-century festivals were not merely extensions of older religious or civic ones. Dieter Düring has argued that nineteenth-century festivals were a consequence of the emancipation of the bourgeoisie and their subsequent desire to gather publicly and express opinions “unter freiem Himmel”—in the open air.²⁹⁴ Whereas medieval and early-modern festivals *reinforced* the static social order, early nineteenth-century festivals *challenged* the political order. Thomas Nipperdey began his history of Germany with, “In the beginning was Napoleon,” and with this he encapsulated the entire French Revolution into one personality.²⁹⁵ The French Revolution introduced slogans, symbols, and heroic figures who came to stand for political ideals and inspired revolutionaries and/or nationalists across the European continent. The *tricolour* became a standard model for national flags; the *Marsellaise* was not only sung in other lands as a song of revolution, but also inspired Polish, Belgian, Italian, or German variants. *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* was refashioned as a tripartite slogan to conform to other nationalist aspirations.²⁹⁶ Many of the symbols and slogans of nineteenth-century nationalism found their roots in France. After 1871, political festivals gave way to “national” festivals and conveyed “diverse and controversial social designs and ideas to the public.”²⁹⁷ As we will see, these ideas ranged from sociability, patriotic fervor, and esoteric artistic tastes.

The national DSB festival in Stuttgart (1896) took place at the midpoint of the German Empire and thus offers a vantage point to look back to the first decades of German unification and forward to the decades preceding World War I. National festivals involved years of planning: choosing conductors and directors, creating a program of suitable music, arranging for a festival hall, accommodations, and transportation, coordinating with regional choral associations to make all these plans known to their

²⁹⁴ Dieter Düring, “Einleitung” in *Öffentlich Festkultur: Politische Feste in Deutschland von der Aufklärung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Dieter Düring, Peter Friedemann and Paul Münch (Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988), 10-13.

²⁹⁵ Thomas Nipperdey, *From Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800-1866*, trans. Daniel Nolan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 1.

²⁹⁶ Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 27-28, 81. The German variant was *Einheit, Freiheit, Vaterland*.

²⁹⁷ Düring, *Öffentlich Festkultur*, 390.

members, and a host of other details. Organized by the officials of the German Choral Association, hundreds of people worked to pull off a successful event, so the large national festivals took place only every five to eight years. As I read through the records, the highly repetitive nature of the invitations, instructions, speeches, and activities tended to lull me into a sense of indifference until I realized what these signified in terms of their highly ritualized nature. Christopher Small reminds us that “ritual is *never* meaningless,” but its value lies in showing us what these participants believed about who they were.²⁹⁸

The information in the first chapters was intended to bring historical context to these rituals that drew heavily on key figures and events of the early choral movement. Nägeli, Zelter, Goethe, Weber, Arndt, Jahn, and even Napoleon and his armies laid a foundation for a set of norms that involved memories and practices. In this chapter we want to look at how festival objects fashioned by musicians, or the spaces they moved through, and the practices they engaged in, reveal beliefs and emotions that add layers of meaning to the words articulated in speeches or songs giving us a more rounded image of who Germans imagined themselves to be. Establishing a common set of beliefs and practices fostered webs of emotional community across existing barriers.

The German Choral Association published a newspaper, *Die Sangerhalle*, that spans the time period I am examining here. It first appeared bi-monthly, then once a week from the 1890s until September 1914 when war conditions constrained it once again to a bi-monthly publication. It existed primarily to inform the various choral associations and music clubs about each other’s activities and to promote German music culture. The paper published all kinds of information about local and regional music events, but since it was the official organ of the DSB, the invitation to the national festivals appeared here, as well as program notes, practice and rehearsal notes for the music, and occasionally texts of the music to be sung in joint performances. After the festivals, there were always articles describing what had happened. The speeches were printed, there were descriptions of the parade, critiques of the music performances, and tales about anything out of the ordinary. The tone of the paper was positive and

²⁹⁸ Small, *Musicking*, 94

inclusive projecting the continued ideal of the social and geographic inclusiveness of the men's choral movement. While it is a wonderful source of information, there are pitfalls to look out for--it *promoted* the DSB so there are inherent biases and blind spots. This is where the approach of archeologists Harris and Sørensen to material cultures proves valuable. They developed their approach as a means of explicating emotions when there are no written records, so you look for spaces, how people moved through those spaces, the types of objects they used (and made), and discern how emotions emerge from interactions with objects, settings, and interactions. Christopher Small observes that ritual, myth, metaphor, and art are a "thicket of related concepts," and all involve material objects.²⁹⁹ An analysis of rituals, practices, and material objects work hand in hand to facilitate an examination of German festival life and how emotional communities were forged.

I begin by examining some material objects created and used by the DSB and individual choristers. Second, I consider the spaces through which festival attendees moved—the rituals surrounding the festival parades were particularly freighted with meaning. Third, I look at the impact of mass culture on the choral movement. Nineteenth-century festival culture drew on medieval and early modern traditions, but industrialization brought about changes by the turn of the century. Finally, the longest section of this chapter is devoted to music—what singers performed at their festivals. An examination of the men's choral repertoire demonstrates continuity but also clear patterns of change. I consider individual *Lieder*, the composers and conductors of the men's choirs, and entire programs of music in order to determine what the men of the German Choral Association valued. Songs, objects, rituals, and practices shed light on the emotional communities inhabited by members of all-male choirs.

3.1.1 Materiality of Print and Advertising

The newspaper published by the German Choral Association, *Die Sängerkhalle*, is itself a material object by which we can establish a starting point for the men's choral movement during the Kaiserreich. The image that made up the masthead of the paper in 1870 until 1886 is saturated with historical referents

²⁹⁹ Small, *Musicking*, 94; Harris and Sørensen, "Rethinking Emotion," 150.

that take us back to themes explicated in Chapters One and Two. The entire masthead image evoked a romantic woodland scene. Rods or tree branches, vines, and leaves framed an image foregrounded by the newspaper's title. Above the title was a ribbon with three words: *Freiheit, Friede, Fröhlichkeit* (Freedom, Peace, Cheerfulness). The largest image under the paper's title was a harp, and the rest of the images were situated on either side or under this harp: a ribbon with the name Walter Vogelweide flowed along the bottom of the harp; groups of cherubs graced either side of the harp either holding lutes or a chalice (often used as a trophy); a castle appeared in the distance on the left side; under the harp five names were highlighted on yet another flowing ribbon: Arndt, Uhland, Zelter, Nägeli, Kreutzer. This masthead offers an opportunity to test archeologist Chris Gosden's claim that "emotions are materially constituted and material culture is emotionally constituted."³⁰⁰ The artist who created the image for the masthead highlighted and condensed the emotionally charged national events of the early nineteenth century into personal names and slogans. Germans reading *Die Sängershalle* in the late nineteenth century understood the images and allusions and would have assigned emotional valence to them.

Early nineteenth-century Romanticism was evoked through the naturalistic framing of branches, vines, and leaves as well as the medieval castle, the Minnesinger Walter Vogelweide, the harp and lute instruments, and ethereal cherubs. We should recognize the four names on the bottom-most ribbon. Ernst Moritz Arndt's "Was ist des deutschen Vaterland?" still resonated with German singers more than fifty years after it first appeared. Uhland was the poet, and Kreutzer the composer, of the Napoleonic era *Lied* "Die Siegesbotschaft" that was sung at the Munich festival (1874) and again in Stuttgart (1896). This

³⁰⁰ Harris and Sørensen rest their theory of emotions and material culture on this contention from C. Gosden, "What do Objects Want?" *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 12, no. 3 (2005): 193-211.



Figure 5 Masthead of *Die Sängerhalle*

masthead, created before those festivals, demonstrated that the themes of their music continually resonated with Germans in the late nineteenth century. Elben had praised Kreutzer for his ability to match the tone of Uhland's poetry, and their compositions continued to be sung throughout the century. Finally, we recall the importance of Carl Friedrich Zelter and Hans Georg Nägeli and their role in inspiring the formation of so many all-male choirs. Germans looking at this masthead instantly associated the names and images with a centuries-long heritage of song and pivotal events from the Napoleonic era. The slogan at the top of the image--*Freiheit, Friede, Fröhlichkeit*--was a shorthand version of the one adopted by *Bürschenschaften* students who fought in the Wars of Liberation (1813-1815).³⁰¹ By 1870, Germans could see that political unification was imminent and the images here reminded them of their earlier (successful) battles for freedom from the French. The entire masthead encapsulated Romantic imagery, national identity, and historical memory. After 1883 the masthead of *Die Sängerhalle* became simpler

³⁰¹ Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800-1866*, trans. Daniel Nolan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 243-47.

including only the title without an illustration. The font for the title changed in 1890, 1907, and in 1914, and while the text of the paper was always in Gothic font, the title in the later editions was in Latin print until 1915 when the publishers went back to Gothic print—font style enlisted for total war.³⁰²

Throughout the period the subtitle and the purpose of the paper did not change. *Die Sangerhalle* was intended to promote the German *Lied* to a wider audience than those living in the Kaiserreich. The subtitle read: *Allgemeine deutsche Gesangvereins-Zeitung fur das In- und Ausland* (General Newspaper of German Choral Societies for those in Germany and Abroad); *Offizielles Organ des Deutschen Sangerbundes* (Official Organ of the German Choral Association). Subscribing to the newspaper was a requirement of membership in the DSB both because it was a primary source of information about national festivals, and also because a corpus of *Lieder* endorsed and promoted by the DSB was advertised and sometimes published in the paper.³⁰³ There was a short article in the August 15, 1907 edition about the paper itself and how valuable it was for members to follow the national organization. *Die Sangerhalle* was not only the main source for information about national festivals, it kept members informed about other choral societies and their activities. The main goal of the article was not only to promote the value of the paper’s information, but also to increase subscriptions. However, the editors assured readers that their concern was not merely financial, rather they wanted more readers to benefit from the information they provided.

Finances did drive some editorial decisions. Advertising increased during the decades from 1870-1914, and the most common advertisements were for song books/collections, hats, banners, musical instruments, and music lessons. Banners and identifying clothing items like hats or ribbons were popular. Before the 1890 festival in Vienna, hat manufacturer Gustav Effenberger of Hannover suggested to readers that they needed a new hat for the occasion: “For the German festival in Vienna, may we suggest

³⁰² In the early 1900s when the *Wandervogel* (youth group) began publishing a monthly journal, they justified using Latin font by saying it was more “modern” and cheaper to print/publish. They subsequently abandoned that practice and switched to Gothic font because of its weighty association with the Germanic Volk.

³⁰³ In 1870, *Die Sangerhalle* included a story about *Twelve Patriotic Lieder for Men’s Choirs* (the titles were listed) and included information about purchasing it. Sometimes the entire sheet of music with voice and piano parts was printed. Each individual member was not required to have their own subscription; the choir could have a joint subscription and this was presumably more common.

a practical, attractive, and reasonably priced *Sängerhüte* made from soft felt and offered to clubs (*Vereine*) at special prices.”³⁰⁴ Ribbons, or rosettes, could be pinned on a coat lapel and served to show the general public that you belonged to a group. Paul Bobe in Hanau am Main offered a variety of styles all in tricolor designs—you could designate your choice of colors.³⁰⁵ Every region of Germany, because they had originally had a number of different ruling families, had regional colors or symbols. Local choral groups often adopted these colors to indicate which part of Germany they lived in. And of course, the German tricolor was the black, red, gold originally displayed by the *Lützow Freikorps* during the 1813 Wars of Liberation. One might want to display both national and regional pride. While one was at a festival, travelling to one, or attending a meeting, you wanted people to know that you were a choral director so you could have *Dirigent* in the center of your rosette, or *Präsident*. For the ordinary singer, a rosette could be adorned with a harp, or you could simply order a harp pin without the rosette and attach it to your hat--the picture from the Gustav Effenberger advertisement showed a small harp attached to the band of the hat. A tricolor ribbon tied in a bow with long tails, the name of the choral club on one tail and the name of the singer’s city on the other, was another possible choice.



Figure 6 Ribbons and Pins of the German Choral Association

³⁰⁴ *Die Sängershalle*, 7. August 1890 (hat advertisement);

³⁰⁵ ZFC-Arch B 1.1.2 (90.5) 62.

In addition to hats and rosettes, the banner industry was quite active judging from the number of advertisements that appeared in each paper. Banners and/or flags could be ornate or simple, but they were an extremely important accoutrement to any individual choral group, regional, or national organization, and when a choral group acquired a banner for the first time, there was always a festival to dedicate it. The Bonn Flag Factory (*Bonner Fahnenfabrik*) advertised:

Vereinsfahnen, Banner,
gestickt und gemalt; prachtvolle, künstlerische Ausführung, unbeschränkte
Dauerhaftigkeit wird schriftlich garantiert.

Fahnen und Flaggen, Transparente, Lampions, Theater-Dekorationen.

Zeichnungen, Beschreibungen, Preisverzeichnisse versenden wir franko und kostenfrei.³⁰⁶

Another company offered only hand-stitched flags and another, stitched flags in every style—elegant and extraordinarily inexpensive (*außerordentlich billig*). In contrast to the Bonn advertisement that attempted to grab one’s attention with strong words and a variety of fonts, Richard Mühlmann’s advertisement had a bearded man dressed in a style reminiscent of Minnesingers and holding a harp. He sat on a little hill and behind him appeared the ubiquitous oak tree. A leafy branch from the tree hovered over the name of the *Fahnen-Manufactur*. Mühlmann’s offered the newest and most artistic executions of your design—and they would offer recommendations. I examine some specific banner designs further on, but here I emphasize the *presence* of material objects advertised in *Die Sängershalle*. As difficult as it is to find written records of how people felt about singing in a chorus or participating in a festival, the objects reveal a sentiment which was not overtly antagonistic to the French. The tricolor concept, as well as wearing clothing or ribbons as identifiers, was a product of the French Revolution. German liberals and

³⁰⁶ I wanted to leave this advertisement in German and with my own rendering of the ad in different fonts (and the last line underlined), but it says: Club flags, Banners, stitched and painted; splendid, artistically executed, unconditional durability guaranteed in writing. Flags, Banners, Lanterns, and Theater Decorations. Drawings, descriptions, and price lists can be sent free of charge.

radicals had incorporated those from the early nineteenth century to the post-unification period as part of their own culture of remembrance.³⁰⁷

3.1.2 *Festival Spaces and Rituals*

Local or regional festivals were commonly held in honor of an association's or individual society's anniversary or (less frequently) as part of a celebration to dedicate a banner. By contrast, the national festivals celebrated the nation itself. I begin with a smaller festival because it demonstrates the ubiquitous nature of festival life and the ability of these events to bind participants together in emotional community. *Die Sangerhalle* reported on the 25th Anniversary Celebration of the Mannheim Choral Society in 1874. They called it a “festival of joy and cheer, pleasurable for all participants and festival-goers.” The reporter related a story of a great concert where the choral members began by singing the creed (*Wahrpruch*) of their society.

Wir werden durch das Lied	We will not forge Freedom
Die Freiheit nicht erfinden	through Song,
Doch in des Volkes Seele zieht	but as the music pulses through our souls
Der Muth auf Liedesschwingen.	We draw courage from it. ³⁰⁸

The concept of freedom was a hallmark of the early choral movement, and the Mannheim choral association was founded in 1849—an auspicious year for Germans who believed in the tenets of representative government and basic human liberties. Members of the early nineteenth-century choral societies and gymnastics clubs were well-represented at the Frankfurt National Assembly (1848-49) which met to write an ill-fated Constitution for a unified Germany. Those endeavors failed in 1849, but as we see from the Mannheim 25th anniversary celebration, the members of choral societies continued to stand for freedom and believed in the power of song to give them the courage to fight for it. While the *Wahrpruch* was apparently a written statement, many of these mottos or slogans were written in verse form, and this one had been put to music, so the men sang it. The sound is something we cannot recapture

³⁰⁷ Some scholars also credit French revolutionaries for national anthems and song as political speech, but song as national or political expression can be dated earlier—specifically to the Lutheran and Calvinist traditions. Puritans and Presbyterians used psalm-singing as political speech in the seventeenth century and hymn-singing was used in a partisan way during the Thirty Years' War. “God Save the King” as a British “national anthem” predates “La Marseillaise.”

³⁰⁸ *Die Sangerhalle*, 31. August 1870, 68.

today, but the *Die Sangerhalle* observer helps us to imagine some of the performance that made up the anniversary festival.

The majority of the festival program was composed of *Lieder* and several pieces were listed in the newspaper report: “Altdeutsches Minnelied” (Old German Minnelied) from the fifteenth century, two *a capella* pieces, and a couple of solos sung by a woman from Karlsruhe--a Schumann *Lied* and one by Robert Franz.³⁰⁹ The reporter offered this commentary about the first piece (the *Minnelied*) which was sung by the men’s choir: “This simple and unpretentious composition, enhanced by its correct and heartfelt performance and with a rare pianissimo, drew the listeners, and their stormy calls for an encore rewarded the singers.”³¹⁰ Later he added that the entire performance made a powerful impact on the audience brought about by the quality of the compositions as well as the skill of the performers—and they listened devoutly (*andachtigen Lauschen*).³¹¹ This was not a famous event with well-known musicians, but it represents the kind of performance that became part of everyday life in Germany. Therefore it offers a way to look at performance and ritual through a single lens and to introduce performance rituals that were common to all German music festivals.

The attendees at Mannheim were both singers and listeners, all of whom took part in the rituals. This occasion offers an illustration of Christopher Small’s exhortation to look at any piece of music not simply as a “work” (notations on a score) but as performance—what did the music mean at the time and place in which it was performed? And what does the performance tell us about relationships between people? In a sharp contrast to the massive choirs that sang at national festivals where the grand effect was more important than the quality, at Mannheim the men’s choir drew both audience and singers together into a meaningful relationship. The heartfelt singing elicited devotion not only from the performers, but

³⁰⁹ Robert Schumann and Robert Franz were contemporaries and both wrote *Lieder*. Franz was a well-known and prolific *Lieder* composer in his day, and served for a time as city organist in Halle as well as the conductor of the city’s *Singakademie* and symphony. When he began to go deaf, Franz Liszt and Joseph Joachim (with others) gave him their proceeds from a concert tour to support him.

³¹⁰ „Wie der erste Chor durch Kraft und Fulle impornirte und zundete, so ri diese einfache und anspruchslose Komposition, gehoben durch korrektin und innigen Vortrag und durch ein seltenes Pianissimo, die Zuhorer hin, und sturmische Rufe nach Wiederholung lohnten die Sanger.“

³¹¹ *Die Sangerhalle*, 31. August 1870, 68-69.

also from the audience. The German word, *lauschen*, means “to listen,” but it carries a subtleness that is more than just hearing something. It is commonly used for eavesdropping, or in an archaic sense, “to harken.” From the brief report left behind we see that the singing fully engaged the audience as though they were paying particular attention, and they longed for more of it.

I suggest that both members of the audience, as well as the musicians, knew their roles—there were expected behaviors that had been reinforced by participating in previous performances. These created an atmosphere in all in attendance attuned to each other’s moods and emotions and to the responses of the people around them. Each individual was not an isolated listener but part of the entire group. In effect, these represented the “communities of emotional styles and/or norms” that Rosenwein considers the defining feature of an emotional community. The *Die Sangerhalle* reporter in no way implied that anyone did anything unexpected—all conformed to preconditioned roles. The choir stood in a group at the front of the audience; the audience sat in chairs or benches facing them. From other descriptions, drawings, or photographs, it is reasonable to assume that the space where the concert took place was festooned with greenery. Garlands and wreaths were common accoutrements in a festival venue, and at the very least, the banner of the Mannheim Choral Society would be on display. The reporter, however, gave one clue about this performance that made it exceptional—the moment when the men sang the “rare pianissimo.”³¹² Musicians write notations into their compositions indicating the tempo, dynamics, and accents, as a matter of course. And the Mannheim singers pulled off the composer’s intent in an outstanding manner. That rare element of attending to the mood of the work elicited a corresponding response from the audience and bound them together in a brief devotional moment.

The rituals of performance and festivals were standardized, but the rare moment of exceptional beauty created emotional communities that were not static, but ever evolving. In a world in which music, to be heard, had to be created in the moment, single performances essentially established a consensus of

³¹² Pianissimo means very, very quiet and is notated in the music by “ppp.” It would not be an unusual stylistic request of the composer, but for untrained or little-rehearsed choirs, difficult to pull off.

meaning.³¹³ In Chapter Three, I quoted Robert Shaw who said that the apparent spontaneous beauty of a choral performance was a lie. Rather it required tenacious work. His comment bears repeating in the context of the Mannheim concert. The hard work members of the Mannheim choral group put in week after week, bound singers together and produced a rare performance moment. The audience was privileged to join in, and the choir embraced their response.³¹⁴ I offered this example first because on the one hand it is so mundane—the Mannheim anniversary festival was just one of many of the type that took place in other towns and cities that year. On the other hand, it exemplified everything that created emotional communities bound by ritual and performance. In our next examples, material objects feature more prominently.

The first “strand” of a festival was the formal invitation. All formal correspondence bore the mark of ritual. The men of the DSB were signified as “German Singers,” “Honored Brother-Singers,” or “Fellow Brothers.” Correspondence always concluded with “Mit deutschem Sangergruss.” (Greetings from the German Singers)³¹⁵ The wording symbolized the bond they had because they were singers and the inclusive realm they created when they sang. The invitation to the Fifth German Choral Festival in Stuttgart had been issued by the Festival Committee of the German Choral Association.³¹⁶ “German Singers! We singers of the German Choral Association are preparing, for the fifth time, to gather for a great festival.” The dates were August 1-3, 1896 and the invitation included “His Majesty, King William II of Wurtemberg” as one of the benevolent (*huldvoll*) dignitaries who would welcome them.³¹⁷ It continued by announcing that the Singers would be coming to the “cradle of the German Volkslied” where Schiller and Uhland sang and where the Hohenstaufens and Hohenzollerns raised their proud heads

³¹³ Obviously Germans living in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries began to have access to recorded music, but the more common experience would have been to make music at home, with friends, or go to an event where music was being performed.

³¹⁴ Robert Shaw, *The Robert Shaw Reader*, ed. Robert Blocker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 22.

³¹⁵ “Deutsche Sanger,” “Geehrte Sangerbruder,” or “Bundesbruder.” These come from several invitations in the files of the Feuchtwangen Musik- und Gesangsverein. ZFC-Arch B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 59.

³¹⁶ The copy of this invitation came from ZFC-Arch B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 61.

³¹⁷ Als Ort fur dieses nationale Fest, welches in den Tagen vom 1. bis 3. August 1896 gefeiert werden soll und fur welches Seine Majestat Konig Wilhelm II. von Wurtemberg das Protektorat huldvoll ubernommen hat, wurde vom Gesamtausschuss des Deutschen Sangerbundes in Uebereinstimmung mit den burgerlichen Collegien der Stadt Stuttgart die schwabische Hauptstadt bestimmt.

to heaven.³¹⁸ They would be coming to a Festival in celebration of the German Nation alongside men from all tribes/clans (*Stämmen*), and all stations in life (*Stellungen im Leben*), from all opinions and points of view (*von allen Meinungen und Parteiansichten*), to sing the German *Lied* as German brothers and to be recognized as sons of one great Fatherland. All German singers whether living on the shores of the Danube or the Rhine, in the German Empire or as one of the distant “relatives” in Austria, whether he pursued work on the shores of the Baltic Sea or the Adriatic would be heartily welcomed in Stuttgart. These themes were representative of the rhetoric and aims of the DSB and its member choruses. What were they celebrating? The German Nation. Who was invited? Men from every tribe or clan, from every social background or political opinion. What would they do? Sing the German *Lied* as brothers since they were all sons of the Fatherland. There was a binding identity that came from ancestral roots in German soil. Geographic unity was invoked repeatedly in speeches and echoed Arndt’s poem in which he asked, “What is the German’s Fatherland?” and then responded “as far as the German language is spoken and the *Lied* is sung.” By 1896 the national festivals had cartographically fulfilled this. The first festival was held in Munich (south), the next in Hamburg (north), the third in Vienna (not only east, but also in Austria), and now Stuttgart which was on the far western border of Germany. The invitation included all German-speaking singers.

Earlier I described the original masthead of *Die Sängershalle* with its medieval and Romantic imagery and the names of men who were important to the choral movement. The imagery on the invitation to the Stuttgart festival was similar but not as elaborate. There were various types of greenery—long, leafy fronds, vines with grapes, branches with berries—a harp, open song book, and cherub were juxtaposed with a wreath (*Kranz*) that encircled the heraldic symbol of Stuttgart—a black horse rearing on its hind legs. In the text of the invitation were familiar names (Schiller and Uhland) and themes

³¹⁸ The Hohenstaufens (1138-1254) were the ruling family of Frederick I (Barbarossa) and II. The Hohenzollerns were first mentioned in the historical record in 1061 and the Protestant Franconian branch of the family eventually became the Brandenburg-Prussian rulers (from 1618). In the *Kaiserreich* the Hohenzollerns were seen as the successors to the medieval Hohenstaufen emperors.



Figure 7 Decorative stationery with invitation to the Stuttgart festival

(the commonality of German singers no matter what their origins, their current position in life, or their political affiliation). The heading was beautifully lettered and adorned by the greenery and objects. It read: *An die Mitglieder des Deutschen Sangerbundes* (To the Members of the German Choral Association). The invitation, like the original masthead of *Die Sangerhalle*, conjured an idealized image of the past, one corresponding to *Heimat*—an idealized homeland wreathed in memories of history, nature, and folklore.³¹⁹ *Heimat* emerged in the early decades of the nineteenth century as part of the Romantic movement, but it was also a response to the anxieties associated with modernity. The historic past informed much of the symbolism, imagery, and themes of the choral movement, but the festivals of the *Kaiserreich* were possible because of the technology of the nineteenth century. The near and distant past, along with the technology of modernity elicited emotions that bound German singers to one another.³²⁰ Once the invitation was received, members of the far-flung choruses made plans to travel to

³¹⁹ Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 35.

³²⁰ David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 273. Blackbourn says that the railroads altered Germans lives in many ways. Not only did

the festival, and travel arrangements, like the festival program itself, were meticulously orchestrated. In the next pages I explore trains, parades, banners, and postcards as material and spatial elements inherent to the festivals of the men's choral societies.

3.1.3 Modern Spaces and Honored Symbols

Railroads transformed more than transportation—they brought dramatic changes in everyday life. Trains made it possible for German singers from north, south, east, and west to gather by the thousands at a distant location and to share a love of music. The small Bavarian town of Feuchtwangen, whose choral association was typical of most small towns, had only two men who travelled to the 1890 national festival in Vienna, but they joined a growing crowd of singers along the way. Organizers of the festival sent out notices well in advance about train schedules, and members from Bavaria convened in Munich.³²¹ Men congregated, recognized one another (or met for the first time), and interacted for the purpose of participating in a shared experience—first travelling, but more importantly participating in the choral festival. As they began the long train ride across Germany and Austria, the landscape changed, villages and towns appeared and disappeared, the train stopped and started again, and the passengers intermingled with one another. The atmosphere of the train was enhanced by the singers' shared experience of going to Vienna to participate in a festival, but also by the process of moving through the same landscape seated on the same train. Certainly one emotion generated by the train was anticipation. As they moved through southern Germany and into Austria their sense of excitement rose—perhaps the kind of nervous excitement one experiences before an event whose outcome is not entirely clear, or the nerves related to train travel—but the presence of other people going through the same experience enhanced the anticipation and mitigated fear or fatigue.³²²

they make it possible to travel to distant locales, they also spread familiarity with urban life to Germans who remained living the countryside.

³²¹ ZFC-Arch B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 59.

³²² Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). I used Schivelbusch's descriptions of train travel and stations as an inspiration for this paragraph.

When singers arrived in Vienna, the train station momentarily took center stage as crowds of singers swarmed into that space. There was an appointed time for the general arrival followed by formal greetings. The number of singers gradually grew in strength as they waited for the ceremonies that kicked off the festival. Yair Mintzker, who writes about the defortification of German cities that took place over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, explains that entering the city gate originally held meaning as a symbolic act. “When a prince, bishop, or ambassador approached the city, it was at the gate that the urban community staged its welcome ceremonies. . . [everyone] performing their roles according to a strict protocol.” City officials, gate watchers, representatives of guilds, and often the entire population were there to welcome guests. For very festive occasions, heralds sounded trumpets and flags and banners were displayed and hung from windows.³²³ Mintzker makes the connection that nineteenth-century railway stations took over some of the functions of the city gate, and because they were occasionally constructed from the stones of old walls, even resembled them.³²⁴ Wolfgang Schivelbusch also notes the relationship between the old city gates and the nineteenth-century train station. Calling the station a “spatial gateway,” he noted that it connected the traffic coming into the city with that already inside.³²⁵ These insights help us imagine the atmosphere in 1890 as thousands of singers congregated at the Vienna train station. The station was the site of anticipation as city officials met the singers and offered formal greetings, and it was also the staging ground for collecting the banners which each individual chorus and regional association had carefully transported; people and banners began moving into the city proper after the formal entry at its “gates.” As hundreds of participants moved from one space to another, they performed rituals that were both centuries old (greetings by city officials and local citizens, a display of banners) and modern. The atmosphere of the train and the station created a “modern” setting for attuning to one another’s enthusiasm and anticipation, while at the same time kindling historical memory. In this

³²³ Yair Mintzker, *The Defortification of the German City, 1689-1866* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 33.

³²⁴ Mintzker, *Defortification*, 249.

³²⁵ Schivelbusch, *Railway Journey*, 174.

way emotional communities were being newly created but were also visible displays of an invisible connection to the past.

Train stations featured in all the DSB national festivals and formally signaled the beginning of three days of singing and socializing. The growth of the rail system allowed the number of participants to escalate after 1870, but the basic format of the festivals remained the same. At the 1874 Munich festival, choral groups from 385 cities were represented, and *Die Sangerhalle* recorded that the singers were greeted at the train station and then taken to a reception hall where they were “surprised” by a typical Bavarian-style greeting involving beer. They then collected their banners and marched to the *Rathaus* (City Hall) where there was some singing and a speech by the mayor. At 10 pm the singers paraded their banners around the hall and a woman recited the following poem:

<p>So oft des Banners schwingen sich entfalten, Gemahne es an Munchens Frauen Euch, Ein Zeichen, das auch wir getreulich halten Am deutschen Liede und am deutschen Reich!</p>	<p>As often as the banners swing and unfurl, It is a sign to remind you That Munich’s women also faithfully hold To German songs and the German Empire!³²⁶</p>
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Although the DSB festivals featured men’s choruses, women were tangentially included in the festivities—they were appointed to participate in the ritual of presenting the banner of the national organization. Following the recitation of the poem, a member of the festival committee re-emphasized the theme of the poem: “Honored banner of the German Choral Association! . . . We recognize in you the symbol of national belonging as the banner demonstrates the unity created by the German *Lied*.”³²⁷ The banner itself had the power to reify emotions associated with the *Lied*. And just as German song bore in itself the truest expression of the German people, banners signified a national identity as they once signified individual or corporate identity. The nineteenth-century use of banners enfolded the past into the present.

Banners originated in the late twelfth century once plate armor had developed to the point of covering the entire body of a knight. In order to tell friend from enemy, knights created bright markings for their shields. These were originally used everywhere in Europe for military purposes and then rapidly

³²⁶ *Die Sangerhalle*, 3. September 1874, 128. (My translation).

³²⁷ From a report about the festival in *Die Sangerhalle* 3. September 1874, 128.

filtered into civil society as decorative identifiers in the form of family coats of arms. In the German states where there were a number of independent cities, the burger class developed their own public festivals and heraldic banners, and groups like guilds, orders of clergy, and hospitals took up heraldry.³²⁸ We looked briefly at Nuremberg's status as a free city in Chapter One. There the burger class developed an identity separate from the aristocracy. The wealthy masters of guilds held public festivals on a regular basis where they demonstrated and reinforced their standing in society by parading through the city wearing identifying clothing, coats of arms, and accompanying colors and designs. The Meistersinger, Hans Sachs, would have been one of these participants, and while festival culture in general was a re-invention of the medieval/early modern period we can imagine that German singers felt a strong thread of continuity with guild rituals in which members like Sachs took part. When DSB members paraded through the streets of Munich or presented the association's banner in their opening ceremony, they were visually asserting a line of continuity with Minnesingers and Meistersingers.

An English scholar of heraldry, George W. Eve, wrote in 1908, "The importance of banners and flags to scenes of pageantry is sufficiently obvious. Their strong colour value, their constant movement and their significance as symbolism, combine to produce a strikingly vivacious and interesting effect."³²⁹ As the society of orders gave way to a society of class in the nineteenth century, European culture retained many of the medieval trappings embedded in a past that was often romanticized by nineteenth-century poets and musicians. Eve noted that with the spread of democracy it appeared that heraldry was useful as a communal marker—social, political, industrial, and municipal organizations demanded identifying badges and there seemed to have been a "renaissance of heraldic design."³³⁰ The poem recited at the 1874 Munich festival echoed the visual effect of the movement of banners described by Eve—the banners swayed, unfurled, and reinforced memories of belonging.

³²⁸ "Battle Armor," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 32, no. 4 (1973-1974): 68-75; Helmut Nickel and Dirk H. Breiding, "A Book of Tournaments and Parades from Nuremberg," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 45 (2010): 125-86.

³²⁹ George W. Eve, "Banners in Pageantry," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 56, no. 2885 (1908), 392.

³³⁰ Eve, "Banner in Pageantry," 396.

Medieval banners were designed to portray origins and identifying characteristics; choral banners displayed those features as well. The DSB banner was consecrated (*weihen*) in 1865 at the first national festival in Dresden six years before the German Empire was formally founded. Otto Elben gave the dedication speech after which the banner was revealed. In part he said, “We certainly cannot yet sing that Germany is free and unified. But we plant in all hearts the indestructible belief in national unity—a doctrine which grows more powerful in every generation—and when the time comes, [our song] will produce the deed.”³³¹ The banner foreshadowed unification, and its form presaged a hoped-for reality. A description of the banner was recorded in the festival memorial book. It was four feet wide by six feet long and painted in oil colors on both sides. On a red velvet background in a gold-embossed frame was a “so-called gothic quatrefoil.” The picture inside portrayed an ancient German Bard (*altdeutscher Sangesmeister*) wrapped in a white garment decorated with an oak wreath. His left hand rested on a golden harp, and his right hand was raised as though in an enthusiastic hurrah (*wie im begeisterten Zurufe erhoben*). Under the picture, embroidered in gold on a sky-blue ribbon, was the saying: It is the whole of Germany! (A phrase from Arndt’s “What is the German’s Fatherland?”). Behind the bard, the sea was visible, and on the shore was a megalithic tomb and an old, mighty oak tree. On the other side of the harp a young oak sprouted up. This was meant to be an image of hope strengthened by memories of Old Germany—the ancient tree gave the young tree hope that it would eventually be old and venerable just as the ancient myths, legends, and heroic figures of the past gave hope to the German people that the ancient empire would be reborn. At the same time, the megalithic grave was meant to be an exhortation (*Mahnung*) to the younger generation to be stout, not weaklings. In the middle of the reverse side of the banner was the single-headed black German eagle on a golden field.³³² An article about the DSB banner that appeared in *Die Sangerhalle* on July 25, 1907 said that the banner itself embodied the principles of its members. “Through the indwelling of German song, all German tribes will be unified and empowered . . .

³³¹ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 132.

³³² Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 132-133. Brusniak includes a photograph of both sides of the banner.

but by singing, unity is firmly planted in the heart and that unity will someday bear fruit.”³³³ This sentiment echoed Otto Elben’s 1865 banner dedication speech almost exactly. In 1907, German singers still admonished each other to not only believe in the power of song to unite them—it was in singing together that the nation would grow strong like the old German oak tree. This banner was paraded, presented, and displayed at every DSB national festival and encapsulated the history of German singers—the Bard, oak, harp, and associated song embodied the meaning of the choral movement. Embedded in that was its modern, literal meaning of uniting Germans in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century German Empire.

The memorial book (*Gedenkbuch*) in which the description of the original banner was recorded also offered a vivid image of a parade of a thousand banners and flags as a “procession of Germanism” and a “living heartbeat of Germany.”³³⁴ Forty-two choral associations with 700 singers met in Dresden in 1867 in anticipation of German unification. The festivals later grew in size much like the oak tree on the DSB banner. At the 1890 festival in Vienna, there were 890 different choral clubs represented.³³⁵ Along the parade route platforms were set up to accommodate groups of 200, 400, or 600 people to stand and watch as the banners passed by. Ceremonial parades in which choral members marched together from the train station to the festival hall and then hung the banners on the walls was a formally prescribed ordinance of the governing board of the DSB.³³⁶ The individuality of singers’ costumes and their banners demonstrated an interesting feature of emotional communities. Each chorus chose objects that set them apart, but the collective affective field demonstrated that these objects were common and unifying objects—each group wore hats or carried banners, and the entire crowd—participants and observers

³³³ *Die Sangerhalle*, 25. Juli, 1907, 285. “Durch die dem deutschen Liede innewohnende (latent), alle deutschen Volksstämme einigende Kraft mitzuarbeiten an der Größe unseres Volkes und der Erhaltung seiner Macht . . . aber durch den Gesang pflanze man den Glauben an diese Einheit fest in die Brust, und seinerzeit werde die Frucht dieses Glaubens zur Ernte reifen.”

³³⁴ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 132.

³³⁵ In the early festivals, it appears there was an informal parade from the train station to the Rathaus and then a more formal parade route that led in a circle from and back to the Rathaus where the flags and banners were then displayed around the walls. The national festivals eventually outgrew the space in the city halls.

³³⁶ ZFC Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 71

attuned to the individual and collective meanings of singers from distinct locations coming together as one nation.

Host cities also displayed and highlighted identifying features of their town or region. Hamburg exhibited its unique identity by drawing attention to shipping—its most important industry. The Hamburgers created a *Festwagen* (a parade float) that looked like a ship, and on its sides were the coats of arms of Munich, Dresden, Berlin, and others, plus a “*riesiges Hamburger Wappen*” (enormous Hamburg coat of arms). This parade went on so long that the evening concert concluded in the dark—there were no electric lights. But the reporter noted that the men kept singing, and it ended well.³³⁷ In spite of the reporter’s optimistic conclusion about the concert, there were several criticisms of the Hamburg performances. Another article in the same edition of *Die Sangerhalle* noted that the singers needed to articulate their words more clearly to separate themselves from their “provincialism,” the choirs needed to learn the music better (or rehearse more), and then admitted the difficulties in directing a choir of thousands of men. Later we will look at these types of criticisms more thoroughly, but for festival participants enthusiasm for the entire experience overcame artistic critiques, and after the Hamburg parade and concert, the following day offered an opportunity to explore the surrounding area.

The Hamburg festival offered participants a unique experience—a boat excursion. This was promoted well in advance of the festival and more than one ship was required, but no women were allowed to come along. So much useful information can be gleaned from the pages of *Die Sangerhalle*, but on the other hand, there were gaps. The paper recorded speeches in endless detail, and there were long lists of choirs who were members of the various member organizations, but details about what the men did on the boat excursion, who came to the performances, and whether families accompanied husbands and fathers to the festivals were regrettably missing. Apparently they did, but the festivals were designed to foster male camaraderie, and we generally have to infer the experiences of observers.

³³⁷ *Die Sangerhalle*, 24. August and 19. Oktober 1882. There were several criticisms of the Hamburg performances--the singers needed to articulate their words more clearly to separate themselves from their “provincialism; the choirs needed to learn the music better (or rehearse more); and the admission that it was difficult to direct a choir of thousands of men.

A photograph from a 1912 edition of *Die Sangerhalle* shows how tightly the streets were packed as choral members made their way from the train station to the festival hall. Choristers with banners marched down the middle of the street and observers pressed in on both sides. Strung across the street from buildings on either side were garlands of greenery.³³⁸ An astute observation about the connection between emotions and material objects can be made by comparing the written description of the “procession of Germanism” (1867 Dresden), and the image from the photograph apropos of an experience of walking down the same streets when they were deserted. The street itself and the buildings were the same, but it is difficult to imagine that the emotions engendered by the parade—exhilaration, pride, companionship, love, patriotism—would exist. The specific place and the crowds of people with a common interest and purpose, together with the objects they wore or carried, generated the emotions. The banners, with their images of Minnesingers, harps, regional colors, and the names of member associations, were a visual reminder of the common roots of the German people and their hopes for the future. One other banner demonstrates this recurring theme.

³³⁸ *Die Sangerhalle*, 10. Juli 1912.



Figure 8 Entrance of Singers into the City

The banner created for the *Fränkischen Sangerbund* (FSB) predated the one designed for the national organization. The FSB banner had a red and white background (the colors of Franconia) and was stitched with silk thread. Two historic figures were featured on one side—the best-known medieval Minnesinger, Walter von der Vogelweide, held a harp and a sword, and Meistersinger Hans Sachs held a pen and a book of poetry. The contrasting side of the banner had the city names of each of the founding members of the FSB on an elaborately appliqued and stitched ground. One of these elements was the German eagle. Each side of the banner prominently featured the motto of the association at the top:

“Eintracht hält Macht.”³³⁹ When the banner was dedicated, P. J. Schneider, a music director in Schweinfurt, gave this exposition of the motto:

“Eintracht hält Macht” means that there is an indelible impulse of the people for unification, in all regions of Germany, an impulse not artificially produced, but a ray of fire in the spirit which cannot be suppressed or violently chained. We have associations for the development of the mind, the heart, and the body, but also for the preservation of German law, German freedom, and the restoration of German power. Everywhere there is a feeling of belonging together. The prejudice of tribalism vanishes, and this represents the success of our singing festivals, and the singers’ moral dignity.³⁴⁰

Schneider’s speech is reminiscent of Hans Nägeli’s claims about choral singing and democracy.³⁴¹ The motto, *Eintracht hält Macht*, was frequently used by individual choruses and is used today by German choral associations.³⁴² It can be interpreted musically, “Power through Harmony.” A choir singing in harmony has the power to bind its members together and to hold an audience’s rapt attention. But for singers of the Kaiserreich, it also represented the power of the *Lied* to express the heart and soul of the German people, and to unite them politically and socially. When they paraded their banners, they joined with other singers from all German-speaking lands to express the spirit of the people. Banners represented a concomitant emotional and physical presence. They cost money to create and also conveyed something of intangible emotional value.

The banners, as seen from the descriptions above, were often quite elaborate. When the national festival was held in Hamburg in 1882, *Die Sängershalle* gave some details about where the banners would be stored and informed readers that the national organization would provide a small

³³⁹ A literal translation of *Eintracht hält Macht* is Harmony holds/keeps Power, but the exposition given in the quoted passage explains this concept better than a literal translation. P. J. Schneider explains that there were many different associational groups in the German states in addition to choral societies. All of these worked for a common goal—the unification of Germany. Their complementary work achieved success.

³⁴⁰ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 121. Brusniak is quoting from Tag-Blatt der Stadt Bamberg Nr. 203, 28 July 1863, page 1437.

³⁴¹ I quoted Nägeli in Chapter 1 saying, “Take hordes of people, take them by hundreds, by thousands, bring them into human interaction, . . . an interaction where each is at liberty to express his personality in feelings and words, where he receives at the same time like-minded impressions from all the others, where he becomes aware in the most intuitive and multifarious way possible of his human self-sufficiency and camaraderie, where he radiates and breathes love, instantly, with every breath—and can this be anything other than choral singing?” (Quoted from Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 47.)

³⁴² Brusniak’s *Das grosse Buch*, includes 674 pages of late twentieth century German choral societies from the region of Franconia. He includes a little history of each choir and a photograph. A number of the all-male choirs date back to the nineteenth century and many of the choirs display their banners with their group photo.

amount of insurance in case of fire. They valued each banner at 300 Marks, but individual associations could purchase more insurance up to the value of 1000 Marks.³⁴³ By 1896 when the national festival was held in Stuttgart, associations were told they could ship their banners ahead of time and they were given an address.³⁴⁴ It was at this point that the parades took on a more formal nature. Singers still gathered at the train stations—this became an increasingly elaborate detail to plan—but now they paraded to a large *Festhalle* (festival hall) where they unpacked and assembled the banners for a formal parade the next day. Banners had transitioned from objects to be packed and brought along as baggage to something valuable in themselves—specifically insured and sent as a special package to be recovered and prepared for the ceremonial parade and opening musical performance. From the 1865 pre-unification festival in Dresden to the turn of the century Stuttgart festival, banners took on a weightier material worth along with their emotional value. After the parade concluded, the banners were hung in the performance area until the conclusion of the festival. Thus the performance spaces were festooned for the endurance of the festival with a visual display of the nation.

Participants in a choral festival arrived at train stations and paraded through the streets of distant cities. While each festival city had unique features (represented by parade floats or banners) they also had common ones. German towns and cities grew up on rivers and trade routes and the center of town had the buildings associated with their finances, religion, government, and a market place where people gathered to exchange goods and meet friends. Before the nineteenth century, the entire city was enclosed by a wall which not only provided protection but defined and delimited the city proper. Mintzker explains that these physical features had an underlying motif—the city was an organism made up of many parts that were intangibly and inseparably joined—like the parts of a human body.³⁴⁵ When the society of orders gave way to the society of class, new mental maps also evolved in which people could conceive of themselves

³⁴³ *Die Sangerhalle*, 13. Juli 1882, 128. According to figures from the University of California Santa Barbara, one U.S. dollar was worth 4.20 Marks in pre-World War I Germany. www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/projects/currency.htm.

³⁴⁴ *Die Sangerhalle*, 2. Juli 1896.

³⁴⁵ Mintzker, *Defortification*, 22.

as autonomous individuals who chose associations—civic, religious, social, and so forth. Germans who joined choral societies in the first half of the nineteenth century participated in this mental and spatial transformation. We looked earlier at how the train station created a new space that did not replace the idea of entering the city but only the means and location. And we saw in the First Movement that music moved out of traditional performance spaces like churches or courts and into concert halls.³⁴⁶ As all kinds of festivals became more popular, large halls were often constructed within cities for the specific purpose of the events.³⁴⁷ Festivals held in large cities where the participants arrived at the train stations and were treated like dignitaries, and the citizenry could participate in the parade and the music, demonstrated to Germans that the city was no longer the exclusive domain of its inhabitants but was part of a larger community of German-ness that was not confined by city walls. Having looked at the train, the station, and the streets as spaces where emotions were heightened by anticipation, ceremony, crowds, and identifying objects, I now turn to the festival hall itself and the other spaces where singers socialized.

Like all previous festivals, the Sixth German Choral Society Festival held in Graz (1902) was set in motion with an invitation: “As ever, We offer you sincere, loyal Singer greetings!” The leaders of the DSB festival committee, in a flurry of rhetorical jargon, called for singers to come together in a “national deed of the foremost essence which would find its most beautiful and sublime embodiment in the German song. . . . [By coming] they would be freed from the storms and struggles of the day and the dissension of parties by means of the glorious glory of song. . . . We will be a single nation of brothers, Separated neither by need or danger!”³⁴⁸ The Graz festival was the second festival to be held in Austria and a special

³⁴⁶ Anyone could go into a church, but the music there was confined to a religious nature; music performed in royal courts was available to a very restricted audience. The public concert hall was a new phenomenon in the nineteenth-century, but it cost money. Choral festivals that took place outside or in an open-walled pavilion allowed the general public to attend in greater numbers and contributed to the idea that music was for everyone, not just the elite. The Lower Rhine Musical Festival is one example of a festival that all classes of people could, and did, attend.

³⁴⁷ Dieter Düding, “Nationale Oppositionsfeste der Turner, Sänger und Schützen im 19. Jahrhundert,” in *Öffentliche Festkultur*, 166-190. While I am focusing only on choral festivals, the members of gymnastic and shooting clubs held similar festivals to those of the choral societies and membership among these clubs overlapped--men who belonged to a music club often belonged to the local gymnastic and/or shooting club as well.

³⁴⁸ ZFC-Arch B 71 (90.5) 65. Einer nationalen Tat, ins Leben gerufen und emporgetragen von jener unvergleichlich idealen Begeisterung, welche im Dienste und zu Ehren des deutschen Liedes die schönste und erhabenste Verkörperung zu finden gewohnt ist. Und einer nationalen Tat des vornehmsten Wesens, weil sie frei von den Stürmen und Kämpfen des Tages, unzugleich aller Zwietracht der Parteien, verklärt durch den Zauber der

hall was built for the occasion. (See postcard image at the beginning of Chapter Four). The July 17, 1902 edition of *Die Sangerhalle* described it as “a powerful timber construction . . . whose arched roofs are surmounted in the middle by its long side, as well as by the two narrow portal front constructions, which (without flag poles) climb to a height of 28 meters.” It was 120 meters long and 90 meters wide and similar in design to a double-barrel construction. It had a long tube intersected by a taller, broader tube in the middle.³⁴⁹ Fortunately, the newspaper also included an artist’s rendering of the building (see below). Each long end had towers at the corners, and a massive arched portal (the central barrel) made up the entrance. Two towers framed the entrance, and from each of the six towers (at the ends and the middle) banners waved in the wind. The drawing showed a very ornate-looking structure with lots of glass windows to let in light with more flags flying all along the outer rim of the roof. To reinforce the sense of its immense size, the artist included small figures of men, women, and children walking on the grounds. As one arrived in Graz, left the train station, and then approached the *Festhalle*, it must have made a magnificent impression. Singers with their new hats and their identifying rosettes, ribbons, and regional costumes, made their way to the splendid hall. The entire scene surely evoked the observation made from the parade in Dresden that it was a “procession of Germanism.” This was where the festival parade ended and the hundreds of banners brought by singers from every part of Germany (as well as other German-speaking lands) were then hung or displayed around the walls. There was a huge stage for the singers and the orchestra numbering in the thousands. The entire effect mirrored the “greatness” of the German Empire.

The *Festhalle* built for the Breslau festival in 1907 was similar in design to the Graz hall, but the artist’s drawing now included a plan of the grounds/gardens where the building stood. It was at the intersection of Kaiser Wilhelmstrae and Kurassierstrae and there were two beer-houses, a wine room,

volkstumlichsten Kunst, der Kunst des Gesanges und durch die Wunderklange der, keinem anderen Volke in gleich erlesenem Mae beschiedenen Herrlichkeit des Liedes alluberall warmfuhlenden Verstandnisses, aufrichtiger Wurdigung sicher sein darf. (I shortened this a good bit while attempting to keep the general meaning *and* the excessive language).

³⁴⁹*Die Sangerhalle*, 17. Juli 1902, 359. See postcard image at the end of the introduction to Movement II.

two open-air dance floors, some little stalls or shops, as well as a smaller Concert Hall on the grounds. It is wonderful to imagine standing in the midst of the crowds of thousands as they arrived and mingled with one another, but a report in *Die Sangerhalle* gave this description.

Yes, in the rosy shimmer of memory. . . the Seventh German Singing Festival in Breslau will live on. With all its jubilation, hustle and bustle, it remains as a gentle echo in our minds--a soft, dreamlike quiet. They were beautiful, glorious days, were not they, dear brothers? Like whirlwinds and waves, like a jubilation on the day of victory, the song of ten thousands of singers! . . . It is crystal clear that such a true patriotic feast, such a glorious revelation of the ideal forces of the Volk, resembles a mighty spring, from which all the participants draw, not only for themselves, but at the same time for the ones left at home. . . . What a tremendous unifying force was such a feast!³⁵⁰

In this recollection, the entire experience left an idyllic memory, and while we might question whether each German singer had this “beautiful, glorious” experience in reality or whether it only lived in the “rosy shimmer of memory,” we find this language in many of the descriptions of festivals or performances. Was it merely a type of formalized speech from a century past, or were they were genuinely caught up in the emotions of enjoying music together? The women who wrote memoirs (Susanne Schmaltz, Anna Ettlinger, and Ethel Smyth) also described music performance in these terms. We need to at least take seriously what being present in the spaces—moving through the streets as part of a parade of Germanism, walking into the gigantic halls festooned with garlands, wreaths, and banners, or standing on a stage with thousands of other men singing—meant in terms of forming emotional bonds. The writer above remembered it as a “tremendous unifying force” for not only the participants, but *all* Germans. The “ones left at home” could also draw from the “forces of the Volk” because singing was not limited to festivals; it was part of everyday life—a theme explored in greater detail in Chapter Five.

³⁵⁰ “7. Deutsches Sangerbundesfest in Breslau,” *Die Sangerhalle* 15. August 1907, 604.

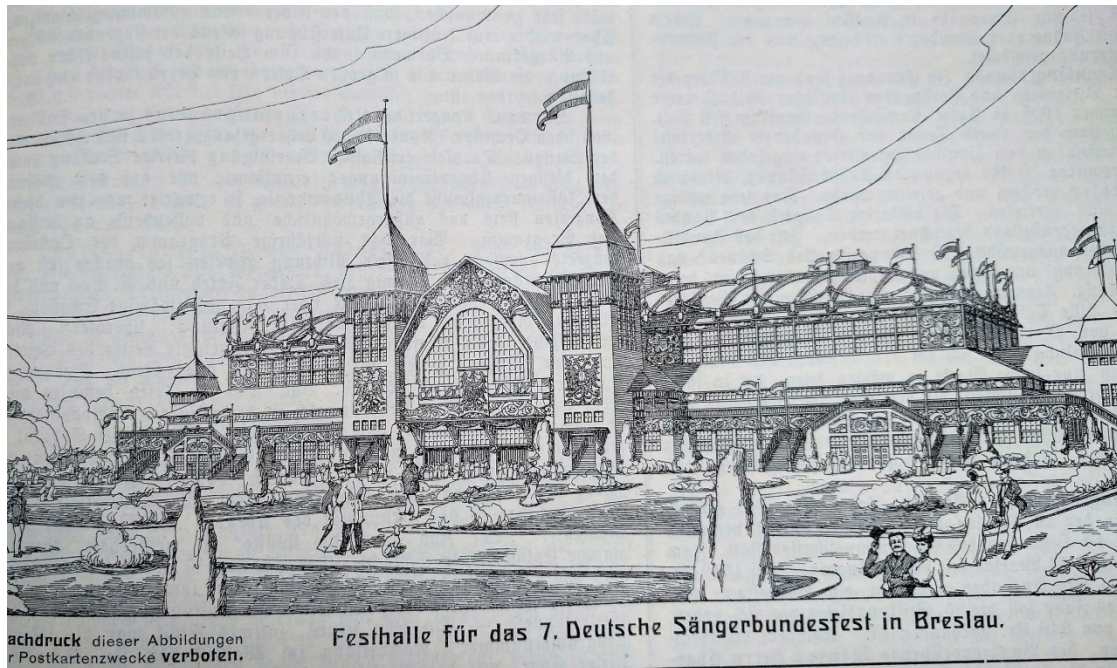


Figure 9 Postcard of the Breslau festival hall

A final material object provides a uniquely modern lens through which to glimpse turn of the century German society. Looking carefully at the drawing of the Festival Hall for the Seventh German Singing Festival in Breslau (reproduced above), we notice it bore a little warning in the lower left corner. “*Nachdruck dieser Abbildungen für Postkartenzwecke verboten*” (Use of this image for printing postcards is forbidden). Banners along with newspaper and stationery mastheads evoked Germany’s romanticized, medieval past; mottoes and patriotic songs emerged from the Napoleonic period; the *Lied* was suggestive of an existential German-ness; the picture postcard was not only German in origin, it was unabashedly modern.

The first postcard was issued in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1869 for business correspondence, and the *picture* postcard originated in 1870 to facilitate correspondence between soldiers and their families during the Franco-Prussian War. These postcards, issued by printers in both France and Germany, had simple drawings of weapons and peaceful battlefields. By the 1890s, picture postcards

were so popular that millions were mailed throughout Europe, North America, and Japan.³⁵¹ Part of their popularity was due to the fact that prior to World War I, newspapers had few illustrations. Picture postcards filled a gap by providing images of events one could otherwise only read about. Originating as a means of sending news from the war front and then as Christmas or New Years' cards, they soon developed into missives featuring tourist sites, famous people, world events, commemorations of festivals and exhibitions, art reproductions, comic, and pornographic visuals.

German-produced picture postcards were regarded worldwide as of the highest quality, and Germans excelled in their attentiveness to purchasing and writing postcards. A British newspaper reported,

The illustrated postcard craze, like the influenza, has spread to these islands from the Continent, where it has been raging with considerable severity. . . . Germany is a special sufferer from the circulation of these missives. The travelling Teuton seems to regard it as a solemn duty to distribute them from each stage of his journey. . . . His first care on reaching some place of note is to lay in a stock, and alternate the sipping of beer with the addressing of postcards.³⁵²

The German Imperial Post Office found that in one week in 1902, 10,128,569 picture postcards were sold—approximately one-and-a-half million for each day of the week. While no exact records have been kept about who bought these, one historian notes that postcards were “possibly the great vehicle for messages of the new urban proletariat between 1900 and 1914.”³⁵³ They were cheap, required only a short message, and could be quickly delivered. An article in the *Lincolnshire Echo* (January 1903) referred to the postcard as “the spirit of the age—brevity and speed,” and British writer Margaret Meadows (*The Girls' Realm*, 1900) said the postcard was “a sign of the times [for] a period peopled by a hurried generation that has not many minutes to spare for writing to friends, what with express trains going at the

³⁵¹ Seamus Kearns, „Collecting Picture Postcards,“ *Dublin Historical Record* 54, no. 2 (2001): 139-144; Frederic T. Corkett, “The Production and Collection of the Pictorial Postcard,” *Journal of the Society for Arts* 54, no. 2788 (April 1906): 622-640.

³⁵² Richard Carline, *Pictures in the Post: The Story of the Picture Postcard and Its Place in the History of Popular Art* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1971), 60. Quoted from the *Standard*, August 21, 1899.

³⁵³ John Fraser, “Propaganda on the Picture Postcard,” *Oxford Art Journal* 3, no. 2 (1980), 39.

rate of a mile a minute, telegrams and telephones.”³⁵⁴ The picture postcard reflected the frenzied pace of the *fin de siècle*—the ability to travel farther and faster and to communicate instantly.

Picture postcards, like the one of the Graz festival reproduced at the beginning of this chapter, became collectibles in the period from 1890 to 1914 and one British publisher claimed they were “in the best sense a highly educational medium.” Postcards were often marketed in packets as souvenirs and frequently featured artists’ drawings or art reproductions.³⁵⁵ The tenth *Fränkischen Sängerbundfest* in 1904 issued a postcard which featured a characteristic medieval image—a woman with a wreath around her head, dressed in a flowing white gown, and presenting a golden flask to a wandering minstrel who had a harp slung over his back. The ever-present castle appeared in the background. In a similar fashion, the Bavarian Workers’ *Sänger-Bundes-Fest* (1910) issued a postcard featuring a worker who held a harp and gestured to the medieval cityscape of Nürnberg. While the bourgeois and workers’ singing associations held separate festivals, they used the same images and sang from similar repertoires of *Lieder*.³⁵⁶ The picture postcard advertising their events tied them both to modernity, a German *Heimat* image, and a festival ritual.

Just as postcards were inexpensive to produce, sell, and buy, published music proliferated from the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries. D. W. Krummel, a scholar of library history, boldly claims that the emergence of printed musical texts was one of the most important events in the history of Western music.³⁵⁷ The earliest processes were labor intensive and tedious as we can see from the following description of a technique developed by the Leipzig firm of J. G. I. Breitkopf in the eighteenth century. The printing of a musical score used type that “consisted of small, standard-sized type units about the size of a note head, with which a complex score—staves, notes, stems and all—could be built

³⁵⁴ Carline, *Pictures in the Post*, 57.

³⁵⁵ Frederic T. Corkett, “The Production and Collection of the Pictorial Postcard,” *Journal of the Society for Arts* 54, no. 2788 (1906): 621-640.

³⁵⁶ Dieter Dowe, “The Workingmen’s Choral Movement in Germany before the First World War,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 2 (1978), 288-289; Friedhelm Brusniak, *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 805.

³⁵⁷ D. W. Krummel, *The Literature of Music Bibliography: An Account of the Writings on the History of Music Printing and Publishing* (Berkeley: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 360.

up piece by piece in the same way as complex decorative designs could be built up with printers' flowers."³⁵⁸ With the development of lithography and the success of the first lithographic steam press in the mid-nineteenth century, music publishing grew exponentially, and Leipzig established itself as the primary European center of music publishing. The success of all music publishers depended on their ability to predict emerging trends and after 1890 that was primarily the music of public concerts and popular entertainment—what became known as “trivial music.”³⁵⁹ A popular format was the single song-sheet whose publication reached a zenith by 1910. After this point, recorded music for phonographs and broadcasts took over the popular music market.³⁶⁰ Phonographs and mass-produced, inexpensive sheet music or postcards helped usher in what became known as “mass culture” where entertainment and glamor superseded “eternal and ethereal beauty, moral propriety, and personal transcendence.”³⁶¹ Critics of mass culture charged new media with a homogenizing of beliefs and practices that led to group-think and a sharp delineation between “high” and “low” culture. This was of particular concern in Germany where genuine appreciation of music was earnestly wrapped up in the concept of *Bildung*. The increasingly large music festivals that drew thousands of participants represented a conflict over popular versus art music in the decades before World War I.

3.1.4 The Main Event: *Die Hauptaufführung*³⁶²

As thrilling as the parade of banners was and as awe-inspiring the *Festhalle*, the entire purpose of a festival was to sing. It would be a daunting task to analyze every piece of music that was performed—and possibly pointless. I can, however, give an overall sense of what performance meant at the national festivals by looking at several of the programs in a general way to examine themes, and then I examine a

³⁵⁸ Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (New Castle, Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, 1995), 139.

³⁵⁹ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 311-312. Dahlhaus does not dismiss this music completely but notes the critiques leveled at it at the time and now. He offers that “lowbrow” music has always existed and that “highbrow” music has never been universally successful—even among its supposed audience.

³⁶⁰ Stanley Boorman, Eleanor Selfridge-Field and Donald W. Krummel, “Printing and Publishing of Music.” Oxford Music Online (2001).

³⁶¹ Andreas Huyssen, “Adorno in Reverse: From Hollywood to Richard Wagner,” *New German Critique*, no. 29 (1983): 8-38.

³⁶² *Die Hauptaufführung* was the expression used for the main choral program that made up the festival events. When there were a number of choirs who presented individual works, the *Hauptaufführung* also referred to the joint performance of a particular composition by all the assembled choirs.

few works in more detail in order to analyze continuity and change in the choral movement. Moving from one festival to another we observe a crescendo effect—in terms of the number of participants, the greater attention to details in planning, and the size of the spaces—until we arrive in Nuremberg in 1912 where the number of participants was so large, they could not all “fit” into one choir but had to be subdivided into two large 15,000-voice choruses as well as several smaller choirs consisting of the larger regional associations like the Swabian Choral Association, the Lower Austria Association, and the Westphalian Provincial Choral Association, who were asked to perform individual works rather than take part in the collective choirs. I plan to save the Nuremberg festival for the Third Movement because it sets the stage for World War I, but the festivals leading up to it demonstrate much about how the German Choral Association responded to shifting political, social, and economic trends.

In Chapter Two we noticed that the Munich festival organizers arranged the choral works for the first part of the program to highlight German history—moving chronologically from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century and particularly focusing on the events of the Napoleonic era. There was a purpose behind this—to convince Catholic Bavarians that they belonged to *Germany*, not the transnational Roman Catholic Church—and to remind everyone of Germany’s musical heritage. Did this pattern continue over the course of the next four decades, or did later festivals focus on other themes, or perhaps showcase certain musicians? I found that studying the programs and looking for patterns revealed answers to these questions and more.

Someone on the editorial board of *Die Sangerhalle* in 1896 was good enough to compile a list of all the works performed at the first four national festivals—arranged in alphabetical order by the composer’s last name. Two composers were clear favorites among the musicians of the DSB during the first three decades of national festivals. Felix Mendelssohn had at least one of his *Lied* compositions sung at each of the first four festivals including three at Hamburg.³⁶³ Friedrich Silcher also had at least one of his works performed at each of those festivals, and two, “Der Schweizer” and “Der Soldat,” were

³⁶³ Mendelssohn *Lied* compositions included “Festgesang an die Kunstler,” “Wasserfahrt,” “Der frohe Wandersmann,” and “Abschied vom Walde,” In addition, two choruses from his oratorios were performed: “O Eros, Allsieger,” from *Antigone* was sung at Munich, and “Auf rosprangender Flux,” from *Oedipus* was sung at Hamburg.

performed at both the first festival (Dresden) and the fourth (Vienna). We do not have a similar list for the final four festivals, but by examining the programs from *Die Sangerhalle* or the files of the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein*, we can get an almost complete account of the offerings at Stuttgart, Graz, Breslau and Nuremberg, and we see that Silcher’s popularity endured. He had at least one song performed at each of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth festivals.³⁶⁴ Mendelssohn’s “Festgesang an der Kunstler” was sung at Stuttgart, but in the following festivals only one of his *Lieder* was performed, “Der Soldat,” at Breslau. Silcher and Mendelssohn were two of the early composers that Otto Elben most admired, but by the turn of the century, Mendelssohn had begun to fall out of favor as a choice in the national festivals. (In Chapter Five I examine smaller festivals and local performances, and Mendelssohn’s works continued to be popular in those). One other composer from the earliest days of the choral movement who was almost as popular as Silcher and Mendelssohn was Conradin Kreutzer. He composed, among other things, “Die Siegesbotschaft,” which was part of the 1874 Munich festival which we looked at in some detail in Chapter Two, and that piece was repeated in 1896 at Stuttgart. Another of his works was performed at three different festivals: “Die Kapelle” appeared on the programs of Dresden, Vienna, and Breslau representing almost the complete time span of the DSB national festivals (1865-1907). No other composers on the long *Die Sangerhalle* list came close to the popularity of these three—especially when we factor in the four festivals that followed 1890.

The significance of the preceding recitation of what was sung when and where is that between 1902 and 1912, almost the entire repertoire of the early festivals had been replaced. *Lieder* dominated all the programs, but the only older pieces that achieved longevity were Silcher’s “Lorelei” and to a slightly lesser extent Kreutzer’s “Die Kapelle.”³⁶⁵ The change demonstrates something about *music and performance* in relation to *composers and directors*, and offers a way to characterize festival programs

³⁶⁴ At Stuttgart: “Morgen muss ich fort von hier,” “Schottischer Bardenchor,” and “Oberschwabisches Tanzliedchen.” At Graz: “Untreu.” At Breslau: “Annchen von Tharau,” “Der Schweizer,” and “Der Soldat.” At Nuremberg: “Lorelei.”

³⁶⁵ Munich festival: *Die Sangerhalle* 3. September 1874; Hamburg: *Die Sangerhalle* 13. Juli 1882; Vienna: *Die Sangerhalle* 15. Mai 1890; Stuttgart: ZFC-Arch B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 61; Graz: *Die Sangerhalle* 5. Juni 1902; Breslau: *Die Sangerhalle* 14. Marz 1907; Nuremberg: *Die Sangerhalle* 22. Mai 1912.

without examining each individual piece. If the meaning of the music lies in performance and not in the work itself, we need to look not at just *what* was performed but *why* and especially *how*. Contemplate all this apart from the historical setting is impossible because the directors, singers/musicians, and audiences participated in the context of their particular time and space.

The choral movement, which began in a rather narrow social realm whose members were contemporaries of Nägeli, Zelter, Goethe, and other early Romantics and enthusiasts of absolute music and ancient myth and poetry, fell victim to the demands of mass culture in the decades after 1870.³⁶⁶ Friedhelm Brusniak called the nineteenth-century *Lied* a “bridge from folk song to art song,” and its popularity owed much to the Romantic movement.³⁶⁷ It is also worth remembering that Hans Nägeli had suggested choirs begin by singing simple folk tunes, and as they acquired more skill, move to more difficult songs—per Brusniak, to sing “pure art song.” This was successful in larger, well-trained choirs, a couple of which we will look at in the next chapter, or even small-town choirs if they had members who were committed to the effort. However, Brusniak notes that popular culture worked against this goal and contributed to a decline in the types of music sung at the large festivals.³⁶⁸ By the end of the 1890s, the cultivation of the “pure art song” had given way to the demands of “the musically less-educated audience” who preferred popular, big-city type songs: satirical, comic, street-songs, or parodies (*zu großstädtischen Mode-“Couplets” Schnurren, Bänkelliedern und Parodien*).³⁶⁹ At the turn of the century, “Amusement became the leitmotif of bourgeois sociability.”³⁷⁰ Solving the conundrum of quality choral music for mass choirs became an almost insurmountable task.

At Munich in 1874, the organizers wanted to send a message of unity based on a common history, and they sat down and consciously chose music that fit that theme. There were echoes of this at Stuttgart (1896) where some of the same works were repeated, but the chronological-historical approach was

³⁶⁶ Huyssen, “Adorno in Reverse,” 9-10. The commodification of literature, art, and music began before 1870, but industrialization and commercialization sped up the process at the end of the nineteenth century.

³⁶⁷ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 142.

³⁶⁸ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 142.

³⁶⁹ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 142.

³⁷⁰ Rainer Traub, “Im Liede stark, deutsch bis ins Mark,” *Der Spiegel Geschichte*, no. 3 (2013): 116-125; here, 121.

missing. The Stuttgart program offered a mix of old and new songs and ushered in a period when the directors/conductors took a leading role in deciding what would be sung and wrote much of the music themselves. They were abiding by decisions made by the governing board of the DSB in response to criticisms of festival music dating back to the 1882 Hamburg festival. The final report of the festival committee that met after that event stated in part, “It is therefore to be observed at future festivals that the pieces of music possess not only high musical value but also the simplicity required for choirs of several thousand singers.”³⁷¹ The aim of the leaders of the choral movement was to preserve the German *Lied* while also maintaining a certain standard of quality. After a regional Singing Festival (*Gausängerfest*) in Fürth in 1898, Eduard Kremser, who was an experienced choral director, was asked to critique the performances. Brusniak records that he was brutally honest (*in schonungsloser Offenheit*). The two main pieces (*Hauptaufführungen*) were too similar and were excessively long. In addition, there was an overall dearth of “artistically interesting works.”³⁷² Kremser became one of several men who composed music for, and directed the choirs of, the national festivals after 1900.

Once again the program of the 1874 Munich festival proves instructive. Almost all of the compositions chosen for that festival were written by men who had already died—works that had acquired lasting value. The two exceptions were “Macte Imperator” (words by Felix Dahn; music by Franz Lachner) and a work written by Franz Wüllner, the *Hofkapellmeister* in Munich.³⁷³ By the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century, we find that the programs were made up of choral works largely written by living composers many of whom were also engaged as the directors of men’s choirs and held leadership positions in the DSB. At Graz, Breslau, and Nuremberg, the last three national DSB festivals held before World War I, a small group of men led the combined choirs, and they were often directing

³⁷¹ Quoted by Brusniak in *Das grosse Buch*, 140.

³⁷² Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 146.

³⁷³ Lachner had been *Kapellmeister* in Munich from 1835-1864; he was replaced by Hans von Bülow, Richard Wagner’s choice. Von Bülow was then replaced by Wüllner in 1869--also Wagner’s choice, and because his musical opinions reigned supreme in Bavaria, he had the final say. In keeping with the theme of the Munich 1874 festival, “Macte Imperator” dealt with the *Leipzigerschlacht*/the Battle of Nations (1813) and the coalition of German forces that repelled the French. Wüllner was not a member of the DSB but was asked to conduct the choirs because of his position in Munich as the city’s musical director.

their own, or each other's, compositions. One of these was Eduard Kremser, and the others were Hugo Jüngst and Gustav Wohlgenuth. Two other men, Max Meyer-Olbersleben and Heinrich Zöllner, were also prolific composers whose music was as popular in small-town festivals as at the large national festivals. Of these five, very little of their choral music has endured the test of time. Anton Bruckner was the only composer whose work appeared on the DSB national festival programs and is well-known today. The five listed above were committed to the all-male choral movement and they were able to partially answer some of the critiques of festival music. They wrote simpler pieces that massive choirs could more easily perform, and they continued to include a few purely artistic pieces in the programs.

These lesser-known composers and conductors played a significant role in the music culture of their day, and for this reason, their careers are important to my story. Two of them were Austrians. Kremser (1838-1914) was born and died in Vienna. For thirty years (1869-99) he was the chorus master of the Vienna Men's Choral Society (*Wiener Männergesangverein*) and in addition, led various other choirs. He wrote light operas, several symphonic sketches with voice parts, *Lieder*, and piano music.³⁷⁴ He is possibly best-known in the English-speaking world for one of his *Sechs altniederländische Volkslieder* which was translated and used as a hymn often sung at Thanksgiving, "We Gather Together."³⁷⁵ Anton Bruckner (1824-1896) was also Austrian and today far better known than Kremser. He was born in Linz, raised Roman Catholic, and wrote a number of sacred choral works: Masses, Psalms, Te Deums, a Magnificat, motets. His secular compositions were written primarily for choral societies and always with German texts (as opposed to his sacred music written for the Latin liturgy). Unlike the other men mentioned here, he only occasionally directed choirs and was primarily an organist and composer. The choice of his works for several DSB festivals reflects the goal to improve the quality of the repertoire.

German composers Hugo Jüngst (1853-1923), Heinrich Zöllner (1854-1941), and Max Meyer-Olbersleben (1850-1927) all studied in their youth with well-known musicians in Dresden, Leipzig,

³⁷⁴ Paul Hawkshaw and Timothy L. Jackson, "Bruckner, (Joseph) Anton, Oxford Music Online (2011).

³⁷⁵ *Sechs altniederländische Volkslieder* <https://hymnary.org/tune/kremser>

Munich, and/or Weimar; they led numerous men's choirs over the course of their careers, and composed choral music as well as symphonies, piano compositions, or other orchestral works. Zöllner was the son of a well-known musician in Leipzig who subsequently had a choral society named for him—the *Zöllnerbund*.³⁷⁶ Heinrich, the son, taught composition at the University of Leipzig and at the Leipzig Conservatory after spending his early years in various cities from Russia to the Netherlands developing his reputation as a skilled musician.³⁷⁷ Meyer-Olbersleben, professor of composition at the *Bavarian State Conservatory of Music* in Würzburg, and Jüngst both served on the governing board of the DSB from 1898 and 1907 respectively. The formal organizational structure of the DSB and its regional societies were based on democratic governing structures with elected officers and written constitutions. The men who were chosen for leadership roles made the day-to-day decisions about what the members would sing, and they planned and organized the national festivals and their programs. By 1900, the first generation who originally founded the German Choral Association had passed away; Otto Elben died in 1899 and was one of the last of that generation. These new men replaced them and had to deal with preserving the original goals amidst changing circumstances.

I left Gustav Wohlgenuth (1863-1937) for last because although he belonged to the new generation, he followed a different path to leadership in the DSB. He was born in the musical city of Leipzig and trained as a teacher—at a time when teacher training included the ability to sight-read music and to play the piano and violin. While teaching at the *Leipzig Volksschule*, he began directing two men's choirs which he combined in 1891 as the *Leipziger Männerchor* (Leipzig Men's Choir).³⁷⁸ Just the year before, he had attended the DSB national festival in Vienna and became inspired to spend the rest of his life training all-male choirs. His first choir in Leipzig had 80 members; by 1912 there were 300 singers in

³⁷⁶ *Die Sängerkirche*, 30. April 1870, 62-63. There was an article about the *Zöllnerbund* in this *Die Sängerkirche* edition that listed nineteen individual men's choruses, most of which had between 18-20 members. The one that rehearsed more than twice a week was a working men's chorus.

³⁷⁷ Deane L. Root, "Zöllner, Heinrich," Oxford Music Online (2011).

³⁷⁸ The *Volksschule* (People's School) was the school system for everyone (the *Volk*) and was compulsory, universal, and free. It was a system first developed under Frederick the Great in 1771, and thereafter it was periodically reformed. Teachers were some of the most vociferous proponents of government reform and were the original nationalists. Many of them came out of the university system that preserved the *Bürschenschaft* movement founded by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn. Wohlgenuth was undoubtedly an early-twentieth-century German nationalist.

his Leipzig *Männerchor*. Although he eventually studied composition at the Leipzig Music Conservatory, his reputation for directing choirs won him numerous invitations as a guest conductor in cities throughout Germany.³⁷⁹ Wohlgemuth served on the executive board of the DSB as a “music authority” from 1898-1932 and was the editor of *Die Sangerhalle* from 1906 until 1926.

As editor, Wohlgemuth began to include performance notes in the editions leading up to the national festivals. Six weeks before the Graz festival, Wohlgemuth included these instructions: verses 1, 2, and 3 of Silcher’s “Untreue” should be sung “at a moderate pace, in 6/8 time;” verse 4 at a faster pace, and verse 5 slowly and softly (p). From the words, “ich mocht’ am liebsten sterben,” it should be very soft (pp) until the end. For Wohlgemuth’s own composition, “Magdlein, hab’ acht!” he gave a specific tempo: an eighth note=152-160; the sixteenth notes throughout the piece should be accented so as not sound blurred together. The last four bars of the song should not be too fast but end very loud (ff) and the entire final lines sung in a “sassy, bold tone” (*das Ganze in ubermutigem, keckem Tone*).³⁸⁰ Before the 1907 festival in Breslau, the choral directors Wohlgemuth, Kremser, and Paul Hielscher offered longer and more detailed performance notes for the pieces they planned to direct. Wohlgemuth’s instructions for Zollner’s “Bonifacius” filled an entire column of one page of *Die Sangerhalle*. With this background in mind—problems with performances at the large festivals, a decline in interest in “pure art song,” the emergence of mass culture, and the passing of the generations of men who first created choral clubs—I want to look at a criticism of the movement which is common in today’s literature.

German historian Rainer Traub maintains that “mass-produced cultural goods gained the upper hand in music . . . and hawkers peddled cheap, trashy music causing gentlemen to hold their noses.”³⁸¹ Dutch historian, Joep Leerssen, goes further and argues that the repertoire of the entire men’s choral movement was “banal.” He uses a poem recited at the outset of the DSB festival in Breslau to establish this thesis and concludes that the men who were part of the movement took music lightly, describing

³⁷⁹ *Die Sangerhalle*, 17. Juli 1912, 525-25. His was one of several biographies of representatives of the DSB that appeared in this edition of the paper.

³⁸⁰ *Die Sangerhalle*, 5. Juni 1902, 281. The tempo indicates that 152-160 eighth notes should be sung/played in one minute.

³⁸¹ Traub, “Im Liede stark,” 121.

them as “German males who once a week indulged in their leisure pursuit of choral singing with a glass or two of beer afterwards” and had “a slumbering readiness to go berserk for the noble cause of the Fatherland.”³⁸² While I do not disagree with much of what Leerssen goes on to say, I think he oversimplifies the entire choral movement by conflating the songs and patriotic enthusiasm of the massive twentieth-century DSB festivals with the entire history of German men’s choruses. I included the biographical information about Kremser, Jüngst, Wohlgemuth, Meyer-Olbersleben and Zöllner to establish that they were well-trained musicians who had a serious interest in good music. They understood the difficulties of directing thousands of singers, and they made some attempt to infuse the festival performances with aesthetic nuance. They each led well-trained and respected choirs apart from the festivals and attained national recognition. When thousands of singers convened at Graz, Breslau, or Nuremberg for a festival, directors had only a few hours to rehearse the choirs. As much as the men in charge of these festival events tried, they could not get the same quality of performance from 15,000 men as from a group of thirty, or even three hundred men who sang and practiced together on a regular basis. DSB leaders like Wohlgemuth, Kremser, Jüngst, Zöllner, or Meyer-Olbersleben attempted to preserve the organization as an *ideal type* but found themselves caught up in a changing world. With that in mind, I direct our attention to three works performed at festivals at Stuttgart, Graz, or Breslau and how these works transcended some of the criticisms articulated above.

The Uhland/Kreutzer *Lied*, “Die Kapelle,” and Heine/Silcher’s “Lorelei” demonstrate that well-written songs that told a story were able to stand the test of time for several reasons. The poets and composers were popular, and the themes were enduring. As well, they represented a longing for earlier times in the midst of the stresses of modernity.³⁸³ The early Romantics looked to the medieval or early modern period for the true roots of the people, and early twentieth-century Germans found reassurance in

³⁸² Joep Leerssen, “The Choir’s Message, the Choir as Medium,” in *Choral Societies and Nationalism in Europe*, ed. Krisztina Lajosi and Andreas Stynen (Boston: Brill, 2015), 15.

³⁸³ Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century*, 302-310. The early nineteenth-century singers were liberal nationalists who envisioned a unified Germany that embraced the ideals of the Enlightenment and believed music could facilitate that. The culture of the *Kaiserreich* seemed to belie that in many ways. Per Blackbourn, “What if the attempts to spread culture and education succeeded only in laying a thin veneer of civility on the brutish masses? At this point, doubt turned easily into fear” (304).

the songs of the previous century's poets and composers. "Die Kapelle" and "Lorelei" drew on nature (mountains, valleys, meadows), a simple shepherd boy, and a well-known bend in the Rhine River. And they addressed the universal theme of death. "Die Kapelle" was a poem written by Ludwig Uhland in 1805, and in addition to the Kreutzer arrangement, it was also set to music by Schumann, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Abt, and Gluck.³⁸⁴ Uhland and Kreutzer, whose names were inscribed on the 1870 *Die Sangerhalle* masthead illustration, lived during the early nineteenth century and were considered pioneers of *Lieder*. Elben had praised Kreutzer's ability to match the tones of Uhland's poems when setting them to music. Their enduring popularity says something about the significance of the Napoleonic era and Romanticism to Germans living at the dawn of the next century.³⁸⁵ Uhland's poem was short and was a poignant statement about the fleeting nature of life.

Die Kapelle

Droben stehet die Kapelle,
Schauet still ins Tal hinab.
Drunten singt bei Wies' und Quelle
Froh und hell der Hirtenknab'.

The chapel stands there, above,
Looking down on the still valley below.
Where a cheerful, bright shepherd boy
Sings by a spring in the meadow.

Traurig tont das Glocklein nieder,
Schauerlich der Leichenchor,
Stille sind die frohen Lieder,
Und der Knabe lauscht empor.

The bell rings sorrowfully down the valley,
and the unearthly sound of the corpses choir,
silencing the cheerful Lieder,
and the shepherd boy listens in.

Droben bringt man sie zu Grabe,
Die sich freuten in dem Tal.
Hirtenknabe, Hirtenknabe!
Dir auch singt man dort einmal.³⁸⁶

Down to the grave he was brought,
Where joy was in the valley.
Shepherd boy, shepherd boy!
Their song will be for you one day.

Unlike some of the works we looked at earlier, one can find recent analysis of this poem, and because so many respected musicians set it to music, we have to reconsider the assertion that songs sung by DSB choirs were "banal." YouTube recordings reveal that it is a short song (a little over two minutes),

³⁸⁴ There are several versions of "Die Kapelle" on YouTube. The fact that so many accomplished musicians set the poem to music says something about the value they placed on the poem, and the fact that men's choirs are still performing it says something about the enduring quality of the individual compositions. Search for "Die Kapelle by Kreutzer" for the version sung by DSB choirs.

³⁸⁵ Works by these composers are well-represented in the repertoire of the Berlin Liedertafeln, a choir that toured worldwide during the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century.

³⁸⁶ I accessed the poem, accompanied by an artist's illustration and an interpretation of the poem by Eva Herold, from www.digitale-schule-bayern.de/dsdaten/587/902.pdf. This is my translation.

and the music matches the tone of the poem. The lines that referenced death and burial were written to be sung softly and with an air of melancholy. The poem established a dramatic contrast between both youth and death and between the cheerful meadow and the grave. These contrasts can be heard in the music as well as the words. The last two lines were emphatic, “Hirtenknabe, Hirtenknabe!” is sung twice, as though to say, “Listen shepherd boy! Listen! Life is very short!” In one sense it was a good choice for a massive choir because of its length, but singing it well required skill and practice in order to give the words and tune proper inflection, dynamics, and attention to text.

Some performance details were not clearly articulated in *Die Sangerhalle* or in the individual programs. Choirs may have sung *a capella*, while some programs noted an orchestra accompaniment. However, one reporter noted, “It was indisputable that the best performances were of simple *a capella* songs.”³⁸⁷ Men singing folksongs from their hearts produced a better sound than poorly executed art songs. There was not only a sense of nostalgia in singing the older songs, but these were the ones that earned the praise of Elben at mid-century and apparently remained popular for singers and audiences alike. Themes of nature (flowers, seasons, morning or evening), churches/religion, and death were popular as well as love, soldiering, home (*Heimat*), and historic events (Hermann’s victory over the Romans in 9 C. E., Bards, Bonifacius—the “apostle of the Germans, the reformer of the Frankish church, and the chief fomenter of the alliance between the papacy and the Carolingian family”—battles of the Napoleonic era), and even songs about songs (“Weihe des Liedes” or Consecration of the Song).³⁸⁸

Silcher’s “Die Lorelei” was one of the most popular songs sung by nineteenth-century choirs and was a song closely associated with German culture and Romanticism. Heinrich Heine composed the poem, “Die Lorelei,” in 1824 and borrowed the story from a ballad written by Clemens Brentano in 1801. The name, *Lorelei* (sometimes spelled Lore-Ley or Loreley), refers to a high steep rock along the right bank of the Rhine River near St. Goar. Brentano’s ballad drew on Homer’s *Odyssey* and/or the folktale

³⁸⁷ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 151. Brusniak’s source is, *Offizielle illustrierte Fest-Chronik des X. Frankischen Sangerbundesfests in Wurzburg 1904*.

³⁸⁸ Norman F. Cantor, *The Civilization of the Middle Ages: A Completely Revised and Expanded Edition of Medieval History, The Life and Death of a Civilization* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994), 167-68.

Rapunzel. Brentano's story, supposedly the rebirth of an old German legend, featured an enchanting sea maiden who, perched on the rocky abutment along the Rhine, sang a beautiful song which lured sailors towards the dangerous curve in the river. Heine's poem based on the Brentano tale was set to music by Friedrich Silcher in 1837, and the popularity of the musical rendition enabled the Heine version to subsume Brentano's.³⁸⁹ The words below are an English translation by Mark Twain who spent the summer of 1878 in Heidelberg and traveled through the region by boat, foot, and train—later memorialized in *A Tramp Abroad* (1880). Twain included a chapter about the song in his reminiscences of the trip, and this is how he described his own translation:

If I were at home, no doubt I could get a translation of this poem, but I am abroad and can't; therefore I will make a translation myself. It may not be a good one, for poetry is out of my line, but it will serve my purpose—which is, to give the unGerman young girl a jingle of words to hang the tune on until she can get hold of a good version, made by someone who is a poet and knows how to convey a poetical thought from one language to another.³⁹⁰

Twain later found an English translation by scholar L. W. Garnham but in the end preferred his own saying Garnham's "don't fit the tune snugly enough." Twain's family was with him on his travels and he probably had his own daughter in mind when he wrote about giving the "unGerman young girl" English words to sing. Mark Twain clearly understood that to "fit the tune" was the goal of a composer. If English speakers could not sing Silcher's melody, the song lost its import. Twain added that at the time of his visit to Germany the song had been popular for forty years, and in his inimical fashion offered the belief that it would remain "a favorite always, maybe."³⁹¹

"Die Lorelei," by Heinrich Heine, translated by Mark Twain
 I cannot divine what it meaneth,
 This haunting nameless pain:
 A tale of the bygone ages
 Keeps brooding through my brain:

The faint air cools in the gloaming,
 And peaceful flows the Rhine,
 The thirsty summits are drinking
 The sunset's flooding wine;

³⁸⁹ „Die Lorelei,“ german.berkeley.edu/leselust/poetry-corner/heinrich-heine-die-lore-ley/

³⁹⁰ Mark Twain, *A Tramp Abroad*, Chapter XVI. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/119/119-h/119-h.htm#p141>

³⁹¹ Twain, *A Tramp Abroad*, Chapter XVI.

High-throned in yon blue air,
Her golden jewels are shining
She combs her golden hair;

She combs with a comb that is golden,
And sings a weird refrain
That steeps in a deadly enchantment
The list'ner's ravished brain:

The doomed in his drifting shallop,
Is tranced with the sad sweet tone,
He sees not the yawning breakers,
He sees but the maid alone:

The pitiless billows engulf him!—
So perish sailor and bark;
And this, with her baleful singing,
Is the Lorelei's grewsome work.³⁹²

Both the Uhland/Kreutzer and Heine/Silcher pieces remained popular because they had lovely tunes, as well as literary structures that were deeper than a surface reading (or hearing) would suggest. Just as Germans longed for the imagined past of *Heimat*, the old beautiful countryside and walled cities, they favored songs that reminded them of simpler times and ancient legends—even invented ones.

The final choral work I examine in this section on festival music is Anton Bruckner's *Germanenzug*, described as a "secular, patriotic cantata" for males voices with a brass accompaniment.³⁹³ The text was by August Silberstein. German singers were undeniably enthusiastic for the Fatherland, and this work demonstrated not only patriotism, but also the enduring interest in mythology that occupied so much energy in the nineteenth century. Bruckner wrote this as an entry for a competition in 1864—the *Oberösterreichisch-Salzburgisches Sängerbundesfest* (Upper Austria-Salzburg Choral Association Festival)—where he won only second prize but was rewarded by having it published. It was Bruckner's first published work.

"Germanenzug," by Anton Bruckner

Germanen durchschreiten des Urwaldes Nacht,
Sie ziehen zum Kampfe, zu heiliger Schlacht.
Es steh'n die Eichen im düsteren Kreis,

Germans stride for forest's darkness,
They are looking for struggle and holy battle.
Oak trees form a bleak circle,

³⁹² Translation by Mark Twain. <https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/translation-heines-die-lorelei>

³⁹³ Paul Hawkshaw and Timothy L. Jackson, "Anton Bruckner," Oxford Music Online (2011).

Und sie rauschen so bang und flüstern so leis,
Als sollte der Kreiger gewaltigen Schwarm
Durchdringen die Ahnung, erfassen der Harm!

Sie aber, sie wandeln urkräftigen Tritts,
So nahet der Donner mit zündendem Blitz!
Und aus des Gezweiges wild düsterem Hang,
Da wird es jetzt lauter, da tönt ein Gesang,
Denn der Walkyren bewachend Geleit
Umschwebet die Helden und singet vom Streit.

In Odins Hallen ist es licht und fern der Erdenpein,
Aus Freyas Wonnestrahlen bricht die Seligkeit
 herein!
Solgofnir ruft den gold'nen Tag und Bragas harfe
 klingt,
Mit Balmungschlag und im Gelag, die süße Zeit
 entschwingt.

In Odins Hall ist es licht und fern der Erdenpein.
Wer mutig für das Höchste ficht, der geht zu
 Göttern ein!
O, Liebe ist's, die uns beschwingt, zu künden
 das Geschicht.
Der Kampf nun winkt, ihr alle sinkt, und keiner
 kehrt zurück!

Da schlagen die Krieger mit wilder Gewalt
Die Schwerter zum Schilde, dass es hallt und
 erschallt!
“Und soll denn dies Schreiten das letzte auch
 sein,
So wollen wir gerne dem Tode uns weih'n;
Doch möge aus diesem so mutigen Zieh'n
Der Segen der Heimat, das Siegen erblüh'n!

Teutonias Söhne, mit freudigem Mut,
Sie geben so gerne ihr Leben und Blut,
Die Freiheit, die Heimat ja ewig bestehn,
Die flüchtigen Güter, sie mögen vergehn!”
So riefen die Krieger, so zogen sie fort,
Gesegnet ihr Tun und bewahret ihr Wort!

And rustle anxiously and whisper quietly
As if foreboding and grief were to grip
The enormous army of warriors.

They, however, stroll with firm steps,
While thunder and all-igniting lightning
 approach
And from the dark branches
Louder noises are heard, a song resounds
As the Valkyries waft around
And guard the heroes, and sing about battle.

Odin's hall are full of light and free of earthly
 pain,
And bliss gushes out of Freya's rays of delight
Solgofnir calls for golden day, and Bragi's
 harp sounds,
The sweet time arises with sword clang and
 revelry.

Odin's halls are full of light and free of
 earthly pain.
He who courageously fights for the highest
 will sit next to the gods!
O, 't is love that elates us to announce your
 fate.

Battle awaits you, and everyone will fall,
 none will return!
Here, the warriors boisterously strike
The swords against the shield so that it
 resounds!

“And if this be our last march,
We willingly devote ourselves to death;
But may the blessing of our home and
 victory bloom
Due to this courageous trek.

Teutonia's sons, with joyous courage,
Gladly give their lives and blood.
As liberty and fatherland will always exist,
Dwindling goods may elapse!”
Thus cried the warriors who marched
 towards battle,
Whose deeds may be blest and whose words
 may be preserved.³⁹⁴

Like Mendelssohn's “Festgesang an die Künstler,” this Bruckner piece is fairly long—over eight minutes in performance. Both the Mendelssohn and Bruckner works were performed at Stuttgart in 1896,

³⁹⁴ Anton Bruckner, “Germanenzug,” *Sämtliche Werke* Band 22/7 (Vienna: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag der Internationalen Bruckner-Gesellschaft Wien 1987/1998).

and both were written for brass accompaniment; the Stuttgart program shows that they were performed with an orchestra and that “Germanenzug” was sung by a “half-choir” (*Halbchor*). As it is a challenging composition, the organizers must have felt a smaller choir could sing it more successfully.³⁹⁵ A description of the piece by Uwe Harten explains that “the outer sections portray German warriors going into battle, and the middle section is a song of the Valkyries who describe the delight of Walhalla”—the final resting place of heroic warriors killed in battle.³⁹⁶ Harten continues by explaining that the brass section acts as another voice in the drama rather than a mere accompaniment to the voices. The choir sings both as a separate “voice” (sometimes *a capella*) and as a backdrop to the soloists. The opening two verses are more declamatory (“warriors going into battle”) and the middle section more melodic. Bruckner’s use of choir, soloists, and brass assertedly demonstrates how the music “carries” the message. Instrumentalists are able to shape the emotions of bare notes on a score through practiced skill—their breath control, fingering, use of their mouths in shaping and defining the tones and notes, and so forth. Trained singers do the same thing—they do not just sing words, they infuse them with tone and meaning. Because “Germanenzug” is a dramatic, musical exposition of German myth with the heroic deeds of legendary Germanic figures, it lends itself to the criticism of overtly nationalist sentiments, but it is powerfully and beautifully written. The minor key and chromaticization lend it the air of modernity characteristic of late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century German composition. There was no follow-up report critiquing the performance of the Bruckner piece, but its theme recommended it to the singers who believed they could preserve their nation by singing together and found existential worth in ancient myths.

Per Christopher Small, performance has as much to do with what people get out of a “work” as it does with the excellence of musical execution. A Broadway cast of the musical, *Carousel*, undoubtedly sings “You’ll Never Walk Alone” better than a rowdy soccer crowd, but “You’ll Never Walk Alone” as a

³⁹⁵ There are several current recordings on YouTube. One does not need to know German to experience the drama of the musical story. This is one of Bruckner’s least well-known compositions today. His religious compositions and especially his symphonies are what have endured. During his lifetime he was also an acclaimed organist.

³⁹⁶ Uwe Harten, *Anton Bruckner. Ein Handbuch*. (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1996), 174-75.

musical composition would have never had lasting fame if it had not been taken up by Liverpoolian soccer fans--they have turned it into an expression of belonging that transcends the musical worth of the song. In an interview with a reporter for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* a British soccer fan explained: "When you stand on Anfield Road and hear this sound—it doesn't go into your ear but into your gut. . . . It is an expression of overpowering collective emotion."³⁹⁷ In the festival culture of the *Kaiserreich* something similar evidenced itself. The *music itself* had the power to unite singers, but it was the *act of musicking* that created emotional communities. This was the meaning of "Eintracht hält Macht"—the act of singing in concert together created a powerful unity that had meaning beyond the printed words and notes. Ethnomusicologist Bernard Lortat-Jacob conducted a study of a choir in a Sardinian monastery, and from the time he spent with the men along with his interviews with them, he offered this conclusion. "Singing is necessary, and it ranks first among its virtues in that it forces you to get along (well). . . . Singing is not only spiritual in its content, but is equally spiritual in its very nature, since bound up in the act of singing is the love for one's fellow human being."³⁹⁸ When soccer fans, Sardinian monks, or nineteenth-century choristers stood shoulder to shoulder, row upon row, with other singers, they lost themselves in the group. The best choirs are those in which individual voices blend into a single, balanced sound—each singer listening for the voices around them. It takes intense work and cooperation to make that happen, and once singers experience the overwhelming sense of unity that comes from singing well, and especially singing from the heart, it is not something that can simply be laid aside when the rehearsal or performance is over. That experience binds individuals into a community.

As we come to the end of this chapter about the festivals of the men's choirs that made up the *Deutscher Sängerbund*, we can pull some strands back together by looking at two festivals. One is the 1874 Munich DSB festival which I have referenced several times, and the other is the last festival of the time period under consideration here—the Breslau national festival of 1907. These serve as temporal

³⁹⁷ Quoted in "Ritual in Soccer" by Gunter Gebauer, *Emotions in Rituals And Performances*, ed. Axel Michaels and Christoph Wulf (London: Routledge, 2012), 312-13.

³⁹⁸ Bernard Lortat-Jacob, "Concord and Discord: Singing Together in a Sardinian Brotherhood," trans. and ed. Marc Benamou, in *Chorus and Community*, ed. Karen Alquist (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 96.

bookends within which an entire range of continuity along with some deviations can be found as though by selecting one book and another out of those pressed together by the weight of years we find traces of change. The choice of music for any performance reveals much about the time and place and that of these two festivals exposes changes wrought by rapid economic growth and social rifts in the decades following the establishment of the German Empire. We have already considered some of the individual compositions from each festival, but what I want to examine in conclusion are overall decisions about music for these festival programs—what do the selections tell us about static or changing values during the first thirty-six years of the German Empire?

The second and seventh national festivals of the German Choral Association in 1874 and 1907 had much in common in terms of rituals and practices and differed in fine-drawn details. The rituals of traveling by train, assembling at the train station, and marching with banners through the respective cities remained the same while the number of participants increased greatly. *Die Sangerhalle* gave some specific details about the choirs who came to sing in Munich: 385 cities were represented, and cities like Berlin, Chemnitz, Dresden, and Munich had more than one choir in attendance—for instance, twenty-one individual choirs travelled from Dresden to Munich.³⁹⁹ The reporter for the *Suddeutsche Reichs-Post* estimated the total number of singers at the Munich festival at 6000 men.⁴⁰⁰ By contrast, the editors of *Die Sangerhalle* reported that they expected at least 20,000 singers to participate in the Seventh Choral Festival in July of 1907. Although a final number was not recorded for the Breslau festival, the parade from the train station to the festival hall on July 29 lasted from one o’clock in the afternoon until six o’clock that evening presenting what must have been an enormous as well as an impressive sight.⁴⁰¹ At both festivals, the men charged with giving speeches welcomed singers with formulaic phrases about the praiseworthy qualities of German song and the joy felt when singers gathered from “north and south, east and west.” The DSB representative in Munich added, “The whole German people sing. Singing is the

³⁹⁹ *Die Sangerhalle* 3. September 1874. There were also several choirs from Austria and one from New York.

⁴⁰⁰ *Suddeutsche Reichs-Post* July 1874 <https://books.google.com/>

⁴⁰¹ *Die Sangerhalle* 15. August 1907. Another music journal that sent a reporter to review the festival music estimated the number of Breslau singers at 15,000. *Die Musik* Vol. 6, Part 4 (Berlin: Schuster and Loeffler, 1906-1907): 249-250.

revelation of the German genius. In this is found the German essence.” (*Das ganze deutsche Volk singt. Gesang ist die Offenbarung des deutschen Genius. Darin fündet sich germanisches Wesen*).⁴⁰² And at Breslau the mayor claimed that they gathered “to cooperate in the greatness of our people and the preservation of its might through the unifying power of German song, uniting all German tribes.” (*Durch die dem deutschen Liede innewohnende, alle deutschen Volksstämme einigende Kraft mitzuarbeiten an der Größe unseres Volkes und der Erhaltung seiner Macht*).⁴⁰³ The capacity of the *Lied* to both express the spirit of the German people, and to unite them geographically, was a thread that ran through the long nineteenth-century. There were, however, dramatic changes in German society in the first decades after unification, and we can use the festivals to demonstrate some of these.

The size of the crowds who came to festivals increased because of the expansion of the railway system, but I plan to use the songs they chose to sing to demonstrate a shift in national aspirations on a more esoteric level. I suggest that musical programs were purposefully designed to create a particular “mood” or develop a theme as an aspect of the rituals inherent in choral festivals. Organizers of all festivals wanted to project German unity through German song, but the enthusiasm of recent unification versus the anxieties of the turn of the century were reflected in the Munich and Breslau programs (both programs shown below). The choirs who gathered in 1874 were the first to celebrate the new nation, and their program was put together to proclaim that victory through song. We looked at the first part of the Munich festival in some detail in Chapter Two. The compositions were arranged chronologically and began and ended with religious pieces (“Psalm 111” and the Klopstock/Klein motet, “You will Rise Again from the Dust”).⁴⁰⁴ But the heart of Part I dealt with the Napoleonic era. The songs that preceded and followed those Napoleonic era works drew attention to the richness of Germany’s past musical culture (Handel, Mozart, Beethoven) and its religious inheritance (the psalm and hymn).

⁴⁰² *Die Sangerhalle* 3. September 1874, 129.

⁴⁰³ *Die Sangerhalle*, 25. Juli 1907, 585.

⁴⁰⁴ Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) is best known for his epic poem, *Der Messias*, from which the motet here was taken. Bernhard Klein (1793-1832) was a contemporary of the early Romantics, so his composition fits with those of the Napoleonic era on the 1874 Munich festival program. Gustav Mahler used the Klopstock poem as the theme of his Symphony No. 2, *Resurrection Symphony*.

The first part of the program reminded the audience of Germany's musical heritage and the events that fostered German nationalism in the Napoleonic era; Part II of the Munich program featured mid-nineteenth German composers and showcased Germany's most recent victory over France (1871), which resulted in the creation of the *Kaiserreich*. "Macte Imperator" (Hail Emperor) and "Deutscher Siegesgesang" (German Victory Song) were the only two works on this day's program written by living composers who also attended the festival. These works were situated at the mid-point and end of Part II. Introducing Lachner's piece were three works by well-known composers of the early nineteenth century: Schubert's, "Lord, our God, Hear our Pleas," Eichendorff/Zöllner's "Morning Prayer," and Franz Schubert's "In the Distance." In a supposed age of secularization, prayers remained one of the more common themes of songs. In Munich religious sentiment and current circumstances set the stage for Lachner's "Macte Imperator." Notice the first lines of Schubert's "In the Distance."

Woe to the fugitive
 Fleeing the world!
 Roaming foreign places
 Forgetting his homeland,
 Hating his mother's house,
 Leaving his friends
 Alas, no blessing follows
 Along their ways.⁴⁰⁵

Schubert, the first great composer of *Lieder*, died in 1828, but this song was surely interpreted by Germans living in the 1870s as a lament for all their friends and family members who emigrated before unification was complete. Emigration continued through the nineteenth century, but many of the Germans who left between 1825 and 1860 did so for political reasons abandoning hopes for German unification. Schubert's *Lied* set the mood for Lachner's composition hailing the Kaiser as the new, victorious emperor of the second German Empire. Franz Lachner who wrote "Macte Imperator," directed the combined men's choirs and orchestra, and the *Süddeutsche Reichs-Post* reported that this performance was the

⁴⁰⁵ "In der Ferner" (In the Distance) was part of a 14-song collection Schubert entitled "Schwanengesang." The translation here is by Celia Sgroi. www.gopera.com/lieder/translation/schubert_957.pdf

highlight of the festival. As the last notes died out, the audience responded with such stormy applause that Lachner and the musicians repeated the entire work as an encore.⁴⁰⁶

This program was victoriously nationalistic in tone throughout—from the first part of the program featuring some of Germany’s finest and best-loved poets and composers to the final victory songs by contemporary composers. In the second part of the first day’s program two works out of the German romantic movement (one corresponding to a fairy tale and the other to Greek drama) led to a final victory song—“German Victory Song” by Munich’s chief court musician (*Hofkapellmeister*), Franz Wüllner. Some of the works from this festival such as “Macte Imperator” and “German Victory Song” cannot be easily referenced. Their overt glorification of the German Empire and their blatant antagonism to France render them unsuitable for current concert programs, but the compositions of Schubert and Mendelssohn, the Lasso motet, the Heine/Silcher “Lorelei,” and the Klopstock hymn (inspiration for Mahler’s Second Symphony) are still popular choices. A glance at the titles performed on the second day of the festival revealed more songs of victory (look at the program below for titles with *Sieg* or *Triumph*) and some that reflected the themes of nature or history. The overall theme of the Munich program was historical but with a particular emphasis on victory over the French and joy over the establishment of the German Empire.

In 1907 there was a shift in historical concerns. The Breslau festival that took place thirty-six years after unification had been accomplished did not devalue that achievement but re-centered the historical emphasis. I began this chapter with an excerpt from a speech by the chairman of the Franconian Choral Association that explains this change in focus. Carl Gerstner proclaimed that the choral associations had a role to play beyond political unification—that of preserving and defending the unity of

⁴⁰⁶ *Süddeutsche Reichs-Post* July 1874 and *Allgemeine Zeitung München* August 1874. According to two newspaper reports “Macte Imperator” was repeated on Day Two of the Munich festival immediately after the performance of Richard Wagner’s *Kaisermarsch*—an orchestral and choral work written by Wagner in 1873 to celebrate the new empire and emperor. One of the reporters offered a critique of the two works saying that while Lachner’s “Macte Imperator” powerfully carried the listeners along until they broke into enthusiastic shouts of jubilation, the Wagnerian “Emperor’s March” made for a more tranquil silence. Both newspapers accessed through www.books.google.com

the empire. *Lieder* were considered the purest and truest expression of the people and song was a powerful tool for preserving the nation. The majority of the Breslau festival was made up of *Lieder* with simple themes. Songs about the Fatherland, Spring, the morning, love, and forests made up the first part of Day One's program, but the last song was meant to be the featured composition—Richard Strauss's "Bardengesang." In the second part of the day's program there was only one work, "Bonifacius." These two grander works defined the mood of the festival. The Strauss composition was based on a poem by Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) titled "Hermanns Schlacht." Hermann was the Cherusci leader who led a coalition of Germanic tribes in destroying three Roman legions in 9 C.E. thereby preserving the independence of the Germanic tribes east of the Rhine River.⁴⁰⁷ Strauss used Klopstock's poem as inspiration for a composition for men's voices (with orchestral accompaniment) proclaiming Germanic victory over ancient foes. By naming the composition "Bardengesang" he associated the ancient German hero (Hermann) with the musical tradition associated with ancient story-tellers.⁴⁰⁸ Recovering the poetry of ancient bards was a widely acclaimed activity of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century nationalists. The choice of the Strauss composition demonstrated the increased interest in ancient Germanic myths at the turn of the nineteenth century—partly a consequence of Richard Wagner's career. The Bonifacius choice reflected something similar, but while Hermann was a military hero, Bonifacius (or Boniface) was a religious hero.

Germans credited Hermann with preserving the political independence of their forefathers and Boniface with bringing Christianity to them. Boniface (675-754) was originally from England but spent his adult life bringing reform and order to the church in the Germanic territories of the Frankish empire.

⁴⁰⁷ Klopstock had a particular interest in the history and mythology of ancient Germanic tribes and heroes. Hermann was glorified by eighteenth and nineteenth-century German nationalists for preventing the incursion of first-century Romans into German territories east of the Rhine. Hermann was also known by his Latin name, Arminius. Hermann/Arminius was raised in Rome and held honorary citizenship status. His military training gave him the skills to ambush the Romans and inflict one of the greatest defeats they ever suffered.

⁴⁰⁸ Bards were the first group of German singers praised by Otto Elben in *Der volkstümliche deutsche Männergesang*. The Bards supposedly represented the earliest and purest form of a nation's poetry and music and were therefore highly acclaimed by nineteenth-century nationalists in not only Germany but also Scotland, Scandinavia, and other European lands.

He was martyred in 754, and his burial place became a popular pilgrimage site.⁴⁰⁹ The two featured choral works evoked a distant, foundational past which became more immediate and comforting after the turn of the century. Richard Wagner's mythical-historical operas, combined with anxieties of modernity, and an early twentieth-century youth movement all factored into this story. These topics will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter Seven, but they are foreshadowed here in the Breslau festival program. The rest of the Breslau program proves an earlier point about who controlled the choral movement after 1900 and the efforts of composers and directors to reign in the trivialization of the men's choral movement.

The two festivals (Munich and Breslau) taken together represented a shift in historical perspective. In the 1870s Germans were concerned with establishing a political nation and they focused on maintaining an oppositional identity to the French while hailing their reborn empire. The music from that program honored past musical traditions but only as far back as the seventeenth century. The Breslau program represented a different historical perspective in which Germans increasingly looked to the distant past to reassure them that there were Germanic values and beliefs that had stood the test of time in the midst of a world that was rapidly changing. The rituals and practices embedded in the festivals of the choral movement were a further means of preserving constancy even though trains, postcards, and Strauss' use of chromaticism in his "Bardengesang" testified to the unrelenting movement towards an uncertain future. In the following chapters we will examine other layers, other emotional communities, and other realms of connection.

2. Deutsche Sängereisen zu München (The Second German Choral Festival in Munich, 1874)

Day 1, Part I of Festival Concert:

1. Motet, "Psalm 111" (Orlando Lasso)
2. "Bachuschor" from *Alexanderfest* (George Frederick Handel)
3. Overture from *Isis and Osiris* (from *The Magic Flute* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)
4. "Das Lied vom Rhein" (Max von Schenkendorf; Hans Georg Nägeli)
5. „Weihelied“ from König Stephan (Hermann Schmid; Ludwig von Beethoven)
6. „Hör uns, Allmächtiger“ (Theodor Körner; C. M. von Weber)

⁴⁰⁹ St. Boniface was admired by Germans from both Roman Catholic and Lutheran traditions until the latter half of the nineteenth century when Boniface and Luther were used as opposing national-religious figures by the two confessions.

7. „Siegesbotschaft“ (Ludwig Uhland; Conradin Kreutzer)
8. „Kommt, Freunde, trinket froh mit mir“ (Körner; Fr. Schneider); „Lorelei“ (H. Heine; F. Silcher); „Kriegslied von 1813“ (A. Methfessel)
9. Motet: „Auferstehen wirst du mein Staub“ (Klopstock; B. Klein)

Part II of Festival Concert

10. „Herr, unser Gott, erhört unser Flehen“ with orchestra (Franz Schubert)
11. Morgengebet, „O wunderbares, leises Schweigen“ (Eichendorf; C. Zöllner); „In der Ferne“ (Robert Franz); „Ein Mann, ein Wort“ (Z. Marchner)
12. *Macte Imperator*, with orchestra (Felix Dahn; Franz Lachner) Under personal direction of the composer.
13. “Dornroschen Straßburg” with orchestra (Julius Otto)
14. “O Circe, allsieger im Kampf” chorus from *Antigone* (F. Mendelssohn)
15. „Deutscher Siegesgesang“ with orchestra (Franz Wüllner)

Day 2 of Festival Concert:

1. *Kaisermarsch* orchestra and chorus (Richard Wagner)
2. “Germanischer Siegesgesang” (Joseph Brambach)
3. “Römischer Triumphgesang” (Max Bruch)
4. “Sturmgeschwörung” (Julius Dürner)
5. “Leb’ wohl du schöne Stunde” (H. Esser)
6. „Siegespsalm“ and „Dem Herrn!“ (Immanuel Faißt)
7. „Römische Leichenfeier“ (Fr. Gernsheim)
8. „Zum Walde“ (Johannes Herbeck)
9. „Hymne an Odin“ (K. M. Kunz)
10. „Normannenzug“ (Fr. Möhring)
11. „Jung Werner“ (Jos. Rheinberger)
12. “Komm, Trost der Welt” (Julius Rietz)
13. „Die Rose stand im Tau“ (Robert Schumann)
14. „Mein Schatz ist auf der Wanderschaft“ (W. Speidel)⁴¹⁰

7. Deutsche Sängerefest zu Breslau (The Seventh German Choral Festival in Breslau, 1907)

Day 1, Part I of Festival Concert

1. Orchestra
2. “An das Vaterland” (Max Gulbins)

⁴¹⁰ The first day’s program was described in *Die Sängerehalle* 3. September 1874 and was also reported on in several other newspapers: *Süddeutsche Reichs-Post* August 12, 1874 and *Allgemeine Zeitung München* August 10, 1874. The last two newspapers were both accessed through google books online. However, no one gave any detailed information about the order of the program on the second day. The list of what was performed came from *Die Sängerehalle* 15. Mai 1890 in an article, „Die Chorgesänge der ersten vier Gesangsfeste des Deutschen Sängerbundes.“ All the works performed in the first four festivals were listed here alphabetically. I know that Wagner’s *Kaisermarsch* was performed first, and the reporter for the *Allgemeine Zeitung München* said that Lachner’s *Macte Imperator* was repeated (from the first day’s performance) after *Kaisermarsch*. The other songs here were presumably sung by individual choirs who attended (that was common) and did not provoke any particular attention from the reporters. Since I do not know the order in which they were performed, I listed them alphabetically.

3. „Morgenlied“ (Reinhardt Becker) directed by Gustav Wohlgemuth; „Frühlingslied“ (Fr. Hegar) directed by Paul Hielscher
4. Einzelvortrag (individual offering)
5. “Weihe des Liedes” (Gustav Baldamus) directed by Paul Hielscher
6. Einzelvortrag
7. „Wer hat dich, du schöner Wald“ (F. Mendelssohn) directed by Eduard Kremser; „Altdeutsches Liebeslied“ (G. Wohlgemuth) directed by Wohlgemuth; „Wie ging das Lied“ (Hugo Jüngst) directed by Paul Hielscher
8. „Bardengesang“ (Richard Strauß) directed by Hielscher

Day 1, Part II of Festival Concert

9. *Bonifacius* (Heinrich Zöllner) directed by Gustav Wohlgemuth

Day 2, Part I of Festival Concert

10. “Gelobnis” (Max Meyer-Olbersleben); “St Michael” (A. von Othegraven) both directed by Eduard Kremser
11. Einzelvortrag (individual offering)
12. “Die Kapelle” (Conradin Kreutzer) directed by Wohlgemuth; “Der Schweizer,” and “Der Soldat” (F. Silcher) directed by Paul Hielscher
13. Einzelvortrag
14. „Soldatenlied“ (Eduard Kremser) directed by Kremser

Day 2, Part II of Festival Concert

15. Orchestra
16. “Steht ein Haus in Grün gebaut” (Max Filke) directed by Paul Hielscher; “Ein schön teutsch Reiterlied“ (Heinrich Rietsch) directed by Wohlgemuth
17. Einzelvortrag
18. „Ännchen von Tharau“ (Friedrich Silcher) directed by Kremser; „Das Lieben bringt groß Freud“ (Hermann Langer) directed by Wohlgemuth
19. Einzelvortrag
20. „Noch sind die Tage der Rosen“ (K. von Persall) directed by Kremser; „Landerkennung“ (Edvard Grieg) directed by Wohlgemuth⁴¹¹

⁴¹¹ *Die Sängerkirche* 14. März 1907; the program was announced well in advance with the works to be sung by all the choirs. As noted earlier in this chapter, this issue of the paper had rehearsal notes for these works, and Wohlgemuth asked that only men who had previously sung “Bonifacius” (or were committed to studying it) would participate in its performance in Breslau.



Figure 10 Stamp created to honor the 1874 founding of a men's chorus in Munich

3.2 Chapter 5 Heterogeneity, Community, and Harmony

There is no pure space where the local remains immaculately local and the national immaculately national; they are in constant configurations as one shapes the other. Alon Confino

In the last chapter we looked at the large national festivals of the *Deutscher Sängerbund*, and a few regional festivals, which involved hundreds and sometimes thousands of men. These men came from all parts of the German-speaking lands where most of them sang on a regular basis with only twenty or so other men. Even in larger cities many of the individual choruses were small—although there were exceptions. In this chapter I look first at a small town's choral and music society whose performances

were an integral part of the citizens' everyday life and then examine how life there was connected to music performance in nearby towns. Provincial choral festivities did not isolate small-town musicians from national events or demonstrate alienation from singers who lived far from them, but rather linked them. The practices, rituals, and body of songs that developed over time originated as local phenomenon and then became national, even as the nation itself was created out of smaller, individual entities.

Heimat was a word encountered frequently in German songs, and the concept embraced both local and national identity. It was, as historian Alon Confino asserts, a flexible concept that allowed oppositional religious, political, or social groups to nevertheless create a “transcendent national community.”⁴¹² Across the spectrum of local, national, and artistic identity, each chorus developed its own rituals and practices, but there were certain common denominators that grew naturally out of historically contingent circumstances. What did the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein* (Singing and Music Society) have in common with the choirs who gathered at the large national festivals beyond the fact that they were all men's choruses? All had members who valued singing together and audiences who came to hear them sing—presumably family members, friends, or music-lovers in the general public. In their scattered geographic spheres they created individual emotional communities which shared common artistic or community interests. Friedhelm Brusniak described the Franconian Choral Association in southwest Germany as a combination of cosmopolitanism and provincialism (*Weltoffenheit und Provinzialität*), and he could have been describing choral associations across the map.⁴¹³ The population of Feuchtwangen remained steady over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries at about 6000 while that of Berlin's grew exponentially from around 170,000 in 1800 to 2,071,257 by

⁴¹² Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Confino describes *Heimat* as the “ultimate German community,” which served as a common denominator uniting the nation during the German Empire (1870-1918). Composed of the elements of history, nature, and folklore it was flexible enough to be employed by different social, religious, and political entities and defied geographic limitations.

⁴¹³ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 8.

1910.⁴¹⁴ In large cities and in small towns, there was a common bond forged by singing *Lieder* and preserving music as a vital feature of German *Kultur*. But far from the staged glitz of large national festivals, I found a more pedestrian, unexceptional group of singers in the small towns of Franconia. They were bound by long-term community and familial ties that often facilitated moments of sublime harmony.

In the last chapter we looked at *Die Sangerhalle* as both a material object and the primary source of information about the national festivals, but for the most part this journal of the German Choral Association was filled with dozens of reports about the doings of choirs in every part of Germany. There were local and regional performances that took place frequently. By 1900 we can conceptualize the structure of the regional associations and the national organization as an intricate web with the *Deutscher Sangerbund* (DSB) at the center. Each regional organization was made up of hundreds of choruses and all were connected back to the center—the DSB. If we begin with the outer threads of the web, the Bavarian town of Feuchtwangen’s *Gesang- und Musikverein* belonged to the *Frankischen Sangerbund*, centered in Nuremberg, which in turn belonged to the *Sangerbund Bayerns* (Bavarian Choral Association), which in turn belonged to the national organization—the *Deutscher Sangerbund*. And these same strands existed in all the other regions of Germany connecting small towns to larger regions and back to the center.⁴¹⁵ *Die Sangerhalle*, the official organ of the DSB, kept its readers connected with other German singers who they would probably never meet but could relate to because they practiced the same rituals and sang the same songs.⁴¹⁶ In this chapter, I argue that the men’s choral movement represented a widespread network of musical culture whose harmony grew out of shared values. The national festivals provided an opportunity to establish webs of connection with singers from everywhere; hometown performances

⁴¹⁴ For Berlin see germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org; Kurt von Ingersleben, *Feuchtwangen und sein Landkreis: Ein kleiner Fuhrer durch die Geschichte und die Kunst Feuchtwangens und seiner Umgebung* (Munchen: Herold Neue Verlags GmbH, 1971).

⁴¹⁵ While I reference Germany in this illustration, it is important to remember that the *Deutscher Sangerbund* included members from Austria, Switzerland, and other regions where German was spoken—they were also part of this web of connections.

⁴¹⁶ After the formal organization of the DSB, it published song books which member choirs were expected to buy. The Constitution of the FSB, in a section titled, “Rights of the Members” instructed members that they were obligated to participate in regional and national festivals and that each choral group must own the *Lieder* book approved by the FSB—presumably there were songs that were common to both collections, but there may have also been regional songs that individual choral associations included apart from the song book of the DSB.

reminded them of those distant links, and along with the hometown rituals, reinforced *Heimat* as local and national.

3.2.1 Feuchtwangen: The Musical Life of a Small Franconian Town

In southwest Germany, about forty-five minutes south of Nuremberg, is a small picturesque town similar to many others strung out along what is today known as the Romantic Road. Without a detailed ⁴¹⁷ map it is difficult to find Feuchtwangen, and from its *Marktplatz* one can see most of the current downtown as well as its *Altstadt*. It originated in the eighth century as a cloister settlement, but after 1284 C.E. when the settlement was first recognized as a city, it became a cross-roads connecting the small towns of Franconia with larger cities like Ansbach and Nuremberg, having as its main task the protection of the important trade routes from the Danube to Rothenburg and from the Rhine to Nuremberg.⁴¹⁸ Wagon tracks and roads led from Feuchtwagen to Rothenburg, Ansbach, Großenried an der Altmühl, Beyerberg, Aufkirchen, and Dinkelsbühl, making it a hub within the region. During the Peasant War of 1524-25 the monks fled the cloister, and the town became Lutheran. As a consequence of the Thirty Years' War the town was left in ruins as Dutch, French, and Swedish armies repeatedly ravaged the region. It came under Prussian control in the late eighteenth century, French control in the Napoleonic era, and after 1815 (to the present) is included in the state of Bavaria.⁴¹⁹ When the main railroad lines were laid in the second half of the nineteenth century, they bypassed Feuchtwangen, and even today the

⁴¹⁷ I spent several weeks in Feuchtwangen in 2016. The Stiftung Dokumentations- und Forschungszentrum des Deutschen Chorwesens is a private foundation based in Feuchtwangen. It is comprised of the Singer Museum, the Archive, and the Research Center of the German Choral Society. According to their website: "The aim of the foundation is to provide our population with significant cultural heritage in the field of German choral singing and to preserve it for future generations. The Foundation serves to explore and promote choral music as a major community-building force beyond our state borders. It seeks to convey the social value of cultural activity for creating community, especially to younger people." (Foundation Statute of the" Foundation Documentation and Research Center of the German Choral Society "in Feuchtwangen, preamble). www.saengermuseum.de. Prof. Dr. Friedhelm Brusniak is the current Chairman of the Board of Trustees as well as the President of the Fränkischen Sängerbundes. Alexander Arlt, M.A. is the Director of the Archive and Museum and provided me with valuable secondary resources such as Dr. Brusniak's *Das grosse Buch des Fränkischen Sängerbundes*, the books listed below about the history of Feuchtwangen, and the 1884 repertoire of the *Berlin Liedertafeln*. When I explained to Herr Arlt that I hoped to demonstrate that choral singing unites people in spite of their differences, he replied, "Of course."

⁴¹⁸ Kurt von Ingersleben, *Feuchtwangen und sein Landkreis: Ein kleiner Führer durch die Geschichte und die Kunst Feuchtwangens und seiner Umgebung* (München: Herold Neue Verlags GmbH, 1971), 17.

⁴¹⁹ Although technically, and politically, under the authority of the state of Bavaria, inhabitants still considered themselves Franconian in the nineteenth century, and that was the name of the regional choral association.

town can be reached only by bus or car.⁴²⁰ However, this little town had one of the oldest choral societies in the German states, and the records of its singing and music club lay bare more than the social life in one small German town—they expose aspects of the entire region and nation.

In 1827 twenty-two citizens of Feuchtwangen had gathered in the “Brandenburger Haus” and founded the *Instrumental- und Vokal-Musik-Verein*—later renamed the *Gesang- und Musikverein*.⁴²¹ The organist and cantor of the town’s church, St. Johannis, became the first chairman of the choral society; they organized themselves with a democratic constitution and in 1828 created a banner, one of the oldest banners of the nineteenth-century choral movement.⁴²² By the mid-nineteenth century a well-established body of choral societies had emerged in the region which became more formally organized in the 1860s as part of the Franconian Choral Association. The twenty men who regularly sang in the Feuchtwangen chorus were concurrently members of the FSB and DSB, and in 1904, they joined with eleven other men’s choruses in nearby towns to form the *Gauverband für die Südwestliche Mittelfranken* in order to facilitate artistic singing and to give the participants an opportunity to sing regularly in a large chorus.⁴²³ This was a reaction to some of the criticisms we looked at in the last chapter about massive choirs and their poor musical quality. The Feuchtwangen singers and their neighbors wanted to cultivate settings where their smaller choirs met frequently, sang together, and elevated their style—proving that provincial choirs could sing as well as their counterparts in Leipzig, Munich, Vienna, or Berlin.⁴²⁴ Feuchtwangen, an

⁴²⁰ The other source for the history of Feuchtwangen came from, Wilhelm Funk, *Feuchtwangen: Werden und Wachsen einer fränkischen Stadt* (Herausgegeben durch das Volksbildungswerk des Landkreises Feuchtwangen, Feuchtwangen: Sommer und Söhne).

⁴²¹ The Instrumental and Vocal Music Society; later the Singing and Music Society.

⁴²² Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 303.

⁴²³ In English, the District Association for Southwest Middle Franconia. Brusniak describes the creation of this small music association of neighboring cities in conjunction with some disputes within the DSB and FSB about whether those associations should allow for competitions between choirs. Non-competitive singing was a fundamental principle of the original choral societies because they wanted to promote unity, not division. Kaiser Wilhelm II had increasingly pressured the men’s choral societies to participate in competitions, and he personally offered prizes at the Kaiser-Song Competition (*Kaiser-Gesangwettstreite*). The *Gauverband für die Südwestliche Mittelfranken* was formed to preserve the original goals (non-competitive) and was sanctioned by the FSB. See Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 153-154.

⁴²⁴ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 154. The other towns were Ansbach (with six choirs), Dinkelsbühl, Leutershausen, and Rothenburg o. d. Tauber (two choirs). These represented 449 singers altogether.

obscure town in southwest Germany, preserved its choral records, and from them we catch a glimpse of small town life at the turn of the twentieth century.

Unfortunately, we do not have personal memoirs to aid in getting to know the men who lived, worked, and sang in Feuchtwangen as we did with the women's memoirs used in Chapter Three. But by examining the records of the Singing and Music Club of Feuchtwangen, and the regular performances of this choir, we can determine what the singers valued and how their programs functioned as part of the rhythm of the town's life. The choral records indicate that the musicians often used the *Turnhalle* (gymnastics hall) for their productions, and in the 1902-03 file of the *Gesang- und Musikverein* there was a typed list of the *Turnerverein* (Gymnastic Club) members and their occupations.⁴²⁵ These included: brewers, businessmen (*Kaufmänner*), a grave digger, carpenter (and master carpenter), a ribbon-maker (*Bandfabrikant*), smith, shoemaker, cartwright, innkeeper, musician, baker, candy maker, dance teacher, organ maker, dyer (*Färbermeister*), photographer, locksmith, stone mason, and a teacher. We associate the period with industrialization and urbanization but see in this list the ordinary occupations that allowed small-town life to flourish. A careful cross-listing of the members of the men's chorus with the Gymnastic Club's list reveals that several of the singers belonged to both clubs—an innkeeper, a businessman, the dance teacher, a master tailor, a master upholsterer, and a tax/customs official (*Aufschläger*).⁴²⁶ The occupations revealed that most of the men worked in town and owned a small business, or they worked for someone in the service industry. The surrounding towns were about the same size with presumably similar demographics; Ansbach was the closest large town and had a population of only 12,635 at the time of unification in 1871.⁴²⁷

Small town life served as an incubator for establishing emotional community where long-term family and social ties embedded value norms that were less-challenged by the fast-paced life in Berlin or

⁴²⁵ ZFC-Archiv B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 66 It might be useful to remember that the Gymnastic Clubs were also a product of the early nationalist movement that grew out of the Napoleonic era. Singing was part of the gymnastic movement and the fraternity movement, so men who belonged to the Burschenschaften as students often went on to participate in choral or gymnastic societies for the rest of their lives.

⁴²⁶ I compared the Turner list to the list of members of the men's choir in 1893, ZFC-Archiv B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 59

⁴²⁷ Baynes, T. S., ed. "Ansbach," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2 (9th edition) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1878), 91.

Vienna. However, everyday life in the Bavarian countryside was presumably fairly mundane, and the regular music programs put on by the *Gesang- und Musikverein* offered a break from work, school, and family obligations and generated certain rituals that bound its citizens together. Christopher Small's claim that "musicking" is a ritual that involves all aspects of a performance meant that the people who set up the chairs, printed the programs, or cleaned up after all the guests and musicians had left to go home, also participated in the actions that established ongoing rituals fostering "social cohesion and stability."⁴²⁸ The by-laws of the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein* allowed for active members (the singers), passive members (non-singers who contributed financially to the society), and honorary members (*Ehrenmitglieder*).⁴²⁹ And, as evidenced in their name, it included instrumentalists as well as singers. There are few detailed accounts of how many townspeople came to the various events offered by the members of the *Gesang- und Musikverein*, but from the printed programs we can see what they performed and get a sense of the role music played in small German towns at the turn of the century. Each year the Feuchtwangen musicians put on programs which coincided with holidays and the seasons and created a rhythmic, reassuring pattern to everyday life while alleviating its tedium. The Feuchtwangen choral records for 1905 show that the cost of the five major musical entertainments offered that year was 160 Marks.⁴³⁰ Those were the Christmas, New Years, and *Fasching* (Carnival) programs plus a Summer and a Fall concert. Performances simply called *Produktion* or *Kellerfest mit Produktion* frequently appeared in the records.⁴³¹ These events made up the entire scope of the music programs offered yearly in the town and demonstrated continuity in the midst of the stress or boredom of everyday life.

⁴²⁸ Small, *Musicking*, 97.

⁴²⁹ Every file of the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein* had several handwritten notes indicating that such-and-such a person had paid their dues as a passive member.

⁴³⁰ According to figures from the University of California Santa Barbara, one U.S. dollar was worth 4.20 Marks in pre-World War I Germany. www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/projects/currency.htm Adjusted for inflation, the 1905 Feuchtwangen programs would cost approximately \$1,138.81 today (2018 figures).

⁴³¹ *Kellerfest* is difficult to translate because the actual word *Keller* means a cellar or basement, and *Fest* means a celebration. So in this context it was a celebratory occasion with a music performance, and the location was a local downstairs room in a pub, bar, or restaurant. The *Gesang- und Musikverein* files (*Akten*) each cover one year beginning in January. The first item in a yearly file was a handwritten *Protokoll* ("Minutes" from the previous year) signed by the members. Other than that, there was no consistency in what was included in the files. There was quite a lot about the national festivals and regional ones because these were part of official communications between the

There are too many programs to review in any detail, therefore I have chosen a few that give a good impression of the types of music performed and what the musicians of Feuchtwangen had in common with fellow singers near and far. In July 1896 the *Gesang- and Musikverein* of Feuchtwangen put on a *Kellerfest mit Produktion* that was held in the “Sonnenwirtschaftler.”⁴³² The printed program offers an opportunity to examine both the material objects produced by this club as well as the songs they sang. The symbol of the club was a harp—the most commonly used image or symbol for singers as we saw from the masthead of *Die Sangerhalle* and the pins available to attach to a singer’s hat band or jacket lapel. (The harp, of course, identified nineteenth-century singers with the Bards, Minnesingers, and Meistersingers of ages past). Flowers and greenery surrounded the harp as well as the head and wings of a cherub which formed the base of the harp’s strings. More flowers and greenery adorned the word, “Programm.”⁴³³ The aptly named Singing and Music Society offered a variety of both instrumental and choral music. In addition to the men’s choir there was also a “double quartet” which indicated that this choir, like Brahms’ Hamburg Women’s Chorus, had members who formed smaller ensembles from within the larger group. The choral music consisted of songs with popular themes: *Rheinweiniied* (Rhine-wine Song), *Abendlied* (Evening Song), *Sangers Heimat* (The Singers’ Home), *Blumlein auf der Haide* (Little Flower on the Heath), *Sehnsucht nach der Heimat* (Yearning for Home), *Waldlied* (Song of the Woods). *Lieder*, especially *Volkslieder*, represented everyday life—favorite wines from the Rhineland (a region that was weighted with emotion in many ways), nature (flowers and forests), and the figurative German “home.”⁴³⁴ The July program primarily featured folk songs by composers who are largely unknown to us today, but several names are familiar from the national festival. A few months after this

larger organizations (DSB and FSB), and they were carefully preserved. Beyond that, it seems as though whoever kept the records each year determined what was preserved.

⁴³² There is nothing definitive in the records to indicate what the difference in a Kellerfest with a Production and a mere Production was. One clue is the location. It is possible that a Kellerfest was restricted to a male audience because women were not welcome in the drinking establishments, whereas in a “hall” the performance was intended for a broader audience.

⁴³³ ZFC Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 61 A mix of Gothic and Latin font styles were used on this program..

⁴³⁴ The Rhineland was weighted with emotion because of its historical association as a boundary between France and the German states and because of the beauty of the region. The song on this program is representative of the latter meaning, but one of the most popular songs of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was “Die Wacht am Rhein.” Max Schneckenburger wrote the poem in 1840, and the most popular musical setting of it was that of Karl Wilhelm in 1854.

Kellerfest, a November 1896 program had one piece that we looked at as part of the national festivals—Conradin Kreutzer’s *Die Kapelle*, which was sung at Stuttgart, Graz, and Breslau. The national DSB sang Stuttgart was held just a few months before the Feuchtwangen *Produktion*, and the men sang *Die Kapelle* at the festival enjoyed it enough to come home and repeat it for their hometown audience.

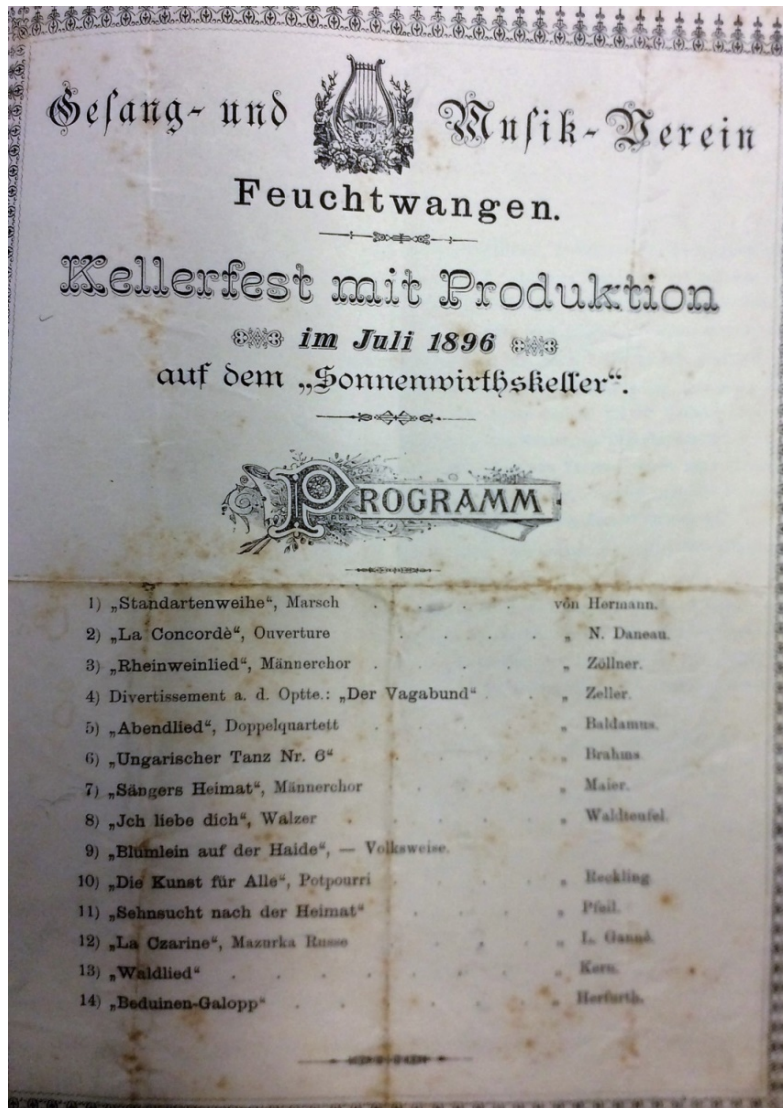


Figure 11 Printed program for a musical “Produktion” in Feuchtwangen

Although there was some overlap in what was performed at the national, regional, or local venues, there were distinct differences. Many musical performances in Feuchtwangen (like the July one mentioned above) began with a “March” and an “Overture” followed by the men’s choir singing *Lieder*.

Some programs featured a more varied assortment of music—an instrumental solo or two, and even an offering by a mixed choir—indicating that there were other groups in Feuchtwangen who studied music and practiced together in addition to the men’s chorus. Like their counterparts in Hamburg, Karlsruhe, or Leipzig, the citizens of Feuchtwangen could field a small orchestra as well as choirs, and the instrumentalists played works written by Wagner, Brahms, Mendelssohn, and Mozart. In Chapter Four we noted that the earliest national festivals featured music by early- to mid-nineteenth century composers, and the later ones favored newer composers who were also part of the leadership of the DSB. In Feuchtwangen, Mendelssohn’s *Lieder* and instrumental works remained popular, and Wagner was performed as frequently as Mendelssohn. Other than Conradin Kreutzer, the composers who appeared with any regularity on both the national programs and on the programs in Feuchtwangen or Ansbach were Heinrich Zöllner, Max Meyer-Olbersleben, Theodor Podbertsky, Johannes Dürrner, Carl Maria von Weber and Franz Lachner. These composers represented the entire nineteenth century and their names appeared on quite a few regional and national programs. However, there were many composers on the Feuchtwangen programs whose names are now obscure: Baldamus, Otto, W. Speidel, August König, Maier, Gutmann, Waldmeister, Filke, Neubner, Koschat, Weinberger, and Nolopp. Sometimes a title of a song was given followed merely by “Volksweise” or “Volkslied.”⁴³⁵ While there was nothing remarkable about most of these small-town music events, a 1907 performance stands out as a further demonstration of the worth associated with themes we examined in previous chapters—history, myth, song.

3.2.2 *Die tausendjährige Linde*

On a spring evening in 1907, the *Gesang- & Musik-Verein Feuchtwangen* offered a *Produktion* in the *Turnhalle*, and the piece that made this *Produktion* remarkable was a longer work for choir and solo voices that made up the heart of the program. The printed program itself had a different appearance than

⁴³⁵ *Volksweise* means “in the style of a folk song,” and this designation demonstrated, as described in Chapter 2, that although old folk songs were especially treasured, newer ones written in an authentic style were also considered genuine expressions of the German people. In terms of the composers, I typed their names exactly as they were printed in the programs—without first names. When it is possible to find biographical information, it becomes evident that most of these lesser known composers had more of a local presence and never national recognition.

the 1896 one. The font style was less ornate, and while there were still vines and flowers, there was no harp or cherub, and the general appearance was more streamlined and “modern.” The program began with an orchestral “Overture,” but this evening there was no “March.” There were *Lieder*, but *Die tausendjährige Linde*, (The Thousand-year old Linden) by Theodor Podbertsky was clearly the highlight of the evening. All the lyrics to this piece were printed in the program—something that was rarely done. Podbertsky has not enjoyed lasting renown as a composer, but the poet who inspired *Die tausendjährige Linde*, Karl Stieler, has fared slightly better.⁴³⁶ Podbertsky’s setting of Stieler’s poem demonstrated the enduring popularity of the themes of German-ness that we examined in Chapters One and Two— mythology, nature, history, the *Lied*, and the difficult-to-translate concept of *Heimat*. The arrangement of the composition (not in a strictly musicological sense, but in a linguistic one) is thought-provoking. It was written to be sung by a men’s choir with baritone and soprano soloists. While the title suggested a broad scope of German history, the small print under the title in the Feuchtwangen program hinted at its true nature: A Scene from Germany’s Past.

The actions described in Podbertsky’s composition took place within a single setting although the time frame encompassed a thousand years. Imagine sitting in a theater anticipating the coming performance; you read the play notes that set the scene.⁴³⁷ A Linden tree stood in the grassy highlands near Tegernsee where woods ringed the lake, and mountains rose in the distance. A poet hiked along his familiar trail—an age-old mule track. Singing birds and sunshine lured the hiker to the foot of the Linden

⁴³⁶ The program for the *Gesang- und Musikverein Produktion* that took place on May 4, 1907 in the Turnhalle included all the words to “Die tausendjährige Linde.” ZFC Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 70. There is very little biographical information about Theodor Podbertsky (1846-1913). He was born in Munich and was a choir director, composer, music teacher and organist. Karl Stieler (1842-1885) was also born in Munich and was primarily a poet who wrote about nature and folkways. He was best-known for his Bavarian-dialect poetry and his lectures on Bavarian culture. He was politically active (member of the Liberal party) and an enthusiastic supporter of German unification. The phrase, “Die tausendjährige Linde,” in addition to being the name of Podbertsky’s composition, is an interesting cultural phenomenon. A linden tree was the inspiration for a song written by Minnesinger, Walter von der Vogelweide in the twelfth century, and the Linden tree subsequently took on the role as a metaphor for the beauties of nature and a trysting spot for lovers--themes dominant in Vogelweide’s “Unter der Linden.” Ancient linden trees are carefully preserved in Germany even today. Vogelweide’s poem, with an English translation by Raymond Oliver, can be found at www.planck.com/rhymedtranslations/vogelweidelinden.htm

⁴³⁷ The Feuchtwangen audience did not have playnotes and pictured the scene as the singers performed.

tree where he lay down to rest.⁴³⁸ The entire action of the composition took place against this backdrop. Each song within the entire work (there were eight separate chorales) brought to mind the beauty of nature; the forest and lake, wind and storms, bees and birds, were a subplot to the main story in which the age of the tree represented the German empire, its demise, and its rebirth. The narrative began and ended with songs titled *Wandergruß* (Hiker's Greeting), but the wording in the two was different. The first one, sung by a men's choir and baritone soloist, set the stage for a millennial-long story which the Linden tree witnessed.

The poet, via the musicians, told us the tree was like a cradle rocking him to slumber in the scent of her flowers and the song of the wind. The last lines of the first *Wandergruß* set the stage for the scenes that followed: "*Das war wie ein tiefer Zauberschlaf, Mir ward es innenso lichte --- ---- Es rauscht mir die Linde ins träumende Herz, Ihre tausendjährige Geschichte.*" (It was like a deep magical sleep, and light filled my inner being --- --- The tree's thousand-year history rushed into my dreaming heart). It is noteworthy that the history that was bound up in the tree's life did not come into the poet's *mind*, but it rushed into his *heart*. Although Stieler lived in the post-Romantic literary age, the poets he most admired were Goethe and Heine, and the influence of early nineteenth-century romanticism was obvious in the imagery and language he used. The next six chorales were a dream sequence rather than a straight narrative and preferred emotions over rational thought.

Each chorale was numbered and titled: I. *Heilige Pilger* (Holy Pilgrim), Soprano Solo; II. *Waldeinsamkeit* (Solitude of the Forest), Chorus; III. *Hunnenzug* (Horde of Huns), Chorus; IV. *Minnelied*, Soprano Solo; V. *Zerfallen* (Decay), Chorus—1806; VI. *Auferstehung* (Resurrection),

⁴³⁸ Tegernsee is a lake located 50 kilometers south of Munich. Karl Stieler's family owned a home there (as well as in Munich) where they spent holidays. In the nineteenth century, as well as today, it was a popular spot for hiking, boating, or merely enjoying the beauty of Bavaria. Stieler set this poem in a spot that held warm memories for him and told the history of Germany from a beautiful locale in Bavaria, not Prussia, the political and military leader of unification. This particular performance was taken from the files of the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein*, a town that had been incorporated into Bavaria after 1815 but was also Lutheran/Protestant. Stieler was Catholic, Podbersky was Lutheran, and this is a fine example of the irenic possibilities of music.

Chorus—1871.⁴³⁹ Finally it ended with another *Wandergruß* sung again by a baritone soloist accompanied by the chorus. During the performance it dawned on the audience that they were not being reminded of a historical-chronological approach to Germany's past, but rather experiencing a series of historical vignettes. Number I, titled Holy Pilgrim, referred to Boniface the eighth-century missionary who brought Christianity to the German lands. In this first dream, the tree was a young green sapling and even the elements, sun and rain, were described as “young and powerful” (*Urmächtig war Sonne und Regen*). A bear surged through the woods while bees hummed around the tree trunk. Then a group of humans wearing long swaying robes and carrying staffs appeared in the scene--they looked like giants and their eyes appeared like holy flames. As they approached the tree, the leader gave orders to stop and rest, and they proceeded to pray and to worship--a resounding noise in the deep woods. The poet-tree concluded this section:

<p>Ich horchte noch lang, wie die Stürme wild, Die mächtigen Wipfel peitschten, Doch mir zu Füßen schlief süß und mild Winfried, der Apostel der Deutschen!⁴⁴⁰</p>	<p>I listened for a long time, as the wild storm Whipped the mighty tree-top, But at my feet, Winfried, the apostle of the Germans Slept sweet and mild!</p>
---	--

Winfried was the Germanic form of Boniface, and because he represented a purer form of Catholicism than that which provoked Luther's sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, he was venerated by both Roman Catholics and Lutherans.⁴⁴¹ The poet-historian established Germany as a Christian land, but not a particularist one. However, in the next chorale the poet mixed Christianity and

⁴³⁹ The predominant theme of the composition roughly followed the Christian narrative of creation, fall, redemption intertwined with parallel themes of nature and love. I use the term “chorale” for each individual song within the piece; the entire work is properly termed a cantata--a story told by choral sections interposed with solos. Most of the songs here consisted of 4-line “verses” (first and third, second and fourth lines rhyme) with a total of 24 lines, but there were two exceptions whose stanzas were 20 or 28 lines.

⁴⁴⁰ The entire *Heilige Pilger* soprano solo was made up of 24 lines; these are the last four lines.

⁴⁴¹ Linda Maria Koldau, “Singing Luther's Praises in 1883 with L. Meinardus,” *Lutheran Quarterly* XXV (2001): 279-297. Koldau is concerned with the popularity of historic oratorios from the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Fifteen oratorios were written with Boniface as the subject--as opposed to only nine for Luther. These two religious figures surpassed all the other German heroes/heroines as subjects for oratorios in that time period. Also, Stan M. Landry, “That All May Be One? Church Unity and the German National Idea, 1866-1883,” *Church History* 80 (2011): 281-301. Landry argues that some Germans sought to find a “third-way” for German Catholics other than exclusion from the Protestant German Empire espoused by Stoeker and Treitschke. *Ut Omnes Unum* was a part of an interconfessional German national movement to promote unity of the different confessions within one nation. *Ut Omnes Unum* suggested another symbol of German unity, St. Boniface rather than Martin Luther. Boniface was considered the Christian missionary of Germany and was promoted as an authentic German national hero who was not divisive.

pagan mythology without any compunction--first he praised Boniface, then he dreamily recalled the days of Wodan.

Number II of this musical history, *Waldeinsamkeit* (Solitude of the Forest), served as a kind of sung interlude. The tree itself was the narrator and began by rhapsodizing over the stillness of the woods, the song of birds, and the gentle waves of a nearby lake. The sunlight fell through green leaves and glittered on dark moss, and as vines of wild dog-roses grew up the trunk of its tree, a deer wandered by silently. This description occupied the majority of the chorale's twenty-four lines. Into this idyllic reverie of what the tree described as "a last breath out of Wodan's tremendous time," a storm was about to burst. The first two chorales privileged nature, religion, and ancient beliefs over political events--there was no mention of Charlemagne or Frederick Barbarossa whose reigns were considered foundational. Instead the focus was on intangible but eternal roots--natural and spiritual forces. But the scenes shifted to political strife as the storm that had raged in the tree-top at the end of *Heilige Pilger* now became anthropomorphized as thousands of wild, vengeful "hunters."

In Part III, *Hunnenzug* (Horde of Huns), the poet inserted a chorale that was seemingly ahistorical in lieu of the fact that the Huns predated Boniface.⁴⁴² The Huns posed a major threat to the Roman Empire in the late fourth and early fifth centuries C.E. when they "pushed" the Alans, Goths, and Vandals into the borders of the Empire weakening its social and political order. Attila (434-453) was the most powerful leader of the Huns, and his army was the most feared military force in Europe leaving death and destruction in its wake.⁴⁴³ But here, in keeping with the dreamlike nature of the scenes, the Huns stood in for a more modern, but equally destructive, force--the French. Although Attila's forces were accurately described (small brown warriors riding Steppe ponies) Stieler clearly meant the French threat--Napoleon was "small" and alien, his forces disrupted the standing political and social order wherever they roamed,

⁴⁴² *Zug*, in a military sense, can be translated as platoon. I think "horde" fits the context better and conveys the same sense.

⁴⁴³ See Paul K. Davis, *100 Decisive Battles from Ancient Times to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 87-91. Davis credits Attila's defeat of the Romans at Chalon in 451 with weakening the empire to the point of no return, while enabling Germanic culture to survive and shape medieval European society in its image (rather than the Roman one).

and just as the Huns destroyed the centuries-old Roman Empire, Napoleon destroyed the thousand-year-old Holy Roman Empire.⁴⁴⁴ The entire *Hunenzug* was a song of terror and destruction. In lines 9-16 the poet-dreamer witnessed the horse warriors ringing the valley and hills while “watchers” lit warning fires. “*Es klingt des Wachrufen von Tal zu Tal, Die Hunnen kommen----die Hunnen!*” (The cry of the watch sounds from one valley to another, The Huns are coming—the Huns!) And the next morning, “*Da war kein Stein auf dem andern mehr, Nur die einsamen Wälder rauschen!*” (There was no stone left on top of another, Only the lonely sound of rustling in the forest!). The next chorale abruptly shifted the mood.

In the true nature of a dream, there was no clear correspondence between the invading armies and a love song which was the theme of the next chorale. The fourth choral work was titled *Minnelied* and evoked the genre of song favored by the Minnesingers—a song of courtly love. Walter von der Vogelweide, the most famous Minnesinger, composed the original poem, “Unter der Linden” that inspired later poems (including Stieler’s). However, I suggest that there was an intentional juxtaposition here of *Kultur* (epitomized in Vogelweide’s medieval song) with French military aggression and destruction (represented by the Huns in the previous chorale).⁴⁴⁵ A soprano soloist sang the entire

Minnelied which opened with these lines:

Der Sternenhimmel liegt über der Welt
Die Bäume flüstern im Winde,
Da schleichen zwei durchs tauige Feld
Unter die grünende Linde.

The starry heaven lies over the world
The wind whispers in the trees,
Two souls creep through the dewey field
To stop under the verdant Linden.

⁴⁴⁴ The 1907 Feuchtwangen performance roughly coincided with the centenary of the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806.

⁴⁴⁵ Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 6. Brubaker distinguishes between the versions of “nationhood” that characterized France and Germany and grew out of the French Revolution and its aftermath. In Germany the nation “was identified with a purely cultural, indeed a specifically literary national spirit.” The French Revolution coincided with the German early romantic period in which Friedrich Schiller (and others) posited the nation as an inner experience--the *Kulturnation* was one that was nurtured as part of the process of *Bildung*, whereas the French considered the nation a public, political entity that could be assimilated by anyone within the geopolitical boundaries of the nation-state. For a further discussion of *Kultur* versus *Civilization* see Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000).

“Ottfried, is it you? “Gerlind, is it you?” They went on to speak of their love for one another and how angry her father would be, before settling down beneath the deep roof of the Linden tree—only briefly disturbed by the tolling of a distant bell. The tree covered them with green leaves, and silence.

The Minnelied reminded the audience of the richness of German *Kultur*, and the next chorale came abruptly back to 1806 and Napoleon. The title of the fifth chorale was *Zerfallen*, (Disintegration). In his dream, the poet envisioned two men walking along the path he himself had taken and heard them say, “The old, thousand-year Reich has crumbled.” As was usual in this composition, there were twenty lines to this section, but the words here were highly repetitive: “There is no Germany, no more Germany.” The tree recalled the days of Charlemagne when both the Reich and the tree were new, but now there was no more Germany. (The poet used *Deutschland*, *Vaterland*, *deutsches Reich* interchangeably). This chorale, sung by the men’s chorus, ended with the tree lamenting its own decay with hopes that a new strong generation would arise, renew the old empire, and restore its greatness. This corresponded to the image on the DSB banner described in Chapter Four where an ancient oak stood as both a symbol of hope and exhortation to a young oak tree—the old empire could be reborn if the new generation was up to the challenge. The banner and this cantata demonstrated not just an interest in trees as nature but as symbols of strength, rebirth, and endurance. And the usages were not coincidences but proofs of prevailing themes that appealed to poets, composers, singers, and their audiences for decades. The gloomy mood of destruction in the fifth chorale led triumphantly to the final “dream” chorale, called Resurrection—1871.

As in the previous chorales, no particulars were given about how Germany achieved “Resurrection,” but this one, sung by the men’s chorus, described the joyful celebrations of the German people.

Der Sonntagmorgen war blau und klar
Welch wundersames Geläute!
Es wogt das Volk in jauchzender Schar,
Ein freudiger Tag tagt heute.

The Sunday morning was blue and clear
What a wondrous ringing of bells!
A jubilant crowd swelled up,
To greet the joyful day.

They put on festival clothes and gathered under the Linden tree where they erected an altar—again conflating ancient and Christian practices—in honor of a political outcome. There, in the open air they

celebrated a victory festival. “Hail to the Kaiser!” and “Hail to the Empire!” cried young and old. Bells and trumpets rang out triumphantly—the Fatherland was reborn! The tree also rejoiced—glad to have lived a thousand years to see this final triumph. In the closing *Wandergruß*, the poet awoke and reflected on his joy in having experienced Germany’s suffering and life (*Leid und Leben*) and gave thanks for the faithful Linden tree that allowed him to experience these events.

This musical composition created by a little-known, nineteenth-century composer is fascinating for several reasons. First, it demonstrated that small-town men’s choruses got together to do more than sing drinking songs at the village pub. This was a long composition with choir and soloists that required some time to learn and hours of rehearsal. Also the tone and setting of the entire piece, strange as it seems to modern sensibilities, was not trite. The listeners needed to interpret each of these scenes as they listened to the performance and could do this because they understood the historical referents and the contexts. Finally, *Die tausendjährige Linde* re-emphasized the common history of Germans. The second national festival in Munich (1874) traced the history of German song through its chronological arrangement of the program’s music from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth with a heavy emphasis on the Napoleonic era. The Franconian festival in Würzburg (1904) created a visual display of German history and culture in the parade floats. In Feuchtwangen, a single extended choral composition celebrated another, but complementary version of German history—set in Bavaria but with events understood by all Germans. Historic memory (and recitation) was a way to legitimate the German Empire as an entity deeply rooted in the past and of enduring worth.⁴⁴⁶ When Germans sang the *Lied* they were not just belting out drinking songs or folk tunes. They proclaimed an entire sense of who they were as an ancient people and a reborn empire—rather than an upstart European entity. Historian George Mosse claimed that Germans in the late-nineteenth century struggled with a crisis of identity when confronted with the forces of industrialization and urbanization which accompanied political unification, and the emergent “Volkish”

⁴⁴⁶ Dietmar Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” in *Deutsche Erinnerungs-Orte* III, ed. Etienne Francois and Hagen Schulze (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001): 392-407. Klenke says that the poets and composers of the men’s choruses always believed they were the “divine prophets” of the nation who kept the memory of 1813 alive and the “noble sons” of the German Fatherland who would bring German myths and history to the common people (397).

movement demonstrated their longing for connections with nature, with the past, and with a life force rooted in German history and its landscape.⁴⁴⁷ While the Feuchtwangen musicians cannot be directly linked to a Volkish or anti-modernist mentalité, Podbertsky's *Die tausendjährige Linde* exhibited the kind of antidote to modernity that Mosse described as a yearning for "cultural cohesion" in the midst of political/social/economic tensions.⁴⁴⁸ But more significantly it represented continuity between Romantic themes of the nineteenth century and beliefs in the early twentieth century. The changes wrought by unification generated a longing for a romanticized past and for the security represented by an established national identity.

Sadly, as in so many of these now unknown works, the music of *Die tausendjährige Linde* is missing along with the performative aspect. I have offered an interpretation of the words printed in the *Produktion* program, but that is all we have to go on.⁴⁴⁹ Podbertsky's musical interpretation of Stieler's poem has left us with no means to examine the intersection of the text, the score, and the performance, therefore we struggle to imagine what it sounded like in Feuchtwangen's singular performance. However, several musical observations can be made. Podbertsky's composition called for two soloists (a soprano and a baritone) as well as the men's chorus. The choir alone sang the chorales dealing with the Solitude of the Forest, Horde of Huns, Decay, and Resurrection—the pieces most closely associated with the tree's narration of nature, violence, war, and national rebirth. The voices of the all-male chorus were deemed most representative of these events. The Holy Pilgrim and the Minnelied were soprano solos—suggesting that a woman's voice was more suitable for themes of religion and love. The baritone soloist sang with the choir in the opening and closing *Wandergruß*—taking on the voice of the poet. The entire work was

⁴⁴⁷ George Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964), 15-17.

⁴⁴⁸ Mosse, *Crisis of Ideology*, 2.

⁴⁴⁹ I can find seven Podbertsky compositions that are still in print, but *Die tausendjährige Linde* is not one of them. The composition described above with a choir and soloists was published by Luckhardt's Musik-Verlag (Stuttgart) in November 1900, and the next month, Podbertsky had a version published for a men's chorus only, but I have not been able to find these. The publication information comes from a project titled, Hofmeister XIX, which has digitized the run of *Monatsberichte*, a publication from Friedrich Hofmeister, a music publisher in Leipzig. The *Monatsberichte* published a monthly list of printed music from 1829 through World War I—the "single most important bibliographical source for the publication of music during this period." www.hofmeister.rhul.ac.uk

accompanied by a piano—which was the simplest tool for small choirs.⁴⁵⁰ The “voices” tell us something about the musical interpretation although the musical *sound* is missing—an essential flaw in terms of understanding how the arrangement of notes, tempo, and dynamics shaped this particular performance and attendant emotions.

According to musicologist Lawrence Kramer, it is commonly accepted that the *Lied* does not possess its own voice but is representative of the poet’s voice; in his words, “the artistic purpose of the lied . . . is to ‘express’ musically the meaning or affect” of a poem.⁴⁵¹ Podbertsky’s task was to mirror the intent of Stieler’s poem, and he clearly meant to intensify emotions associated with national belonging through his interpretation. The crystal-clear lyricism of the soprano *Minnelied* contrasted sharply with the sonorous tones of the chorus that represented the invading Huns. Later the men’s voices rose in soaring triumph hailing the resurrection of empire. This leads to a further, significant observation. It might be reasonable to assume that each chorale had the same tune, but although most were composed of twenty-four lines, there were variations and the mood changed from one chorale to another. Therefore it is safe to assume that each chorale had music that matched the tone of the words aiding the listeners’ ability to grasp the historical mood and shaping their emotions. The participants were expected to understand the historical circumstances and cultural allusions because that was a natural consequence of growing up in the “atmosphere” of nineteenth-century Germany.⁴⁵² The “scenes” were set in natural surroundings and the musicians and audience were meant to think of woods, storms, human figures, and specific actions. As they listened (or performed) they held a program (or score) in their hands, and the pages that contained the words were preserved as a memory that recalled the emotions of the musical performance.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵⁰ The *Produktion* program tells us the names of the soloists. The baritone soloist and the pianist were from nearby Dinkelsbühl (*Stadtkantor* and *Gymnasialassistent* respectively). The soprano soloist was “Fraulein” E. Harlfinger from Feuchtwangen.

⁴⁵¹ Kramer, *Song Acts*, 147-149.

⁴⁵² Oliver J. T. Harris and Tim Flohr Sorensen, “Rethinking Emotion and Material Culture,” *Archeological Dialogues* 17 (2010): 145-163. Harris and Sorensen use the term “atmosphere” to explain how emotions are “engendered by being in a particular place and situation” (153).

⁴⁵³ A further reflection on this piece can be found in Chapter Six in the context of a performance by the *Berlin Liedertafel*.

Archival files preserve printed programs, and these tend to freeze musical compositions as single performances at an isolated place in time. However, it should not stretch the imagination too much to believe that impromptu repetitions of individual works performed in any, or all, programs occurred. That the works on a single program were heard and/or performed only once would be more *unusual* than assuming that many became an informal part of everyday life.⁴⁵⁴ The first experience of a piece of music produced an impression, but it was only upon further reflection that the words and music added to one's own way of thinking. Repetition allowed the words to impart more of the poets' and composers' intentions.⁴⁵⁵ The words to *Die tausendjährige Linde* were included in the 1907 Feuchtwangen program to facilitate this phenomenon, and although only the performers knew the piece well enough to absorb and analyze the musical interpretation, this had a carry-over effect. It is not unreasonable to speculate that men hummed the songs at home, sat at the piano and sang a favored number to the family, the soloists practiced their parts at home, or groups of singers gathered informally and sang individual sections together. The initial performance merely offered an opportunity to extend the experience--expanding and deepening the meaning of the original performance. This same work was performed in its entirety by an Ansbach choir, "Harmonie," in 1912 on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of its founding.⁴⁵⁶ Members of the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein* attended this anniversary celebration where they heard *Die tausendjährige Linde* again. There, with a wider group of German neighbors, they shared a sense of pride in their culture and history and felt again the joy of triumphing over enemies and the rebirth of empire.⁴⁵⁷ Performing in Feuchtwangen versus hearing the piece at an anniversary celebration changed the venue but not the meaning of the work—it remained an electrifying statement of German history.

⁴⁵⁴ Any choir or orchestra, no matter the size, has a repertoire of music that is learned and then repeated at intervals over the years. The Feuchtwangen files (1889-1914) offer a relatively small window into their entire history so it is not obvious from the available programs that works were frequently repeated, and it appears they continually showcased new works. Composers of folk songs (or songs in a folk style) were prolific from the second half of the nineteenth century and the DSB encouraged its member choruses to perform these new works. The orchestral pieces were repeated more frequently demonstrating that the instrumental repertoire was more fixed.

⁴⁵⁵ Kramer, *Song Acts*, 91.

⁴⁵⁶ Without the score, we do not know if the piece lacked musical value, but Podbertsky was a somewhat prolific writer, and appeared on post-1900 programs, but not as frequently as the composer/directors mentioned in Chapter Four.

⁴⁵⁷ ZFC Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 75

People generally like a certain rhythm to life but not unrelieved predictability. The programs put on in Feuchtwangen would not, for the most part, be considered innovative, and this is a final reason why the 1907 *Produktion* in which the longer *Die tausendjährige Linde* was performed is meaningful. Part of the musical director's task was to plan programs that contained both new fresh works and old favorites. The director did not want to overdo performing pieces like *Die tausendjährige Linde*, or they lost their impact; simpler folk songs remained popular because they reinforced the familiar themes of nature, the German landscape, peasant life, and *Heimat*—and both types of works were essential to the German spirit. Cognitive psychologist and neuroscientist Daniel Levitin explains this in the context of our musical acculturation—we expect a predictable underlying structure to the music of our culture (whether that is the western classical tradition, or another one), but greater emotional responses are elicited when the composer violates those expectations.⁴⁵⁸ The same can be said of the structure of a musical performance. The programs that were distinctly *different* from the formulaic Overture-March-Lieder-Solos format kept the citizens of Feuchtwangen coming back for more, and the entirely *expected* format reassured those citizens that order was continually restored. The repeated favorites as well as the occasional novelties reinforced emotional communities.

3.2.3 *Celebrating Holidays with the Gesang- und Musikverein*

Every few months the citizens of Feuchtwangen could expect the *Gesang- und Musikverein* to put on some kind of performance which would be held in one of the usual venues--the public house meeting room or in the *Turnhalle*. Some programs merely gave singers and musicians occasions to perform, entertain, and socialize while others were virtual requirements like those of Germany's most popular holidays. It is difficult to tell from the records how many people attended performances like the *Herbst-Produktion* or *Kellerfest*, but someone generally kept a more detailed record of attendees for the holiday ones.⁴⁵⁹ The Christmas and *Fasching* programs in Feuchtwangen were the yearly ones that drew the

⁴⁵⁸ Levitin, "Anticipation: What We Expect from Liszt (and Ludacris)" in *Your Brain on Music*, 111-131.

⁴⁵⁹ There were numerous handwritten "invitations" (*Einladung*) in the files indicating that some performances were casual events (without a printed program). On the back of these were hand-written names (last names); a couple

largest crowds. In 1892 ninety-five names (family names) were recorded for the *Christbaum-Verloosung* (Christmas Raffle) and ninety-four for the 1894 *Fasching* program.⁴⁶⁰ These numbers increased slightly over the years but remained more or less constant.⁴⁶¹ The 1899 *Fasching* list of attendees was the first to also record that attendees paid 50 Pfennig to come. A respectable number of Feuchtwangen's citizens were willing to pay something to attend this performance.⁴⁶²

The Christmas holiday does not need much explanation, but *Fasching* was a more purely German holiday so we will briefly look at its history and the ways it came to be celebrated in the nineteenth century. The word *Fasching* dates to the thirteenth century and was derived from the word *Fastenschank* meaning the last serving of an alcoholic beverage before Lent. *Fasching* was typically associated with southern Germany and Austria, but the same event was known as *Karneval* in the Rhineland or *Fastnacht* in Swabia, Switzerland, and the city of Mainz. While *Fasching* was most closely associated with Roman Catholic pre-Lent celebrations, Protestant German cities adopted particular regional celebrations based more on geography than religious beliefs—Feuchtwangen was part of Bavaria after 1815, and at any rate, *Fasching* was part of medieval culture so had a historical significance that superseded confessional divides.⁴⁶³ The most elaborate parades and balls took place in large cities like Munich or Cologne, but the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein* offered a modest celebration for its citizens, and the performances were well-attended. One hint about the festive mood came from the color of the printed programs. All the *Fasching* programs preserved in the files were printed on brightly colored paper—the

from 1892 included 85-89 signatures indicating that a good number of people attended even the non-holiday programs.

⁴⁶⁰ ZFC Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 59 The number of attendees for the Christmas and *Fasching* programs remained fairly consistent at 100 for the years 1900-1914. Since only last names are recorded we do not know the exact numbers of who came. Presumably parents brought their children to these because they included plays and comedy pieces.

⁴⁶¹ ZFC Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 72 This year's Christmas program attendee list had 109 names.

⁴⁶² There were 100 Pfennig in a Mark and 4.20 Marks equalled one U. S. dollar so it was not much money for an individual. Considering that the *Fasching* and Christmas programs were family events, it might represent a more significant financial output for a large family. Dues for the Franconian Choral Association were 50 Pfennig a year and those for the *Gesang- und Musikverein* Feuchtwangen were 10 Pfennig a year.

⁴⁶³ "Fasching," *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Fasching-carnival>; and see Jeremy DeWaal, "The Reinvention of Tradition: Form, Meaning, and Local Identity in Modern Cologne Carnival," *Central European History* 46, no. 3 (2013): 495-532. DeWaal explains that the medieval celebration became secularized (and politicized) over the centuries and by the nineteenth century the symbols of jesters, ships of fools, wearing of masks, the number eleven, etc. evolved into something mostly festive rather than religious.

1893 program was on bright blue paper. Every other music or festival program in the files of the *Gesang- und Musikverein* was printed on white or ecru paper. It was a colorful holiday and the Feuchtwangen organizers represented this materially.

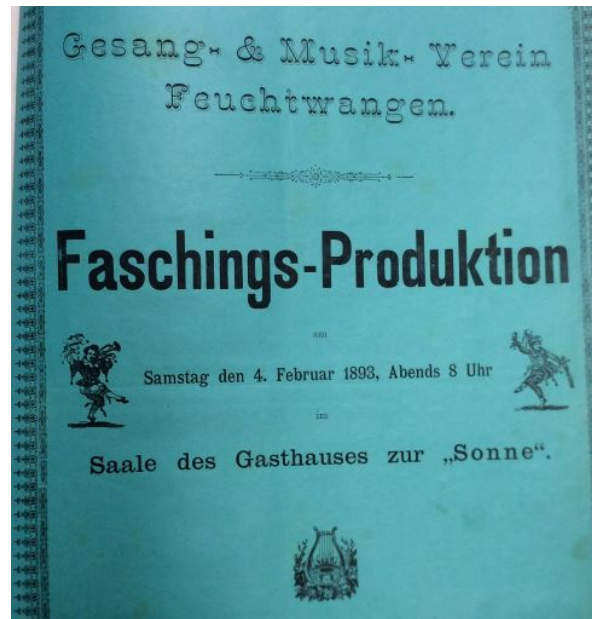


Figure 12 Colorful program for Feuchtwangen Fasching performance

The 1893 Feuchtwangen *Fasching* program (printed on bright blue paper) listed fourteen items, and while it began with an overture followed by several songs sung by the men's chorus, the majority of the program consisted of sung skits and humorous episodes. As a point of comparison, Cologne's Carnival (i.e. *Fasching*) was one of the most famous in Germany, and historian Jeremy DeWaal who has studied its centuries-old traditions argues that the symbols and metaphors of the holiday have been reinvented over time. Originally meant as a juxtaposition of the Kingdom of Hell against the Kingdom of Heaven in which heaven wins out in the end (sinful revelry ultimately ushering in the pious Lenten season), the festival became more politicized and secularized over the course of the nineteenth century. The Feuchtwangen version of *Fasching* was, without a doubt, tame compared to that of Cologne or Munich, but what it had in common with the celebrations described by DeWaal was a "light-hearted, gay,

and friendly” atmosphere.⁴⁶⁴ For example, the title of Number Eight on the 1893 program was *Ein lustiger Studentenstreich aus guter alter Zeit* (A Funny Student Prank from the Old Days) and featured Jeremias Böckelmann (a guard posted at the city gate), three students, and a professor.⁴⁶⁵ Number Fourteen was titled *Im Bivouak* (In Camp) and featured a “choir of soldiers” plus three individuals: Corporal Piefke and two privates—named Schnuppe and Knospe. The names of the characters hint at the humor in this one. “Piefke” was a slang term for Germans (especially north Germans) and could also mean “snob;” “Schnuppe” literally meant the charred part of a candle wick and used in expressions to express indifference. (*Es ist mir Schnuppe*. I couldn’t care less.), and Knospe means a “bud.” In other words, a immature version of a full-grown person. The characters were stereotypes of the military figures who populated turn of the century Germany—a pompous Prussian officer and run of the mill, immature youths. There was one longer song sung by the Feuchtwangen men’s chorus titled *Fritzchen’s erste Liebe* (“Young Fritz’s First Love”).⁴⁶⁶ The theme of the song dealt with a young man, only sixteen years old, who was in love with a “darling maiden” who worked in the local bakery-café. As he tried to get up his courage to tell her about his love (while eating cream-laden cake), a dashing Lieutenant entered the shop and shattered Fritzchen’s dreams. It was the type of song that hinted at humiliation and mockery, but the words belied this possibility. Fritzchen (meaning “little Fritz”) came to an important realization when the maiden spoke an encouraging parting word to him.

Lieben Sie ein Mädchen sehr
 Warten Sie bis an der Frist,
 Wo der Schnurrbart g’wachsen ist.
 Ohne Schnurrbart hör’n Sie an
 Ich Sie ‘mal nicht lieben kann.

You love a young lady very much
 Wait until the right time,
 when the mustache has grown.
 Listen, without a mustache
 I could never love you.

⁴⁶⁴ DeWaal, “Reinvention of Tradition,” 498.

⁴⁶⁵ The title in English: “A Funny Student Prank from the Old Days.”

⁴⁶⁶ Some of these were published works which can be found in anthologies that list published music—but no additional information; others are too obscure to track down and only the composers’ last names are listed. The majority are about soldiers and their jokes, tricks, and adventures.

The skits and song, “Young Fritz’s First Love,” give us a sense that the citizens of Feuchtwangen were good-hearted, and the men’s chorus sang this as an encouraging, albeit light-hearted, word to their town’s young men—their sons, grandsons, nephews, and neighbors.

The *Fasching* programs all followed this pattern, and were well-attended. Their popularity demonstrated a rhythm of continuity with folk life and humor dating to the medieval period when laughter was a coping strategy by which the common people faced the fears of everyday life.⁴⁶⁷ In the same way that history and nature served as an antidote to modernism, *Fasching* connected Germans to past customs and allowed them (at a specified period of time in the calendar year) “permission” to laugh at the stresses associated with life. The jester, featured as jovial figures on the late-nineteenth century Feuchtwangen program below, was originally understood as a microcosm of the *Fasching* metaphor of the terrors of hell and evil—the devil was evil, a torturer of Christ, and a figure of sin and death—but one to be laughed at as though to mock those threats.⁴⁶⁸ By the late nineteenth-century, Germans welcomed occasions to laugh in spite of rising tensions that accompanied political, social, and economic divisions, as well as nationalist imperial ambitions. DeWaal specifically links nineteenth-century celebrations of *Fasching* to rising German militarism. The skits were rife with military figures and themes, and the holiday period offered opportunities to mock authority figures and fears.⁴⁶⁹ Music ever accompanied the mockery.

⁴⁶⁷ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1968), 47, 90

⁴⁶⁸ DeWaal, “Reinvention of Tradition,” 505-8.

⁴⁶⁹ Brophy, “Carnival,” in *Popular Culture*, 171-215.



Figure 13 Playful jesters on Fasching program

German Catholics and Protestants had traditionally celebrated Christmas in different ways and their practices were not significantly standardized until after World War I, but the Christian holiday of Christmas had the power to unite Germans like no other national event. There was a reassuring commonality in rituals that perpetuated centuries-old traditions combined with new Christmas traditions that developed over the course of the nineteenth century.⁴⁷⁰ Folklorist, anthropologist, and ethnologist Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann details a centuries-old history of celebrating Christmas through song. Originally a sacred celebration enshrined in the church where the clergy, chorus, and congregation engaged in a sacred “dialogue,” little performances of Jesus’ birth (*Kindelwiegen*) or outdoor singing (*Singspiele*) gradually emerged--in large part to educate children about religious beliefs.⁴⁷¹ A further development that brought Christmas celebrations out of the exclusive realm of the church was the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther’s interest in putting scripture and song into the language of the people facilitated singing in the home. Luther preached hundreds of Advent and Christmas sermons and composed five carols. A favorite carol of the nineteenth century, “From Heaven on High” (“Von Himmel

⁴⁷⁰ Joe Perry, *Christmas in Germany: A Cultural History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010). Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann, *Das Buch der Weihnachtslieder: 151 Deutsche Advents- und Weihnachtslieder Kulturgeschichte, Noten, Texte, Bilder mit Klavier- und Orgel-Begleitung* (Mainz: Schott, 1982)

⁴⁷¹ Weber-Kellermann, *Weihnachtslieder*, 6.

Hoch, da komm' ich her") was composed as a Christmas present for Luther's children and published in 1535.⁴⁷² Because of Luther's love of music, singing Christmas carols became a joint church and family venture and even crossed confessional boundaries.⁴⁷³ Over the course of the nineteenth century, Christmas became a more secular and family-oriented affair with decorated trees, gift-giving, and *Hausmusik* taking precedence over the purely religious celebrations of previous centuries. Polyphonic church music lost its complexity when sung around the family piano and German carols took on a broader social meaning when carolers from the nearby church were invited into the family home to add their voices to those of the inner circle.⁴⁷⁴

The records of Feuchtwangen reveal that Christmas in a small town was not merely a religious or family-centered one but also a communal celebration. Certainly there were church services in Feuchtwangen where Advent was celebrated and Christmas music sung, but the *Gesang- und Musikverein* put on a program each year in which a community Christmas tree was decorated, skits performed, and local choirs performed. The following little newspaper excerpt (carefully preserved in the 1900-01 *Gesang- und Musikverein* files) could apply to any number of holiday celebrations in any number of German cities, but it described a Feuchtwangen Christmas program.

The smell of spruce, the glow of candlelight, and Christmas peace surrounded everyone who attended on the second day of Advent. The Christmas tree raffle of the Feuchtwangen Singing and Music Club in the spacious gymnasium captured the bygone days of childhood with their fairytale magic and Christ-child faith. One was carried back in time when our dear little ones performed the two-act fairytale "Princess Greta" or "The Christ Child in the Stable" with such childlike skill and their charming sets. Four lovely angels with cheeky, rapturous Rafael faces proclaimed the Christmas message. All the while, dwarfs and gnomes worked diligently, and the fairies quietly observed the children's game. This lovely tableau was arranged by Mr. Hofmann and afterward . . . the board of directors [provided] a splendidly decorated Christmas tree and a wealth of presents . . . [Games were played] . . . and in between, the splendid musicians of our

⁴⁷² Weber-Kellermann, *Weihnachtslieder*, 97, 103; and *Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, ed. Roland H. Bainton (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1948), 6-7.

⁴⁷³ Weber-Kellermann, *Weihnachtslieder*, 28, 43, 107. The author notes that Christmas songs that were originally written in Latin became "Protestant" when Luther translated them into German, but many of Luther's translations and original Christmas songs appeared in Catholic, as well as Lutheran, songbooks.

⁴⁷⁴ Weber-Kellermann, *Weihnachtslieder*, 150-151.

well-trained city band resounded and . . . long after midnight we danced happily. Has this evening or the glorious hall ever been so beautiful?⁴⁷⁵

By taking the family names recorded in the Feuchtwangen files, I estimated that about 450 people attended this holiday celebration.⁴⁷⁶ The setting was a “hall” (perhaps the *Turnhalle* where many other performances took place), the children performed a skit with a religious theme but also accompanied by magical creatures—gnomes and fairies. Mr. Hofmann (the dancing teacher who was a member of the men’s chorus) directed the children’s performance, and the *Gesang- und Musikverein* provided the decorated Christmas tree and gifts for the children.⁴⁷⁷ There was a raffle where gifts were exchanged followed by dancing that lasted well into the night. This offers a glimpse into life in Feuchtwangen from the perspective of a resident who was present at the Christmas celebration and described it for us unlike the music performances where all that was left behind was a printed program. In our mind’s eye we can smell and visualize the Christmas tree, the lighted candles, children in costumes concentrating on their roles in the skit (anticipating the reward of gifts), the excitement of parents and grandparents watching their little ones perform who subsequently joined in the festivities of the gift exchange and the late-night

⁴⁷⁵ ZFC-Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 65 Tannenduft, Kerzenklimmer, und Weihnachtsfriede umwehte alle, die am zweiten Weihnachtsfeiertage der Christbaumverlosung des Gesang- und Musikvereins Feuchtwangen in der geräumigen Turnhalle beiwohnten. In längst vergangene Kinderzeit mit ihrem Märchenzauber und Christkindglauben fühlte man sich zurückverfetzt, als unsere lieben Kleinen auf der herrlichen Bühne das 2 aktige Märchen: “Prinzeß Grete oder das Christkind in der Köhlerhütte” in wirklich reizender Ausstattung und mit kindlichem Geschicke aufführten und 4 liebliche Engelein die hehre Weihnachtsbotschaft verkündeten, mit bausbackigen, vor Freude verklärten Rafaelgesichtchen. Da schafften emsig die Zwerglein und Gnomen, da walteten leise die Feen, daß es eine Lust war, der Kinder Spiel zu folgen. Hieran schloß sich ein herrliches Tableau, arrangiert von Herrn Tanzlehrer Hofmann, der auch das Spiel mit großem Geschicke einstudiert und den schönsten Dank jedes Jahr wohl finden mag, wenn er in die glückseligen Kinderaugen blickt. Aber auch die rührige Vorstandschafft hatte nichts unterlassen, den Abend zu einem genußreichen zu machen. Ein herrlich geschückter Christbaum und darunter eine Fülle von Geschenken lockte gar manches Märklein aus der Tasche heraus, um Fortuna zu versuchen und manchmal einen niedlichen Hanswurstel dafür einzutauschen. Dazwischen erklangen die herrlichen Weisen unserer gut geschulten Stadtkapelle und ließen manch tanzlustigem Mägdelein die Verlosung etwas lange dauern. Doch die versäumte Zeit wurde reichlich nachgeholt; denn lange nach Mitternacht tanzten wir noch fröhlich. Hat es uns der so schön verlaufene Festabend oder die herrliche Halle angethan?

⁴⁷⁶ There were 103 names recorded, and in 1895 there was an average of 4.53 persons living in private households in Germany. www.deutschland-in-daten.de/en/population/ Technically, using these figures there would have been 466.59 people in attendance.

⁴⁷⁷ Webb-Kellermann says that even in the Early Modern period, children performed Christmas skits as a learning activity. Acting out the story of Jesus’ birth was a way for burgher families to educate their children. *Weihnachtslieder*, 92. The skit described above was described as a Märchen (fairy tale), and in true nineteenth-century fashion combined religion with folk creatures.

dance. The musicians were there, too—playing in the band, setting things up, making sure everyone enjoyed this last program as a highlight of the year.

In 1903 another newspaper clipping saved in the files revealed the *anticipation* of the upcoming Christmas production, and it foreshadowed a slightly different tone than the previous Christmas celebration.

Everyone is preparing for the festive Christmas party, and the Singing and Music Club is already working on preparing its members for a wonderful family evening on the second Sunday of Advent. But this year we should expect not only to enjoy the games of our little ones and the various taunts and tomfoolery of the Christmas tree raffle; the club also wants to provide a dignified musical program. The men's and children's choir hopes to achieve the most resounding success with old and new Christmas music performed by themselves as well as soprano and violin solos. These will transport us back to the golden days of childhood and put us in a festive Christmas mood.⁴⁷⁸

This year they again hoped to celebrate the “golden days of childhood,” games, a raffle, the Christmas tree, and the opportunity for a “wonderful family evening” but also emphasized the goal of a “dignified musical program.” Perhaps the organizers thought the celebrations of previous years had gotten out of hand and wanted to bring a more serious air back into the program—particularly into the music performances. We get an idea of the music and entertainment from the printed program for the 1912 Feuchtwangen Christmas party. In contrast to earlier program designs (the 1896 *Kellerfest Produktion* program with its ornate designs, or the less ornate but still decorative one from 1906), the 1912 printed Christmas program was almost completely unadorned. It had a simple dotted line border with small stylistic emblems at each corner and at the mid-points of the top and bottom edges, and there was no

⁴⁷⁸ ZFC Arch B 71 (90.5) 67. Alles rüstet sich zur hehren Weihnachtsfeier, auch der Gesang- und Musikverein arbeitet schon daran, seinen Mitgliedern ein herzlichen Familienabend am 2. Festtage zu bereiten. Doch sollen uns diesmal nicht nur das Spiel unserer lieben Kleinen und die verschiedenen Treffer und Hanswursteln der Christbaumverlosung erfreuen, sondern der Verein will heuer auch in dem Streben seinen Angehörigen immer mehr gediegene musikalische Genüsse zu verschaffen, ein größeres Weihnachtswerk mit Männer- und Kinderchor aufführen, das allüberall durchschlagenden Erfolg errungen hat. Alte und neue Weihnachtsweisen, übertönt von einem wirkungsvollen Sopran- und Violinsolo zaubern uns da der goldenen Kindheit Tage wieder vor Augen und versetzen uns in feierliche Weihnachtsstimmung.

There were no newspaper clippings in the first ten years of the Feuchtwangen files, but after 1900 there were a few. It appears that certain official papers were always preserved (correspondence from the FSB or DSB) and the yearly Protokoll, but otherwise it was left to the discretion of the secretary for the year to clip items from the paper or keep handwritten notes. The clipping here was dated 17. Dezember 1902. Each year's records began in January and included the Christmas celebration from the previous year.

gothic print or ornamental letters. It is typed below in a style that mimics the early nineteenth-century printed version.

Gesang- und Musikverein Feuchtwangen **Weihnachtsfeier**

am 2. Weihnachtsfeiertag 1912 abends 8 Uhr
in der Turnhalle.

1. Weihnachtslied. Gemischter Chor Nolopp.
2. „Weihnachtspech“ Schwank in 1 Akt Matthes.
Personnen:
Erich Landeck. Hermann Nagel } Landecks
Agathe, seine Frau. Pauline, dessen Frau } Schwiegereltern
Nanke, Hausdiener.
Ort der Handlung: Landecks Wohnung.
Zeit: Der Weihnachtsheiligabend.
3. „Die Nacht“ Männerchor Abt.
4. „Das Christkind im Kleiderspind“
Humoristische Scene mit Gesang Goldmann.
Personnen:
v. Weber, Major.
Ella, dessen Tochter
Gerhard Eisen, Einjähriger.
Pauline, Köchin bei Weber.
Füsilier Peter Häppchen, deren Schatz.
Ort der Handlung: Majors Wohnung.
5. a) Abschied } Männerchor Kirchl.
b) Unterm Lindenbaum } Sturm.
6. „Mer sitzt unter Aepfelbäum“
Gemischter Chor Kromer.
7. „Bin fideler Strohwitwer“ Posse mit Gesang in 1 Akt Lorenz.
Personnen:
Schlaucherl: Wirt zum „Blauen Kater“
Zeisig: Tuchhändler aus Zwickau.
Sperling: ein Hochstapler.
Leukadia: Zeisigs Frau.
Annerl und Hanni: Landmädchen, Schlaucherls Nichten
Anton: Kellner bei Schlaucherl.
Ort der Handlung: Kleine Bahnstation.⁴⁷⁹

This program encapsulated bourgeois German Christmases. It took place in the *Turnhalle*—presumably one of the larger gathering facilities in a small town. It was called a Christmas Celebration and consisted of three skits which were introduced and followed by songs sung by a mixed choir and the

⁴⁷⁹ ZFC Arch 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 76

men's choir. The choral numbers had simple titles with obligatory *Lied* themes: "Weihnachtslied" (Christmas Song), "Die Nacht" (The Night), "Abschied" (Departure), "Unterm Lindenbaum" (Under the Linden Tree), and "Mer Sitzet unter Aepfelbäum" (Sit Here under the Apple Tree). Franz Wilhelm Abt (1819-1885) was the best-known of the composers listed. He studied music and theology in Leipzig and was acquainted with Mendelssohn and Schumann, but his first love was choral conducting for which he gained an international reputation.⁴⁸⁰ Below is Abt's song, "Die Nacht," published in 1862.

Die Abendglocken rufen
das weite Tal zur Ruh,
die Herden von den Bergen,
sie ziehn dem Dörfchen zu.
Welch feierliches Schweigen,
die Blumen fromm sich neigen,
sie kommt in ihrer Pracht,
die stille Nacht.

The evening bells call
to the wide valley,
the flocks on the mountains,
and the villages--peace! quiet!
What a celebratory hush,
flowers piously bow,
as comes in splendor,
the silent night.

Da schmücket sich der Himmel
mit Sternen groß und klein,
da kommt der Mond gezogen
in hellem Demantschein.
Wohin ich immer spähe,
fühlt alles deine Nähe,
fühlt alles deine Macht,
o stille Nacht!⁴⁸¹

The sky adorns itself
with stars great and small,
the moon rising
against their diamond brilliance.
Whenever I stare at it,
I feel your nearness,
I feel your might,
o silent night!

Abt's musical style has been described as "popular, his melodies simple and fresh, with a pleasing and varied accompaniment, so that some . . . are easily mistaken for genuine folksong."⁴⁸² "Die Nacht" was not the carol, "Silent Night, Holy Night," but evoked the same sense of stillness—the flocks in dark, quiet fields where stars blazed like diamonds in the calm, quiet night. In this sense it was art *Lied* rather than a carol—there was no repeated refrain. Set in a pastoral German setting, Abt did not recount

⁴⁸⁰ Edward F. Kravitt, "Franz Wilhelm Abt," in Grove Music Online, (2001). Abt first gained a reputation as a choral conductor in Zürich and during the years he spent there was asked to direct every one of its choirs. He was invited to guest conduct in many of Europe's capital cities and had a highly successful tour of the United States in 1872. He composed over 3000 individual works, and his primary concern was with enriching the repertoire of music for men's choruses.

⁴⁸¹ "Die Nacht," [http://www1.cpl.org/wiki/index.php/Die_Nacht_\(Franz_Wilhelm_Abt\)](http://www1.cpl.org/wiki/index.php/Die_Nacht_(Franz_Wilhelm_Abt)) The translation is mine.

⁴⁸² Kravitt, "Franz Wilhelm Abt."

the nativity story, but it was nevertheless a message of peace.⁴⁸³ In a shift of mood, the song was followed immediately by a skit. The organizers planned a Christmas program for the entire family—a “festive” party—but they also wove in “dignified” music like “Die Nacht.” The children came for the gift-exchange and the Christmas tree; the musicians looked forward to performing beautiful music; everyone anticipated the rollicking fun of the skits.

Historian Joe Perry says that the vast majority of Christmas plays followed formulaic scripts in which Christmas became a setting for “a moment of domestic crisis, typically involving lost love, financial hardship, hidden identities, and family misunderstandings.”⁴⁸⁴ From a look at the cast of characters and settings on the program above, it is evident that the skits performed for the Feuchtwangen Christmas program fit the formula and were intended to be humorous. In the first one, *Weihnachtspech* (Christmas Mishap), the main characters were Eric Landeck and his wife, Agathe, her parents (Hermann and Pauline), and the house servant, Nanke. It was Christmas Eve in the Landeck’s home. Even without the script, one can imagine any number of scenarios that may have played out, and the audience was, without a doubt, made up of combinations of this very commonplace fictional group of people which allowed them to laugh at themselves as well as the actors.

The second skit announced itself as a “humorous scene with song,” and while it is not obvious what the point of conflict was, it was clearly the setting for some kind of “domestic crisis” or “family misunderstanding.” The characters were a Major Weber, his daughter, a one-year old child, the Weber’s cook, and her boyfriend Private Peter Häppchen (whose name means “nibble” or “bit”). It took place in the Weber’s home and the title was, “The Christ Child in the Clothes Closet.” A third scenario with a different family dynamic was the skit titled, “A Jolly Grass Widow.” Members of the audience could surely identify some local character/s who fit these descriptions and laugh along. With this last skit the

⁴⁸³ There are several recordings of Abt’s setting of “Die Nacht” available on YouTube. Each performance is slightly different—one is a *cappella* and the others have a piano accompaniment. This is actually a good way to demonstrate that each performance deals with the music differently. The choirs are all-male, they sing the same words and tune, but each has a different tone. The other songs listed on the program are more obscure. Sturm’s “Unterm Lindenbaum” is mentioned briefly in the *British Musical Times*; all I can find about Nolopp’s “Weihnachtslied” is that it was published.

⁴⁸⁴ Perry, *Christmas in Germany*, 153.

formal part of the program ended, and the rest of the evening followed the pattern described in the two previous newspaper clippings with food, a raffle/gift-giving, and dancing. Although this was a community party, it was akin to the nineteenth-century family celebrations described by Perry and Weber-Kellermann in which Christmas was internalized as a particularly *German* holiday.⁴⁸⁵ The *Turnhalle* audience represented many generations of families who grew up in Feuchtwangen, sang in the choirs, and performed the skits, and together with citizens across Germany they facilitated a standardization of German Christmas rituals.⁴⁸⁶ However, the trope that the bourgeois German Christmas “had become an archetypal symbol of a German nation united above class, religion, region, or ideology” is not as simple as it appears.⁴⁸⁷ Perry argues that while specific, prescribed elements had come to define the holiday both in Germany and as exports to other nations, these were never uniformly practiced—poor workers could not afford the accoutrements that came with commercialization. Residents of small towns like those in Franconia also did not enjoy the big markets or department store window displays of Berlin, yet certain practices created an *ideal* of “German Christmas,” and that ideal was preserved for us in the Feuchtwangen newspaper reports.

Music was part of the rhythm of life in Feuchtwangen even for citizens who did not directly participate. The musicians were your neighbors, the local businessmen, teachers, and people you came in contact with on a regular basis. The membership of the gymnastics club was larger than the *Gesang- und Musikverein*, but there was a strong connection (and overlap) between the two clubs, and although the local church was never mentioned in the records or on programs, it is safe to say that Feuchtwangen’s musicians played a role in that venue, as well. The first choral director of the club (1827) was also the organist and choirmaster of the church, and it would not be surprising if that tradition continued.⁴⁸⁸ Feuchtwangen encompassed an “affective field” in the same way the train station or festival hall did for the participants in a national DSB choral festival. It was a more permanent space as citizens daily moved

⁴⁸⁵ Perry, *Christmas in Germany*, 7-8.

⁴⁸⁶ Perry, *Christmas in Germany*, 32.

⁴⁸⁷ Perry, *Christmas in Germany*, 153.

⁴⁸⁸ Larger German cities hired musicians (a *Kapellmeister* or *Hofkapellmeister*) who directed church music, played the organ, and also conducted civic choirs and orchestras.

through the streets, gathered in the *Turnhalle* or *Sonnenwirthskeller*, visited in shops or homes, or met to practice music—in these spaces the citizens of Feuchtwangen created networks through which traditions and emotions were perpetuated by means of the common and ordinary practices and objects.

Participatory emotions can have a second-hand effect, and for those who lived in Feuchtwangen, the yearly rhythm of music programs added a certainty to life; the material objects associated with the towns' musical association became part of the identity of the entire town. The banner of the association may have been on display during the regularly scheduled programs of the *Gesang- und Musikverein*, and as we shall see in the next section of this chapter, there were choral festivals that drew together participants from the surrounding towns. A parade of banners through the streets of Feuchtwangen drew the attention of anyone who happened to be in town, and the Feuchtwangen banner was an identifier for all the citizens, not just the singers. Modern-day photographs of the choirs of Franconia show choir members wearing a distinct performance costume or dress style.⁴⁸⁹ These costumes identified not just an individual choir, but also its hometown. Membership in the town offered a distant association to the music society. Especially in a small town there would also be a strong sense of connection to ages past—their parents, grandparents and other relatives had lived and worked here, celebrated holidays, and sung the songs associated with these. Several generations of Feuchtwangen men had sung with the choral club by 1912, and they drew the rest of their families and friends into that circle of performance and meaning.

Christmas and *Fasching* were centuries-old, common German holidays—*Fasching* with a more raucous, irreverent public nature and Christmas, the family-oriented, *gemütlich* celebration.⁴⁹⁰ When the singers of Feuchtwangen gave Christmas and *Fasching* performances it connected them across space and time with other (Christian) Germans. In all the little neighboring towns, in nearby larger cities, and across the landscape of Germany, people participated in these same rituals with local variations. The programs in Feuchtwangen were most likely characteristic of all German festivities so in this sense they demonstrated

⁴⁸⁹ Pages 267-941 in Brusniak's *Das Grosse Buch des Frankischen Sängerbundes* has photographs of the current choirs that make up that organization. Some of the choirs wear traditional costumes, but the members of today's Feuchtwangen Männerchor wear suits and ties. This men's choir has now been in continual existence for 190 years.

⁴⁹⁰ *Gemütlich* is one of those untranslatable words that means something like homey, comfortable, familiar.

not a unique, but a formulaic, strand of connection within the web of emotional communities. Local events demonstrated how music played a prominent role in creating community. The festivals that involved all the neighboring towns broaden our perspective on the local and national.

3.2.4 *Feuchtwangen and its Neighbors*

In 1905 the small neighboring town of Gunzenhausen sent an invitation to the musicians in Feuchtwangen for a “Singing Day.” Its contents are a striking testimony to what music meant to men who sang in choral societies in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. *Grüß Gott mit hellem Klang! Heil deutschem Wort und Sang!* (Greetings with a Brilliant Sound! Hail to the German Word and Song!) read the heading of the two-page invitation.⁴⁹¹ The image of it below is not perfect, but it provides a visual sense of what these singers valued. On each side of the harp were the attention-grabbing phrases quoted above. Though they were ubiquitous, the typesetter did not want the reader to skim over them, and they set the tone for the rest of the printed message. It is worth examining and quoting from this invitation at some length because it demonstrates how local societies sought to emulate the national ideal of preserving the *Lied*. Choral societies that formed in the first half of the nineteenth century to agitate for national unity continued to carry on this mission after political unification.

⁴⁹¹ ZFC-Arch 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 68 Gunzenhausen is another of those towns that can only be found on a detailed map. It is 28 miles southwest of Nuremberg and about 12 miles east of Feuchtwangen. Friedhelm Brusniak credits Ernst Moritz Arndt with originating these phrases which subsequently became a motto of all German singing clubs. Brusniak, “Chor und Chormusik,” *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd ed. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1995), Sachteil vol. 2, col. 788.

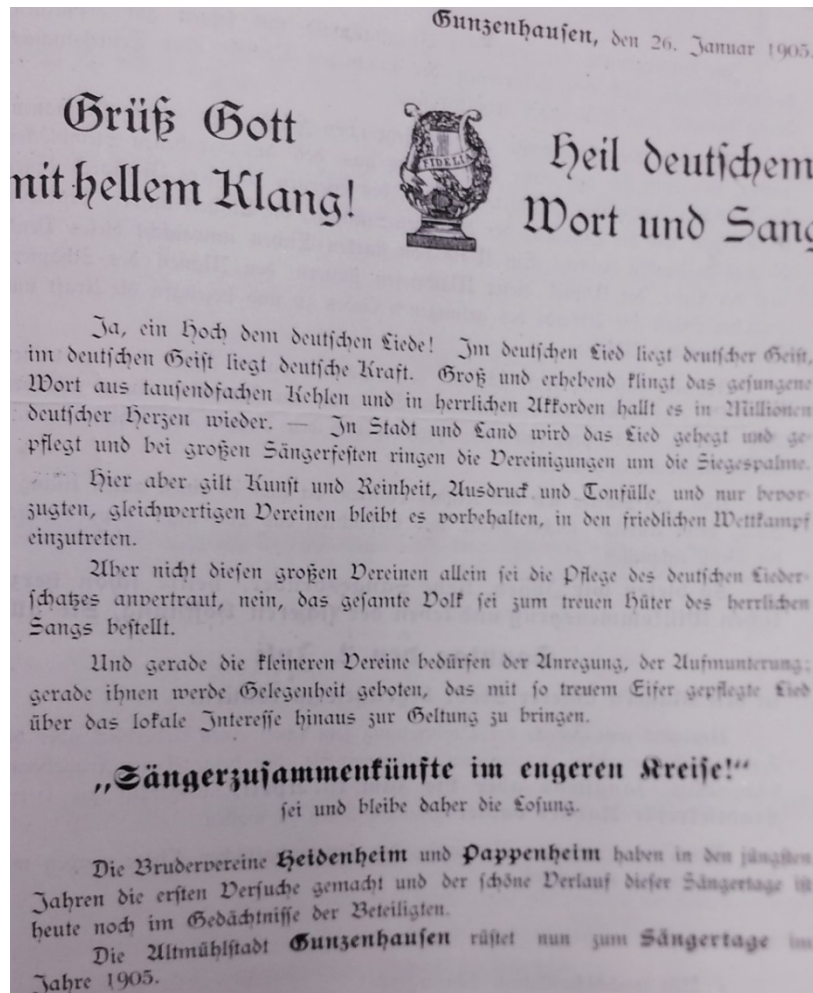


Figure 14 Invitation to Gunzenhausen Singing Day

The first lines of the text below the harp and slogans were: “Hail to the German song! In the German song lies the German spirit, in the German spirit lies German power. How great and uplifting the sung word sounds when magnificent chords come from thousands of throats and then echo in millions of German hearts.” These words encapsulated the sentiment that the German nation was more than a political entity, it was the very spirit of the German people, and the *Lied* itself was considered a “national-religious manifestation of God.”⁴⁹² Songs were written to be sung, and the task the members of choral societies had taken on was as preservers of the *Lied* but also as mediators—the chords that came from

⁴⁹² Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” 393.

their throats echoed in the hearts of their listeners making a connection between the *Lied* and the *Volk*.

The text goes on to say:

In town and country the song is cherished and cared for, and at the great singing festivals the choral societies surround it with palms of victory. . . . It is not the great associations alone who are entrusted as the caretakers of the treasure of German song. No, the entire people are commissioned to faithfully guard their glorious songs. And it is precisely the smaller associations who need the motivation and encouragement--exactly from them will the opportunity be required to showcase *song* above their other, local concerns.

Then in bold letters the singers from Gunzenhausen proclaimed:

“Small Singing Gatherings!”

That is the watchword.

The Gunzenhausen choristers issued a strong exhortation to their fellow singers. They could not entrust the *Lied* only to the large festivals but must also play their part in nurturing it. The *Lied* was bound up in the spirit of the people and subsequently of the entire nation. Caring for the *Lied* (and all its incumbent themes of history, nature, myth) meant supporting and promoting the nation itself. After this long introduction came the announcement that the city of Gunzenhausen, located on the Altmühl River, was preparing for a “Singing Day” (*Sängertag*). To keep the recipients reading, the invitation did not announce the date until the end of the next page.

The Singing Day organizers offered those invited a further incentive to visit Gunzenhausen by describing the beauty and historical significance of the region where their town was located.

Gunzenhausen lay in a river valley surrounded by a “magnificent forest with its well-maintained, wide paths, and the remains of a mighty Roman Wall.” This wall stood as a symbol of Teuton victories over the Romans, and it was brought to the readers’ attention that stones from that very wall were used to erect a monument to Iron Chancellor Bismarck—located on a nearby hill. German singers hardly needed to be reminded that they had his (Bismarck’s) “intellectual power to thank for the unification of the German tribes and the unity of the German Reich.” The monument was surrounded by oak trees whose topmost branches “whisper the chords of the song sung to the mighty wall, to the creator of German strength, and

to testify to the strength and loyalty of German men.”⁴⁹³ All the elements of the entire choral movement were articulated in this invitation from a tiny town in the Bavarian countryside—nature, historic roots of the Germanic *Volk*, the nineteenth-century struggle for political unification, and the worth Germans poured into the *Lied* as an expression of their existence.

A final glance at the program shows that it was printed in Gothic font. The official FSB and DSB correspondence employed Gothic font almost exclusively, and this was the style most associated with German-ness. While simpler font styles were cheaper to print, the use of Gothic visually reinforced the patriotic words of the text.⁴⁹⁴ Did German choristers grasp the entirety of this nationalist mission each time they sang? Possibly not, but the message was so frequently articulated in speeches, in written texts like the Gunzenhausen invitation, in song lyrics, and in visual images that it became part of their very worldview. The entire invitation reinforces Confino’s assertion that the local and national constantly re-configure each other. Choral groups consciously sought to engage with one another on both the local and national level, but the “Singing Day” invitation is also a reminder that choral clubs were not dependent on formal associations—the nation was an accumulation of each individual German singer wherever they gathered.

This Gunzenhausen Singing Day was not an anomaly; the event had a history. Annual Swabian song festivals took place between 1832 and 1845 and were not the result of a governing body’s rules, but a spontaneous reaction to the desire to sing together. The location changed from year to year making it more convenient for participants and giving a variety of towns the opportunity to host. Otto Elben described these original singing festivals as a grass-roots movement to “bind the nation together and

⁴⁹³ Im Hintergrunde der prächtige Burgstallwald mit seinen gut gepflegten breiten Wegen, mit den Ueberresten der mächtigen Römer- oder Teufelsmauer, deren Kastelle zum Teile noch erhalten sind. Errinnern diese Ueberreste an die siegreichen Feinde des alten Germanen volkes, so erhebt sich auf einer Anhöhe das aus den ausgegrabenen Steinblöcken der deutschen Ringmauer errichtete Denkmal des eisernen Kanzlers Bismarck, dessen Geisteskraft wir die Einigung der deutschen Stämme, die Einheit unseres deutschen Reiches zu danken haben. Ein Wald von starken Eichen umrauscht dieses Denkmal der Liebe, die Wipfel dieser Waldriesen flüstern den Mauern des Schöpfers deutscher Stärke die Akkorde des gesungenen Liedes zu und bezeugen die Kraft und Treue deutscher Männer.

⁴⁹⁴ *Wandervogel, Monatsschrift für deutsches Jugend* (Wandern herausgeben von der altwandervogel-Bundesleitung, 1911) 1. Jahrg. Heft 1, 13-16. The Wandervogel youth journal offered a long explanation about why they chose to use Latin script rather than Gothic for their journal, and it can be summed up as a financial decision. However, seven months into the publication of their monthly journals they switched to Gothic. This group was particularly concerned with preserving folk traditions and Germanic values.

through the mediation of music to connect all parts of Germany.”⁴⁹⁵ One example Elben offered was an 1841 event in Ludwigsburg where 74 *Liederkränze* with 2300 singers took part.⁴⁹⁶ The singers arranged themselves in groups for the parade in which each choir carried its flag and sang “cheerful marching songs.” Young women with rosebuds braided into their hair and wearing white dresses escorted the choirs and gave each singer an armband stitched with an image of the Ludwigsburg church. The *Marktplatz* was decorated with vines woven into garlands and wreaths, and the singers gathered in the town church to hear speeches and sing more songs.⁴⁹⁷ The 1905 Gunzenhausen event may have followed this same pattern, but there was no follow-up information about their Singing Day, so we do not know which songs they sang or who came. It appeared to be an informal event organized by a single town, like those of mid-century described by Elben, which brought together singers from the surrounding area to spend a day singing *Lieder*, thereby preserving their German heritage.

These same choral clubs later organized formally into the regional associations and the national organization as has been previously described, and the informal festivals of the 1830s and 1840s became the precursors to the later, more strictly prescribed ones. The Franconian Choral Association laid out in writing that local choral festivals should be joint events of a number of its member associations (*Vereine*) in which at least fifteen clubs participated—this ensured that the festival affected a “more powerful and expressive effect.”⁴⁹⁸ They could not match the numbers that attended the national festivals, but considering that most of the small-town choruses had twenty singers, they could create an impressive visual impact when 300 or more men descended on Feuchtwangen or one of its neighboring towns to parade their banners and perform *Lieder*.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁵ Elben, *Volkstümliche Männergesang*, 83. “Ein Band um die Nation zu schlingen, eine Verbindung deutscher Landestheile durch Vermittlung der Musik zu schaffen.”

⁴⁹⁶ Elben, *Volkstümliche Männergesang*, 90. *Liederkranz* was another name for a *Liedertafeln*--a choral society.

⁴⁹⁷ Elben, *Volkstümliche Männergesang*, 91.

⁴⁹⁸ ZFC Archiv B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 71 This file contained a draft of a new constitution. The rules about the local festivals are given in chapter IV. Sängerefeste, article B.

⁴⁹⁹ When Rothenburg ob der Tauber celebrated their 60th anniversary in May, 1902, more than 1200 singers participated. ZFC-Arch B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 65

One festival in Herrieden offers an opportunity to examine a local festival in more detail and to compare this event to the huge national festivals examined in Chapter Four. In March, 1899 the *Gesang-Verein und Liederkranz* of the small Franconian town of Herrieden invited neighboring choral clubs to come celebrate their 50th Anniversary.⁵⁰⁰ As we saw with the national festivals, the invitations always included some standard greetings: “*Mit treuem Sangergruss!*” “*Mit sangesbruderlichem Grue,*” “*mit deutschem Sangergrue.*”⁵⁰¹ These are difficult to translate directly, but the words signified something about the emotions of community—“true,” “brotherly,” and “German greetings”—which were specifically engendered by singing. While the greetings were standard, some clubs’ stationery was more elaborate than others. Like the masthead of *Die Sangerhalle* described in Chapter Four, many featured a harp, or a minstrel holding a harp; the borders most frequently displayed a flower or leaf design; and Rothenburg ob der Tauber’s, the most detailed, had a landscape view of their picturesque walled city. The harps, plants, and medieval cityscape projected an idealized image of Germany—the mythologized site of heroes and folklore whose development we traced in Chapters One and Two. Rothenburg’s elaborate minstrel heading included the renowned motto of the singing clubs, “Gruss Gott mit hellem Klang! Heil deutschem Wort und Sang!” which was so prominently displayed on the Gunzenhausen invitation. Just like the large national festival in Stuttgart, the Herrieden festival featured formal greetings, a parade of banners, a central gathering place where the entire group as well as individual choruses sang a long program of music, and opportunities for sightseeing and shopping. (The cover of the program appears below, and the program is included at the end of the chapter).

⁵⁰⁰ ZFC-Arch B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 62. The founding of this club occurred in 1849 in the wake of the 1848 revolutions which singers (and others) hoped would result in German unification.

⁵⁰¹ One can find these throughout the documents in the files of the Feuchtwangen Musik- und Gesangverein, ZFC-Arch B 71.



Figure 15 Festival program for the 50th anniversary of Herrieden's choral society

Saturday, 15 July

9 pm: Preliminary Ceremony. Brass and choral Concert with the Royal Ulanen Regiment, "König" in Ansbach in the Pfahlereschen Garten.

Sunday, 16 July

5 am: Reveille

10-12 am: Reception of the Guests

12-1 Midday: Lunch in various restaurants

2 pm: Opening Ceremony at the Marktplatz

Presentation of Banners

"Fahnen-Marsch"

Joint Choirs: "The Singer's Prayer" by Käsbohrer.

3 pm: Parade through Herrieden to the Festplatz-Wäldchen

Festival Concert

Lieder interchanged with Concert Music

Performed by the complete Regimental Kapelle of the 2nd Ulanen Regiment "König" in Ansbach under the personal direction of Conductor Wich.

March by Linke

1. Gesangverein Liedertafel Ansbach, Lied vorbehalten⁵⁰²
2. Gesangverein Lichtenau, Lied
3. Gesang- und Musikverein Feuchtwangen, Lied
4. Gesangverein Liederkrantz Ansbach, Lied

Overture from the Cantate "Die vier Menschenalter," by Lachner.

5. Gesangverein Weidenbach, "Deutsches Bundeslied," by Waldbecher
 6. Gesangverein Frohsinn Ansbach, Lied
 7. Gesangverein Merkendorf, "Beim Liebchen zu Hause," by Oeth
 8. Gesangverein Wieseth, Lied
 9. Gesangverein Leutershausen, Lied
 10. Gesangverein Schillingsfürst, "Im Maien," by Breu
 11. Gesangverein Schopfloch, Deutscher Rheinmarsch
 12. Gesangverein Sängerkunst Aub, "Die schönste Liebe, Vaterlandslied," by Santner.
- Die Kunst für Alle*, Potpourri by Reckling. (Contents printed on the back of the program).⁵⁰³

III.

"Muffel," March from Siegfried Wagner's "Bärenhäuter" by Morena.
 "Komm zum Rendezvous," Lied from the Operetta, "Der schöne Rigo," by Ziehrer

Student Songs, Potpourri by Kohlmann

Immer gefällig, Concert-Polka by Sackur

IV.

Two historic pieces for Heroldtrompeten: (Herald trumpets)

- a. Parademarsch des Königs-Husaren-Regiments Nr. 18 by Müller
- b. Barbarossa's Erwachen, Marsch by Reckling.

Deutschlands Ruhm und Ehre, Patriotisches Tongemälde von Römisch
 Massliebchen, Polka-Mazurka von Hermann

Then the program states that apart from the previously listed choirs, the following choirs will also participate.

13. Gesangverein Eyb
14. Gesangverein Colmberg
15. Gesangverein Liederkrantz Aub
16. Gesangverein Bechhofen
17. Gesangverein Ornbau
18. Radfahrerklub Ansbach
19. Feuerwehr Herrieden

⁵⁰² Most of the *Lied* selections on this program were listed as "vorbehalten" meaning the choirs had not sent in a specific title for the song they planned to sing.

⁵⁰³ "Die Kunst für Alle" is an offering that frequently shows up on programs, and it was a collection of works that someone assembled to be performed together--as a potpourri or medley. It directly translates to "Art for Everyone."

- 20. Kriegerverein Herrieden
- 21. Schützenverein Herrieden
- 22. Gesangverein Männerverein Ansbach

V.

Monday, 17 July

- 10 am Shopping
- 9 o'clock in the evening Festival Ball⁵⁰⁴

The events on this program offer us one opportunity (among many) to establish commonalities between the local Herrieden anniversary festival and larger regional festivals or national festivals. At the Herrieden festival most of the participants lived in towns that radiated out from Herrieden at distances of nine to fifteen kilometers and were approximately the same size as Feuchtwangen. Most guests arrived by foot, wagon, or possibly a car or train. Once singers assembled, official greetings and speeches were always observed and foregrounded the parade of banners. Herrieden was no exception. All over Germany singers from little towns gathered on weekends from May to August to make music, socialize, and perpetuate their mission as “bearers of a national culture of remembrance.”⁵⁰⁵ As they paraded their banners and flags the “procession of Germanism” was reproduced here as a smaller but still powerful visual image that connected the singers who gathered in Herrieden with those scattered across the German countryside.⁵⁰⁶ The affective field created in the streets of Munich, Hamburg, Vienna, or Stuttgart could be transported to any number of small German towns as banner parades reinforced the emotions of belonging wherever they took place.

Herrieden’s printed program does not offer much to analyze in terms of songs—many choirs arrived without having told the organizers in advance what they planned to sing. This program was more notable for the variety of associations who formed choirs as an ancillary function—military groups, students, bicyclists (*Radfahrerklub*), firefighters (*Feuerwehr*), marksmen (*Schützenverein*), veterans (*Kriegerverein*)—demonstrating again the universal presence of choral music in Germany and the fact

⁵⁰⁴ The program comes from the Feuchtwangen files for 1898-99. ZFC-Archiv 71 B 1.1.2 (90.5) 62

⁵⁰⁵ Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” 392.

⁵⁰⁶ The phrase “procession of Germanism” was used to describe the parade at the first national choral festival in Dresden in 1867. Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 132.

that ordinary singers and musicians were the bedrock of Germany’s reputation as “the people of music.”⁵⁰⁷ Choral music was not reserved for formally trained musicians, concert halls, the Lower Rhine Music Festival, or the church but pervaded many other activities—even those that seemingly had no connection to music—fighting fires or shooting guns. Associational life was a means of socializing and participating in civil society, but the singers also took their mission of preserving German song seriously. To fully comprehend German society at the turn of the century, we must take the rituals, practices, and repertoire of the thousands of amateur musicians into consideration. One specific song from the Herrieden festival was printed in the program and attests to this.

Before the parade, the combined choirs sang one piece together, “The Singer’s Prayer.” This echoed sentiments expressed in the Gunzenhausen invitation, and I conclude this chapter by looking at it.⁵⁰⁸

“Sängers Gebet” by Oskar von Redwitz

Du, der du bist der Geister Hort!
Was hab ich Grosses noch getan,
dass Du mir gabst des Liedes Wort?
Ich habe keinen Teil daran,
dass Du mir gabst des Liedes Wort,
ich habe keinen Teil daran, o Herr!
wie säng ich ohne Dich, o Herr!
wie säng ich ohne Dich.

Ich trag die Lieb in voller Brust,
ich seh die Welt im Frühlingslicht,
werd fast erdrückt von Liedeslust,
doch ach ich finde Worte nicht, o Herr!
werd fast erdrückt von Liedeslust,
doch ach ich finde Worte nicht, o Herr!
wie säng ich ohne Dich, o Herr!
wie säng ich ohne Dich.

Mein Lied ertön’ nur Dir zur Ehr!
Du gabst es mir, es ist ja Dein,
und sing auf Erden ich nicht mehr,
lass mich auch dort Dein Sänger sein!

You who are the spirit’s refuge!
What have I done to deserve
the gift of expressing songs?
I have no part in the fact,
that you gave me the words of song,
I have no part, oh Lord!
How could I sing without you, oh Lord!
How could I sing without you.

Even when I carry a heart full of love,
Or I see the world in the light of Spring,
these are nearly overwhelmed by a joy of songs,
and I cannot find words, oh Lord!
I am overcome by my delight in songs,
still I cannot find words, oh Lord!
How could I sing without you, oh Lord!
How could I sing without you.

My song sounds only to honor you!
You gave it to me, yet it is yours,
and I do not sing any more for those on earth,
let me be Your singer there, too!

⁵⁰⁷ Numbers 18-21 on the program; the regimental band and chorus from Ansbach was very prominently featured in Herrieden’s anniversary festival.

⁵⁰⁸ It was quite common to include songs with religious themes on the programs of the DSB choirs. Chapter Six will deal with the religious climate of the German Empire more thoroughly. Here I include this to prove a point about using what people sang as a means of understanding what they valued.

und sing auf Erden ich nicht mehr,
 lass mich auch dort Dein Sänger sein!
 Du Herr des Klangs, erhöre mich,
 Du Herr des Klangs, erhöre mich,
 erhöre mich Du Herr!
 erhöre mich Du Herr!⁵⁰⁹

and I do not sing any more for those on earth,
 let me be Your singer there, too!
 Lord of sound, hear me.
 Lord of sound, hear me,
 Hear me, Lord!
 Hear me, Lord!

This song, which was the only joint performance at the Herrieden celebration, verified something important about German society that might be easily overlooked—music was valued as a means of expression, and singing became almost a religious obligation. I quoted from “Hymne an die Musik” (Hymn to Music) at the beginning of Chapter Two. The composer of that *Lied* praised music as a divine art and one that commanded reverence. At the Herrieden festival, singers echoed that theme. The words to “The Singers’ Prayer” do not require much interpretation—singers believed that God had created music and given people the ability to sing. The phrase, “How could I sing without you?” that was repeated more than six times in the song (I left out some of the repetitions above) validated that. Singing transcended human love or the pleasures of spring, and song was the highest means of expression God gave to humans. The sentiments of music as a divine art, one requiring supernatural aid for proper expression, paralleled some of the sentiments in the Gunzenhausen invitation—the *Lied* was an expression of the German nation and a “national-religious manifestation of God.” “The Singers’ Prayer” was more religious in tone than the wording of the Gunzenhausen invitation, but the constant refrain, “How can I sing without You?” echoed the exhortations given by the choral associations that German men must keep the *Lied* alive—how could they do that without God’s help? The singers in the small towns near Gunzenhausen proclaimed that they were responsible for preserving the *Lied* as national expression just as much as singers in larger, more prominent cities—they were all “the people of music.” The following chapters will deal with religious and social conflict in more detail, but the festivals of the singers in

⁵⁰⁹ The words were printed in the 50th Anniversary program and can also be found here: www.lieder.net/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=13273 The English translation is mine.

Franconia represented cohesiveness that developed out of practices just as the national festivals did.

Heimat, music, and festival rituals allowed for unity amidst diversity.⁵¹⁰

When I first began researching German choral societies I happened upon the Feuchtwangen Choral Museum in an internet search, and without knowing much else about it, I made plans to visit and look at the sources they claimed to have. That was my first introduction to how German choral societies actually functioned, the events they put on, and their interactions with other choirs. The first file I opened had the official announcement about the upcoming national festival in Vienna (1890) where only two of the members of the Feuchtwangen men's choir travelled to participate. I was immediately drawn into the connection between small-town choirs and large-scale national events. The next summer I stumbled across the entire collection of *Die Sangerhalle* in Leipzig and began to piece all the connections together more clearly. Alon Confino's claim that the local and national "are in constant configurations as one shapes the other" can be demonstrated not only through the notion of *Heimat* (as he and Celia Applegate have shown) but also through the choral movement and the rituals and practices singers created over the course of the nineteenth century.⁵¹¹

The connections that naturally transpired between individual choral societies were both vertical and horizontal. As individual groups came together to create more formal associations, the strands that connected them locally (horizontally around the figurative web) developed into vertical strands connecting them all to the national center of the web--the German Choral Association. The banners, flags, and slogans of the earliest choral societies like Feuchtwangen's became national types and symbols giving proof to the oft repeated phrase, "from north and south, from east and west."⁵¹² Individual choral societies saw themselves as a microcosm of the nation (as we saw from the Gunzenhausen invitation) and

⁵¹⁰ Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance*, 28. Confino says *Heimat* was apolitical and I argue that music also had the power to overcome political and religious differences.

⁵¹¹ Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

⁵¹² This was the sentiment that was repeatedly expressed in speeches during the national festivals and echoed Ernst Moritz Arndt's poem that the German's Fatherland was wherever the German language was spoken and German songs sung. The first national festivals were situated in the south (Munich), north (Hamburg), east (Vienna), and west (Stuttgart).

as carriers of a national culture of remembrance--keeping the *Lied* alive in the hearts of the people and constantly reminding the *Volk* of their history (as in performances like “Die tausendjährige Linde”). Thus programs from the Feuchtwangen files show us how musicians made music part of the life of a small town, they also show the connections that developed with their neighbors, and they ultimately represent the local as an intrinsic part of the national. Feuchtwangen musicians not only took part in each other’s anniversary celebrations or the dedication of a choral banner, but singers from nearby towns sometimes came to Feuchtwangen to sing solo parts in performances; the baritone soloist for “Die tausendjährige Linde” was from nearby Dinkelsbühl. Singers from Feuchtwangen and all the clubs that made up the Franconian Choral Association came together in regional festivals and gathered *en masse* at the national festivals.

From here I move on to other layers of German musical life. The men’s choral movement was not considered “high culture” and has been scorned as “mass culture,” i.e. without taste, value, or enduring worth, but they represented an important strata of bourgeois culture that facilitated national cohesion both before and after the creation of the German Empire. The examples used in this chapter barely skim the surface of what actually went on year to year, and we know that these events were repeated all over Germany—*Die Sängerkirche* was filled with reports about concerts in small towns and events planned by regional associations. We will take a more critical look at difference as we examine other layers of choral music—the *Berlin Liedertafeln*, Leipzig’s *Riedel-Verein*, the *Allgemeine Cäcilienverein*, Luther celebrations, Wagner’s music drama, the workers’ choral association, and the youth movement.

4 MOVEMENT III HARMONIC DISSONANCE

The thing that distinguishes dissonances from consonances is not their greater or lesser degree of beauty but their greater or lesser degree of intelligibility. Arnold Schönberg

There was a fascinating parallel between political/social/economic developments at the turn of the century and those in the field of music. Wilhelm II became the new emperor of Germany in 1888, and when Otto von Bismarck, the architect of German unification was forced out of office, the alliance system he had so carefully constructed was allowed to expire. Subsequently, Wilhelm launched a more

aggressive policy of colonial and naval expansion. Germany had become the second most-industrialized country in the world and with the revocation of the anti-socialist laws the Social Democratic Party (SPD) became an active political force—the old was passing away, and a new society being created. Meanwhile, in the field of music, both Mahler and Strauss debuted works that broke new ground in what German musicologist Carl Dahlhaus called “the dawning of ‘musical modernism.’”⁵¹³ Composers began experimenting with harmonic constructions and were “insatiable in [their] drive to complexity”—experimenting with chords to create “nonharmonic tones and chromaticizations.”⁵¹⁴ Arnold Schönberg made the final rupture with tonality in 1900 and announced that he had liberated dissonance. Chords no longer had to move from one to another within the context of a harmonically centered key, rather sounds could be woven “into a network of relationships . . . just at the point where they threaten to become isolated.”⁵¹⁵ This is a useful metaphor for German society at the turn of the century.

The de-centered nature of modern music mirrored that of the German Empire. Unlike other European nations, Germany had no “center”—France had Paris; Britain had London; even the dysfunctional Austro-Hungarian empire had a center, the most glittering one of all, Vienna. Germany had no center, but it had an intelligible structure consisting of a network of relationships. In this Movement we will explore music outside the circles of the German Choral Association to examine German society in the pre-war years as one in which disparate groups were woven into networks of relationships even at points where their differences threatened to isolate them. Depending on one’s perspective the entire society seemed fraught with dissonance, but I argue that, per Schönberg’s analysis of dissonance, coherent networks emerged out of disparate forces. Music continued to define German-ness, but it was reconstituted in new and different spheres. Thus it effectively drew broader groups of people into the realm of musical expression and spanned the fissures that threatened to rupture society.

⁵¹³ Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. by J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 330. The two pieces were Mahler’s First Symphony and Strauss’s *Don Juan*.

⁵¹⁴ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 379.

⁵¹⁵ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 388.

Each chapter in Movement III deals with contestations of national identity at the turn-of-the-century. Was the German Empire religiously, politically, and economically inclusive or did national identity come to mean something more narrowly defined? Could Ernst Moritz Arndt's vision of the German fatherland prevail in spite of tremendous forces that exposed stark differences?⁵¹⁶ Did an asymmetrical power structure undermine attempts to forge a consensus version of the German nation? These were complex issues that threatened the potential of *Heimat* to reconcile differences that were more contentious than local versus national. The choral movement encompassed other binding features, and its practices and rituals endured as a defining feature of German identity even under the pressures of modernity—a love of nature, an idealized version of *Heimat*, an interest in folktales and myth, and national pride bound up in a distinct national-imperial identity. Crowds of individuals singing “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” (A Mighty Fortress is our God) or hearing its melody incorporated into other musical compositions facilitated an inner appreciation of the nation as a Protestant entity and one that (supposedly) fulfilled Luther's original mission. Other voices entered the picture creating an appearance of dysfunction at times and the dissonance painfully incoherent, but the undergirding structure held the promise of national community. Accepting the complexities and tensions inherent in society in the decades before the First World War allow us to approach disharmony with a degree of skepticism—and to perhaps emancipate narratives of dissonance. In this entire Movement we see groups who were potentially fractious, but we also unveil overlapping emotional communities and shared values.

To set the stage, Chapter Six deals with three choral groups much like those examined in the previous chapters. The first, the *Berlin Liedertafel*, was an all-male chorus and a member of the German Choral Association; after 1880, it acquired a national and international reputation for excellence. The second, the *Riedel-Verein* in Leipzig, was a mixed chorus founded with the primary purpose of reviving music from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁵¹⁷ The so-called Palestrina revival broadened the repertoire of the choral movement to include more than *Lieder*, cantatas, and oratorios—the last two

⁵¹⁶ Arndt's „Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?“ (1813) had not restricted Germany to geographic boundaries but included every place German was spoken and German songs sung.

⁵¹⁷ The founder of the choir was Carl Riedel (1827-1888) and it took on his name.

genres generally associated with the Protestant music tradition.⁵¹⁸ Within the Catholic tradition, this music did not need revival because it was the traditional music of the Catholic liturgy. However, amateur choirs were not part of the traditional Catholic Mass.⁵¹⁹ The third choral group examined in this chapter was not an individual choir; rather the *Allgemeine Cäcelien-Verein* (Cecelia Association) was a movement that originated to offer Catholics opportunities for music-making within the realm of associational life.⁵²⁰ The *Berlin Liedertafel*, the *Riedel-Verein* and the Cecelia Association represented both continuity and change within the German choral movement. Amateur choirs continued to proliferate and included both men and women. As their repertoires expanded, they continued to sing about themes important to all Germans. These choirs had particular interests but were not mutually exclusive, and as we shall see, the music itself often bound them together into overlapping emotional communities.

Religious difference is an underlying motif in Chapter Six but is the primary focus of Chapter Seven. As Protestant Germans sought to assert a specifically Protestant identity for the German Empire after 1870, the sixteenth-century reformer Martin Luther was elevated to the status of the model German citizen and a national hero. We will examine some celebrations of Luther and especially look at how his chorale “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” was loosed from its moorings as a hymn of confidence in God and converted into a hymn in praise of the German Empire and the German emperor. It might seem discordant to pair Luther with Richard Wagner, but I argue that there is a way to juxtapose these two that makes sense in the context of dissonance and national identity. The historical Luther became mythologized at the same time Wagner’s “new mythology” was given cultural legitimacy. Luther became a symbol of political liberty and freedom; Nordic-Germanic mythology became the ultimate expression of national

⁵¹⁸ This is an over-simplification of the Palestrina revival because there were Protestant composers who wrote music during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the music of Bach fell into this category. But Protestant choirs did not sing this music from about 1750 to 1830. Reintroducing the works of Bach or Heinrich Schutz brought this music back to life within Protestant circles—both in churches and in concert halls.

⁵¹⁹ Joseph Dyer, “Roman Catholic Church Music,” Oxford Music Online, 2001. It was not until the eighteenth century that non-professional soloists or choirs sometimes participated in so-called *Landmesse* (country Mass) and not until the late eighteenth century that hymns in the vernacular were published for Catholic congregations to sing. It was not until the nineteenth century when genres of music that had traditionally been confined to religious settings became part of the concert repertoire that amateur singers regularly sang Masses, oratorios, or Passions.

⁵²⁰ Membership in the ACV was not restricted to Catholics—Anna Ettlinger mentioned in her memoirs that she and her sisters sang in a Cecelia choir in Karlsruhe, and they were Jewish.

redemption celebrated through the “music of the future.” Nineteenth- and twentieth-century pilgrims made their way to Luther sites and to Bayreuth—not always the same groups of people but with the same longing for national roots and a common German identity. Festivals surrounded both Luther commemorations and Wagner’s music dramas and their rituals reinforced community among those persuaded by their messages of national belonging.⁵²¹

The final chapter in this Movement deals with a realm of music that has not yet been examined—education—and it proved to be a connecting thread between the early choral movement and turn of the century forces like workers and the youth movement. Both emerged as defined “groups” in the decades following unification and education reforms were aimed at training a modern, industrialized work force while maintaining the cultivating power of music. Although not formally recognized until 1890, workers first organized socially and politically in the 1860s and created all-male choirs. At the same time a generation of young people came to age that was the first generation of “Germans.” In almost every way, the *Kaiserreich* had not fulfilled the national-liberal hopes of the previous generations that formed the first choral associations and supported the revolutions of 1830 and 1848. However, the bourgeois grandparents and parents had adjusted themselves to the new socioeconomic-political order and found a means of accommodation. The *fin de siècle* generation formed their own associations which emerged out of the shifting structural configurations at the turn of the century—the *Deutscher Arbeiter-Sängerbund* (German Workers Choral Association), *Wandervogel* (Wandering Birds), and the *Deutscher Akademische Sängerbund*.⁵²² Workers and youth associations rejected, parodied, and yet embraced many of the cultural values nurtured by the men and women who created the first choral societies. In the process they created other layers of German music culture—ones that did not negate harmony but added to the complexity of the cultural landscape.

⁵²¹ The most important Luther pilgrimage sites were Eisleben (his birthplace), Worms, the Wartburg Castle, and Wittenberg. The Bayreuth Festival began in 1876 and guaranteed Wagner’s mythology a permanent place in German culture.

⁵²² The workers first created a umbrella associational group in the 1860s—the *Arbeiterbildungsvereine* and later reorganized in the 1890s. *Wandervogel* were clubs of young people who spent their weekends and school vacations hiking and exploring folk culture.

Innumerable forces threatened to isolate Germans into separate camps at the turn of the century, but there were threads that wove them together as well. *Avant garde* musicians and composers attempted to reflect modernity in their music, but also employed Germanic myth. Educators advocated a turning away from rote learning to more active and participatory styles. Industrialization pushed Germans into urban environments creating sharply delineated social groups who became more political. At the same time there was a reaction in which various groups rejected modernity and took up singing simple *Volkslieder* to create community and embraced traditional art forms as a means of transcending social divisions. In the midst of this cacophony of change, the choral organizations that originated in the first half of the nineteenth century, as well as new ones created by musicians of the New German School, teachers, workers, and young people, continued to bind Germans together in separate and overlapping emotional communities who believed they were the “people of music.”⁵²³

4.1 Chapter Six Die Kunst für Alle, A Potpourri

Art by the many, perhaps like government by the many, is at its best when it not only allows but inspires the greatest possible individual participation, self-discipline, and self-expression.” Robert Shaw

Die Kunst für Alle (Art for Everyone), was a title found on several music programs from the Feuchtwangen files. A musician chose a selection of instrumental and choral works that represented a colorful mixture, a potpourri, or what we call a medley, and these were presented as a single composition--usually at the very end of an evening’s program.⁵²⁴ This chapter is offered in that same spirit. It

⁵²³ Anton Rubenstein was credited with calling the Germans the “people of music.” Anton Rubenstein, *Autobiography of Anton Rubenstein, 1826-1889*, trans. Aline Delano (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1903), 117-119. Rubenstein estimated that in Germany at least 50% of the people “understood music;” in France it was no more than 16%; in England, “the least musical of all,” only 2%. Rubenstein added, “In no other land do we find the real merit of musical compositions so quickly discerned and accurately valued as in Germany.”

⁵²⁴ The 1896 *Kellerfest mit Produktion* in Feuchtwangen as well as the *50th Anniversary Celebration* in Herrieden listed “Die Kunst für Alle, Potpourri” by Reckling on the programs. Three other programs included in the Feuchtwangen records have a “Potpourri” in their programs--attributed to different musicians. Except for the event in Herrieden, these Potpourris always came at the very end of the program. The Herrieden anniversary program is the only one that lists what was included in Reckling’s “Die Kunst für Alle”: 1. Introduction. 2. Reveil du Lion. 3. Troubadour, von Verdi. 4. Donauwellen, Walzer von Ivanovici. 5. Lohengrin, von Rich. Wagner. 6. Carmen von Bizet. 7. Trompeten-Fanfare. 8. Was blasen die Trompeten etc. 9. Unser Vaterland, Lied von Nägeli. 10. Pfingsten in Florenz, von Czibulka. 11. Lied aus Mignon, von Thomas. 12. Am grünen Strand der Spree, Walzer. 13. Hinaus in die Ferne. 14. Französische Tagreveille. 15. Oberon, von C. M. v. Weber. 16. Loin du bal, von Gillet. 17. Prinz August, Armeemarsch Nr. 10. 18. Wohlauf Kameraden. 19. Die hastigen Weber, von Nicolai. 20. Maestoso. 21.

demonstrates that Germany's choral music culture was more diverse than that represented by the amateur men's choruses. The potpourri offered here is a metaphor for the different layers of music culture that existed in Germany during the *Kaiserreich*. The choral movement that began as a more-or-less homogenous movement became more diverse over the course of the nineteenth century, and the varied components of this potpourri reflect those diversities. I argue that these revealed threads of emotional connection amidst complex societal tensions.

Carl Dahlhaus calls the amateur choral societies and corresponding music festivals the “institutional bedrock” of the bourgeois music culture that flourished in nineteenth-century Germany. The differing repertoires divided groups along social lines--the men's choruses (*Liederkränz* or *Liedertafeln*) represented the lowest stratum; a *Singakademie*, symphony chorus, or choir like the *Riedel-Verein*, made up of men and women, represented a higher economic/social standing. It was the general availability of music in concerts and festivals, and the ability of the *Bildungsbürgertum* to perform and appreciate it, that provided a unifying foundation from which emotional communities were created and sustained.⁵²⁵ In this chapter I demonstrate how groups that appeared to be in different musical-social spheres were nevertheless all enthralled by common themes—nature, mythology, history, and above all, a belief in the superiority of German music. In addition, I look at religious music as part of this potpourri—the *Riedel-Verein* sang music written by German-Lutheran composers of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries and the choirs of the *Cäcelien-Verein* sang music from the Catholic liturgy dating to the same period. However, the lines were not so starkly drawn because these choirs as well as the *Berlin Liedertafel* all sang music representing what was known as the Palestrina revival. The *Berlin Liedertafel* was the oldest of the three groups and we will begin with it.

Beersagliere. 22. Amazonen-Marsch. Reckling had a piece titled, “Die Kunst für Alle! Grosses Potpourri,” published in 1893; it may not have been the exact work above, but demonstrated that these “potpourris” were popular. The above list comes from ZFC-Archiv B 71 (90.5) 62.

⁵²⁵ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 43-47; 160-64; 195-96.

4.1.1 *The Berlin Liedertafel*

The two men most responsible for the early nineteenth-century formation of lay choirs and choral associations were Hans Georg Nägeli and Carl Friedrich Zelter. As we saw in Chapter Two, Zelter's goals for the *Berlin Singakademie* and *Liedertafel* were primarily artistic while Nägeli was more concerned with the pedagogical value of singing, but both goals fed into the prevailing view that music had the power to elevate, to cultivate, and to edify. This was the German conception of *Bildung* that Dahlhaus claims was "so taken for granted at the time that it was not even recognized as bourgeois."⁵²⁶ The original men's chorus founded by Carl Friedrich Zelter in 1809 was made up of twenty-five men who were "artists, scholars, writers, or composers."⁵²⁷ After Zelter's death in 1832, several other men led the men's choir, but the one who did the most to transform the choir was Adolf Zander (1843-1914). Shortly after Zander took over its direction in 1881, he combined it with another of his choirs, the *Männerchor Liedeslust*, and this combined choir preserved the name and the heritage of Zelter's 1809 *Berlin Liedertafel*.⁵²⁸

Whereas Zelter's original chorus was a strictly elitist endeavor, Zander was interested in finding the most gifted singers in Berlin, and he turned the *Liedertafel* into the most highly regarded amateur chorus in the city.⁵²⁹ Zander successfully recruited men from various occupations and gave them the skills to become exceptional choristers. This earned him the reputation as a conductor who with just a glance or

⁵²⁶ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 179; James Garratt, "Performing Renaissance Church Music in Nineteenth-Century Germany: Issues and Challenges in the Study of Performative Reception," *Music & Letters* 83, no. 2 (2002), 190.

⁵²⁷ Fritz Grahl, *100 Jahre Berliner Liedertafel: Chronik 1884-1984* (Berlin: zusammengestellt von Fritz Grahl, Archivar, 1984). Zelter also led the *Berlin Singakademie* which was a mixed choir and its membership was less tightly defined.

⁵²⁸ The names of men's choirs reveals much about the core beliefs of the movement--*Liedeslust* means "delight in song." *Liedertafel* or *Liederkrantz* were more generic names that date to Zelter's original choir. *Harmonie* was a popular name as well as *Eintracht* (Harmony), *Concordia*, *Lyra* (Glockenspiel/Bell), and *Frohsinn* (Glee/Cheerfulness).

⁵²⁹ James Garratt, "Performing Renaissance Church Music in Nineteenth-Century Germany: Issues and Challenges in the Study of Performative Reception," *Music & Letters*, 83, no. 2 (2002): 187-236. Garratt says that while Zelter's singers "were committed in principle to the ideal of musical renewal for the benefit of the masses" they performed primarily for themselves and guests were limited to "refined friends" who had educated, refined tastes in music (189-90).

facial expression could convey the meaning of the *Lied* to his singers.⁵³⁰ The first public concert of Zander's *Berlin Liedertafel* was on February 24, 1885, and a newspaper reported, "It was high time that the men's chorus in Berlin was removed from the philistine sphere of the beer hall and made into a valuable facet of public art."⁵³¹ In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the *Berlin Liedertafel* had apparently lost the original "artistic" image that Zelter had envisioned, but Zander enabled this chorus to bridge the worlds of beer halls and the concert stage. In the 1880s Berlin was not a prominent cultural center like Paris or Vienna, but as its population grew after 1871, its musical reputation kept pace. The *Berlin Philharmonic* was founded in the same year as Zander's *Berlin Liedertafel* and the two became associated--partly because they shared the same facility. Within twenty years, both the chorus and the orchestra achieved international status.⁵³²

In June of 1885, the *Berlin Liedertafel* gave their one-year anniversary concert at the Berlin Zoological Gardens. The program from this performance offers us a point of comparison with those given by men's choirs in the small towns of Bavaria--these were, after all, fellow choruses within the German Choral Association (DSB). The Berlin chorus was accompanied on this occasion by the band of the Kaiser-Franz-Garde-Grenadier-Regiments No. 2.⁵³³ The choir numbered 120 singers and the newspaper reported that 15,000 people attended the concert. Grahl merely listed the choral pieces presented in this program, although it was almost certain that there were also speeches and perhaps some instrumental offerings.⁵³⁴

1. "Gesang der Geister über den Wassern" Goethe/B. Klein
2. "Im Grase thaut's" Th. Krause/Julius Wolff
3. 2 Volkslieder:

⁵³⁰ Grahl, *100 Jahre*, 3.

⁵³¹ Grahl, *100 Jahre*, 7.

⁵³² Berliner Philharmoniker, Orchestra History www.berliner-philharmoniker.de The website of the Berlin Philharmonic has an informative history of the orchestra from 1861 to the present. It is considered one of the world's premier orchestras today.

⁵³³ Men's choruses were frequently accompanied by military bands; we saw this previously at the Herrieden 60th anniversary festival (Chapter 5).

⁵³⁴ Ethel Smyth made an observation about Germans and speeches that proves this point. "The Germans say of themselves that wherever three of their nation are gathered together--say at the North Pole--they instantly found a 'Society;' if so I believe it is chiefly in order to have an excuse for making speeches. You never were safe from them." Smyth, *Impressions that Remained*, 248.

- Schottisches Volkslied T-T-B-B both by A. Zander
Schwäbisches Volkslied
4. “Vineta” Jos. Seiler/Franz Abt
 5. “Schön Rotthraud” E. Möricke/Veit
 6. “Ossian” W. Duncker/J. Beschnitt
 7. “Hüte dich!” Old German Volkslied/Girschner
 8. “Piratengesang” J. Beschnitt
 9. “Wie hab ich sie geliebt” K. Körner/F. Möhring⁵³⁵

The entire program was composed of *Lieder*, as was typical of a DSB choir, but there was something striking about this performance that set it apart from the national DSB festivals or the programs put on in Feuchtwangen. There were nine items on the program (not so unusual), but even a cursory look at the titles leaves one with the impression that it was a “simple” program. Considering the size of the choir, the occasion, and the military band, one might expect at least one “grand” piece. However, the collection of songs set a mood for this program that was intensified by its setting in the zoological gardens.

One way to use this program (in comparison with others) is to examine how the lyrics of songs represented a mood, or a prevailing worldview, that was characteristic of Germany over the course of the long nineteenth century.⁵³⁶ The themes of nature, history, and a certain exoticism pervaded the song choices listed, and the venue complemented these. Founded in 1844, the Berlin Zoo was the oldest zoo in Germany and one of the oldest in the world. Dr. Heinrich Bodinus, who took over its directorship in 1869, raised money to “modernize” the zoo; he added more animal species, and constructed music pavilions, terraces, and a restaurant.⁵³⁷ In addition to these amenities, the appeal of the Berlin zoo was the

⁵³⁵ Grahl, *100 Jahre*, 7. I typed the names as they were listed on the program. The first name is the poet and the second that of the composer.

⁵³⁶ 6. Juli 1888 *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, “Ueber Littauische Volkslieder,” 418-244. The author of this article analyzed several Lithuanian folk songs and concluded that the songs must be considered as a “single family, as the one family in which the poetic-musical traits of the Lithuania people come to the fore most closely.” German musicians/music critics of the nineteenth century believed that characteristics of music revealed something about the people who wrote it (and sang it). Understanding that mindset gives us tools to examine German music programs and what they revealed about turn of the century Germans. See also, George S. Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press: 2004), 33.

⁵³⁷ Gary Bruce, *Through the Lion Gate: A History of the Berlin Zoo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 42-43; and www.zoo-berlin.de

surrounding park which allowed citizens a respite from industrial life.⁵³⁸ This was the setting for the *Berlin Liedertafel*'s anniversary concert where they sang songs whose themes were entwined with nature and history. The atmosphere created by the surrounding gardens amidst exotic creatures enhanced the musical offerings and generated an “affective field” that differed from that of a concert hall or a *Kellerfest*. During the pauses between one song and another, or while the speeches were given, the audience heard birds chirping, looked up into the trees, enjoyed the fresh breezes, and relished the sounds of music and nature. The setting generated a different level of emotions from those elicited by the banner parades of a national festival, or the overwhelming sound produced by thousands of men singing together in a festival choir, but this anniversary performance was one part of the bigger emotional community created by the rituals of performing the *Lied*.

The choice of songs tells its own story. No musical program was (or is) the result of random selection. Zander carefully chose these particular works to perform for this occasion and setting. It was a *one*-year anniversary celebration—but it also pointed to the long-standing existence of a “re-created” choir. The lesser known middle works were bookended by those based on the poems of famous poets-- Goethe and Körner. Wolfgang Goethe was a personal friend of Carl Friedrich Zelter; although Zelter set many of Goethe's poems to music, Bernhard Klein (1793-1832) was the composer for “Gesang der Geister über den Wassern” (Song of the Spirits over the Waters).⁵³⁹ The last four lines to this poem/song are: Soul of man, You are like water! Fate of man, You are like wind!⁵⁴⁰ Perhaps the audience (and singers) felt the wind and heard a stream flowing through the gardens and thus grasped the import of Goethe's words more vividly than in an enclosed concert space. The opening song set the mood for the rest of the program.

⁵³⁸ Bruce, *Through the Lion Gate*, 5. Bruce explains that nineteenth-century European zoos flourished because they offered people a respite from industrial life and an antidote to the squalor and noise of modern urban life.

⁵³⁹ Goethe, Zelter, and Klein all died in 1832; this first musical offering was a homage to the early history of the *Berlin Liedertafel*. Franz Schubert's setting of “Gesang der Geister über den Wassern” is more famous, but he did not have the same connection to the early days of the *Liedertafel*. Schubert's version can be heard on YouTube and runs about eleven minutes, although Goethe's poem is six stanzas with only thirty-five lines. Since most of the works listed above are not well-known today, it is impossible to know how long this entire program ran.

⁵⁴⁰ Martin Schütze, *Goethe's Poems: Selected and Annotated with a Study of the Development of Goethe's Art and View of Life in His Lyrical Poetry* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1916), 133. “*Seele des Menschen, Wie gleich du dem Wasser! Schicksal des Menschen, Wie gleich du dem Wind!*”

Zander found it fitting to begin and end the program with poets associated with the early years of the choral movement and universal themes of life and love. The last item on the program, number Nine, “Wie hab ich sie geliebt” (How I Loved Her) was written by Karl Theodor Körner, the poet who died in battle in 1813. Goethe and Körner were two of the best-loved German poets of the nineteenth century, and they both lived during the early decades of the choral movement. Körner himself embodied the theme of Goethe’s poem bringing to mind the young Körner’s, “Hör uns Allmächtiger,” which was sung at the second national DSB festival in Munich in 1874. This prayer, written as the young men of the *Lützow Volunteers* were preparing to march against Napoleon’s forces, concluded with: “Lead us! If our lot falls deep in the graves’ bosom . . . Lead us, Almighty.” Körner’s own life exemplified Goethe’s sentiment that life was like a wind that fate swept away. The audience that gathered in the Zoological Gardens did not need program notes to make these connections, and while the gardens may have evinced pleasant thoughts of breezes, trees, and flowers, the setting reinforced the themes of the songs--life, like blooming flowers, was brief. The reader may think I am reading too much into this, but Germans who were raised on music were trained to listen to the intents of the lyricist and composer and to interpret these intelligently. A music concert was more than entertainment--it elevated and enlightened the listeners. This was the very essence of *Bildung*, and the rest of the program provided further opportunities for careful reflection.⁵⁴¹

Nature was purposely intertwined with history in the Romantic movement which influenced so many German poets and musicians, as the core of the program beautifully demonstrated. The second *Lied*, “Im Grase thaut’s, die Blumen träumen,” was replete with the imagery of a tree in the midst of a flowery meadow, the moon and the quietness of night. This song could be taken purely as a reflection on the beauty of nature. The poem was short, only three stanzas, and the audience contemplated the scene around them as they listened to:

⁵⁴¹ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 50. Dahlhaus adds that listening silently, rather than using music as a background to conversation, gained ascendancy as a result of embracing music’s educatory function. The roots of this are found in the early-nineteenth century emphasis on music as an art form that speaks for itself if one has the skill to hear it. Also, Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music,” 199.

Dew falls upon the grass, the flowers are dreaming
 Of their colorful honey thief,
 And above in the trees there is a whispering:
 Are you sleeping? Are you sleeping, my dear love?
 The moon shines through the green woods.

A little branch sways in quiet rocking,
 In the dark secretiveness of the leaves
 There stirs a caressing, wafting, nestling:
 Faithful to you, faithful to you for all eternity!

Now quiet falls in the air and the branches,
 A blissful breath lifts the bosom,
 Night kisses you with sweet silence,
 Rest, rest, from love and passion,
 The moon shines through the green woods.⁵⁴²

Here nature was a living, active subject personified as a witness to love. This brought to mind Walter von der Vogelweide's twelfth-century poem, "Unter der Linden," which we saw in the previous chapter was the inspiration for Theodor Podbertsky's *Die tausendjährige Linde*, as well as numerous other poems that conjured trees as a trysting spot for lovers. The Berlin program was replete with examples of songs whose themes beat a constant refrain that pervaded the entire repertoire of the choral movement. It was this repetition by dozens of poets and composers that demonstrated what Rosenwein describes as "communities of emotional styles and/or norms."⁵⁴³ So often, it is impossible to find even the briefest biographical information about the composers listed on the programs examined in this dissertation, but this detail alone speaks volumes about the popularity of traditional *Lieder*--those written in the style of old folk songs. Every musician no matter how talented wrote them, and from the mid-nineteenth century, hundreds of *Lieder* were composed or arranged that ubiquitously reinforced the same themes.

Rather than creating new stories, composers returned again and again to favorite myths, poems, and historical figures. An example here was number Four on the program. Vineta was a mythological city that was the Baltic Sea version of Atlantis and was described by a nineteenth-century writer as: "That city which has been the theme of so many a story, the inspiration of so many a song . . . the sunken city

⁵⁴² "Im Grase thaut's, die Blumen träumen," www.lieder.net/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=33184 The translation here is by Sharon Krebs, and the first line of the poem is an English translation of the poem's title. It appeared in *Der wilde Jäger: Eine Weidmannsmär*, published 1877 and was set to music by numerous composers.

⁵⁴³ Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, 259.

beneath the wave.”⁵⁴⁴ The version here was composed by one of the better known nineteenth-century composers Franz Abt. “Vineta” tied in with the exotic setting of the zoo.⁵⁴⁵ The fifth verse read:

A beautiful world is sunk there,
Its ruins have stood fast,
Often sending up golden, heavenly sparks
Visible in the mirror of my dreams.⁵⁴⁶

The story went that Vineta was a wealthy trading city on the coast of the Baltic Sea--wealthier than Constantinople. It attracted people from all over Europe, and because of its population’s extravagant lifestyle, they received a prophetic threat of impending judgement--the island would be destroyed if they did not change their ways. Some islanders left, others ignored the prophecy, and in the end the island mysteriously sank into the sea. For centuries visitors came hoping to catch a glimpse of the glorious sunken city, and scholars continue to search for its remains to the current day.⁵⁴⁷

A favorite story in new musical arrangements allowed listeners to contemplate the myriad ways notes could be arranged to give new life to an old tale, and this was true not only of a ballad like Vineta but of traditional folk songs, as well. On this one-year anniversary program there were several *Lieder* that were simply identified by a locale—a Scottish one, a Swabian one, and an old German one. Imitation of a Minnelied was also a popular choice as we see in number Five, “Beauteous Rosy One.” A young lad (*Knabe*) loved a princess and on meeting by chance in the forest, she allowed him to kiss her once on her mouth; then they parted never to see one another again—a common theme of courtly love.⁵⁴⁸ These songs seem unremarkable in themselves, but again, they repeated and reinforced myth, history, nature—all the themes that Herder and other Romantics claimed represented the true spirit of the German people.

⁵⁴⁴ Frances A. Shaw, *Vineta, the Phantom City* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1877), 191. <https://books.google.com>

⁵⁴⁵ Abt wrote over 3000 works for the choral repertoire and his works appeared frequently on the programs of DSB choirs. We previously looked at one, “Die Nacht,” from the Feuchtwangen Christmas program in 1912.

⁵⁴⁶ “Vineta,” www.lieder.net/get_text.html?Textid=26525&RF=1 Translation by Emily Ezust.

⁵⁴⁷ Shareen Blair Brysac, “Atlantis of the Baltic: Searching for a vanished city that flourished during northern Europe’s not-so-Dark Ages,” *Archeology* 56, no. 4 (2003): 62-66. Since the nineteenth century, scholars have been searching for the remains of Vineta, and German romantics like Heinrich Heine or Johannes Brahms wove themes of the story into their literature or music. According to Brysac, the city may have been destroyed in a “crusade” against the pagan occupants of Vineta. The only extant medieval manuscript that mentions the city’s destruction was written by a Saxon priest Helmold of Bosau in 1170. He credited a Danish king with attacking and destroying Vineta.

⁵⁴⁸ *Aus der Jugendzeit: Historie von der schönen Lau, Dichtungen von Eduard Mörike* (Berlin: Verlagsanstalt für Vaterländische Geschichte und Kunst GmbH, 1920). <https://books.google.com>

However, there is one work that bears a closer examination because it exposed roots of choral elements that we glimpsed before, providing an unexpected link between this Berlin chorus and performances in Feuchtwangen, Munich, Stuttgart, and even Brahms's Hamburg Women's Chorus.

Number Six was titled "Ossian" and though the poet and composer listed here are insignificant, the original poem, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language*, was extremely influential to nineteenth-century German literature and music.⁵⁴⁹ Ossian was (allegedly) an ancient Scottish bard, and in the eighteenth century poet and writer James Macpherson (1736-1796) was persuaded to translate the Ossian poems he claimed to have collected. They were published to great acclaim over the course of several years from 1760 to 1765 and eventually translated into German, Italian, French, Spanish, Russian, Swedish, Bohemian, Polish, Hungarian, and Danish.⁵⁵⁰ The discovery of the *Ossian* texts predated that of the *Nibelungenlied*; Herder's fascination with Macpherson's presumed "discovery" served as an inspiration to the early Romantics to find their own foundational myths, their own Homeric-type bard, and their own Ur-poetry that could express the soul of the *Volk*. More than 200 pieces of German music, covering a period of over 200 years referred to Ossian in the text or title, and musicologist Paul Moulton references a further hundred or so that he claims capture the "mood" of the Ossian texts, which "exude a sound-rich text that emphasizes nature." He goes on to explain, "The sounds of nature resonate through every poem . . . the sounds of storms, winds, and the roar of oceans and rivers occur on nearly every page."⁵⁵¹ This presents us with an occasion to connect some wide-ranging choral performances—each of which we have previously encountered—with this Berlin performance and to highlight common threads that bound these emotional communities together.

⁵⁴⁹ I am primarily indebted to: Paul F. Moulton, *Of Bards and Harps: the Influence of Ossian on Musical Style* (Masters Thesis, Florida State University, Department of Music, 2005) for the information about *Ossian* and German music.

⁵⁵⁰ Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 74-75; Moulton, *Of Bards and Harps*, 10. There is an ongoing argument about the authenticity of the Ossian texts. Williamson is of the school that discredits them as "a creative forgery." Moulton is a bit more ambiguous, but they both acknowledge their influence on nineteenth-century culture.

⁵⁵¹ Moulton, *Of Bards, and Harps*, 16 and 38.

In 1861, Brahms's career was still in its early stages, and he was anxious to have his works published as we saw in Chapter 3. His Hamburg Women's Choir gave him an opportunity to compose works for them which they could perform in public thereby creating a demand for published compositions. One of these opportunities was a concert showcased by Clara Schumann and Joseph Joachim, and item "6c" on the Schumann program was a new Brahms work entitled "Gesang aus Fingal."⁵⁵² There was a parenthetical note on the program next to this title: "(Ossian) with harp and horns." Fingal was an ancient Scottish warrior and a principle subject of Ossian's poetry.⁵⁵³ While a harp was the usual instrument a bard used to accompany his singing, Brahms's use of the French horn alongside the harp gave the piece the haunting, ethereal sound treasured by Romantics. The Ossian craze was significant enough to capture the attention of modern musicologists and Carl Dahlhaus says that it was "[a] literary precondition for the 'romantic tone'" in countless musical genres—comic opera, *Lieder*, ballads, and cantatas.⁵⁵⁴ Brahms followed that dictate and published "Gesang aus Fingal" as Opus 17—one of his earliest publications.

The same "romantic tone" was represented in two previously examined compositions: Kreutzer's "Siegesbotschaft" performed at DSB festivals in Munich (1871) and Stuttgart (1896), and the Feuchtwangen *Produktion* (May, 1907) where Podbertsky's *Die tausendjährige Linde* played a prominent role in the program. Kreutzer's song (Chapter 2) filled the requirement of a "sound-rich text that emphasizes nature": "Es war so trübe, dumpf und schwere, Die schlimme Sage schleicht umher." All the while birds circled in the twilight, and through the dark clouds they suddenly burst up towards the sun.⁵⁵⁵ Podbertsky's composition (Chapter 5) exemplified the *Ossian* themes even more dramatically with the

⁵⁵² The title in English, "Song of Fingal"; Fingal was a Scottish warrior who Ossian, the bard, sang about.

⁵⁵³ See Chapter Three for complete program.

⁵⁵⁴ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 21. This is from Dahlhaus' comments on a reproduction of the cover of Franz Schubert's *Ossians Gesänge*. In the image, a young woman sits listening to the old bard strumming his harp while he sings. Dahlhaus includes another Schubert music cover, one in which Schubert had set Goethe's *Gesang der Geister über den Wassern*. This poem/song which began the *Berlin Liedertafel* one-year anniversary performance has no reference to Ossian, but the illustration on Schubert's cover has the old bard playing his harp while an angelic choir sings along. Dahlhaus' conclusion is that the artist "seems to have taken Ossian, the mythical epic singer of the Celts, as the patron saint of romantic music." *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 166.

⁵⁵⁵ See Chapter Two. The Uhland-Kreutzer piece was written in 1813.

wind constantly whipping through the top branches of the Linden as the tree and poet witnessed Germany's history while characters from the past continually entered and exited the story. Sometimes the wind whispered, sometimes it roared, sometimes it was a lonely rustling. Stieler (the poet of *Die tausendjährige Linde*) and Podbertsky (the composer) perfectly captured the *Ossian* composition themes. The *Berlin Liedertafel's* choice of a work titled "Ossian" demonstrated the dominance of Romantic themes and tropes in music over the course of the nineteenth century.

It was common to situate works on a program for emphasis, and a couple of final examples of the influence of the Ossian "craze" were the 1896 national DSB festival in Stuttgart where Kreutzer's "Siegesbotschaft" was performed followed by two songs arranged by Silcher-- "Schottischer Bardenchor" (Scottish Bard Choir) and "Oberschwäbisches Tanzliedchen" (Little Dance Song from Upper Swabia). These two works, combined with the Kreutzer piece, were similar combinations to the 1885 Berlin performance where "Ossian" was combined with a "Scottish Folk Song" and a "Swabian Folk Song." Juxtaposing a *Lied* about the ancient Scottish bard with corresponding folk songs demonstrated a continuous connection between the origins of the people and their maturation into a nation. At Breslau in 1907 this pattern flipped. Part I of the festival program was made up entirely of songs about the Fatherland, nature, and the *Lied* itself followed by a relatively long choral work by Richard Strauss entitled "Bardengesang"—a tribute to Ossian.⁵⁵⁶ In these programs we see not only how compositional elements (alliteration, sounds, wind, instrumentation) were used repeatedly but also the ways in which ancient stories evoked an exotic past. Songs about myth were performed in combination with folk songs and reinforced the meaning of history to German identity. Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries composers adapted the themes to more modern compositional techniques--exemplified by the

⁵⁵⁶ The list included: "An das Vaterland" (Max Gulbins); "Morgenlied" (Reinhardt Becker); "Frühlingslied" (Friedrich Hegar); "Weihe des Liedes" (Gustav Baldamus); "Wer hat dich, du schöner Wald" (Felix Mendelssohn); "Altdeutsches Liebeslied" (Gustav Wohlgemuth); "Wie ging das Lied" (Hugo Jüngst). Richard Strauss' *Bardengesang* Opus 55 (1905) was arranged for orchestra and male voices and numerous recordings can be found on YouTube.

Strauss rendition of “Bardengesang.”⁵⁵⁷ Program directors or conductors arranged pieces for a performance to highlight themes which demonstrated basic values—and audiences who had been raised with the notion that music was an educational tool to elevate its citizens were meant to make the connections between the themes and styles—and to learn from them.

An ancient Scottish bard, whose provenance was doubtful, became the inspiration for generations of German poets and musicians not only in the themes associated with *Ossian*--simple folk songs that were a true expression of the people, a “sound-rich” text, the forces of nature--but also the hunt for their own ancient texts which the Romantics found in the *Nibelungenlied*. The “longing for myth” represented the search for a genuine past rooted in the days of Germania’s youth before the traditions were corrupted by civilization.⁵⁵⁸ Their Odyssean pursuit of this led them to a veneration of the stories and songs of the *Volk* and eventually to Wagner who made Germanic mythology come alive in a hypnotizing fashion.⁵⁵⁹ We will return to him later, but in the manner of a true musical potpourri, I introduced him to the medley for a few bars, and he must then wait in the wings for another entrance. Meanwhile we return to the *Berlin Liedertafel*.

An examination of the entire repertoire of the Berlin *Liedertafel* reveals connections between the men who sang in Berlin and those who sang in smaller choirs. The 1884 *Noten der Berliner Liedertafel* (Sheet Music of the Berlin Liedertafel) listed the titles of 628 songs along with the lyricists, composers, and in some cases the *Bearbeiter* (reviser/arranger).⁵⁶⁰ There are a few observations that are relevant for connecting the highly respected *Berlin Liedertafel* with the rest of the often disparaged men’s choral movement. Quite a few songs and/or composers appeared both in the repertoire of the Berlin choir and on

⁵⁵⁷ Bryan Gilliam and Charles Youmans, “Strauss, Richard,” Oxford Music Online (2010). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40117> Strauss was considered the successor to Wagner and Brahms; conductor Han von Bülow dubbed him Richard III (saying Wagner did not have a *direct* “compositional” descent). Strauss was a supporter of Liszt’s music saying, “New ideas must seek new forms . . .” Strauss’s “Bardengesang” (1905) was composed for male voices with an orchestral accompaniment, and his was based on the poem by F. G. Klopstock. One version on YouTube runs eleven minutes.

⁵⁵⁸ Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 33.

⁵⁵⁹ Moulton concludes that “Wagner’s operas may manifest the extremity of the Ossianic influence,” and *Der Ring* “distantly influenced” by *Ossian. Of Bards and Harps*, 77.

⁵⁶⁰ This source was given to me by Alexander Arlt, the archivist at the Feuchtwangern Choral Museum. Many of the old folk songs did not have a “known” composer, or if they did another composer reworked the song to make it suitable for a TTBB choir.

the programs of the national festivals that took place from 1874-1912. In Chapter Four we noted that conductor-composers like Gustav Wohlgenuth, Eduard Kremser, Max Meyers-Olbersleben, Hugo Jüngst, and Heinrich Zöllner began to dominate what was sung at the festivals. They are (today) less well-known than Franz Schubert, Johannes Brahms, Richard Wagner, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, or Felix Mendelssohn, but all these composers had pieces that made it into the Berlin repertoire. Among the works sung in large and small venues were those of Mendelssohn, Anton Bruckner, Friedrich Silcher (“Die Lorelei”), and some of the important Napoleonic era compositions by the poet-composer pairs of Körner-C. M. Weber, Uhland-Schenkendorf, and Nägeli-Kreutzer. Surprisingly, Theodor Podbertsky, who wrote *Die tausendjährige Linde*, had one *Lied* listed on the Berlin list, “Thalatta, du ewiges Meer, du mächtige Flut.”⁵⁶¹ Adolf Zander, the man who catapulted the Berlin choir to a higher level, composed or arranged over twenty songs himself, and there are dozens of *Volkslieder* (old and new folk songs), *Weihnachtslieder* (Christmas carols), and *Lieder* from other countries (Ukrainian, Hungarian, English, Russian, Latvian, Luxemburg, Dalmatia, Eastern Europe, Irish, Swedish, and Japanese) in their repertoire. After their 1885 anniversary performance the men of the *Berlin Liedertafel* went on a tour to Stettin, Magdeburg, Dresden, Leipzig, Stuttgart, Baden-Baden, and received invitations to perform in Austria, Romania, Constantinople, Greece, and Sweden. A concert tour in 1910 included performances in Königsberg, Riga, St. Petersburg, Wiborg, Helsinki, and Stockholm, and in 1914 the choir travelled to Egypt for its last great concert tour before the war. By 1909 the choir numbered 254 active singers and 31 honored singers.⁵⁶² This belied the common narrative that the men’s choral repertoire consisted entirely of banal or trivial music and existed merely for the purpose of *Bierhaus* socializing.

Finally, the appearance of the following names on the *Berlin Liedertafel Noten* reveals something previously unexamined in this study of the choral movement: Eccard, Donati, Palestrina, Orlando Lasso, J. S. Bach, Antonio Lotti. These were sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and eighteenth-century composers,

⁵⁶¹ Listed in *Hofmeister XIX*, June 1898 as an arrangement for a unison-male chorus with either orchestra or piano accompaniment, “Thalatta, Eternal Sea, Might Flood,” echoed the cry of a fourth century BCE Greek army on reaching the Black Sea and thus escaping a Persian army. It reflected the interests of the German romantics with ancient Greece and was published in Leipzig by Hug & Co. as Podbertsky’s Op. 106.

⁵⁶² Grahl, *100 Jahre*, 8, 17, 19, 22.

represented a movement known as the Palestrina renaissance, and seem like a detour from the “mission” of preserving the German *Lied* as the highest form of national expression. However, their inclusion also represented continuity because one of Zelter’s original goals in founding the *Berlin Singakademie* (and *Liedertafel*) was to revive church music. These names serve as a bridge connecting the men’s choral movement with a different type of musical society located in Leipzig.⁵⁶³

4.1.2 *Leipzig’s Riedel-Verein and the Allgemeine Cäcelien-Verein*

The amateur choral movement originated in part as a means of reviving church music. Carl Friedrich Fasch founded the *Berlin Singakademie* with this as one of its primary goals. After his death, Carl Friedrich Zelter continued this mission but rather than attacking the problem of “artistic renewal” from inside the church he (and others) used the secular choral societies.⁵⁶⁴ By mid-century religious works of music commonly appeared on festival programs and in concert halls, but the genres and composers favored were primarily Protestant.⁵⁶⁵ However, in the mid- to late-nineteenth century the so-called Palestrina revival movement brought some Protestant and Catholic choristers together challenging the divisive climate of the *Kulturkampf*. The joy of rediscovering and performing works written by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594) or Heinrich Schütz (1582-1672) lubricated points of friction between the confessions. In 1869 Catholic Franz Xaver Witt proudly proclaimed, “If the music is noble, sublime, pious, its effect will be like a noble, sublime, pious sermon, lifting and purifying the listener, filling his heart with feelings of piety.” Echoing the sentiment that music was more than entertainment, Protestant Carl Riedel claimed “the best in every kind of art is always the poetic content that expresses itself in general terms to the public: the ultimate goal of art is not exclusively for the artist and art connoisseur, but for the human being.”⁵⁶⁶ Both men represented a movement to use music of the sixteenth

⁵⁶³ James Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music in Nineteenth-Century Germany: Issues and Challenges in the Study of Performative Reception,” *Music & Letters* 83, no. 2 (2002): 187-236.

⁵⁶⁴ Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music,” 189.

⁵⁶⁵ Glenn Stanley, “‘Bach’s Erbe’: The Chorale in the German Oratorio of the Early Nineteenth Century,” *19th-Century Music* 11, no. 2 (1987): 121-149.

⁵⁶⁶ *Riedel-Verein Programme* P 5134.127 (Leipziger Stadtbibliothek)

through eighteenth centuries as a means of elevating, training, and edifying the spirits of the *Volk*.⁵⁶⁷ In this part of our “potpourri” the two groups are woven together--nineteenth-century Catholic and Protestant revival movements expressed in music of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestant and Catholic reformations. Carl Dahlhaus posits these nineteenth-century revival movements as “a return to ‘established truths’ in which refuge was sought from the unwonted strangeness of the present.”⁵⁶⁸ Just as myth was resurrected as a means of confirming genuine Germanic roots, and the *Lied* was promulgated as the authentic expression of the *Volk*, the music of Palestrina and his contemporaries was revived to confirm the character of Germans as a religious people.

More than one historian has proffered the notion that it is impossible to separate religion, or religious sympathy, from German society during the nineteenth century.⁵⁶⁹ Passions, motets, cantatas, oratorios, requiems, or chorales that had been written for church choirs and intended for worship services became concert music in the nineteenth century—but without losing their religious meaning. Johannes Brahms wrote his *German Requiem* (1868) without attending to the actual liturgy of a requiem or the setting in which the work was to be performed. What seemed most important (and not just to Brahms) was to leave the listeners and performers with a “feeling of utter and prostrate dependence.”⁵⁷⁰ This explained why a Jewish musician like Hermann Levi could conduct Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* or Brahms’ *Requiem* and why the *Riedel-Verein*, performing in Leipzig’s Lutheran churches, built a reputation singing music of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century composers who wrote for the Latin

⁵⁶⁷ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 178-79; Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music,” 209-215.

⁵⁶⁸ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 181.

⁵⁶⁹ Rebecca Ayako Bennette, *Fighting for the Soul of Germany: The Catholic Struggle for Inclusion after Unification* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012); Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800-1866*, trans. Daniel Nolan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 356-358. Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001).

⁵⁷⁰ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 178-185; the quote is from Friedrich Schleiermacher who, more than any other German theologian, substituted deep-seated feelings of devotion for confessional exactitude.

liturgy. The worth of the music lay in its inherent beauty and ability to evoke emotional response rather than a strict belief in the text.⁵⁷¹

Carl Riedel represented the Protestant version of this narrative. He was born in Kronenberg in 1827 and studied music at the Leipzig Conservatory from 1849-1852. He was especially interested in music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and set about introducing these works to a small quartet of enthusiastic singers. Within a year, he had attracted enough participants to create a choir which he named for himself—the *Riedel'schen Verein*. When they gave their first performance on November 25, 1855, Georg Göhler, who later sang in the bass section of the choir, recorded that, “No such concert had ever occurred in Leipzig.”⁵⁷² By 1870 the choir numbered over 200 men, women, and young people from all social classes.⁵⁷³ They sang primarily in churches, favored *a cappella* Renaissance music, and combined that interest with new works of the nineteenth century. Riedel aligned himself with the New German School after meeting Franz Liszt.⁵⁷⁴ From 1854-1888 his choirs regularly presented the music of Heinrich Schütz, J. S. Bach, George Frederick Handel, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig von Beethoven, Felix Mendelssohn, Friedrich Kiel, E. Leonhard, Johannes Brahms, Albert Becker, Hector Berlioz, Felix Draeseke, and Franz Liszt—a panoply of seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth-century German composers alongside those of the New German school. The first man on this list, Heinrich Schütz

⁵⁷¹ An article in the *Deutsche Arbeiter-Zeitung* entitled “Was hat Johann Sebastian Bach dem Arbeitersänger zu sagen?” (What does Johann Sebastian Bach have to say to Workers?) concluded that, “Die Musik ist stärker als das Christentum, ja als alle Religion.” (The music is more powerful than Christianity--or than all religion). 15. August 1926 *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, B 3123 (Berlin Stadtbibliothek).

⁵⁷² Göhler, *Der Riedel-Verein*, 106. He was asked to direct the quartet by the wife of a colleague and from that beginning attracted enough singers to form a *Verein* (or choral society). This was a mixed chorus like the *Singakademie* choruses. Renaissance church music was originally written for male voices only (boys sang the treble clef lines); nineteenth-century musicians rearranged the works for SATB choirs in which women sang the soprano and alto parts.

⁵⁷³ J. C. Lobe, “Das Muster eines Dirigenten,” *Musica Sacra: Zeitschrift für katholische Kirchenmusik* Nr. 4 (1870), 28. The author of this article claimed that in Riedel’s choir there was “no social exclusivity, but true democracy in the field of art!”

⁵⁷⁴ The term, “New German School” was first used in 1860 when a group of “serious-minded musicians” published a manifesto protesting the music of Franz Liszt and Richard Wagner. Brahms, still largely unknown at the time, was pressured into siding with the “conservative” faction and from this point on, two “camps” represented by Wagner versus Brahms were established. See, Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 252-53. A fascinating aspect of this is that Carl Riedel’s musical goal was to promote music of the past, and at the same time he became closely aligned with Liszt and the New German School. Riedel lived in Leipzig whose musical world was deeply split between supporters of Brahms and supporters of Wagner.

(1582-1672), is regarded as the most important German composer before J. S. Bach and was one of several German musicians who received his training in Italy in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries and subsequently inspired the German baroque style.⁵⁷⁵

In 1885 the *Riedel-Verein* gave a *Musikalisches Jubiläum* (Musical Anniversary Celebration) in honor of the 300th anniversary of the birth of Schütz.⁵⁷⁶ The printed programs of the *Riedel-Verein* did more than inform the audience about the works they would hear--they educated them about these older composers and their music. Germans were familiar with the classical-romantic style of Mozart, Beethoven, or Mendelssohn, but before the nineteenth century few were acquainted with the works of renaissance composers--and this was particularly true in the Protestant north. On the occasion of the Schütz celebration, the program author credited Schütz with changing music from the complex polyphonic style to one in which a single note accompanied a word making the message more understandable--a priority in the Protestant tradition. In 1885, the *Riedel-Verein* was the only group who regularly performed the works of Schütz.⁵⁷⁷ However, in spite of Riedel's zeal for reviving the music of Schütz and his contemporaries, his choir sang a variety of music. Below is a list of works performed on Friday, 17 August 1877, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when the choir was touring and sang at St. Catherine's Church in Nuremberg.⁵⁷⁸ At the bottom of the program, it noted that this performance by the Leipzig *Riedel-Verein* was for the inauguration of the church as a concert hall. (*Aufführung des Riedel-Vereins aus Leipzig zur Einweihung dieser Kirche als Konzertraum*).

1. Two organ pieces (un-named) by Conrad Paumann (died, 1473)
2. Hans Sachs, *Psalm 121*. From a manuscript in the Nuremberg City Library; harmonized for voices.

⁵⁷⁵ Joshua Rifkin, Eva Linfield, Derek McCulloch and Stephen Baron, "Heinrich Schütz," Oxford Music Online (2001). Schütz studied music in Venice from 1609-1613 but spent his career from 1615 until his death in Dresden as the court composer to the Elector of Saxony. He is considered one of the most important composers of the seventeenth century and the most important German composer before J. S. Bach. Only his sacred compositions have survived to the present day. www.bach-cantatas.com/Lib/Schutz-Heinrich.htm

⁵⁷⁶ The program for this celebration comes from the Leipziger Stadtbibliothek, P 5134.126

⁵⁷⁷ Göhler, *Der Riedel-Verein*, 112-113. In addition to Schütz, the works of Johann Eccard, Leo Hassler, Michael Prätorius, and Johann Wolfgang Franck were republished as a result of Riedel's efforts and became part of the music of the German evangelical church choirs.

⁵⁷⁸ As usual, I have typed this to reflect the way it actually appeared in the printed program. In this case, some side-notes appear beside individual numbered items.

3. Hans Leo Hasler, Arrangement of *Ein feste Burg* (A Mighty Fortress)
4. Johannes Pachelbel, Choral arrangement of *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, accompanied by the Pedalharmonium
5. Franz Liszt, *Pater noster*, from Christus
6. Franz Liszt, *Seligkeiten* from Christus
7. Franz Liszt, *Consolation* for Viola, Cello, and Piano
8. Friedrich Chopin, *Adagio* from B minor Sonata
9. Franz Liszt, 3 Lieder with piano: “Wieder möcht ich dir begegnen,” “Du bist wie eine Blume,” “Loreley”
10. Robert Franz, 2 Chorlieder: “Frühlingsglaube,” “Mailied”
11. Robert Franz, 2 Sololieder with piano: “Im Herbst,” “Mailied”
12. Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, “Die Waldvögelein,” mixed chorus
13. Niels W. Gade, “Die Wasserrose,” mixed chorus
14. Robert Schumann, “Im Walde,” mixed chorus
15. Johannes Brahms, 3 Sololieder with piano: “Heimweh,” “Wie bist du meine Königin,” Romanze from L. Tieck’s “Magelone”
16. Richard Wagner, from *Die Meistersinger*: “Choral, da zu dir der Heiland kam,” “Am stillen Herd in Winterszeit,” “Wach’ auf, es naht.”

It is easy to skim over the programs to these performances without giving them much thought, but as we have already seen, they are rich sources that reveal not only what the performers, but also what their audiences valued. Singers could sing only for themselves and their pure enjoyment of music, but audiences came because there was something that made it worth the time, effort, and perhaps expense. Like Zander, Riedel carefully chose the works to be performed at this particular place and time. There were no second-rate composers on this program, which reflected the serious nature of the *Riedel-Verein*. Some of the most important nineteenth-century Germans were included—Robert Franz, Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Johannes Brahms, and Richard Wagner, plus some who were “adopted” by Germany—primarily Liszt (Wagner’s father-in-law).⁵⁷⁹ The first composers listed (Paumann, Sachs,

⁵⁷⁹ This is a slight exaggeration; there were some famous nineteenth-century Germans not included, but this was a fairly comprehensive list. Liszt was born in Hungary; Chopin was Polish. Niels Gade was Danish, but worked for a short time with Mendelssohn as assistant conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra (1843-47) and was promoted to lead conductor after Mendelssohn’s death in 1847 returning to Denmark when revolution and war broke out in 1848. Gade specialized in cantatas, taking many of their themes from Danish folklore. His first published composition was an overture, *Echoes of Ossian* (1840).

Hasler, and Pachelbel) were German but probably not as well-known as the nineteenth-century composers who did not appear until midway through the program. The printed program for this concert had an article about Heinrich Schütz, whose 300th birthday was the occasion for the program, and that information had been carefully chosen by Riedel to not only honor the composer but as an educational tool for the audience.

Beyond the choice of composers came the careful ordering of the performance pieces which in this case was chronological. According to musicologist James Garratt this was a common practice among those who saw renaissance/baroque music as an ideal type. By ordering the program chronologically, the listeners could detect the evolution of music and acquired the “taste” necessary to treasure these older forms.⁵⁸⁰ In Chapter Two we looked at the German Choral Association (DSB) national festival in Munich (1874) in which Part I of the program was arranged chronologically, and the first works performed in that program were from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Munich (and Bavaria), were primarily Roman Catholic locales and performance of older church music was not innovative there--instead it represented enduring traditions.⁵⁸¹ The 1874 Munich festival represented a conciliatory approach to confessional difference. The organizers began the program with Antonio Lotti (1667-1740), chose works by both Catholic and Protestant composers, and ended with a poem by Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) set to music by Bernhard Klein.⁵⁸² The *Riedel-Verein* performances in Nuremberg occurred three years after the Munich festival in a majority Protestant city but had similar characteristics to the Munich DSB festival. Chronological organization was a characteristic of the Palestrina renaissance which was most closely associated with the Roman Catholic church, but in both the Munich and Nuremberg performances there was a cross-confessional aspect to the music programs that belied the combative

⁵⁸⁰ Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music,” 191-193. Periodization in music is different from that in other disciplines. J. S. Bach is considered a composer of the baroque era, but he was included as part of the Palestrina renaissance. The surprisingly enthusiastic reception of Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* performed by Zelter’s *Berlin Singakademie* (directed by F. Mendelssohn) in 1829 was part of this same Palestrina renaissance that Carl Riedel was perpetuating in the late-nineteenth century.

⁵⁸¹ Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music,” 209.

⁵⁸² Klein was the composer who set the Goethe poem “Gesang der Geister über den Wassern” which was performed by the Berlin *Liedertafel* in the Zoological Gardens in 1885.

political-religious effort to assert the Protestant character of the *Kaiserreich*. The inherent worth of the music performed and the joint effort across confessional lines to retrieve serious music from a common past facilitated harmony in the midst of strife.⁵⁸³

One last thing to notice from this program is that it was not *exclusively* religious music or renaissance genres, and we get a sense that Riedel wanted to educate but also entertain his audience.⁵⁸⁴ There were *Lieder* with the themes we have come to associate with the nineteenth-century choral movement: number Nine, “I Would Like to Meet You Again;” “You are Like a Flower;” and probably the most famous of songs, Heine’s “Loreley.” Numbers Ten to Fourteen included songs about the seasons (Spring, May, Autumn) and songs about the woods, birds, and flowers. The last two selections were perhaps surprising, because by the 1870s, musical Germans tended to side with one or the other of these two composers--Brahms or Wagner. Riedel, as the president of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein*, promoted the music of Wagner and Liszt, but here he also included several of Brahms’ *Lieder* in the program. This was an inclusion that seems of no consequence from our perspective, but a couple of Ethel Smyth’s observations offer a nineteenth-century perspective. In 1877, the same year the *Riedel-Verein* performed in Nuremberg, Smyth noted that although it was not unusual for Wagner excerpts to be included in musical programs in most German towns, he was considered taboo in Leipzig’s *Gewandhaus*.⁵⁸⁵ And later she commented that although Brahms’ admirers “despised” Wagner, Brahms had admitted: “His imitators are monkeys (*Affen*) but the man himself has something to say.”⁵⁸⁶ In Nuremberg Riedel (who lived in Leipzig) gave Wagner the last word, and it was a tribute to the performance locale as well as the composer.

A final look at Riedel’s arrangement of the program reveals that the first composers featured were all associated with Nuremberg, and Wagner’s tribute to native son Hans Sachs, the most famous

⁵⁸³ Another example of this was the *Ave Maria* music Brahms wrote for women’s voices. He was writing for his Hamburg Women’s Chorus which was made up of Lutheran women, but he proposed to Simrock, his publisher, that the pieces would be popular in southern Germany.

⁵⁸⁴ Renaissance genres included masses, motets, madrigals, and chansons, as well as instrumental forms like dances.

⁵⁸⁵ Smyth, *Impressions that Remained*, 146.

⁵⁸⁶ Smyth, *Impressions that Remained*, 237.

Meistersinger, concluded the program. Riedel arranged the program specifically for this audience, while also highlighting the music that he considered most elevating.⁵⁸⁷ The performance took place in a church, but it was meant to dedicate the church as a “concert hall”--a clear proof of Dahlhaus’ argument about the fluidity between secular and sacred music and spaces. At the same time, the setting of a church lent the concert a different mood than that of the *Berlin Liedertafel*’s performance in the Zoological Gardens where fifteen thousand people gathered to hear Zander’s choir accompanied by the regimental band.

There were no Schütz compositions on the program, but Riedel honored him by showcasing some of the finest music of Germany’s past *and its present*--the best tribute Riedel could give to the old master was to show that Germans continued to create music. Christopher Small’s fundamental question brings us back to the theme of this Movement--what did this (*Riedel-Verein*) performance mean at this time and place?⁵⁸⁸ It was a 300-year celebration of the birth of Heinrich Schütz in his hometown, Nuremberg. Riedel’s emphasis on Nuremberg and its bygone musicians was not meant to pander to the audience--the city had played an authentic role in Germany’s musical history. Its role as a “burgher” city and the singing guilds in which Hans Sachs played a seminal role laid the seeds for the nineteenth-century amateur, bourgeois choral movement as we saw in Chapter Two. The ritual of the 1877 Nuremberg performance was more solemn than a festival program of the German Choral Association--there was an emphasis on quality singing rather than a massed effect. However, both were celebrations of German music and the value of music in distinguishing them as a distinct people. Singing the music of the old masters, and then following those by singing the works of Germany’s finest nineteenth-century composers, established a strand connecting emotional communities across time and space.

⁵⁸⁷ Besides Hans Sachs, Hassler, Schütz, and Pachelbel were also natives of Nuremberg.

⁵⁸⁸ Eduard Hanslick (1825-1904) was an extremely influential Austrian music critic whose *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (The Beautiful in Music, 1854) influenced generations of musicologists. His basic tenet was that the meaning of music came from within the piece itself; understanding a compositional work was primarily an intellectual exercise. Christopher Small’s premise is fundamentally different--it is performance that gives a composition life, and each performance creates a set of relationships that give meaning to the work. Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

Five days after this performance, the *Riedel-Verein* sang at another Nuremberg church, St. Lorenz, and Riedel's approach was essentially different. The program was made up entirely of renaissance composers and religious music. On a Thursday afternoon, in one of Nuremberg's largest Lutheran churches, singers and musicians from Leipzig, Erfurt, and Weimar performed the music of baroque composers of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. This program was not arranged in a strictly chronological order--it also spotlighted national variances.⁵⁸⁹ The printed program included only the composers name, the work to be performed, and whether it was a choral, vocal solo, or instrumental piece. I have added some biographical information about each composer in order to highlight what I believe Riedel's intention was in arranging the program.

1. Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, *Impropria*. (1525-1594) Palestrina's work is seen as "a summation of renaissance polyphony," but his later music also conformed to the dictates of the Council of Trent--music composed with intelligible texts.⁵⁹⁰
2. Gir. Frescobaldi, Organ Prelude
3. A. Lotti, *Crucifixus* (for 8-part chorus) (1667-1740) Italian (Pisa) baroque composer.
4. G. M. Clari, *Christe, cum sit: aus dem Stabat mater* (soprano aria). (1677-1754) Italian composer.
5. Francesco Durante, *Qui Tollis* (4-part chorus from a Mass accompanied by Harmonium) (1684-1755) Italian composer from Naples.
6. Orlandus Lassus, *Salve Regina* (4-part Motet) (1532-1594) Franco-Flemish composer.
7. Johannes Eccard, *Über's Gebirg' Maria geht*. (5-part festival/holiday song) (1553-1611) German composer
8. Michael Praetorius, *In Bethlehem ein Kindelein* (4-part Christmas song) (1571-1621) German, Lutheran composer.
9. Dietrich Buxtehude, *Puer natus in Bethlehem*: choral work rearranged for the organ. (1637-1707) Danish-German composer.
10. Paul Heinlein, *Geistliches Wiegenlied* (soprano solo with organ). (1626-1686) German composer who was born, and died, in Nuremberg.
11. J. W. Franck, *Jesus neigt sein Haupt*. (Passion song for choir and organ) (1644-1710) German composer who later moved to London.
12. Heinrich Schütz, *Kreuzigung*, choir and solo. (1582-1672). German composer.

⁵⁸⁹ A characteristic feature of this program, in terms of the *Riedel-Verein*, was the combination of Latin and German texts. In their printed programs, the words were commonly given, and German translations were always offered for the Latin texts. Riedel valued the music of the renaissance masters, but in typical Protestant reformation fashion, he wanted the text to be intelligible.

⁵⁹⁰ Lewis Lockwood, Noel O'Regan and Jessie Ann Owens, "Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi da," Oxford Music Online (2001). "His success in reconciling the functional and aesthetic aims of Catholic church music in the post-Tridentine period earned him an enduring reputation as the ideal Catholic composer, as well as giving his style (or, more precisely, later generations' selective view of it) an iconic stature as a model of perfect achievement."

13. G. F. Händel, Adagio for violin and organ. (1685-1759) Like Franck above, he was born in Germany but later moved to England.⁵⁹¹

If we look at the birth and death dates, the range was from 1525 (Palestrina's birth) to 1759 (Handel's death). Riedel organized the program with the Italian composers first (numbers One to Five), a geographically transitional composer at the midpoint (number Six), and the final composers all of German birth. The first choral works (numbers One and Three through Six) were from the Roman Catholic liturgy and focused on events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion or on Mary; the German works were either instrumental pieces, Christmas songs, or Passion songs. Other than the Lassus piece, *Salve Regina*, these represented common ground for both Catholics and Protestants.⁵⁹² Nuremberg had been Lutheran since the sixteenth century, was handed over to Bavaria in 1806, and after 1838 it belonged to the Bavarian district of Middle Franconia. By the late-nineteenth century, the city maintained a Protestant majority within a confessionally mixed region of Germany. Riedel highlighted composers who came from one confession or the other, but he also chose themes that unified Christians--the birth of a savior, his suffering and death, and the pre-eminent role of Mary, the mother of Jesus.⁵⁹³

My assessment is that the choices were meant to be irenic. Riedel valued the musical quality of the renaissance Italian composers; most of the German composers listed studied music in Italy and were responsible for merging that style with a German style to create the German baroque. By including Franck and Handel he also acknowledged the contribution of German composers to the English baroque. Riedel put together a program that showcased commonality rather than particularism that mirrored the dynamic of his choir—many voices coming together in a single vocal expression. Polyphonic music was an especially suitable medium for doing this because each vocal part had its own melody but

⁵⁹¹ *Riedel-Verein Programme* P 5134.126 (Leipzig Stadtbibliothek)

⁵⁹² *Salve Regina* translates to Hail, holy queen. While Luther (and other protestant Reformers) admired Mary, they opposed her exaltation above other humans. The performance in St. Catherine's Church had a slightly more "Lutheran" feel to it (the tribute to Hans Sachs and the instrumental arrangement of Luther's *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*) than the one in St. Lorenz Church.

⁵⁹³ The works of renaissance composers were not performed just as they had been at the time they were written. James Garratt notes that most of the works were adapted in a process of "simplification and translation" for nineteenth-century choirs. One example he gave of this process was Richard Wagner's arrangement of Palestrina's *Stabat mater*. When it was published in 1878 it was intended for use in Protestant churches and choral societies as well as Catholic churches--there are two alternative German translations of the text. The Protestant version replaces references to Mary with phrases more acceptable to Protestants.

intermittently merged precisely with the other vocal lines. The setting of a cathedral allowed the sound to reverberate upward and outward into the vast spaces—drawing the audience into the experience. In the zoological garden, a singular atmosphere was created by the garden setting and the proximity of exotic animals; the cathedral setting was not “strange” but the music itself (rarely heard previously in Lutheran churches) offered a similar intoxicating effect. A conclusion the audience could make was that it was possible to have a German nation where Catholics and Protestants expressed faith differently but came together as a harmonious whole.

At the height of the *Kulturkampf* Carl Riedel put together a program of Protestant and Catholic compositions to emphasize that all Germans were the “people of music.” A member of Riedel’s choir later wrote a history of the choir and described Riedel’s greatest contributions. First, his reintroduction and republication of musical works from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Johannes Eccard, Leo Hassler, Michael Prätorius, Heinrich Schütz, Johann Wolfgang Franck, and others) ensured that these became incorporated into the music of the German Evangelical Church. Second, Riedel’s recognition by the Roman Catholic Cecilia Society ensured that the works by the old masters would be preserved in both confessions and many young music directors exposed to these works. Finally, Riedel’s enthusiasm for good music, and his efforts to preserve it, were his greatest legacy to all German choral societies—not just church choirs.⁵⁹⁴ An article that appeared about Riedel in the Cecilia Society monthly publication in 1870 claimed that he had “given new life to the present time by means of the imperishable sounds of the ancient times and has reopened to all of us what was accessible to only a few ‘explorers.’”⁵⁹⁵ Prefacing this entire movement (both Catholic and Protestant) was a rejection of the pure rationalism and secularization of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment that had been accompanied by a decline in church music.

Riedel was not a pioneer in the Palestrina revival movement but joined with Catholics who faced the same problems of quality church music and singers who were skilled to perform sophisticated works.

⁵⁹⁴ Göhler, *Der Riedel-Verein*, 112-13.

⁵⁹⁵ Lobe, “Das Muster eines Dirigenten,” 27.

Although there was a continuing tradition of polyphonic liturgical music in Austria and southern Germany where renaissance music had never been abandoned, it was embraced anew in the nineteenth century as part of a “revival and reform” movement in the Catholic church—an attempt to replace “modern” music with “true Catholic music” in the liturgy. Rather than working through choral societies Carl Proske (1794-1861) and Franz Xaver Witt (1834-1888) brought their reforms to the Catholic liturgy.

In the introduction to the first volume of *Musica divina* Proske insisted that sacred music must be performed in sacred spaces instead of concert halls.⁵⁹⁶ Proske said, “Art, torn from the depth of faith, seriousness of truth and life, and fidelity to the church, what elevation can it work, what kind of fruit, what comfort?”⁵⁹⁷ Proske viewed Palestrina’s style as a pure expression of Catholicism, gave up an early career as a medical doctor, was subsequently ordained in the Roman Catholic church, and spent his life collecting old musical manuscripts. He served as the *Canon* and *Kapellmeister* at Regensburg Cathedral from 1830 until his death and through his publications of *Musica divina* and *Selectus novus missarum* inspired a movement to “define Catholic German perceptions of Renaissance church music.”⁵⁹⁸ He promoted the works of Palestrina as well as some German and Flemish composers (including Hans Leo Hassler and Orlando Lassus listed on the *Riedel-Verein* program). In his published works he offered not only suggestions about how to sing the music he had collected, but also advocated advanced musical training for singers.

Other Catholics disagreed that music could only be performed in churches; Franz Xaver Witt (quoted earlier) opined that music as well as sermons would lift the listener to “feelings of piety.” Like Proske, Witt was a Catholic priest, but he took up the mission to preserve and foster the Palestrina

⁵⁹⁶ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, 178. Dahlhaus states emphatically that for nineteenth-century composers, musicians, and music lovers “the aesthetic and liturgical aspects of church music were two separate issues.”

⁵⁹⁷ Carl Proske, *Musica divina*, 1854. www.ccwatershed.org/blog/2013/mar/19/1854-musica-divina-volume-1/

⁵⁹⁸ Garratt, “Renaissance Church Music,” 209-10. Garratt deals in this article with the nineteenth-century German “reception” of Palestrina, et al. His argument is that nineteenth-century Germans, in both the Protestant and Catholic traditions, believed they were “preserving” the music of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries while they were also subtly altering it to meet their own needs. The older works of music were often reinterpreted in terms of dynamics and expression, edited for nineteenth-century choral abilities or tastes, and set for female as well as all-male voices. Also, Stephen R. Miller, “Stile antico,” Oxford Music Online (2001). *Stile antico* means “old fashioned” features of music like polyphony. Nineteenth-century composers aimed to create music that mirrored the style of Palestrina but also worked within non-liturgical settings and accommodated the skills of amateur musicians.

musical tradition through a Catholic choral association created in the 1860s. James Garratt calls the *Allgemeine Deutsche Cäcilien-Verein* (ACV) “the most influential nineteenth-century movement for church-music reform.”⁵⁹⁹ The name came from St. Cecilia, the patron saint of sacred music, and Cecilians favored unaccompanied choral music.⁶⁰⁰ Witt first became interested in polyphonic music while singing in the cathedral choir in Regensburg where he was a student. After his ordination in 1856, he spent most of the rest of his life leading church choirs, composing music, and advocating for the reform of “German Roman Catholic church music.”⁶⁰¹ He was the guiding force behind the creation of the ACV in 1868 and the chairperson of this association until his death in 1888. The ACV published a journal (*Musica sacra*) and a calendar (*Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch*) in which they provided information about older church music and how to sing it, printed articles about the history of German church music, and provided an apologetic for Roman Catholic culture at a time when many influential leaders of the new German nation pronounced it a Protestant entity. The publications of the ACV supported the efforts of Catholic choral music in the same way *Die Sängerkirche* supported the singers of the DSB. The goal of the ACV was to revive sacred music as a means of combating “boundless freedom” in musical forms and preserving traditional forms, while the goal of the German Choral Association (DSB) was to preserve the *Lied* as the perfect expression of German-ness.⁶⁰² Both groups looked to the music of past centuries as a means of expressing who Germans were, and both believed in the efficacy of choral music.⁶⁰³

⁵⁹⁹ Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music,” 208.

⁶⁰⁰ Garratt, “Performing Renaissance Church Music,” 199. Early nineteenth-century theoreticians of music (Ludwig Tieck and E.T.A. Hoffmann) posited *a cappella* singing and instrumental music as the highest forms of music—purely vocal and purely instrumental. “The works of Palestrina are thought of not as a combination of text and music, but as pure music” (200).

⁶⁰¹ August Scharnagl and Christoph Lickleder, “Witt, Franz Xaver,” Oxford Music Online (2001).

⁶⁰² *Musica sacra: Monatschrift für Hebung und Förderung der kath. Kirchen-Musik*, (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1889), 22.

⁶⁰³ “Die Bestrebungen des ‘Cäcilien-Vereins für alle Länder deutscher Zunge’ unter allgemeinen Gesichtspunkten,” *Musica sacra, Monatschrift für Kirchenmusik*, 12. “In a church-minded choir the individual members of the choir are not concerned with standing out but rather letting the liturgical songs be heard, and thus lifted by noble melodies. The people can ‘internalize’ themselves.” (Wie ganz anders kann doch der innere religiöse Sinn, dass selbstständige Erwägen religiöser Gegenstände gefördert werden, wenn während des Hochamtes ein kirchlich gesinnter Chor, dessen einzelnen Mitgliedern es nicht darum zu tun ist zu glänzen, sondern zu erbauen, die liturgischen Gesänge ertönen lässt und indess gehoben von den edlen Melodien das Volk sich ‘verinnerlichen’ kann.). In a similar way, the promoters of folk songs (Herder, Goethe, the early Romantics) believed that these represented a common expression of German-ness.

The publications of the Cecilia Society provide a window into Roman Catholic perspectives on music and its historical significance to Germans, but because they considered music an essential feature of the liturgy there were no programs of music performances like those that we have with the *Riedel-Verein* or the choirs of the German Choral Association. However, there were traces in my other sources demonstrating that ACV choirs sang in other venues and that the music of the Palestrina revival was performed outside churches. These give us a chance to make some observations about confessional differences in the *Kaiserreich*—one of the most divisive forces in post-unification German society. We saw in Chapter 3 that Brahms originally rearranged older folk songs for the Hamburg women to sing as part-songs, but he was inspired to expand his repertoire of music for his Hamburger Women’s Choir after hearing the Göttingen *Cäcilien-Verein* choir sing. The result was the *Marienlieder* which he subsequently marketed for southern (Catholic) Germany. When the Hamburg women performed the *Marienlieder* they sang in one of Hamburg’s Protestant churches—something that was highly unusual and it was strictly a performance—not part of a church service. A contrasting example came from a “Music Report from Munich” published in the August 6, 1873 edition of the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*. A secular choir, the Royal Choir and Oratorio Society (*Concerte der königliche Vokalkapelle und des Oratorienvereines*), gave a concert that reminds us of the *Riedel-Verein* 1877 Nuremberg performance. The Munich choir performed Palestrina’s “112 Psalm;” “Ich bin ein Gast auf Erden;” by Barth; “Ein Liedlein von dem tröstlichen Namen Jesu” by Eccard; a solo from Händel’s “Samson;” “Crucifixus” by A. Lotti, “Lieber Herr Gott” a motet by J. C. Bach (one of J. S. Bach’s sons); two old Bohemian Christmas songs (*Weihnachtsliedern*) arranged by Carl Riedel; two *Lieder* by Mendelssohn; unnamed choral works by Brahms, Robert Schumann, and J. S. Bach; and “Nachtstück” by Franz Schubert. The performance was directed by Franz Wüllner--the *Hofkapellmeister* (Court Music Director) who led the choirs at the DSB national festival that took place the next year in Munich.⁶⁰⁴ There was a mixture of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music with that of the nineteenth and also a mixture of secular and sacred music. This was a performance that took place in Bavaria—the Catholic stronghold of the newly

⁶⁰⁴ “Musikbericht aus München” 6. August 1873, *Allgemeine Musikalisches Zeitung*, 506-508.

created German Empire—but the music was cross-confessional. Palestrina was the finest Roman Catholic renaissance composer and J. S. Bach the quintessential Lutheran composer.

If we fast-forward thirty years we observe a similar performance at the Lower Rhine Music Festival in 1902, and we might draw the conclusion that the Catholic and Protestant confessions had learned to coexist in the newly created nation-state. J. S. Bach's *B-minor Mass* was the featured performance on the first day, and on the second day, "Der Traum des Gerontius" from a poem by Catholic English Cardinal Newman was the highlighted event. Edward Elgar composed the music, and the writer for *Die Sangerhalle* called it "a Roman Catholic work in the narrowest sense of the word," but added that Elgar's music was beautiful.⁶⁰⁵ The beauty of the music served as an apologetic for its content, but the comment was a veiled accusation against the inclusion of Catholic theology couched in choral music. The music held the power to elide some differences but not to make them disappear altogether which was the primary reason Catholics created their own social organizations.

The ACV represented a parallel system of clubs and associations to those of Protestant Germans and in the wake of the *Kulturkampf* a number of choral societies emerged that aligned themselves with the Roman Catholic church rather than the DSB. Two examples remind us of the small town choral associations we looked at in Chapter Five. The *Gesangverein Cacilia* (Cecelia Choral Society) in Donaustetten (Baden-Wurttemberg) was founded by the local school teacher in 1899 and was originally made up of ten men.⁶⁰⁶ Twenty years later they held a festival and dedicated their banner. In a similar way the head teacher (*Hauptlehrer*) in the town of Werlte (Lower Saxony) founded a men's choir in 1892, became its director and led it until 1917. They took the name *Cacilia* (patron saint of church music), and

⁶⁰⁵ 12. Juni 1902 *Die Sangerhalle*, 294. "The text tells us of the demise of a godly man and the life of the deceased's soul in the hereafter, and growing out of the soil of the Catholic doctrine, is so immersed in mysticism and metaphysics that it seems incomprehensible to a Protestant." (Der Text schildert uns das Ableben eines gottesfurchtigen Mannes und das Leben der Seele des Verstorbenen im Jenseits, und ist, emporwachsend aus dem Boden der katholischen Glaubenslehre, so sehr in Mystik und Metaphysik getaucht, da er fur einen Protestanten unfabar erscheint.)

⁶⁰⁶ Donaustetten is a small town in Baden-Wurttemberg and as was common, it was founded and led by the local schoolteacher. www.caecilia-donaustetten.de/

the co-founder of this choir was the local parish administrator.⁶⁰⁷ A slightly different example strengthens the argument that amateur singers from Catholic regions of Germany chose to create their own choirs rather than join the mostly Protestant German Choral Association. The men's choir in Ludwigschorgast was founded in 1885, and although the history of this choir does not mention its affiliation with the ACV, it was in a region that was almost exclusively Catholic. Like the Feuchtwangen men's choir in Franconia, the *Gesangverein Liederhort* in Ludwigschorgast put on various musical programs for their own town and those in the neighboring region and sang primarily *Lieder*. Their banner featured a large lyre/harp in the middle with vines of greenery in the four corners.⁶⁰⁸ When the banner was dedicated in 1910 people gathered from all the towns in the northern part of Upper Franconia to hear speeches and participate in a banner parade—music accompanied the singers and guests to the *Marktplatz* in a ritual with which we have now become familiar. These examples show that choral societies continued to form throughout the nineteenth century, but in these cases there was a turn to a religious identification rather than the more inclusive nature of the early nineteenth-century associations.

Religious division became more apparent after German unification, but the barriers were often porous. Anna Ettlinger made a brief mention of the *Cäcilia-Verein* in her memoirs and it offers us a further thread demonstrating connections across religious difference in defiance of historical norms. Ettlinger's sister Emilie had a lovely soprano voice and sang in several Karlsruhe choirs, one of which was the local *Cäcilien-Verein*. When Emilie married, Anna recorded: "The solemnity of the wedding was greatly enhanced by the fact that the Cecilia Society sang in the synagogue in honor of Emilie."⁶⁰⁹ Emilie Ettlinger lived with her husband in Munich, and although she was prevented by cultural norms from becoming a professional soloist, upon her husband's death she formed a choral society and taught private music lessons. She was a particularly close friend of Hermann Levi—one of the premier German conductors of the late nineteenth century and Munich's *Hofkapellmeister* from 1872 until his death in

⁶⁰⁷ Osnabrücker Zeitung, <https://www.noz.de/lokales/werlte>

⁶⁰⁸ Ludwigschorgast is a tiny village in Bavaria and the choir has existed since 1885 and won many prizes for excellent singing. www.chor-ludwigschorgast.de/der-verein/historie/ See photograph at the end of this chapter.

⁶⁰⁹ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 83. (Die Feierlichkeit der Trauung wurde dadurch wesentlich erhöht, daß der Cäcilienverein zu Ehren Emiliens in der Synagoge sang.)

1900. The Ettlingers, though Jewish, participated actively in both Protestant and Catholic realms of German music culture. We must wrestle with deeper issues at play here. Without denying that there were genuine battle lines of confessional difference being drawn, and efforts to define the German Empire as a Protestant nation clearly existed, the boundaries were sometimes blurred. The leader of the Roman Catholic *Cäcilien-Verein* acknowledged Carl Riedel's contributions to bringing back sixteenth-century church music as a pattern for the nineteenth century, and in 1876, at the height of the *Kulturkampf*, Riedel wrote to the Regensburg *Domkapellmeister* that his choral group would be performing a sixteenth-century piece from a "Roman master" as soon as they could.⁶¹⁰ Choral societies founded as Catholic associations practiced the same rituals and sang the same songs as their Protestant counterparts, and Jewish singers found a place in these choirs.

Margaret Lavinia Anderson remarks that after unification, the three officially recognized religions were "not always mutually hostile, sometimes even cooperative . . . nevertheless acutely aware of each other's presence—and difference."⁶¹¹ Rebecca Ayako Bennette adds: "To the extent that nations are 'imagined communities' based on shared identities, they are also rooted in different groups learning to manage conflict and to live together."⁶¹² The rituals of choral music--practicing together, attuning to one another's voices, breathing patterns, and intonation, learning works that make up an entire repertoire, performing in front of an audience—these things superseded individual beliefs. They did not negate differences or alleviate common annoyances that happen anytime people interact closely, but as earlier noted from Durkheim, "ritual builds solidarity without requiring the sharing of beliefs. Solidarity is produced by people acting together, not people thinking together." Ritual also has the power to reinforce difference, as will become evident when we look at the festivals performed in honor of Martin Luther in the next chapter.

⁶¹⁰ Göhler, *Der Riedel-Verein*, 112-113.

⁶¹¹ Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "Afterword: Living Apart and Together in Germany," in *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 319-320.

⁶¹² Rebecca Ayako Bennette, *Fighting for the Soul of Germany: The Catholic Struggle for Inclusion after Unification* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012), 193.

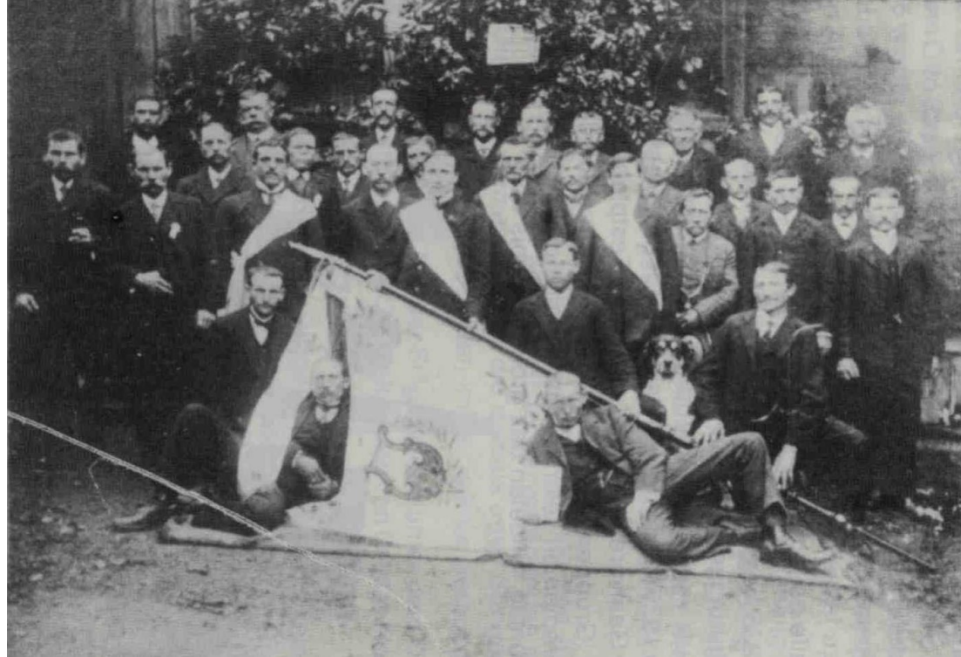


Figure 16 Gesangvereins Liederhort Ludwigschorgast, 1910

4.2 Chapter 7 The Model German and the Spellbinder: Martin Luther and Richard Wagner

Art is no power, only a consolation. And yet—a game of the deepest seriousness, a paradigm of every aspiration toward perfection, it has been given from the very beginning as a companion to humanity, which will never quite be able to avert its guilt-darkened eye from art’s innocence. Thomas Mann, 1952

The German people . . . were in danger of sinking down into a shallow, superficial enjoyment of a culture that was supposed to yield happiness. . . . Then Wagner recalled our people to the true and right, and to aspiration after the eternal and the highest. Heinrich Weinel, 1904

German historian Michael Fischer claims that the entire festival culture of nineteenth-century Germany was part of an effort to affect an “*innere Nationsbildung*” (nation formation from within).⁶¹³ Mine is a weak translation of what Fischer’s expression means, because *Bildung* encompassed the idea of acquiring within yourself elements that made you a cultivated and knowledgeable person. Festivals or monument dedications to Schiller, Gutenberg, or Beethoven were meant to facilitate an appreciation of German culture and accomplishments and train its citizens to embrace those values within themselves and

⁶¹³ Michael Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg: Der Lutherchoral Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott zwischen Befreiungskriegen und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2014), 42.

thus generate a collective national identity. Music was an essential part of festival culture along with speeches, parades, and material objects. The performance and observance of these ritual acts were as well a powerful means of “ensuring social cohesion and stability.”⁶¹⁴ After the formation of the German Empire in 1871, this increasingly meant embracing a *Protestant* conception of the German nation. In this chapter rather than look at a choir or a choral association, I direct our attention first to celebrations of the sixteenth-century religious reformer Martin Luther and second to Richard Wagner’s “new mythology” brought to life at Bayreuth. I argue that both exemplified festival life, manifested a longing for a German identity rooted in the past and expressive of the true nature of the German people, and drew responses challenging a polarized version of German-ness.

Wagner and Luther demonstrate how music projected a vision of German identity that increasingly resonated both at home and abroad. In previous chapters we saw how Germans uncovered a musical history as a vehicle to proclaim who they were as a people, and in the nineteenth century they wrote and sang the *Lied* as an expression of the people. Wagner took this a step further and attempted to create a unified musical, legendary version of an authentic German race. Historian Anthony D. Smith explains that a nation’s “golden age” was a crucial element in uncovering a national “character.”⁶¹⁵ Smith identifies several possible “golden ages” in German history and claims that Richard Wagner attempted to bring all these ages together with his music dramas. George Williamson warns that you cannot identify Wagner too closely with either Catholicism or Lutheranism because he was primarily interested in bringing together ideas from Greek tragedy and Nordic-Germanic myth, and fusing these with non-confessional Christian beliefs. Some Germans used Luther to project a Protestant Christian identity historically grounded in the sixteenth-century Reformation; others, including Wagner used his new

⁶¹⁴ Small, *Musicking*, 97.

⁶¹⁵ Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 190. The golden ages Smith identifies are Hermann’s first-century conquest of the Romans, Charlemagne’s reign, Frederick Barbarossa, and Luther’s Reformation.

mythology to incorporate Luther into the other German heroes of all the golden ages. Either, or both, appealed to many Germans and excluded others.⁶¹⁶

Religious faith remained important to many Germans living in the *Kaiserreich* even if only as part of their cultural heritage. An anecdote from the memoirs of Susanne Schmaltz was consistent with this assertion. In 1900 Schmaltz was living in Dresden and received an invitation from Therese Malten to attend a musical evening in her home—an event Schmaltz called “the crown of my days.”⁶¹⁷ Malten was the leading Wagnerian soprano of her generation, and Schmaltz had made her acquaintance when Malten sang in the 1889 performance of Wagner’s *Ring* cycle in St. Petersburg. On this occasion, Schmaltz described Malten’s improvisations at the piano as she played the music of Beethoven, Wagner, Mozart, and others. “Beautiful modulations led from one to the other. I usually sat in a corner, and when she closed with the chorale, “A Mighty Fortress is our God,” I became aware that I could never forget these hours.”⁶¹⁸ Weaving together the music of Beethoven, Wagner, and Luther was not discordant or unusual to Schmaltz or Malten but represented their unified vision of German culture—one shared by those trained to incorporate the values of the nation within themselves.

4.2.1 Martin Luther: From Sixteenth-century Reformer to Nineteenth-century Icon

Crowds of individuals singing “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” (A Mighty Fortress is our God) or hearing its melody incorporated into other musical compositions, facilitated an inner appropriation of the nation as a Protestant entity and one that (supposedly) fulfilled Luther’s original mission. The anniversary of the Protestant Reformation had been celebrated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the Protestant states of the Holy Roman Empire providing occasions for local officials to reinforce civic and religious authority. These were considered solemn events--drinking wine and beer, dancing, gaming,

⁶¹⁶ Anthony J. Steinhoff, “Embracing the Grail: Parsifal, Richard Wagner and the German Nation,” *German History* 30, no. 3 (2012): 372-394.

⁶¹⁷ Susanne Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances: The Life of a Sunday’s Child*, trans. Inge Kistler (Evanston, Illinois: Evanston Publishing, 1994), 174. Schmaltz lived for nearly twenty years in St. Petersburg and was an attendant to Grand Duchess Helene. The Grand Duchess was German and most of the people who came to her court as musicians were Germans. After the Wagner performance in St. Petersburg, Schmaltz became close friends with Malten. Schmaltz moved permanently to Dresden after the turn of the century and the event she described here was one of many. Malten had a life-long contract with the Court Opera (*Hofopera*) in Dresden.

⁶¹⁸ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 174.

sumptuous food consumption, or coffee-house visitations were strictly forbidden.⁶¹⁹ By the late-eighteenth century these rules had been relaxed, and in the festival culture of the nineteenth century, Luther celebrations were not exclusively religious occasions limited to commemorating the posting of the *Ninety-Five Theses* (1817) but extended to celebrations of the Augsburg Confession (1830), newly erected Luther statues, and Luther's birthday (1883). Over the course of the nineteenth century Luther was increasingly identified with liberal principles like freedom and individualism and Luther festivals evolved from religious celebrations to national ones. Poet Heinrich Heine's (1797-1856) compared the Protestant Reformation to the French Revolution and called "Ein feste Burg" the German Marseillaise enabled religious rituals to become civic ones.⁶²⁰ The song most closely associated with Luther became a rallying cry for freedom and an emblem of Luther's veneration--as a reformer *and* a freedom fighter.⁶²¹

Martin Luther (1483-1547) was a contemporary of Palestrina and was himself an accomplished musician who played the lute and understood the musical forms of his day well enough to incorporate them into new compositions. The Gregorian chant and polyphonic motets on which medieval and renaissance church music relied resigned it to specialists, but Luther reclaimed music for the common church-goer. "The gift of language combined with the gift of song," he wrote, "was only given to man to let him know that he should praise God with both word and music, namely, by proclaiming [the Word of God] through music and by providing sweet melodies with words."⁶²² Luther solved the dilemma of complex vocal church music by utilizing a form, the chorale, which made it possible for untrained congregations to sing together. And he translated the Bible into German--many of his own vernacular

⁶¹⁹ Johannes Burkhardt, "Reformations- und Lutherfeiern: Die Verbürgerlichung der reformatorischen Jubiläumskultur," in *Öffentliche Festkultur: Politische Feste in Deutschland von der Aufklärung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Dieter Düding, Peter Friedemann, and Paul Münch (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988): 212-236.

⁶²⁰ Heinrich Heine, "Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland," in *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke* (Hamburg: Manfred Windfuhr, 1981), 36-42. "Indem Luther den Satz aussprach, daß man seine Lehre nur durch die Bibel selber, oder durch vernünftige Gründe, widerlegen müsse, war der menschlichen Vernunft das Recht eingeräumt, die Bibel zu erklären und sie, die Vernunft, war als oberste Richterin in allen religiösen Streitfragen anerkannt. Dadurch entstand in Deutschland die sogenannte Geistesfreyheit, oder, wie man sie ebenfalls nennt, die Denkfreyheit. Das Denken war ein Recht und die Befugnisse der Vernunft wurden legitim."

⁶²¹ Linda Maria Koldau, "Singing Luther's Praises in 1883 with L. Meinardus," *Lutheran Quarterly* 25 (2011), 289.

⁶²² Martin Luther, *Luther's Works* vol. 53 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 323.

compositions were based on the biblical Psalms.⁶²³ Luther wanted good singing but did not require expert singers, and he taught Lutheran congregations to sing as active participants in, rather than passive observers of, the worship service. Of all the hymns (chorales) Luther wrote, “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” (A Mighty Fortress is our God) became the one most closely associated with him. Fischer iterates that what began as a song of confidence in God’s comfort and protection soon served as a “musical recognition or confession of Lutheran-Protestant faith.” And he goes on to state that from the early-nineteenth century the religious meaning of the hymn faded and “Ein feste Burg” acquired instead a national and war-oriented (*nationale und bellizistische*) meaning.⁶²⁴

For a hundred years (1817-1918) the words and the melody of “Ein feste Burg” were utilized in multiple ways. The hymn was sung as it was originally composed in various celebrations of Luther and the Reformation and as a “protest” song in the context of political events.⁶²⁵ The melody was used in symphonies and other orchestral works as well as for the basis of parody songs.⁶²⁶ Individual phrases of the hymn were utilized in World War I propaganda postcards. We will look at World War I in the concluding chapter of this dissertation; here we will focus on Luther’s hymn and Luther celebrations during the nineteenth century--a century known for its festivals. The traditional locations of Luther

⁶²³ Rather than singing separate lines of music that intermittently converged (polyphony), in a chorale all voices sang the same notes and words simultaneously.

⁶²⁴ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 9. According to Fischer, the period of political and social upheaval that characterized the Napoleonic period was marked by a mixture of religious, historical, and nationalist response. The 300th anniversary of the Reformation and the Wartburg Festival not only commemorated the distant and near past, but also commemorated political-national demands for the present. German Romantics embraced Luther as a pioneer of the German language and a national culture.

⁶²⁵ Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals: The Democratic Movement and the Revolution of 1848-1849* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 151. Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 131. Sperber notes the use of “Ein feste Burg” and other hymns as protests against government authorities; Michael B. Gross, *The War Against Catholicism: Liberalism and the Anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004), 175. Gross mentions an incident after unification when Berliners gathered to protest Dominican and Franciscan monks and sang “the old Protestant fight song, ‘A Mighty Fortress Is Our God’” (175). James Brophy, *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere in the Rhineland 1800-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Brophy mentions a number of songs used in political protest and notes, “The act of singing oppositional songs cut across class and spatial lines, constituting a political community larger than either the bourgeoisie or the laboring classes” (101).

⁶²⁶ Michael Fischer has a brief article about the various uses of the hymn in “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,” http://www.liederlexikon.de/lieder/ein_feste_burg_ist_unser_gott. He has written more extensively about it in *Populäre Kriegsliteratur im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2013), and in *Religion, Nation, Krieg: Der Lutherchoral Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott zwischen Befreiungskriegen und Ersten Weltkrieg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2014).

celebrations had been the church, universities, or schools. In the nineteenth century they moved to the town hall, concert hall, and town square. In keeping with the transformation of Luther to a “public character” his celebrations became community events.⁶²⁷ By the time of formal unification in 1871 Prussian court preacher Adolf Stoeckers could announce, “Das heilige evangelische Reich deutscher Nation vollendet sich.”⁶²⁸ (The holy Protestant empire of the German nation is now complete). This proclamation proclaimed the new German empire as a Protestant entity.⁶²⁹

It should not be remarkable that after 1871 one confession or another claimed to determine the religion of the nation because religious unity was considered a norm.⁶³⁰ For centuries individual German rulers had determined the confessional affiliation of their realms according to the terms of the Peace of Augsburg (1555)--*cuius regio, eius religio* (whose region, his religion). This had enabled the Christian confessions (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and after 1648, Calvinism) to coexist within the Holy Roman Empire. The first challenge to this system arose after Napoleon dismantled the Holy Roman Empire and reorganized the German states in 1806. The Vienna Settlement of 1815 imposed a different set of geographical boundaries but did not restore the old confessional units. This remained one of the thorny issues that proponents of German unification had to deal with between 1815 and 1871. Bismarck engineered a Prussian-Protestant version of the German nation by eliminating Catholic Austria from the German Confederation in 1866. Fischer says that it was at this point that three features of the future empire were predetermined: 1. A foundation of “blood and iron;” 2. A monarchical-authoritarian political structure; 3. A Protestant identity--both religiously and culturally.⁶³¹ In the process Martin Luther was

⁶²⁷ Burkhardt, “Reformations- und Lutherfeiern,” 220.

⁶²⁸ Quoted by Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 53.

⁶²⁹ Stoecker’s proclamation was a play on words. The *Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation* was the official title of the Holy Roman Empire that existed from 800 to 1806. Stoecker replaced “Roman Empire,” which implied Roman Catholic, with “Evangelical Empire.” The Lutheran and Reformed churches were formally united in 1817 by Prussian king Frederick William III and from that time known as the Evangelical Christian church.

⁶³⁰ In the nineteenth century most European countries were still identified with a single national church--Great Britain’s monarch was the head of the Church of England; France, Spain, and Italy were Roman Catholic; Russia was Orthodox. It was not unusual for non-conformists everywhere to be marginalized. James Brophy, *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere*, notes that after 1815 the state-church relationships in the German Confederation faced new challenges and that not only Prussia but other German states subordinated Protestant liturgy to greater state control “showing an obsessive concern with uniformity” (255-56).

⁶³¹ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 41.

elevated to the status of a *national* hero. In the rest of this section we will look at the unveiling of the Luther Monument in Worms (1868), the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth (1883), and some musical compositions that transfigured "Ein feste Burg" into an expression not only of Protestant faith but of faith in the *Kaiserreich*.

When Martin Luther penned "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" in 1529, he wrote it as an expression of faith in God as a figurative and spiritual fortress, but for nineteenth-century Germans the nation itself became the fortress.⁶³² In 1856 thirty-six citizens of Worms had established the *Luther-Denkmal-Verein* (Luther Monument Society) and commissioned sculptor Ernst Rietschel (1804-1861) to design a monument commemorating Luther's courageous stand at the Diet of Worms in 1521.⁶³³ It was planned as a public and national monument and designed to face the Rhine River thereby conflating Luther's defiant stand against papal authorities with Germany's response to nineteenth-century French aggressions. The physical design of the monument brought to mind Luther's fortress image (see below). It was dedicated in 1868 before the creation of the *Kaiserreich* and contrary to the Reformation celebrations of previous centuries, the unveiling of the monument was surrounded by forms of ritual similar to those of the choral festivals. The streets of Worms and the town square were festooned with garlands and wreaths, crowds of people gathered from distant locations and paraded to a central square accompanied by singers and instrumentalists where they then heard speeches by civic officials. Set in a plaza, one climbed up six steps to walk among the figures of the monument, and Luther rose above the other figures. While the entire structure faced the Rhine River (and France), Luther himself was positioned to face the Bishop's residence where his trial took place in 1521. There was no subtlety in the defiant postures towards foreign powers or religious authorities. The planning for the Worms monument and its unveiling were undertaken

⁶³² Luther's chorale was based on Psalm 46 and written between 1527-29. It was a time when Luther was discouraged about his efforts to reform the church and, like most of the rest of Europe, anxious about the military threat of the Ottoman Empire. Look for the Dan Forrest arrangement on YouTube (A Mighty Fortress) in which the first verse is sung according to Luther's original composition (with a more syncopated renaissance dance feel) and the last verse most closely resembles how it is sung by congregations today--J. S. Bach's version of Luther's chorale (BWV 80). In terms of the national "fortress" mentality see Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 250-51.

⁶³³ Rietschel designed the monument and sculpted several of the figures but died before it was completed.

by citizens of Worms, not initiated as a civil or religious project, and it was erected in public—not in the confines of a church. It was a statement of civic pride symbolized by Luther’s historic stand against the Catholic church.

The members of the *Luther-Denkmal-Verein* organized the unveiling of the monument in 1868 as “an event for the entire Evangelical church” and for “Protestant Germans.”⁶³⁴ Almost 100,000 people from Germany and abroad gathered for the festival in Worms that began on June 25 and ran for three days. Royal guests from Prussia, Württemberg, and Hesse attended but Fischer claims the festivities maintained a “bourgeois-liberal character.”⁶³⁵ A church service was held on June 24, but the main festivities occurred the next day with a *Festzug* (parade) to the *Denkmalsplatz* (Monument Square). This was the order of the days’ events:

1. Choral performance: *Psalm 66* by Vinzenz Lachner
2. Speech by Andreas Oppermann (biographer of Ernst Rietschel who designed the monument)
3. Choral performance: *Hallelujah Chorus* by George Frederick Handel
4. Another speech
5. Unveiling of the monument to the accompaniment of the crowd singing, “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.”
6. Final speech
7. Closing song: “Ach bleib mit deiner Gnade.” (Oh, Let us Remain in your Grace)

The following description of the unveiling came from a participant, Friedrich Eich who recounted:

When, with the last words of the orator, the wide covering which surrounded the extensive monument on four sides was lowered, the cannon thundered and bells of the neighborhood rang out introducing the colossal statue of the German reformer. Surrounded by its precursors, protectors, and comrades, and in the bright luster of the midday sun the monument shone brightly before the amazed assembly. Everything was as though enchanted, and the aged, but still sprightly and handsome King William rose with the other princely guests gathered at the pavilion, visibly deeply moved by the majesty of the moment. A never-ending jubilation greeted the exceedingly splendid work of art. It only subsided when, accompanied by music, the Song of

⁶³⁴ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 46. Fischer is quoting from Friedrich Eich’s *Gedenkblätter zur Erinnerung an die Enthüllungsfeier des Luther-Denkmal in Worms am 24., 25. und 26. Juni 1868*. (Worms: Auftrag des Ausschusses des Luther-Denkmal-Vereins, 1868).

⁶³⁵ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 46.

Songs of Protestantism: "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" was sung by perhaps 20,000 festival participants--and sung to the end under the rhythmic roar of the cannon volleys.⁶³⁶

This richly worded first-hand account allows us to imagine the scene both visually and aurally. In addition to the sun which reflected off the bronze statues the crowd itself presented an overwhelming sight. The jubilant noise of thousands of voices, the roar of the cannon, and the sound of church bells was matched by the effect of an exhilarating, unrehearsed crowd of singers. The German Choral Association seldom amassed 20,000 men to sing at their national festivals, and yet here was an impromptu choir that affected the same collective sense of German-ness that the members of the DSB strove for on an enormous scale. And while the Worms participants were not a formal choir, individuals within the crowd experienced the same sensations choral singers did--listening to the voices around them, matching the tones and inflections of those on either side, breathing in rhythm, and creating out of many throats one singular sound. As they stared at the statue of Luther they sang the words to the song he penned over 300 years before. There was no conductor so they attuned to each other's moods and voices and matched the beat of the cannon. This performance, staged as part of the entire ritual of the unveiling, incorporated the crowd as participants rather than mere observers and reaffirmed their identity as a community of Lutheran Germans.

It is worth looking at the order of the program in a little more detail, because although it took place out of doors in a public plaza, the organizers meant it to have a worshipful mood. The program began with a musical rendition of Psalm 66.⁶³⁷ This psalm was called (in Hebrew) both a "song" as well as a "psalm" doubling its value as a choral piece, and the first four verses called for "all the earth" to sing praises to God. "In great assemblies a joyful noise was appropriate," said the well-known English preacher Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) in his commentary on the psalm.⁶³⁸ The day's program began

⁶³⁶ Burkhardt and Fischer both quote from Friedrich Eich, *Gedenkblätter zur Erinnerung an die Enthüllungsfeier des Luther-Denkmal in Worms*. Im Auftrage des Luther-Denkmal-Vereins, Worms 1868. Eich estimated the crowd size that sang at 20,000; Fischer used Eich as a source for the total crowd that attended the Worms event at 90,000-100,000. Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 46-47.

⁶³⁷ Vinzenz Lachner (1811-1893) was one of several musical brothers, but I could not find the piece listed here so we do not know exactly how Lachner set this psalm to music.

⁶³⁸ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Treasury of David* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1963), 108.

with this exhortation, which the crowd heeded when they later sang “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” in a jubilant fashion. Verse five of Psalm 66 says “Come and see what God has done” and goes on to enumerate how the people of ancient Israel were delivered from the Egyptians. After having been tested and tried (verse 10) and rescued from “a crushing burden on our backs” (verse 11), they were brought “out to a place of abundance” (verse 12).⁶³⁹ Spurgeon summarized the psalm: “Praise is the topic, and the subjects for song are the Lord’s great works, his gracious benefits, his faithful deliverances, and



Figure 17 A 1902 postcard of the Luther Monument in Worms

⁶³⁹ Psalms 66, English Standard Version, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2003).

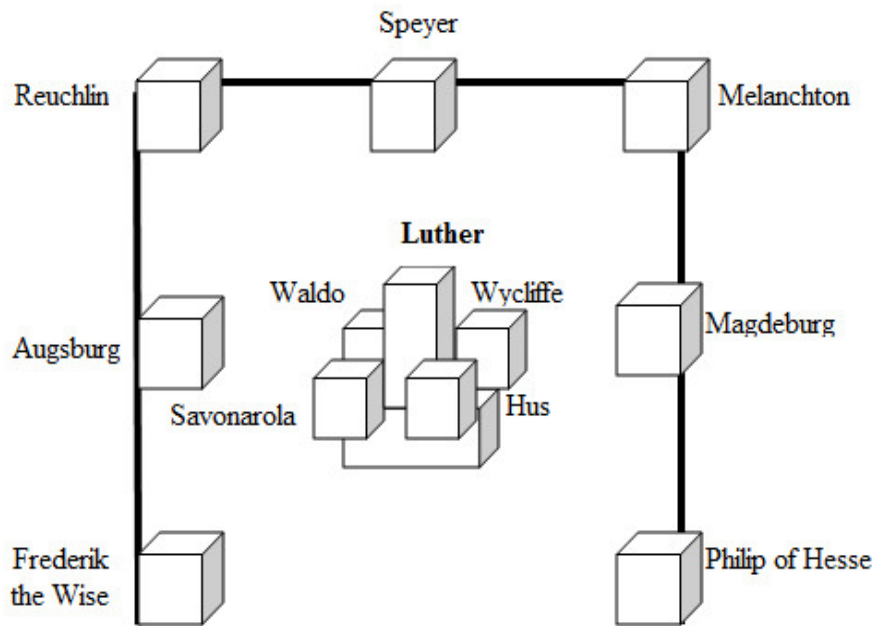


Figure 18 Design of the Luther Monument

The Luther Monument was designed as a group of bronze statues on stone plinths. The elements were arranged in the shape of a castle--meant to bring to mind the hymn, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott." Luther was depicted in a preacher's robe and positioned in the center of the other figures. He held a Bible in his left hand and rested his right hand with an extended finger on it signifying his reliance on "scripture alone." This brought to mind his apocryphal statement before the Diet of Worms: "Here I stand; I can do no other."

all his dealings with his people."⁶⁴⁰ In 1868 German nationalists who believed they had faithfully endured years of French threats and failed efforts to bring about unification, now saw hope for their own national deliverance and began the afternoon's ceremony by listening to a psalm exhorting them to sing. After the speech honoring the designer of the monument there was another song.

The other choral pieces were also carefully chosen to fit the day's ceremony—a well-known chorus from the oratorio *Messiah* and two hymns. Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* is one of the most triumphant chorales from the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century oratorio repertoire, and although George Frederick Handel is often considered an English composer, he was German by birth. American composer-

⁶⁴⁰ Spurgeon, *Treasury of David*, 108.

conductor Rob Kapilow explains the pervasive popularity of *Hallelujah Chorus*. "The thing that's so amazing about it is that it's actually based on one of the simplest ideas you could possibly imagine: a single note repeated over and over again; one note per syllable — 'king - of - kings' and 'lord - of - lords.' But Handel keeps repeating the passage in higher and higher registers. Each one seems to be the highest you could possibly get," Kapilow says. "That's the climax of the piece."⁶⁴¹ German nationalists could imagine the evolution of the nation in the same way--rising from one point to another until it reached the triumphal moment of unification. In 1868 as they listened to the performance they could almost see that moment. They stood in a long line of Lutheran Germans for whom national unity also signaled progress towards historical "salvation."⁶⁴² In 1868 as they listened to the performance they could almost see that moment. After the exhilaration of the Handel chorale there was another speech and then the triumphant moment when the monument was unveiled and the entire crowd became a mighty chorus. A final speech was followed by a final song which was a prayer, "Ach bleib mit deiner Gnade" (Abide Among us with Thy Grace). This hymn was composed by Josua Stegmann (1588-1632), a pastor and professor of theology. He studied in Leipzig and Wittenberg where he received his Doctor of Divinity in 1617. There was a strong connection between Stegmann and Lutheran history—he earned his DD in the city where Luther began the Reformation and received it 100 years after Luther nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses* to the church door in that city. The crowd probably knew the words to Stegmann's hymn, as well as those to "Ein feste Burg," without reference to a hymnbook. An article in *Die Sangerhalle* in 1870 claimed that people learned the songs of Luther by heart. They did not read them, rather they sang them, and they

⁶⁴¹ "The Pure Power of Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus,'" National Public Radio Music, December 23, 2008. www.npr.org/2008/12/23/98517850/the-pure-power-of-handels-hallelujah-chorus

⁶⁴² Dietmar Klenke, "Der Gesangverein," in *Deutsche Erinnerungs-Orte* III, ed. Etienne Francois and Hagen Schulze (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001): 392-407. Klenke explains that the participants in choral societies developed a basic understanding of German history in which the nation was progressively moving towards a point of "salvation." The singers understood the 1813 wars of freedom (*Befreiungskriegen*) as a period of rebirth and the wars of unification in the 1860s and 1870-71 as the final struggle of "historical salvation" (*Heilsgeschichte*).

became the property of the German-Protestant people.⁶⁴³ “Ach bleib mit deiner Gnade” was a fairly simple song--the first verse is below.

Ach bleib mit deiner Gnade	Abide among us with thy grace,
Bei uns, herr Jesu Christ,	Lord Jesus, evermore.
Daß uns hinfort nicht schade	Nor let us e'er to sin give place,
Des bösen Feindes List.	Nor grieve him we adore. ⁶⁴⁴

After the exultant *Hallelujah Chorus* and the crowd's enthusiastic rendering of “Ein feste Burg” to the accompaniment of cannon and bells, the ceremony ended with a simple hymn penned in 1629 and in the tradition of Luther's Protestantism.

The public ceremony marked by secular speeches and religious music gave the day an overall mood of remembrance and joy. The participants celebrated a religious event, the Protestant Reformation, but moreover a singular person, Martin Luther. Later in the evening after the formal afternoon program had concluded, Eich recorded that the monument was illuminated by electric lights and the crowd, without prompting, spontaneously began singing “Ein feste Burg.” A pastor who was in the crowd gave a short speech that recalled Luther's influence on freedom of conscience, civil liberty, and human rights—the liberal-bourgeois mood prevailed at this celebration.⁶⁴⁵ Some in the crowd may have been the singers who created the first choral societies believing they were “carriers of a national culture of remembrance,” and the Luther Monument in Worms was erected in that spirit.⁶⁴⁶ Over the course of years, however, Luther festivals became more closely associated with the monarchical state.

⁶⁴³ *Die Sangerhalle*, 30 Mai 1870, 103. “Man lernte es auswendig; man las es nicht, sondern sang es, also da es bald Eigentum des deutsch-evangelischen Volkes wurde.” The article went on to say that even when songs became more secular, Luther's songs held their value because of the melodies. They were easy to sing and also to make into three- or four-part harmonies.

⁶⁴⁴ Both the German hymn and the English translation come from <https://hymnary.org/hymn/HBUE1884/6> The German hymn can be found in the *Kirchenbuch fur Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden*; the English translation was by Catherine Winkworth (1863). There are six verses and in German verses 2-6 begin with “Ach bleib mit deinem Wort (verse 2), deinem Glanze (verse 3), deinem Segen (verse 4), deinem Schutze (verse 5), and Deiner Treue (verse 6). The message is simple but the hymn has endured to the present and can be heard on YouTube.

⁶⁴⁵ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 48. An American publication described the Worms monument as “the greatest Luther monument” and pointed out that the figures representing the cities of Spires, Augsburg, and Magdeburg were meant to point out “the power of protest of a free conscience, the joyousness of confession, the martyrdom of the evangelical faith.” *The Lutheran Cyclopedia*, ed. Henry Eyster Jacobs and John A. W. Haas (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 297.

⁶⁴⁶ Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” 393.

The festival rituals of parades and banners, as noted in Chapter Four, were ways of preserving older historical traditions, what Burkhardt called “a search for a vivid visualization of a lost past.”⁶⁴⁷ However, by 1883 and the celebrations of Luther’s 400th birthday Luther had been transformed to a symbol of the nation and a national hero as well as a model of bourgeois members of the new nation—a presentist interpretation of Luther and his family.⁶⁴⁸ In that spirit, the 1883 birthday celebrations had actors in costume reenacting events associated with Luther, and there were as well, a number of musical works written in celebration of pivotal events in Luther’s life.⁶⁴⁹ *Luther at the Diet of Worms* by Ludwig Meinardus (1872) was one of the most popular compositions. Meinardus wrote it for three choirs (including men, women, and children), six to eight soloists, an orchestra and organist, and it was performed in sixty German cities in 1883.⁶⁵⁰ *The Lutheran Cyclopedia* of 1899 listed seven other noteworthy musical pieces written for the occasion and made especial note of Hans Herrig’s 1883 “Lutherfestspiele” (Luther Pageant). Herrig’s work required no sets or scenery and was written for amateur performers. It had two narrators, “Herald” and “Counselor,” who represented respectively the new and old eras. In between “scenes” of Luther’s life (in his Erfurt monk’s cell, with his students, at the Diet of Worms, and so forth) their conversations formed a connecting link between the events and their significance. At three points in the play the audience, “or rather the congregation,” was expected to

⁶⁴⁷ Burkhardt, “Reformations- und Lutherfeiern,” 230.

⁶⁴⁸ Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck 1800-1866*, trans. Daniel Nolan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 378-79. Nipperdey says that in the first half of the nineteenth century Germans sought to reconcile Christian faith and reason. As part of that attempt, “Luther was modernised and came to be regarded as the father of the spirit, of freedom and of modern culture.”

⁶⁴⁹ Besides the Meinardus *Luther at the Diet of Worms*, there was another work with the same name by R. Klose (1883), *Luther in Erfurt* by Bernhard Schick (1883) and “Luther in Eisenach” by Wilhelm Venus (1883).

⁶⁵⁰ Koldau, “Singing Luther’s Praises,” 279, 284 and 292. Koldau closely associates the genre of the oratorio with Protestantism. Her argument, that choral music of nineteenth-century Germany represented a “Luther cult,” is based on the number of oratorios that were composed and sung at music festivals. These festivals, other than those associated with Luther’s 400th birthday, were primarily those of the Lower Rhine Music Festival. The men who sang in the choirs associated with the *Deutscher Sängerbund* never sang oratorios because it was the *Lied* they sought to preserve. That does not mean they were not familiar with “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,” rather it demonstrates again the variety of musical opportunities that existed in Germany during this period. For the significance of the oratorio as “Protestant” music see also, Howard E. Smither, *A History of the Oratorio: The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and Glenn Stanley, “Bach’s ‘Erbe’: The Chorale in the German Oratorio of the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Nineteenth-Century Music* 11, no. 2 (1987): 121-149.

participate in singing several chorales.⁶⁵¹ Like the Worms monument celebration, spectators were written into the festival as active participants, as though to underscore Luther's own goal of giving vernacular music and language back to German congregations.

The anniversary celebrations of Luther's birth in 1883 were unique in a number of ways. His death had been commemorated in 1646, 1746, and 1846, but his birth had not been especially noted until 1883. It was observed in September 1883 as a state occasion held in Wittenberg--although Wilhelm I cautiously took the official position that the event should be primarily a religious observation.⁶⁵² The event included a procession of 1,100 clergymen, "eloquent addresses" by a number of speakers, and a mark of imperial favor when Crown Prince Frederick laid a wreath on Luther's grave.⁶⁵³ His actual birthday was celebrated in November in Eisleben--the city where Luther was born and where he died. In the image below note how the streets surrounding the city square were festooned with garlands and banners as the participants paraded to the performance area. On the left side of the picture you see a wagon and people dressed in sixteenth-century costumes--bringing the 400-year old Luther back to celebrate with his nineteenth-century descendants. The celebratory life of monument dedications, parades of banners, and choral performances is largely lost to us today, but I have a personal observation that contributes to the 1883 narratives. In 2013 I spent a few days in Wittenberg and Eisenach--two cities closely associated with Luther and "Ein feste Burg."⁶⁵⁴ Wittenberg especially struck me as a drab little German town--the train station was a platform, and most of the few tourists were Germans. In August 2017 I visited Wittenberg again when I attended a conference as part of the 500-Year Anniversary celebrations of the Reformation.⁶⁵⁵ The city had been completely transformed. There was a new, modern

⁶⁵¹ *The Luther Cyclopedia*, 296.

⁶⁵² Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 61-62.

⁶⁵³ *The Luther Cyclopedia*, 295.

⁶⁵⁴ Wittenberg was where Luther was teaching in 1517 when he nailed the Ninety-Five Theses to the Schlosskirche door, and he spent the rest of his life there after starting the Reformation. Eisenach was the location of the Wartburg Castle where Luther was hidden after his excommunication at the Diet of Worms in 1521. Pilgrimages to Luther sites were popular in the late nineteenth century and the cities of Eisleben (birth and death place of Luther), Erfurt, Eisenach, and Wittenberg are not far from one another and could all be reached within a few hours by train. Burkhardt attributes the large crowd sizes at the 1868 and 1883 Luther celebrations to the German train system.

⁶⁵⁵ The conference was titled *Kulturelle Wirkungen der Reformation* (Cultural Impact of the Reformation) and included panels on how the Protestant Reformation has impacted education, science, aesthetics, everyday life, law,

train station with a beautifully paved and landscaped path that led to the two main streets that make up the heart of Wittenberg and its historic landmarks. .



Figure 19 Artist's rendition of the 400-Year Celebration of Luther's birthday in Eisleben, 1883

Throughout the town there were plaques explaining various contributions made by Luther (and other reformers) to German culture and history, and at the train station an enormous rectangular tower had been covered with the entire text of the Luther Bible. Four years earlier only the Luther House Museum had been updated in preparation for Reformation festivities; by 2017 the entire town had come alive, there were crowds of people, tour buses, an abundance of freshly minted Luther memorabilia, and all the parks, churches, and shops had been given a facelift. I imagine it was something like that in 1883 for Luther's birth celebrations. There would have been a celebratory feeling in the air that had more to do with Germany itself than with fervent religious feeling--per the Eisleben picture above. In both years (1883

politics, and economy in Europe and across the globe. It was sponsored by Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg and the Federal State of Saxony-Anhalt.

and 2017) the Wittenberg Town Square, site of the Luther-Melanchthon monument, was the staging ground for music, speeches, plays about the Reformer's life, and relaxation at outdoor cafes. Both celebrations allowed for a display of religious devotion, national pride, and enthusiastic tourists.

Michael Fischer claims the 1883 Wittenberg festivities were reminiscent of the citizen-bourgeois celebration in Worms in 1868, but there were striking differences in 1883. The crown prince was an official representative of the Empire at the Wittenberg celebration lending it, according to observers, "a general and national meaning" (*eine allgemeine und nationale Bedeutung*). Royal visitors were present in Worms, but only as members of the audience.⁶⁵⁶ The most significant difference came from the closing event of the Wittenberg festival where the participants sang the first stanza of "Ein feste Burg" followed by a speech from the mayor. After the speech there was a *Hochrufe* (cheers, or Here! Here!) for the Kaiser, and the crowd then sang "Heil Dir im Siegerkranz" (Hail to Thee in the Victor's Crown). To conclude, they sang the last two stanzas of "Ein feste Burg."⁶⁵⁷ Luther's hymn framed the accolades to the Emperor on the occasion of the Reformer's birth celebration. The celebrations in Wittenberg in 1883 highlighted the transformation of the early liberal bourgeois movement for unification versus the less democratic post-1871 reality. A look at the songs that were juxtaposed demonstrates this. "Ein feste Burg" had been used as a protest song veiled as a hymn from 1817 to the 1850s.⁶⁵⁸ Now it was used to frame praise to the monarchical-authoritarian state. Below are the first and last stanzas of "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" with "Heil Dir im Siegerkranz" inserted between them--the way it was sung at Luther's 400th birthday celebration in Wittenberg.

"Ein feste Burg" (1st verse)

1. Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott,
ein' gute Wehr und waffen;

1. A mighty fortress is our God
A bulwark never failing.

⁶⁵⁶ Quoted by Fischer from the 19. September 1883 *Provinzial-Correspondenz*, 62. The Worms event was planned by a group of citizens who wanted to emphasize Luther's defiant stand against tyranny—therefore they did not give the royal visitors a particular place of honor. This reflected the beliefs of choral and gymnastic society members that the German princes were responsible for preventing national unity.

⁶⁵⁷ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 62-63. "Heil Dir im Siegerkranz" was the royal anthem of Prussia since 1795 and set to the tune of Britain's "God Save the King/Queen."

⁶⁵⁸ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 28. Luther was not only associated with the pantheon of German heroes but "Ein feste Burg" was included in the anthology of Napoleonic era freedom songs.

er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
die uns jetzt hat betroffen.

Our helper He amidst the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing

Der alt' böse Feind,
mit Ernst er's jetzt meint,
groß Macht und viel List
sein' grausam' Rüstung ist,
auf Erd' ist nicht seinsgleichen.

But still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe
His craft and power are great
And armed with cruel hate
On earth is not his equal.

“Heil Dir im Siegerkranz”

1. Heil dir im Siegerkranz,
Herrscher des Vaterlands!
Heil, Kaiser, dir!
Fühl' in des Thrones Glanz
die hohe Wonne ganz,
Liebling des Volks zu sein!
Heil, Kaiser, dir!

Hail to thee in victor's crown,
Ruler of the fatherland!
Hail to thee, emperor!
Feel in the throne's glow,
The high ecstasy in full,
To be darling of thy people!
Hail to thee, emperor!

2. Nicht Roß und Reiske,
sichern die steile Höh',
wo Fürsten stehn;
Liebe des Vaterlands,
Liebe des freien Manns
gründet den Herrscherthron
wie Fels im Meer.

Neither steed nor mounted knight,
Secure the towering height,
Where princes stand:
Love of the fatherland,
Love of the free man
Create the ruler's throne
Like crags at sea.

3. Heilige Flamme, glüh',
glüh' und erlösche nie
fürs Vaterland!
Wir alle stehen dann
mutig für einen Mann,
kämpfen und bluten gern
für Thron und Reich!

Holy flame, glow,
Glow and expire not
For the fatherland!
Then we all stand
Valiant for one man,
Gladly fighting and bleeding
For throne and empire!

4. Handlung und Wissenschaft,
hebe mit Mut und Kraft
ihr Haupt empor!
Krieger- und Heldentat
finde ihr Lorbeerblatt
treu aufgehoben
an deinem Thron!⁶⁵⁹

Commerce and science,
Hoist with courage and strength
Their chief aloft.
Warriors and heroes' deeds
Find their laurel leaves
Faithfully preserved
Upon thy throne!

“Ein feste Burg” (verses 3 and 4)

3. Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär'

And though this world with devils filled

⁶⁵⁹ “Heil Dir im Siegerkranz,” www.volksliederarchiv.de/heil-dir-im-siegerkranz/ This composition was based on one written for the Danish king in the eighteenth century. The original German text used the term *König* (King) instead of *Kaiser* (Emperor). It was the Prussian national anthem and after 1871 an unofficial German national anthem though not all Germans embraced it as such.

und wollt' uns gar verschlingen,
 so fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,
 es soll uns doch gelingen.
 Der Fürst dieser Welt,
 wie sau'r er sich stellt,
 tut er uns doch nicht;
 das macht, er ist gericht't;
 ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.

Should threaten to undo us.
 We will not fear for God has willed,
 His truth to triumph through us.
 The prince of darkness grim,
 We tremble not for him.
 His rage we can endure,
 For lo, his doom is sure:
 One little word shall fell him.

4. Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn,
 und kein'n Dank dazu haben:
 er ist bei uns wohl auf dem Plan
 mit seinem Geist und Gaben.
 Nehman sie uns den Leib,
 Gut, Ehr', Kind und Weib:
 laß fahren dahin;
 sie haben's kein'n Gewinn,
 das Reich muß uns doch bleiben.

4. That word above all earthly powers
 No thanks to them abideth.
 The spirit and the gifts are ours
 Through Him who with us sideth.
 Let goods and kindred go,
 This mortal life also,
 The body they may kill,
 God's truth abideth still.
 His kingdom is forever.⁶⁶⁰

A casual reading of the lines above without the insertion of the song titles might lead one to think both songs refer to the same person, but a careful reading shows that the structures of the two songs differ, but the themes are similar. Luther's hymn began by declaring that God is a mighty fortress against earthly dangers and a powerful foe. Then you move to the German anthem that praised the victorious ruler who valiantly saved the "fatherland." Some of the lines are virtually interchangeable: God is a fortress that stands amidst a flood; the emperor's throne is as secure as a rock in the sea. Both use military imagery and speak of God, or the emperor, as the power that saves, and in both the people are willing to die for the savior/preserver. There was a conflation of Luther's use of a biblical psalm with a song praising the emperor, and the strong fortress of confidence in God was now that of the nation.

Historian Anthony D. Smith claims that nationalism is not just a replacement for traditional religion but "is best seen as a form of culture and a type of belief system."⁶⁶¹ Germans had spent several decades cultivating a mythology, historical narrative, and symbols that identified them as a particular

⁶⁶⁰ "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" <https://deutschelieder.wordpress.com/2018/04/23/martin-luther-ein-feste-burg-ist-unser-gott/>; English language version, "A Mighty Fortress is our God," from *Trinity Hymnal* (Atlanta: Great Commission Publications, 1990), 92. While the tunes of "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" and "Heil dir im Siegerkranz" are different they both have a similar strong, regular beat. Singing them together would reinforce similarities between the two both in word and music.

⁶⁶¹ Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 18.

people and reinforced this through a repertoire of music. Heroic figures from the past like Barbarossa or Luther gave citizens someone to rally around and that figure became shorthand for who they believed they were. German historian Dietmar Klenke claims the failure of the German princes to defend Germany from Napoleon was a particular sticking point for nationalists of the first half of the nineteenth century and a rallying cry for liberal-minded bourgeois singers before 1850. However, in the 1860s when unification appeared imminent, they supported Bismarck--and the emperor he put on the throne was conflated with past warrior kings like Hermann (Battle of Teutoburg Forest) or Frederick Barbarossa.⁶⁶² The princes were invited to the 1868 Luther monument celebration but were not the focal point; in 1883 the Kaiser (though not present) was given equal status with Luther--and with Luther's God.⁶⁶³

In this section about Luther we have seen how the dedication of the Luther Monument in Worms, as well as and plays and musicals written for Luther's birthday celebrations, elevated Luther to the status of a civic hero. This was part of a nineteenth-century process in which Luther was, according to German theologian Karl Dienst (1930-2014), "de-theologized" (*enttheologisierte*) and "de-confessionalized" (*entkonfessionalisierte*). In the process he became a liberal, national, anti-catholic Protestant, and a musical pioneer.⁶⁶⁴ Using literature, art, architecture, and music to reinforce a national identity, German nationalists built statues and monuments to Luther, restored his Wittenberg home as a museum, composed plays and musicals in his honor, and made him part of a century of celebrations. A couple of final examples will conclude this section. In 1871 Richard Wagner composed *Kaisermarsch* (1871) to celebrate the unification of Germany and included the melody of "Ein feste Burg." He skillfully wove the personages and contributions of Luther together with those of Kaiser Wilhelm in the opening lines of the piece: "Hail, hail to the Kaiser! Kaiser Wilhelm! The refuge and fortress of the German people's

⁶⁶² Klenke, "Der Gesangverein," 395-6. The Kyffhäuser Monument to Barbarossa was constructed in 1890-96 as a memorial to Kaiser Wilhelm I with the intention of linking Wilhelm and Prussia to the most prestigious Holy Roman Emperor of the Middle Ages.

⁶⁶³ The last line of Luther's hymn was ripe for retranslation by nineteenth-century nationalists: "Das Reich muß uns doch bleiben." Reich can mean "rich" or "abundant" as well as "realm," "kingdom," or "empire." Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 21.

⁶⁶⁴ Karl Dienst, "Martin Luthers 'Ein feste Burg,'" 2-9.

freedom.”⁶⁶⁵ Luther’s mighty fortress was now the new emperor of a unified Germany and in case listeners missed that message, Wagner used the melody of “Ein feste Burg” to underscore it. This was a similar pairing to the one at the 1883 Wittenberg celebration of Luther’s birth—“Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott” and “Heil dir im Siegerkranz.” Earlier in the century Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt, Giacomo Meyerbeer, and as we have seen, Ludwig Meinardus (among others), wrote symphonies, oratorios, and overtures in celebration of Luther and his contributions to German history and culture. Many of these were composed for specific occasions. Mendelssohn composed his *Symphony No. 5 in D Major, Opus 107 (Reformation Symphony)* for the 300th anniversary celebration of the Augsburg Confession (1830), but these were celebrations of religious events—not a projection of national identity. Luther became politicized over the course of the century and represented “Germany” both at home and abroad. One of the more powerful uses of “Ein feste Burg” came from French composer Claude Debussy, and his work demonstrated how intricately Luther’s chorale was identified with Germany. Debussy combined Luther’s melody with that of the *Marseillaise* in a 1915 Suite for two pianos entitled, *En blanc et noir* (In Black and White). Here, of course, the melody of “Ein feste Burg” was utilized negatively. Debussy wrote to his publisher, “I want [to write this] not so much for myself but rather in a small way to prove that 30 million ‘boches’ cannot destroy the French spirit as they attempted to do earlier—to blunt and to destroy it.”⁶⁶⁶ In the third movement of the Suite Debussy employed a musical style to depict the sounds of the *Marseillaise* as bright and airy juxtaposed against the “*dumpfen Grollen eines Kanons*” (dull rumble of a cannon) expressed by “Ein feste Burg.” The *Marseillaise*’s “rousing and graceful arabesque” was answered by the “düstere Kampf Stimmung” (grim fighting mood) of “Ein feste Burg.” Naturally, at the conclusion of the Suite there was a triumphant sound of trumpets (by means of the pianos) implying the victory of the *Marseillaise* over “Ein feste Burg.”⁶⁶⁷ The melodies told a powerful story all on their own.

⁶⁶⁵ Dienst, “Martin Luthers ‘Ein feste Burg,’” 8.

⁶⁶⁶ Dienst, “Martin Luthers ‘Ein feste Burg,’” 8-9.

⁶⁶⁷ This description comes from Dienst in “Martin Luthers ‘Ein feste Burg,’” 9.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, Martin Luther was increasingly unmoored from his theological and historical roots and transmogrified into a German nationalist who fought for freedom—freedom of thought and independence from foreign influences. Particularly after 1871 he was claimed as the model German—a hard-working family man, well-educated and cultured, and above all Protestant. Although he penned numerous chorales, the one most associated with him and the Reformation as a whole was “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.” Nineteenth-century festivals commemorating Luther and events associated with him fostered a Protestant-national identity and one that resonated not only in Germany but also abroad. Luther, however, was an inadvertent German nationalist. In the second section of this chapter we will look at Richard Wagner who unabashedly promoted the virtues of the Germanic race and did so by bringing ancient myths and heroes to life in a way never before imagined—in a redemptive “total work of art.”

4.2.2 Richard Wagner: “Music of the Future” and the Bayreuth Festival

From the first decades of the nineteenth century Germans acquired a reputation as the “people of music.” Musicians, composers, and members of the first choral societies created common rituals and practices that bound them together in a more or less harmonious way largely because they adhered to the same notions about the superlative virtues of German music. On one level the art *Lied* and folk songs were the truest expression of the German people; on another level instrumental music (as defined by E. T. A. Hoffmann and Ludwig Tieck) was elevated to “a language beyond language” which could only be apprehended through *Bildung*.⁶⁶⁸ On both levels music acquired a degree of superiority tied to German language, history, myths, and music’s key to the infinite and inexpressible. At mid-century, however, this harmonic consonance was shaken by Richard Wagner whose “music of the future” provoked reactions that threatened to destroy the accord of the German musical scene. I argue that though Wagner was a

⁶⁶⁸ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 90-91 and 110-111; Bernd Sponheuer, “Reconstructing Ideal Types of the ‘German’ in Music,” in *Music and German National Identity*, ed. Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 40-55.

polarizing individual and artist, he nevertheless left an indelible stamp on Germany's reputation as a "people of music."

Wagner spent his entire professional life in an attempt to create a form of drama that fused art and music with German mythology, thus creating a "total work of art" that encompassed both performers and audience in a social ritual.⁶⁶⁹ In this sense he represented a paradigm shift between the early Romantics' employment of history, myth, and nature as treasured and essential elements of German culture to an elevation of them as "an essentially new myth"--one that merged modernity, science, and the arts.⁶⁷⁰ Wagner's "new mythology" also marked a shift away from the more inclusive liberal-democratic vision of the post-Napoleonic era German nationalists to a narrower "blood and soil" version of nationalism.⁶⁷¹ On the one hand Wagner did for the theater what Beethoven had done for the symphony--elevated the genre and convinced the public to believe in it.⁶⁷² But on the other hand, Wagner's music broke with conventions, and while some found his tumultuous personal life, his fascination with Germanic mysticism, and his antisemitism disturbing, others embraced either his pure version of music drama or its more radical racialist meaning.

I do not plan to analyze Wagner's operas, his compositional innovations, or his personal life in any detail, but in the same way I used Martin Luther in the previous section to expose German nationalism as a Protestant mission, I want to use Wagner as a means to lay bare other fissures (dissonances) in German society. First, Wagner was one of several musicians who challenged the forms and harmonic structures of the Classical—Romantic style thus dividing the music world into two opposing camps. Second, he rejected conventional features of opera and created a distinctly German music drama. His *Gesamtkunstwerk* was a fusion of art, drama, music, nature, and myth and required its

⁶⁶⁹ *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 6th edition, eds. Time Rutherford-Johnson, Michael Kennedy, and Joyce Bourne Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁶⁷⁰ George S. Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 209.

⁶⁷¹ George Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964), 88-98. Although the term "blood and soil" is closely associated with the National Socialists, it was a concept that came from the nineteenth century—combining Romantic notions of the land and folkways with racial theories. Also see Wagner's "Das Judentum in der Musik" for his interpretation of why Jews were alienated from a German identity.

⁶⁷² Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, 194.

own theater. The Bayreuth *Festspielhaus* represented a further rejection of European opera and opera houses both abroad and in German cities. Finally, although Wagner was not the only German (or European) to embrace the growing antisemitism of the late nineteenth century, he came to be closely associated with that sentiment. Since I deal primarily with reactions to Wagner and the beliefs expressed in his music and essays, I use accounts written about him or his music performances either while he was still alive or in the decades after his death. Susanne Schmalz, Ethel Smyth, and Anna Ettlinger all made the pilgrimage to Bayreuth and along with others—music critics, enthusiasts, and thinkers—are sources for the second part of Chapter Seven. Wagner managed to generate effusive praise and scornful mockery—sometimes from the same individuals.⁶⁷³ According to musicologist Carl Dahlhaus, “Richard Wagner provoked the admiration and revulsion of a century which he, more than almost anyone else, may be said to represent.”⁶⁷⁴

Richard Wagner’s life was punctuated by monumental historical changes and shifting intellectual patterns that shaped his understanding of music and the nation. He was born in Leipzig in 1813 and was less than six months old when Napoleon’s forces were defeated at the Battle of Leipzig (Battle of Nations)—a pivotal moment for the German states. He grew up in Leipzig and Dresden—two prominent centers of music instruction and performance and as a teenager mourned the death of Carl Maria von Weber and Ludwig von Beethoven who died within a year of each other. These were the German composers who made the greatest impact on him.⁶⁷⁵ Upon hearing the news of Beethoven’s death Wagner promptly hunted down a score of his D minor symphony and later wrote, “Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony*

⁶⁷³ Friedrich Nietzsche is the quintessential example of someone who was a devotee of Wagner but later turned on him calling his music “sick” and a means of pandering to the masses.

⁶⁷⁴ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, 194.

⁶⁷⁵ Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) was one of the founders of Romanticism in music. As the music director of the *Dresdner Staatskapelle* he attempted to create a German opera tradition. In that spirit he composed three operas—the most famous was *Der Freischütz* which debuted in Berlin in 1821. It included folk tales, mysticism, magic, distant and foreboding places, danger and the supernatural. (See notes for the opera by James Keays at www.redlanssymphony.com). When Wagner was the *Kapellmeister* in Dresden in the 1840s, he led the endeavor to have Weber’s body moved from its burial place in London back to his hometown, Dresden, for reburial and wrote a four-part men’s choral work for the occasion.

became the mystical goal of all my strange thoughts and desires about music.”⁶⁷⁶ Beethoven’s mystique never left him, but before he succeeded in bringing his own vision of music drama to life, Wagner made a living as a conductor in Würzburg, Riga, Paris, and Dresden while frequently dodging debt-collectors. Paris was the most important center of opera in the mid-nineteenth century and Wagner moved there in 1839 hoping to make a name for himself as a composer.⁶⁷⁷ The competition for success in Paris was stiff however and fatefully turned Wagner towards a search for a uniquely national opera. After he returned to Dresden in 1843 he began working on his first music dramas based on German myths and legends.⁶⁷⁸ He had to flee Dresden after participating in the 1848 revolution and spent years living in Switzerland before German authorities allowed him back into Bavaria in 1872.⁶⁷⁹ The years in Switzerland were critical for his mature conception of German music drama. He studied Greek drama and fleshed out his understanding of German myth and opera. After reading Schopenhauer, and wrestling with the fusion of art, religion, and modernity, Wagner began work on the music dramas that brought his vision of a “new mythology” to life. The works that eventually included *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (the *Ring* cycle), and *Parsifal* proved durable and have mesmerized generations of enthusiasts.⁶⁸⁰

⁶⁷⁶ Richard Wagner, *My Life*, Volume I, Part I 1813-1842 www.the-wagnerian.com/2011/07/download-my-life-richard-wagner-in.html

⁶⁷⁷ Wagner lived in Paris from 1839-43 and debuted *Rienzi*, *Faust Overture*, and *Der fliegende Holländer* (The Flying Dutchman) in 1840-41.

⁶⁷⁸ Williamson, *Longing for Myth*, 183.

⁶⁷⁹ Wagner lived in Zurich from 1849-1858 where he was provided for by a wealthy German-Swiss patron. Unfortunately Wagner had to leave in 1858 when the patron discovered that his wife and Wagner had carried on an affair. Ludwig II of Bavaria paid off all of Wagner’s debts and invited him to Munich in 1864. While in Munich, Wagner began an affair with Cosima von Bülow (wife of conductor Hans von Bülow and daughter of Franz Liszt). After the birth of their daughter Isolde, Wagner and Cosima moved back to Switzerland where they lived from 1866-1872—in a villa provided by Ludwig. Wagner and Cosima had two more children and married in 1870. In 1872 they were given permission to return to Germany, and it was at that time that they built their home in Bayreuth—again with funds from Ludwig. During the years in Switzerland Wagner composed *Die Meistersinger*, *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan and Isolde*, and began work on the operas that made up the *Ring* cycle.

⁶⁸⁰ One need not listen to a Wagner opera to appreciate his contribution to art. Wagner’s concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* has had a direct influence on the modern film industry in which the musical score is an integral part of the entire script. And music from Wagner’s operas is pervasive in the American film and cartoon canon. Tony Thomas, *Music for the Movies* (South Brunswick: A. S. Barnes, 1973); Joe Jeongwon and Sander Gilman, ed. *Wagner and Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

Richard Wagner's innovative approach to composition led to a great crisis in the mid-nineteenth century world of music. Ethel Smyth who studied composition in Leipzig in the 1870s and 1880s encountered a number of Germans who considered opera a "negligible form of art" and music drama "suspicious," preferring instead the orchestral, chamber music, and oratorio traditions Leipzig was noted for since the time of Bach.⁶⁸¹ They acknowledged Johannes Brahms as the champion of that tradition. After 1860 a national debate emerged that pitted the supporters of the Classical-Romantic tradition represented by Brahms against the *Neudeutsche Schule* (New German School) represented by Richard Wagner, Franz Liszt, and Hector Berlioz. Dahlhaus explains that musical "camps" had occasionally existed before the nineteenth century but usually in the form of pitting secular (i.e. opera) against sacred music. The so-called New German School represented a new approach to music composition and was first defined by Franz Brendel, who had written an influential book about the history of Italian, French, and German music. Brendel gave a speech in 1859 in which he used the term (*Neudeutsche Schule*) to describe the post-Beethoven period—a period in which Berlioz and Liszt had taken Beethoven's musical vision to a new level in which content determined form—this was the "music of the future."⁶⁸² Wagner's music dramas came to represent this most closely.

The musical "camps" corresponded to a general anxiety at the turn of the century about the meaning of modernity versus traditional values.⁶⁸³ The music critic Eduard Hanslick voiced opinions that were favored by the older, traditional bourgeoisie—music should follow the prescribed forms and structures that had emerged during the eighteenth century—a century defined by reason and order rather than emotions. The *Bildungsbürgertum* largely followed Hanslick's lead and judged Wagner's music (and

⁶⁸¹ Smyth, *Impressions that Remained*, 243.

⁶⁸² Richard Taruskin, "Nationalism," (Oxford: Oxford Music Online, 2001): 1-48. Programme music (a genre representative of the New German School) was instrumental music that carried extramusical meaning such as a literary idea, a legend, a scenic description, or a personal drama. The narrative itself might be included in the program notes while the music was designed to evoke a specific idea and atmosphere. As an afternote, Brendel got around the problem that Liszt and Berlioz were not Germans by asserting that they had taken Beethoven as their departure point so were "German as to their origins," and birthplace did not determine their musical spirit (15).

⁶⁸³ Among many writers and artists who debated the issue of degeneracy was Max Simon Nordau, *Degeneration*, (London: William Heinemann, 1898). For another contemporary perspective see Abraham Kuypers, "Uniformity: The Curse of Modern Life," in *Abraham Kuypers: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998): 19-44. Also see Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 104-108.

that of the other followers of the New German School) unnatural, uninspired innovation.⁶⁸⁴ One example illuminates this argument. Anglican minister and musician Henry Cart presented a paper to a group of British scholars about Wagner and his music in which he included a personal anecdote. Describing an occasion when he heard “Flight of the Valkyries” at Albert Hall under Wagner’s direction Cart exclaimed, “If ever dramatic action was embodied and personified in music, it may here be found in unparalleled force; and I should question whether in the whole history of music so vivid and startling a presentment of a pictorial image has ever been made simply by orchestral means.”⁶⁸⁵ Hanslick (in effect) responded, “One can in fact portray an object musically. But to want to portray in tones the *feelings* which falling snow, a crowing rooster, or flashing lightning produce in us is just ridiculous.”⁶⁸⁶ This aspect of Wagner’s music provoked Friedrich Nietzsche to accuse Wagner of writing music that appealed to the passions of the “masses” and contributed to the decadence of society, while Wagner responded by saying that his music was an antidote to the degeneracy of the modern age.⁶⁸⁷ The sharp rift in the musical world created by Wagner’s music paralleled tensions in society as a whole.

Industrialization and the growth of the working class created a seismic shift that pulled the arts into disparate realms. Was music an exclusive preserve of the highly educated or could it be embraced by the growing population of working people with some leisure time? Cheaply printed music and phonograph records made music more attainable and accessible—people did not need musical training to appreciate music that was entertaining but not challenging whereas clinging to the musical forms of the past was a way of compensating for economic and societal change.⁶⁸⁸ Nietzsche and Wagner were only

⁶⁸⁴ Benjamin M. Korstvedt, “Reading Music Criticism beyond the Fin-de-siecle Vienna Paradigm,” *The Musical Quarterly* 94, no. 1 (2011), 182.

⁶⁸⁵ Henry Cart, “Richard Wagner,” *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 16 (1889), 73.

⁶⁸⁶ Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey Payzant from the Eighth Edition 1891, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1986), 20. Emphasis added.

⁶⁸⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Der Fall Wagner: Ein Musikanten-Problem* (Leipzig: C. G. Neumann, 1888).

www.nietzschesource.org/#eKGWB/WA Richard Wagner, *Religion and Art*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press): 211-252. Ellis translated Wagner’s prose works into English (originally published in 1897) and claimed that Nietzsche and Wagner participated in a “literary duel” from 1878-1880.

⁶⁸⁸ Rainer Traub, „Im Liede stark, deutsch bis ins Mark,“ *Spiegel Geschichte* no. 3 (2013), 121-123. In 1908 the Deutsche Grammophon-Gesellschaft produced 6.2 million records and by 1913 the SPD was promoting gramophone devises that even workers could afford.

two of many Europeans who believed the late nineteenth century was an age of decadence and degeneracy, and both believed that art offered a solution.

Nietzsche and Wagner stood for that ‘epochal’ tendency referred to by Ernst Troeltsch in 1913 as ‘end-of-the-century cultural critique,’ a tendency that arose in protest at what he called the ‘democratic-capitalist-imperialist-technological century.’ This sense of a *fin de siècle*, this critique of the waning nineteenth century formed the obverse of modernism, which saw Wagner’s and Nietzsche’s works as standing at loggerheads with their own age.⁶⁸⁹ Although it is difficult today to clearly grasp the significance of the conflict over music, it was such a divisive issue at the time that anyone associated with Wagner was scorned by his opponents.⁶⁹⁰ In a nation in which the ruling class had established music as a primary identifier, the dissonance created by “othering” the music of Wagner, Liszt, and Berlioz was similar to that produced by the campaign of the *Kulturkampf*.

Music often had the effect of creating community amidst tension, and historian Anthony Steinhoff notes that Wagner was not only divisive “but also united [Germans] across divisions created by social, regional, and confessional differences.”⁶⁹¹ As early as 1851 Richard Wagner sketched out a vision of a festival in which his *Ring* cycle would be performed that would offer an antidote to the decadence of the modern world. Over the course of four days a “total work of art”—a fusion of music, drama, and poetry into a single art-form—would be presented to the public, and in Wagner’s conception this was not mere entertainment but instead a means of redemption. Wagner laid out this vision of music’s redemptive qualities in “Religion und Kunst”—an essay that originally appeared in *Bayreuther Blätter* in October, 1880.⁶⁹² Although the essay also dealt with the visual arts and poetry, Wagner believed that music had the

⁶⁸⁹ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 331.

⁶⁹⁰ Korstvedt, “Reading Music Criticism, 161-167 for a specific discussion of the Brahms-Wagner divide and reception of Anton Bruckner who was associated with Wagner by Hanslick and other “conservative” critics.

⁶⁹¹ Anthony J. Steinhoff, “Embracing the Grail: *Parsifal*, Richard Wagner and the German Nation,” *German History* 30, no. 3 (2012): 372-394.

⁶⁹² From his days in Paris, Wagner earned money by writing reviews and essays about music. The *Bayreuther Blätter* was a journal that he published after moving to Bayreuth—the first issue appeared in January 1878. His intent was to set forth a system of ethics that would halt the decline of the human race, and the essays that appeared from 1878-1881 are known as the “regeneration” writings.

greatest ability to communicate religious redemption.⁶⁹³ To accomplish this he needed a venue in which to present this vision on a continual basis. Wagner travelled to Bayreuth in 1872 to consider its Margravian Opera House as a suitable site, and although he rejected that opera house, he favored the town as not only the future site of his festival but his own home—known as *Wahnfried*.⁶⁹⁴ When the foundation of the future *Festspielhaus* (Festival Playhouse) was laid in 1872, Wagner chose to direct Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* to celebrate the occasion. Wagner considered listening to a Beethoven symphony “a religious act of hallowed cleansing,” and added a rapturous phrase that summed up his enthusiasm for Beethoven's genius: “Glad shouts ascending to divinest rapture.”⁶⁹⁵ In typical Wagnerian fashion he was also claiming this status for his own creations. The first Bayreuth Festival debuted with *The Ring of the Nibelung* (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*) in 1876, but it was initially a financial and artistic failure. The later premier of *Parsifal* at the second Bayreuth Festival in 1882 was a resounding success and ensured the future of Wagner's festival.⁶⁹⁶ Although Wagner died six months after the *Parsifal* premier, the festival continued to prosper—first under Cosima Wagner's direction and later that of his son Siegfried and other Wagner descendants.⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹³ Richard Wagner, (*Religion and Art*) of *Richard Wagner's Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd., 1897; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 222-224. Citations refer to University of Nebraska edition.

⁶⁹⁴ WAHNFRIED is carved on a stone tablet directly above the front door, and three plaques on the front of the house declare “Hier, wo mein Wähnen Frieden fand / Wahnfried / sei dieses Haus von mir benannt.” (This house, where finally my quest is fulfilled, shall be named by me Wahnfried).. If you were to pull into the driveway and alight by the front door, you could look in the opposite direction and see a bust of Ludwig II gracing a little garden. Ludwig not only paid off all of Wagner's debts but partially financed the building of Wahnfried and the Bayreuth *Festspielhaus*. The home of Franz Liszt (father of Cosima Wagner), across the street from *Wahnfried*, facilitated a tiny community of the musicians who initiated the “music of the future.”

⁶⁹⁵ Wagner, *Religion and Art*, 250. The fourth movement of the Ninth Symphony is the choral movement based on Friedrich Schiller's poem, *An die Freude* (Ode to Joy). One reason Wagner so admired Beethoven was that he considered him a precursor to his own efforts to create a music drama that combined singing with instrumental music.

⁶⁹⁶ Rick Fulker, “It Started with a Dream,” *Deutsche Welle* (August 7, 2011). www.dw.com/en/it-started-with-a-dream-100-years-of-the-bayreuth-festivals/a-6577495 *Parsifal* was performed sixteen times at Bayreuth in its premiere.

⁶⁹⁷ Control of the festival has remained in the hands of family members since 1883 while the interpretations of the dramas have continually evolved. Two great-granddaughters run the festivals today and, like all the family members who preceded them, are artistically involved in staging the performances.

Wagner's music dramas wreathed propaganda in dazzling spectacle, and the Bayreuth *Festspielhaus* drew thousands of admirers from its inception.⁶⁹⁸ Among the German nobles who attended the premiere of the four dramas that made up the *Ring* cycle in the summer of 1876 were King Karl of Württemberg, Grand dukes from Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, the Duke of Anhalt-Dessau, the Prince of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, and the most illustrious guest—Kaiser Wilhelm I who called the Bayreuth Festival a “national enterprise.”⁶⁹⁹ In addition, there were a number of important musicians in attendance—Franz Liszt, Camille Saint-Saens, Edvard Grieg, and Peter Tchaikovsky. Friedrich Nietzsche had been part of the Wagners' inner circle since 1869 and attended in spite of suffering from a violent migraine headache. Wagner's most enthusiastic royal admirer and patron Ludwig II of Bavaria was noticeably absent—but he had attended a dress rehearsal prior to the main event.⁷⁰⁰ Susanne Schmaltz left a vivid impression of what it was like to experience the performance of Wagner's *Ring* cycle—though not in Bayreuth. She was living in St. Petersburg in 1889 when German conductor Angelo Neumann brought artists there to perform the complete work. Schmaltz recounted that in spite of the high cost she bought fifth balcony tickets for the entire performance and described it variously as deeply touching, captivating, elating; she concluded, “Wagner's genius overwhelmed me.”⁷⁰¹ By the 1890s Wagner's own festival had become a “world event” and attendees by the hundreds from America, Britain, and France made the pilgrimage to Bayreuth.

⁶⁹⁸ Wagner spent twenty-six years working on the four operas that made up the entire *Ring* cycle—*Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*, *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* premiered individually in 1869 and 1870 in Munich, but Wagner intended for all four operas to be presented as a complete work, and when the *Ring* premiered at Bayreuth they were performed over four days, August 14-17. The theater seated 1650 people, but it was not until the 1890s that the *Festspielhaus* was filled with attendees. George Bernard Shaw informed a friend in 1894 that he could get him tickets to four performances at Bayreuth (*Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, and two *Parsifals*) for £1 apiece. *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 164.

⁶⁹⁹ Johannes Saltzwedel, “Ästhetik des Untergangs,” *Spiegel Geschichte* no. 3 (2013), 136.

⁷⁰⁰ Ludwig was reclusive and preferred not to attend public events where he would be a center of attention.

⁷⁰¹ Schmaltz, *Enchanted Remembrances*, 150-51. It was at the conclusion of the last performance that Schmaltz first met Therese Malten who sang the role of Brünnhilde. They remained life-long friends, and Schmaltz travelled to Bayreuth twice to hear her perform in *Parsifal*.

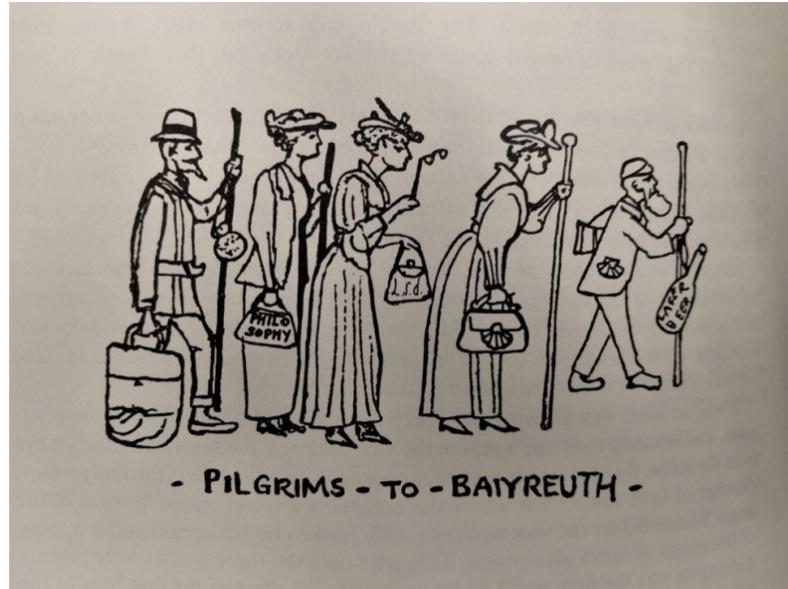


Figure 20 Illustration by Walter Crane (1845-1918)

Eventually Wagnerians evolved into an almost cult-like group, but not everyone who came to the original festival to hear the long-anticipated premiere of the complete *Ring* cycle was a Wagner enthusiast. Renowned nineteenth-century music critic Eduard Hanslick attended the premier in 1876 and concluded: “I doubt that the enjoyment of art is furthered by being uncomfortably housed for a week, sleeping badly, eating wretchedly, and after a strenuous five or six hours’ performance of opera, being uncertain of securing a modest snack. . . . I only wish to state my increased conviction that a major artistic undertaking belongs in a major city.”⁷⁰² Hanslick was Viennese, and at the turn of the century when Vienna was the concert capital of the world, he was no champion of Wagner’s “music of the future” performed in an obscure Bavarian town.⁷⁰³ Another critique came from an unexpected source. In spite of Friedrich Nietzsche’s long-time attachment to Wagner he was skeptical of the Bayreuth endeavor and after hearing the premiere of the *Ring* in the company of the rich and famous, he complained about experiencing “art for the masses” that appeared to him as “nothing but torment in Bayreuth—music not as

⁷⁰² Eduard Hanslick’s account of the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876 in *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 73.

⁷⁰³ Korstvedt, “Reading Music Criticism,” 170-171. Korstvedt situates Hanslick’s critiques of Wagner in the context of post-unification Germany. After 1871 music became central to Vienna’s self-identity and any deviations from their standards of artistic worth were fair game. Music criticism shaped public opinion and appeared not just in music journals but was part of the popular press.

a lucid, powerfully elegant sound experience, but as an intoxicating dive into a sensory experience.”⁷⁰⁴

When Englishwoman Ethel Smyth encountered similar critiques in Leipzig about the length and emotive qualities of Wagner’s operas she responded, “But Wagner is, among other things, the greatest hypnotizer the world has ever seen, and for the hypnotized time does not exist.”⁷⁰⁵ Wagner understood the power of ritual and designed a space in which his music dramas could best be presented—and it was not just the space of the theater but also that of the remote town. There was nothing else to do in Bayreuth but to sit listening to Wagner’s music for hours and days, and the pilgrims created their own emotional community.

Wagner’s music and the theater he created exclusively for his own dramas created a dissonance within mainstream nineteenth-century music culture; it was his antisemitism that ensured the dissonant nature of his art would linger. Wagner was not a practitioner of conventional Christianity, and his religious beliefs were outside those of mainstream Lutheranism or Catholicism.⁷⁰⁶ However, as he worked through his theories of music drama he determined that music was the only art form that fully corresponded to Christian belief. Borrowing from Herder’s ideas that language and poetry were rooted in the ancient past of a people, Wagner claimed that German Jews could not create authentic music.⁷⁰⁷ Anna Ettlinger admired Wagner’s music, but her memoirs are especially useful because they offer a unique insight into the most controversial aspect of Wagner’s legacy—his antisemitism. Ettlinger was part of a large, respected Jewish family in Karlsruhe who had successfully assimilated into German society. In April 1871 when Wagner was touring in order to raise money for the construction of the Bayreuth

⁷⁰⁴ Quoted by Saltzwedel, “Asthetik des Untergangs,” 137.

⁷⁰⁵ Ethel Smyth, *Impressions that Remained: Memoirs* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923), 243.

⁷⁰⁶ Wagner, *My Life*, and “Religion and Art,” 214-215. Wagner related that his mother was very devout and had the children of the family read Bible passages or religious poems aloud each morning. At the time of his first communion he said a shudder ran through him when he was offered the bread and wine—because he knew he did not have genuine faith. At the time he compiled his autobiography he noted that he had never taken communion again. In “Religion and Art” where he spelled out his beliefs more explicitly, he acknowledged that Christianity in its simplest and purest form was the best religion and music was the only art that corresponded with Christian beliefs. But he rejected the artificial rituals, symbols, and practices that had been added on over the centuries. It was in “Religion and Art” that Wagner explained that Jesus was not actually Jewish—the Jehovah of the Old Testament was the god of the Jews and represented war, death, and the sacrifice of animals; Jesus was a friend of the poor and lowly and the story of his descent from King David was a later invention.

⁷⁰⁷ Wagner’s essay, “Das Judenthum in Musik,” was originally published in 1850 in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. It did not initially create much of a reaction, but his later writings both grew out of and contributed to growing antisemitism in Germany after 1870.

Festspielhaus, Ettlinger attended one of his noon concerts in Berlin. At the end of the performance Wagner gave a speech thanking the audience for their attendance, and she noted the pessimism in his speech and face. “What did he not have to suffer for the sake of his work? . . . Those who are ahead of their time are all too often maltreated by stupidity, malice, and misunderstanding.”⁷⁰⁸ Bear in mind that Ettlinger knew Wagner’s opinions about Jews and national identity, but sympathized with his creative efforts—she did not confuse his art with his racial ideas. This dynamic was influenced not just by her own viewpoint but also because of her friendship with the well-known Jewish conductor Hermann Levi.

The fact that Levi, who was from a long line of Jewish rabbis, became the favored conductor of Wagner’s most Christian music drama created an interesting paradox. Although it does not appear that Ettlinger ever met Wagner, her reflections about *Parsifal* and Levi’s professional connection to Wagner lent her memoirs a poignant note and a perspective into escalating antisemitism in Germany after unification. Hermann Levi (1839-1900) was representative of both the Jewish experience in nineteenth-century Germany and a shift in musical roles that underscored the emergence of professional musicians—many of whom were of Jewish descent. He was born into a family of distinguished rabbis but joined a group of Jewish artists and intellectuals who embraced *Bildung* and managed to join the elite orbit of German musical culture.⁷⁰⁹ After attending the Mannheim Lyceum (1851-53) he left to study music with Vinzenz Lachner and then moved on to the Leipzig Conservatory in 1855.⁷¹⁰ His first professional appointment was as music director at Saarbrücken in 1859, and after two other short posts with the Mannheim Opera and the Hoogduitse Opera in Rotterdam, he was appointed *Hofkapellmeister* in

⁷⁰⁸ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 171-172. „Was hat er nicht leiden müssen um seines Wirkens willen! Noch mehr als Brahms, der auch ein gut Teil zu tragen hatte, bis er sich durchsetzen konnte. Wer seiner Zeit vorauseilt, wird nur gar zu oft von der Dummheit, der Bosheit und dem Unverstand mißhandelt.“

⁷⁰⁹ Laurence Dreyfus, “Hermann Levi’s Shame and ‘Parsifal’s’ Guilt: A Critique of Essentialism in Biography and Criticism,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 2 (1994), 132-33.

⁷¹⁰ Vinzenz Lachner was the musician who composed *Psalm 66* sung at the Worms Lutherdenkmal commemoration in 1868. Lachner was a vehement opponent of Wagner’s “music of the future” and the two men carried on a bitter feud that resulted in Lachner’s removal as court conductor in Mannheim after serving in that position for 37 years. Ironically, Lachner then moved to Karlsruhe which was known as “Little Bayreuth” because of the city’s enthusiasm for Wagner’s works.

Karlsruhe.⁷¹¹ In Karlsruhe he not only became acquainted with the Ettlinger family but also Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms. Levi was an early admirer of Brahms and premiered a number of his works in Karlsruhe including his Piano Quintet in F-minor and *Schicksalslied*. After eight years in Karlsruhe he accepted the more prestigious post of *Hofkapellmeister* in Munich and remained there until his retirement in 1896.⁷¹²

Levi emerged as a gifted musical conductor at just the right moment in history. For much of the nineteenth century composers rehearsed and directed their own compositions, but that began to change as a result of several factors that emerged in tandem in the last decades of the century. Christopher Small explains that the rise of the conductor, the development of the fully notated musical score, and the cult of genius status assigned to composers *and* directors were parallel movements in the late nineteenth century. Ettlinger, who took part in many of the Karlsruhe performances as a member of the *Philharmonische Verein* (Philharmonic Chorus), had this to say about conducting—and Levi:

Through Levi's work I first grasped that the true regeneration of a work of art depends first of all on the conductor. Whenever Levi stood at the podium in the theater or concert hall, he did not lead merely with his baton, even if the baton communicated the finest and most passionate pulsations of the soul. No, the look in his eyes, the expression on his face, his own presence exerted a compelling, unconscious influence that swept the performers along with him.⁷¹³

⁷¹¹ A *Kapellmeister* could designate the director of music for a monarch or nobleman or the director of music for a church. It was a senior position that involved supervision of other musicians. A *Hofkapellmeister* worked at a nobleman's court. Because most German states even after unification had their own rulers—a Duke, Grandduke, Prince, King, Margrave, and so forth, these hired musicians to direct all the music in their realm—orchestras and choirs—both for the state and for the church. As noted earlier, when Wagner was *Kapellmeister* in Dresden, he was in charge of church music on Sunday, he conducted operas in the Opera House, and led an amateur men's chorus. Levi's position in Munich meant that he conducted the city orchestra and symphony choir; these were by default the musicians who performed for Wagner's operas when they were first performed in Munich and later in Bayreuth. Ludwig II was Wagner's patron, and Wagner had a great deal of influence over who was appointed *Kapellmeister* in Munich. Towards the end of Levi's career he received the rare honor of being named *Generalmusikdirektor* in Munich.

⁷¹² Laurence Dreyfus, "Levi, Hermann," (Grove Music Online, 2007).
www.oxfordmusiconline.com:30/subscriber/article/grove/music/16515

⁷¹³ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 112. "Durch Levis Tätigkeit lernte ich erst begreifen, daß die wahre Wiedergeburt eines Kunstwerkes in erster Reihe vom Dirigenten abhängt. Wenn Levi im Theater oder im Konzertsaal am Dirigentenpult stand, leitete er nicht nur mit seinem Stab die Aufführung, wenschon dieser Stab die feinsten wie die leidenschaftlichsten Seelenschwingungen zu charakterisieren verstand. Nein, der Blick seines Auges, der Ausdruck seines Gesichtes, sein eigenes Miterleben übte einen zwingenden, unbewußten Einfluß aus, der die Mitwirkenden mit fortriß."

This ability to deduce the composer's intent and bring the performers along was what overcame Wagner's opposition to allowing a Jewish musician to conduct his most Christian work—*Parsifal*. The British journalist who wrote Hermann Levi's obituary acknowledged that “as an interpreter of Wagner's works, Levi had no rival . . . ; his firm grasp of the intricacies of the later scores of the Bayreuth master, and his power to reveal their innermost artistic significance were truly marvelous.”⁷¹⁴

Parsifal represented Wagner's ultimate goal of creating a complete work of art (*Gesamtkunstwerk*) that was also redemptive in nature, and it was the last opera Richard Wagner completed. Its successful Bayreuth premiere occurred just months before his death, and Levi continued as the principle conductor of *Parsifal* in its only venue (the Bayreuth *Festspielhaus*) until his retirement in 1894. The story of *Parsifal* encapsulated antisemitic themes, but Wagner's choice of Levi as its preferred conductor complicated this. On the surface it joined Christian elements with magic and sorcery, the Holy Grail, the spear that pierced Jesus side at the crucifixion, a seductress, and a simple lad (*Parsifal*) who eventually proved to be the savior of the guardians of the Grail by destroying the power of the evil magician who lived in a neighboring fortress.⁷¹⁵ That is an over-simplified version of “what happened.” Heinrich Weinel was a New Testament scholar and theologian who in 1903 enthusiastically endorsed Wagner's efforts to “deliver mankind from the woes of life, and above all from the pressure of modern culture.”⁷¹⁶ He gave a more piercing interpretation of the drama as Wagner's attempt to use “culture” to bring his audiences back to the source of Christianity's strength—Jesus himself.⁷¹⁷

He has with tremendous force depicted the fall of the soul in the alluring garden of voluptuous culture, the restless fever of this life, and the blissful, superterrestrial rest. . . . When one remembers that, in the hearts of most of the hearers of *Parsifal*, the deepest impressions of their childhood's faith and the memories of the most decisive day of their early religious life—though these may have been deadened by years of indifference, amid the stress of daily toil or mundane pleasure—have been revived by the representation of the sacrament of the Supper, of baptism, and of Good Friday, he can understand why the performance of *Parsifal* is the most powerful sermon that can be preached to our generation.⁷¹⁸

⁷¹⁴ *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 41, no. 688 (1900): 410.

⁷¹⁵ The legend of *Parsifal* came from a thirteenth-century text by Wolfram von Eschenbach.

⁷¹⁶ Heinrich Weinel, “Richard Wagner and Christianity,” *The American Journal of Theology* 7, no. 4 (1903), 611.

⁷¹⁷ Weinel, “Richard Wagner and Christianity,” 634.

⁷¹⁸ Weinel, “Richard Wagner and Christianity,” 621.

Weinel understood Wagner's artistry as an attempt to deliver "modern" humanity from a culture in which "the mass of European mankind" was floating in "voluptuous enjoyment" while "millions from beneath press eagerly upward to enjoy a share of the supposed treasures which it has accumulated."⁷¹⁹ Here he echoed the concerns about commercialization and decadence that threatened society at the turn-of-the-century—Wagner offered instead memories of a simpler past. We glimpse here again the early nineteenth-century themes embraced by the choral movement—a longing for the past, myth, a setting in the rolling hills of a small town, and the medieval imagery of the drama itself—all cast in Wagner's "new mythology."

However, other interpretations of *Parsifal* showed that it was "bound up with a range of racial themes in which his [Wagner's] obsession with the Jews must be seen as more or less constant."⁷²⁰ In this schema Wagner used *Parsifal*, his last opera, to expound a belief that modernity itself was corrupted by Judaism and therefore needed redemption. Wagner's depictions of the evil wizard (representing the vulgar consumerism of the modern era) and Kundry (the wandering Jew who was a cursed outcast) both drew on Jewish tropes. Wagner's beliefs about the Jews had been spelled out in essays—particularly "Das Judentum in der Musik" (Judaism in Music) and "Religion und Kunst" (Religion and Art). The language Wagner used in these essays was virulent and reflected a growing antipathy towards the Jews after some earlier decades in which German governments passed laws to emancipate their Jewish residents. When Levi took up his post as *Hofkapellmeister* in Munich, Germany was on the eve of unification and antisemitism intensified both as a result of nineteenth-century racial theories and the attempts to make Germany an exclusively Protestant nation. The first use of the term "antisemitism" appeared in an 1880 pamphlet entitled *A Word about Our Jews*. It was published by politician and professor of history Heinrich von Treitschke. Treitschke applauded members of the Mendelssohn family and others who assimilated and were "German men in the best sense," and he primarily attacked Jews who had

⁷¹⁹ Weinel, "Richard Wagner and Christianity," 611.

⁷²⁰ Lawrence Dreyfus, "Hermann Levi's Shame and 'Parsifal's' Guilt: A Critique of Essentialism in Biography and Criticism," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 2 (1994), 138. Dreyfus is summarizing the analysis of Paul Lawrence Rose—one of the most vocal opponents of Wagner's antisemitism.

immigrated into Germany from Poland and refused to become “German.”⁷²¹ He concluded the pamphlet with the words, “The Jews are our misfortune!” Foreign elements and materialism were contrary to the traditional German values of *Heimat*, nature, and history that were threatened by industrialization and urbanization.

Wagner believed music more than the visual or literary arts had the power to usurp our hearts “as by an act of Grace” and to redeem civilization from degeneration.⁷²² The degeneracy of modern society was blamed on the Jews in many circles—not only by Wagner. In his essay “Religion and Art,” Wagner claimed that Jews were responsible for centuries of violence because of their belief in a vengeful god who demanded animal sacrifices—this led to conquest and subjugation and civilization thus went into a decline.⁷²³ By the nineteenth-century this decline was furthered by capitalistic greed and cold-hearted materialism fostered by Jewish control of banking systems, industry, and journalism.⁷²⁴ The Christian religion was also at fault for allowing in “worldly” influences that had led to “decay.” Thus Wagner asserted “that where religion becomes artificial, it is reserved for Art to save the spirit of religion by recognizing the figurative value of the mythic symbols . . . [which revealed] their deep and hidden truth through an ideal presentation.”⁷²⁵ This was what Wagner attempted to do in all his music dramas and why they have remained relevant—he touched on universal themes. Human traits of power, greed, love, prejudice, and revenge (as well as a longing for restoration) were not unique to characters in Nordic-

⁷²¹ “Heinrich von Treitschke,” German History in Documents and Images. ghdi.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.dfm?document_id=1799 In 1880 2.7% of the Jews living in Germany were foreign-born. By 1910 12.8% of the Jews living in Germany were foreign-born. Treitschke primarily attacked the Jews who lacked “the goodwill to become thoroughly German,” although he also blamed Jewish businessmen for growing materialism, greed, and fraudulent business practices.

⁷²² Wagner, *Religion and Art*, 224 and 237.

⁷²³ Wagner, *Religion and Art*, 225-236. Treitschke had blamed the Jews for dominating the field of journalism and influencing public opinion—an idea that appealed to Wagner because he felt he received negative press from music critics.

⁷²⁴ Celia Applegate, “Family Ties: How the Mendelssohns Understood Their Own History.” Keynote Address, The 12th Southeast German Studies Workshop, Atlanta, GA, February 14, 2019. Applegate argued that Sebastian Hensel’s publication of *Die Familie Mendelssohn 1729-1847* was very carefully structured to portray the Mendelssohn family as “typical” Germans—hard-working, educated, cultured, in short, the essential *Bildungsbürgertum* family. He assembled letters from family members and added commentary, and Applegate said it was in response to Treitschke and Wagner. Hensel was the son of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel and the nephew of Felix Mendelssohn.

⁷²⁵ Wagner, “Religion and Art,” 213.

Germanic myths. “Let ourselves be gently led to reconciliation with this mortal life by the artistic teller of the great World—tragedy. This Poet priest, the only one who never lied, was ever sent to humankind at epochs of its direst error, as mediating friend.”⁷²⁶ Wagner believed that *he* was this “Poet priest” and *Parsifal* was the culmination of his efforts to use music drama as a redemptive force. Therefore he was willing to set aside his racial beliefs to bring this final music drama, what he called his “Consecration Festival Play” (*Das Bühnenweihfestspiel*) to life at the Bayreuth *Festspielhaus*.

Anna Ettlinger remembered the 1870s as a significant time for Levi when he was “more and more drawn into the magic circle of later Wagnerian works, and his closer acquaintance with Wagner's fascinating personality increased this magic further.”⁷²⁷ Ettlinger was invited by Levi to an 1883 performance of *Parsifal* so that she could write a report for a southern Bavarian newspaper.⁷²⁸ As she made her way back to Munich in the women’s compartment of the train, she and her companions spent the entire trip enthusing over the performance.⁷²⁹ When years later she wrote her memoirs, Ettlinger contextualized the *Parsifal* episode by adding a lengthy defense of Judaism—not because she was offended by veiled antisemitic tropes in the drama, but because of Wagner’s association with Houston Stewart Chamberlain.⁷³⁰ Chamberlain’s own more virulent antisemitism almost swayed Wagner away from his choice of Levi, but Ettlinger mused that Wagner merely gave lip service to the racial theories espoused by Chamberlain—otherwise he would never have invited Levi (and other Jewish conductors) to direct his works.⁷³¹ As part of the *Parsifal* festivities, Levi also invited Ettlinger to a reception at

⁷²⁶ Wagner, “Religion and Art,” 247.

⁷²⁷ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 212. „Für Hermann Levi waren die siebziger Jahre, besonders in ihrer zweiten Hälfte, eine bedeutungsvolle Zeit. Mehr und mehr wurde er in den Zauberkreis der späteren Wagner’schen Werke gezogen, und die nähere Bekanntschaft mit Wagners faszinierender Persönlichkeit erhöhte noch diesen Zauber.“

⁷²⁸ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 239-240.

⁷²⁹ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 243.

⁷³⁰ Chamberlain, a long-time admirer of Wagner, had cautioned him that a Jew could not direct *Parsifal*.

Chamberlain’s *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1899) was an account of European culture in which he claimed that Western Aryan people had been responsible for the creative greatness of European culture and the Jewish influence historically negative. His ideas were greatly influenced by Gobineau who had first claimed the superiority of the Nordic race.

⁷³¹ Ettlinger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 309. See also, Laurence Dreyfus, “Hermann Levi’s Shame and ‘Parsifal’s’ Guilt: A Critique of Essentialism in Biography and Criticism,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 2 (1994): 125-145. Dreyfus concurs with Anna’s assessment of Wagner’s attitude towards Jewish musicians--and he uses her as one of

Wagner's Bayreuth home, *Wahnfried*. She turned this down with the comment: "If Wagner had still been alive, it would have been a great temptation, but I would have said 'No'."⁷³² Her primary objection was that she would be forced to socialize with Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Ettliger took a position vis-à-vis Wagner based on an argument later articulated by Hannah Arendt—one should not take the sins of artists too seriously, rather poets should be judged primarily by their art.⁷³³

Whatever judgements contemporary or later interpreters of Wagner's art have made, there is no doubt that his *Festspielhaus* in Bayreuth represented one of the most self-articulated expressions of German-ness and the one whose embrace of history, myth, and national expression held enduring significance. Wagner envisioned Bayreuth as not only a theater but a festival imbued with its own rituals to buttress his new mythology. The *Gesamtkunstwerk* was a fusion of art forms and also a fusion of Greek, Nordic, and Germanic myths and heroes—Venus, Wotan, Siegfried, Barbarossa, Luther, and Hans Sachs could inhabit the same stages surrounded by scenes of the Rhine River, thousand-year oaks, and medieval castles. Enthusiasts and the curious travelled to a sleepy little town in the rolling hills of eastern Bavaria to experience a performance like no other. The rituals of Bayreuth were less elaborate than those of the amateur choral movement but were no less ceremonial and the performances required hours of concentration broken up by the lengthy intermissions. Wagner's works were performed in other venues, but to be at Bayreuth for those few summer days and to experience the thrill of standing where Wagner had walked and planned this spectacle was to absorb the atmosphere in which the maestro had brought his entire vision to life.⁷³⁴

Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Wagner enthusiasts inevitably arrived by train in late July or early August where they might gather at the station or in hotel lobbies in anticipation of the four-

his sources. He argues that Levi cannot be reduced to a "Jew" nor can Wagner's *Parsifal* be reduced to an anti-Semitic piece of musical propaganda, therefore Levi was not denying his own identity by directing it.

⁷³² Ettliger, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 241. Anna was by this time pursuing a career as a writer and teacher. Wagner died in February, 1883. Levi continued to be the primary conductor of *Parsifal* until his own death in 1900.

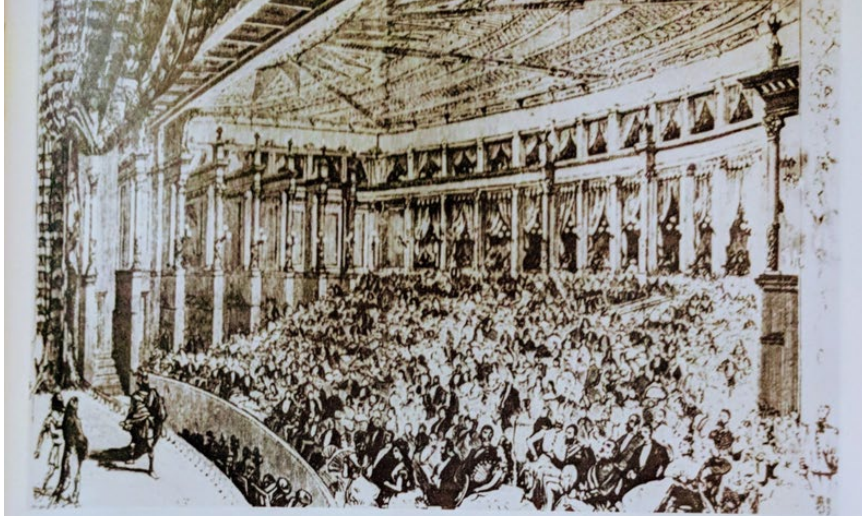
⁷³³ Dreyfus, "Hermann Levi's Shame," 139.

⁷³⁴ Kate Connolly, "The Battle for Bayreuth," *The Guardian* (August 23, 2010). As part of this article there was an interview by Imogen Tilden, "A Singer's Perspective: Andrew Shore, Alberich, in the current Ring Cycle." Shore explained that "it feels as if the music comes up from a soundbox under the stage" and this is especially effective at the beginning of *Das Rheingold* when both the music and the Rhine maidens emerge "almost imperceptibly out of the darkness."

day performance of the *Ring* cycle, or to see *Parsifal*, *Tannhäuser*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, or *The Flying Dutchman*.⁷³⁵ Austrian conductor Felix Weingartner received a free student ticket to attend the 1882 Bayreuth Festival and left a lengthy description of the experience in his autobiography. “My first sight of the Festival Theatre gave me a shock . . . In majestic harmony it crowns the hill over the town, framed by the range of hills in the distance. No better site could have been found for a festival building.”⁷³⁶ His description of the interior of the *Festspielhaus* gives us an excellent sense of the space in which Wagner’s music dramas were presented. “A soft light illuminated the auditorium. Below, in front of the stage . . . nothing was to be seen but a simple rounded screen. True, there was a subdued humming as of soft tones far down in the depths, but this did nothing to disturb the mystic silence which broods over this hall and which compels all-comers to lower their voices.” The hidden orchestra pit and the stark simplicity of the hall’s interior created a sense of reverence from the moment Weingartner and his friends entered the room. Many first-hand accounts remarked on the hush that came over the audience as soon as they entered the *Festspielhaus*. Mark Twain’s portrayal of Wagner’s playhouse supplemented Weingartner’s. He described the efficient means by which attendees were directed through seven entrance

⁷³⁵ Mark Twain visited Bayreuth in 1891 and warned future travelers to book their trip well in advance. He remarked that the train they took from Nuremberg to Bayreuth was the longest train he had seen in Europe. Mark Twain, “At the Shrine of St. Wagner,” in *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, ed. Robert Hartford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980): 148-155.

⁷³⁶ *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 129. Weingartner’s autobiography from which this excerpt was taken was titled *Buffets and Rewards*, published in 1937.



The Festspielhaus auditorium, 1876

The orchestra pit during the *Parsifal* rehearsals of 1882.
Wagner talks to Hermann Levi through a little trap-door in the cover

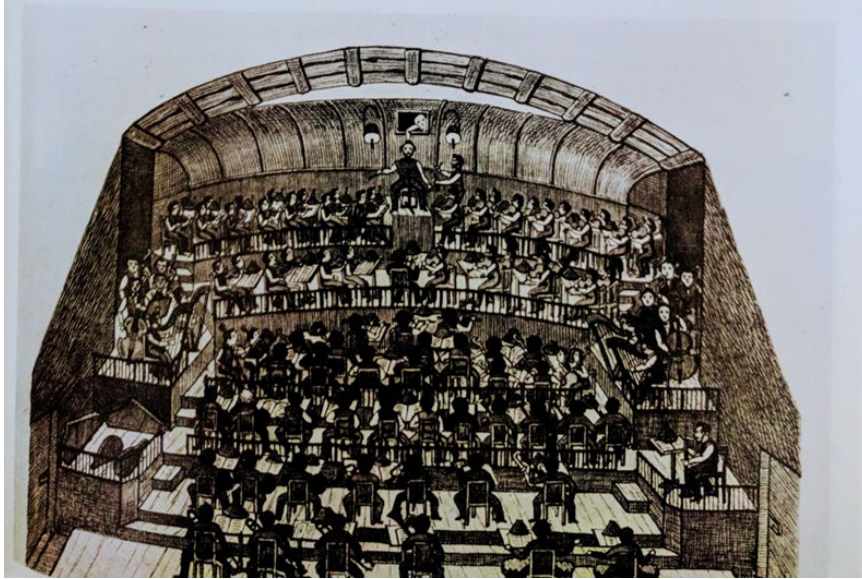


Figure 21 The Bayreuth Festival Theater and the hidden orchestra pit

doors to reach their seats, and then he turned to the atmosphere of the theater which he likened to a church.

All the lights were turned low, so low that the congregation sat in a deep and solemn gloom. . . . Presently not the ghost of a sound was left. This profound and increasingly impressive stillness endured for some time—the best preparation for music, spectacle or speech conceivable. . . . Finally, out of darkness and distance and mystery soft rich notes rose upon the stillness, and from

his grave the dead magician began to weave his spells about his disciples and steep their souls in his enchantments. . . . It was exquisite; it was delicious.⁷³⁷

Twain's was one of the most evocative of descriptions of those who attended Bayreuth in the decades after Wagner's death, but almost everyone commented on the quiet and stillness followed by the music that softly rose up from the dark. Thousands of participants sharing this experience demonstrate how emotional communities came into existence—per Barbara Rosenwein learning to value the “same norms of emotional expression” and internalizing the “narratives that people use to make sense of themselves and their world.”⁷³⁸ The “music of the future” communicated Wagner's “new mythology” in a way that drew the participants together in a way that could only be described by reference to traditional religious experiences. This was a ritual that had been carefully contrived by the design of the theater and the music itself, and all was preserved by Cosima and Siegfried Wagner after Richard Wagner's death.

A Wagner music drama was about the redemptive story, but the music and the atmosphere enhanced that story—this was the essence of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art). The music critic Hanslick described Wagner's musical style: “In *Parsifal* there is no longer any real modulation but rather an incessant undulation, in which the listener loses all sense of a definitive tonality. We feel as though we were on the high seas, with nothing firm under our feet. Wagner has got himself into a chromatic-enharmonic way of thinking quite his own, continuously twisting in and out of the most remote keys.”⁷³⁹ Wagner's music of the future carried the listener along as though at sea—on a voyage towards an unseen landscape where Wagner sought to lead the listeners. Ultimately Hanslick (a critic of the New German School of music) conceded that the 1882 *Parsifal* performance was “an unqualified success.”⁷⁴⁰ Leipzig musician Angelo Neumann was at the same performance as Hanslick and recorded, “Words fail me to express the deep impression this work made upon us all. A lofty ecstasy came over me and I felt I had

⁷³⁷ Twain, “At the Shrine of St. Wagner,” 150. Wagner had died seven years before Twain's visit to Bayreuth.

⁷³⁸ Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 2 and 259.

⁷³⁹ Eduard Hanslick, Review of first performance of *Parsifal* for the *Neue Freie Presse* in Bayreuth: *The Early Years*, 123.

⁷⁴⁰ Hanslick, *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 122.

taken part in a sacred service.”⁷⁴¹ Like Twain, Neumann could think of no better comparison of the experience than that of being in church—an atmosphere that Wagner certainly intended as part of the redemptive aspect of his “new mythology.”⁷⁴² Later that evening both Hanslick and Neumann joined with a number of other participants at dinner and Neumann related that Hanslick sat next to him. “That redoubtable critic was evidently still under the spell of *Parsifal* and was noticeably silent and thoughtful. Naturally the sole topic of our conversation was the wonderful experience of the day. Hanslick joined enthusiastically in our conversation, making no adverse or caustic comments, and we felt he had been now quite converted.”⁷⁴³ Although Hanslick continued to criticize the music of the New German School throughout his career, he was left temporarily in a state of confusion by the experience of Bayreuth and momentarily part of that emotional community. Others were more easily converted. American author and music critic Lawrence Gilman visited Bayreuth in 1904 and described the music of the final scene of *Parsifal* as “ineffably lovely” and “a signal of that purification through pity and terror whereby we are put in touch with immortal things.”⁷⁴⁴ Gilman, Neumann, and Hanslick experienced powerful emotions as a result of their participation at the Bayreuth *Festspielhaus*, and it was not accidental. Wagner designed the theater to direct every member of the audience to the action on stage. There were no extraneous architectural features to distract, the orchestra was hidden from view, and the audience was expected to remain silent from the moment they took their seats until the closing notes sounded from the stage.

In the hills of Bavaria a well-orchestrated ritual was performed each summer after 1882 that involved not just the action on stage but everything that went on behind the scenes.⁷⁴⁵ Christopher Small’s assertion that performance involves musicians, the audience, and all the “extras” to the production is richly demonstrated by the Bayreuth experience. In previous chapters we have looked at how spaces

⁷⁴¹ Angelo Neumann, excerpt from *Personal Recollections of Richard Wagner* in, *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 120.

⁷⁴² George Bernard Shaw in a review for *The Star* (1896) said, “At Bayreuth nobody takes a curtain call,” *Bayreuth: The Early Years*,” 232. And Angelo Neumann recorded that Wagner came on stage at the premiere of *Parsifal* and asked the audience to not applaud *during* the performance—only at the conclusion of all three acts. *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 120.

⁷⁴³ Neumann, *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 120.

⁷⁴⁴ Lawrence Gilman, “‘Parsifal’ and Its Significance,” *The North American Review* 178, no. 566 (1904), 74.

⁷⁴⁵ The festivals under Cosima Wagner’s direction took place every one or two years. When Siegfried Wagner took over they were held every year. The festival was interrupted for seven years after World War II.

generated emotions—city streets, a hall festooned with garlands or flags, a train station, the Berlin zoological gardens, or a church. Often these were un-extraordinary spaces that served other functions than a German Choral Association festival or concert—the train station that hummed with men in festival garb with their banners had been built only to facilitate moving people from one city to another. The city streets where a “procession of Germanism” took place quickly reverted to their pedestrian function after the festival concluded. In concluding this section about Wagner, I want to briefly address how Wagner’s vision of bringing a “new mythology” to life transformed one small town—workers who built the theater and the people who worked behind the scenes became part of the Wagnerian emotional community.

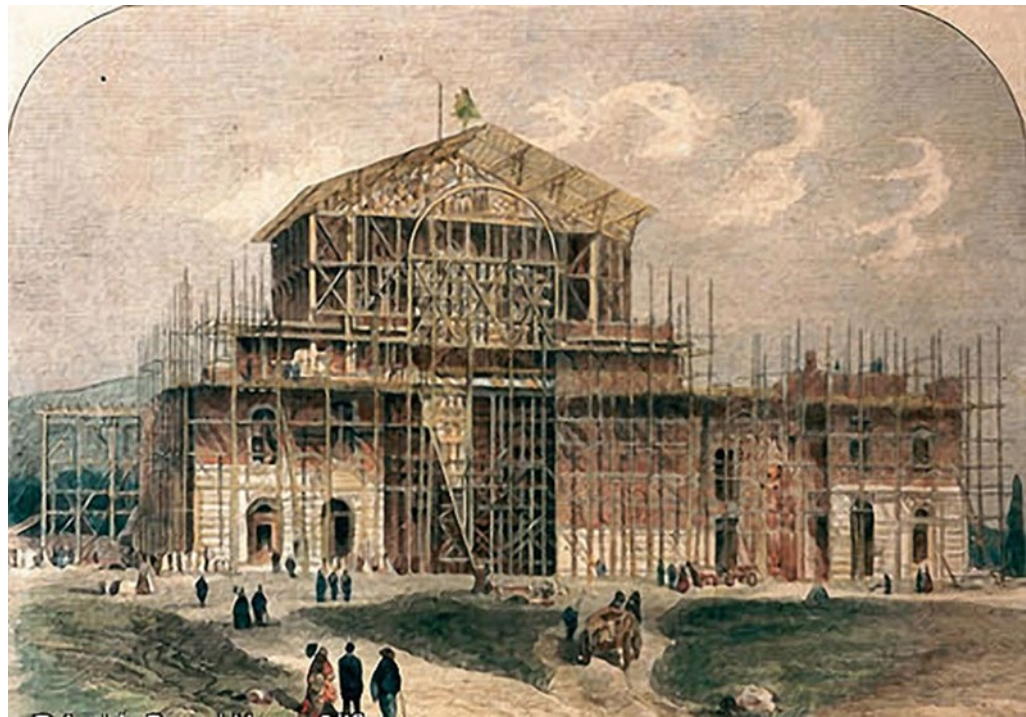


Figure 22 The Bayreuth Festival Theater under construction

Part of Wagner’s original intent was to include as many people as possible in his “new mythology,” and he began by directly involving the residents of Bayreuth in this project. Wagner first went to examine the city in 1871 as a possible location for his theater, and after meeting with the mayor and a local banker, he enthusiastically promised a certain number of complimentary seats in the theater for the town’s citizens. Shortly afterward the Town Council of Bayreuth bought the land where the

Festspielhaus would be built and presented it to Wagner free of charge.⁷⁴⁶ It took four years to build what was then the “largest free-standing timber-framed building ever undertaken,” and although the architects and designers were not local men, the master mason and master carpenters were from Bayreuth—along with all the other laborers who worked on the structure.⁷⁴⁷ The people of Bayreuth were intimately involved with accepting and completing Wagner’s vision of staging a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and when people came from near and far to attend performances Bayreuth’s citizens were the ones who hosted them, fed them, transported them, and even attended performances. Although designers and specialists were brought in from other parts of Germany, the people who built sets, sewed costumes, hoisted the curtains and changed the scenery, cleaned the theater, collected tickets, and performed all the other tasks behind the scenes were intimately connected to the community of Bayreuth and to Wagner’s vision of music drama.⁷⁴⁸ Wagner had written to one of his patrons in June 1882, “I have often declared my belief that Music is the saving genius of the German people,” and as a result Wagner endeavored to engage as many people as he could, not just as paying members of an audience, but as facilitators of his music dramas in as many ways as possible.⁷⁴⁹ Subtly and half-consciously the people of a small Bavarian town became central figures in the fulfillment of Wagner’s long-planned vision and inextricably part of an emotional community that encompassed pilgrims from all over the world.

After the premiere performance of *Parsifal* in 1882 Angelo Neumann and Eduard Hanslick were enjoying dinner when someone shocked the other dinner guests by announcing, “Wagner is not long for this world! . . . A man who is capable of producing a work of that order can *not* be long for this world, his

⁷⁴⁶ Robert Hartford, “Introduction,” *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 24-25.

⁷⁴⁷ Hartford, “Introduction,” *Bayreuth: The Early Years*, 32.

⁷⁴⁸ Today the set-designers, costumers, wig-makers, musicians, lighting technicians, and others begin working in January to prepare for the late-July to late-August yearly festival. For a fascinating pictorial account of what it takes to stage a Bayreuth Festival see, Enrico Nawrath and Katharina Wagner, *Bayreuth Backstage: Innenansichten vom Grünen Hügel* (Mainz: Schott Music GmbH & Co., 2009). On the basement floor of Wahnfried is a museum that displays some of the original costumes from the music dramas and give a sense of why the performances were so costly to stage. Wagner wanted the musicians to volunteer their services—as a tribute to their dedication to his mission. He paid the 1876 *Ring* and 1882 *Parsifal* musicians out of his own funds for their transportation costs.

⁷⁴⁹ Richard Wagner, Letter to Herr Friedrich Schön in Worms, trans. William Ashton Ellis, 295. One means of supporting the Bayreuth festivals was in the form of a *Patronatschein* (Certificate of Patronage) which cost 300 Thalers and ensured the patron a seat at the festival. In order to enable more people to take part, Wagner Societies were formed in which groups of people contributed together and shared the festival seats among themselves. (Hartford, 37). Thus the building of the *Festspielhaus* was funded.

work is finished!”⁷⁵⁰ Six months later Richard Wagner died in Venice. His body was returned to Bayreuth, and in the long train of the funeral cortege were cars laden with more than 200 wreaths.

“During the procession from the train station at Bayreuth to Wahnfried . . . the funeral march from ‘Siegfried’ was played, and the *Lieder-Kranz* of Bayreuth sang Wagner’s composition written for the funeral of Weber.”⁷⁵¹ Like Carl Maria von Weber, Wagner died on foreign soil but was returned for burial to the land of his birth. “An Webers Grabe” was one of the few works Wagner composed for all-male choirs and the men of Bayreuth sang it for his funeral.

„An Webers Grabe“

Hebt an den Sang, ihr Zeugen dieser Stunde,
die uns so ernst, so feierlich erregt!
Dem Wort, den Tönen jetzt vertraut die Kunde
des Hochgefühls, das uns’re Brust bewegt!
Nicht trauert mehr die deutsche Mutter Erde
um den geliebten, weit entrückten Sohn,
nicht blickt sie mehr mit sehnender Gebärde
hin übers Meer, zum fernen Albion:
aufs Neu’ nahm sie ihn auf in ihren Schoß,
den einst sie auswandt’ edel, rein und groß.
Hier, wo der Trauer stumme Zähren flossen,
wo Liebe noch das Teuerste beweint,
hier ward von uns ein edler Bund geschlossen,
der uns um ihn, den Herrlichen, vereint.
Hier wallet her, des Bundes Treu genossen,
hier grüßet euch als fromme Pilgerschar;
die schönsten Blüten, die dem Bund entsprossen,
bringt opfernd dieser edlen Stätte dar;
denn hier ruh’ Er, bewundert und geliebt,
der unsrem Bund der Weihe Segen gibt.

„At Weber’s Grave“

Raise the song, you witnesses of this hour,
which stirs us so solemnly, so solemnly!
Entrust now to the words, the notes,
the sense of delight that moves our hearts!
No longer does the German mother earth
lament the distant exile of her well-loved son,
no longer must she turn her longing eyes
across the sea to distant Albion.
She took him again into her lap,
the one whom she sent away noble, pure, and great.
Here, where silent tears of grief had been flowing,
where love still weeps for that which is most precious,
here we made a noble pact which unites us around
him, the most glorious one.
Approach, you faithful companions,
here greet each other as a pious band of pilgrims.
Bring the most beautiful flowers sprung
from our company to this noble place like a sacrifice,
for here may he find rest, who, admired and loved,
gives to our group a sacred blessing.

Essentially this was an art *Lied*—Wagner wrote the poem, and then set it to music. The piece had a mournful tone that fit the words, and throughout it maintained a constant beat as though the singers were the pall-bearers walking carefully and steadily towards the grave. The use of repeated crescendos and de-crescendos reinforced the sense of the men’s swaying gaits as they bore the coffin. Wagner wrote

⁷⁵⁰ Angelo Neumann, *Personal Recollections of Richard Wagner*, ed. Robert Hartford, 120.

⁷⁵¹ Cart, “Richard Wagner,” 72. The *Lieder-Kranz* was the men’s choral society in Bayreuth.

it to be sung *a capella* which generated a mood of solemn simplicity. The burial in German “mother earth” was the central act of the song and reinforced a belief that national identity was not something that could be conferred by the state but originated in the soil of one’s ancestors. The juxtaposition of men’s voices singing about the body’s final return from exile to rest in his mother’s lap was a poetic expression of this. The words, especially in the last seven lines, articulated the essence of emotional community—faithful companions, fellow pilgrims, each a member of the whole—these are the ones who shared in the grief of loss and the task of returning the traveler’s body to native soil. And in Wagner’s world they expressed their feelings of unity and sorrow most eloquently through the words and notes of a song. The use of this piece for Wagner’s funeral demonstrated the connection between the origins of German music drama in Weber’s operas and its maturity in Wagner’s works. The use of “Siegfried’s Funeral March” as the other musical work performed at the funeral further reinforced this. A hallmark of Wagner’s compositional style was the use of *leitmotifs*, and in the “Funeral March” the listener is taken through the most important events of Siegfried’s life by means of the associated *motifs*. The death of Siegfried marked the dramatic conclusion to the entire *Ring* cycle—*Götterdämmerung*—in which Walhalla goes up in flames and the world of the gods with it. Wagner’s funeral made use of two of his own compositions written for death and finality to mark his own final departure from this world. It marked a culmination of everything he had attempted to do to bring about the fusion of drama, Germanic myth, and music.

Nineteenth-century festivals enacted rituals that affected an appreciation of German history and trained its people to embrace values of the nation. Religious imagery and symbols continued to resonate in the context of festival culture. The hold of religious faith was both real and a response to the uncertainties of life as the very foundations of social/economic/political stability shifted and buckled after 1871. Luther represented continuity while at the same time his historical image was altered to fit the needs of those who wanted to promote a secularized-Protestant version of nationalism. Wagner represented change—his “music of the future” and “new mythology” separated the *Bildungsbürgentum* into camps and attracted, as well, hordes of enthusiasts. Festival life fostered adherents and nurtured emotional communities that were neither uniform nor mutually exclusive.

From the onset of the nineteenth century, music took on a descriptor—the Germans were the people of music—and Luther and Wagner represented this while also revealing fissures among groups of German music enthusiasts. As we saw with Luther, not all Germans embraced a Protestant identity and some rejected Wagner’s “new mythology” as a means of redemption, but both men became cultural icons that proved stubbornly enduring. The emergence of festivals celebrating Luther or Wagner’s music dramas created opportunities for promoting as well as contesting particular narratives of national identity. Before attempting to resolve the dissonances between Catholics, Protestants, Jews, traditionalists, and pioneers of new music we will first examine three other groups that emerged after unification as societal “forces”—teachers, workers, and youth. These are the subjects of the next chapter and then we can more clearly delineate how emotional communities were not entirely exclusive but overlapped beyond confessional and social difference.



Figure 23 Karneval in Dresden (1913) with floats depicting scenes from Parsifal

4.3 Chapter 8 A Drama of Relationships: Educators, Workers, and the Youth Movement

If you could imagine dissonance assuming human form—and what else is man?—this dissonance would need, to be able to live, a magnificent illusion which would spread a veil of beauty over its own nature.
Friedrich Nietzsche, 1872

Large, impersonal groups of people lumped together under labels like those in the title of this chapter generate little enthusiasm—or drama, as promised. However, these made up the generation of young people who were born in the 1880s and 1890s that marched off to the trenches of World War I or worked on the home front to support that war. They populated an era marked by heavy industrialization, a naval race, imperialism, and competitive nationalism in which workers were pitted against wealthy landowners, industrialists, and politicians, and the insecurities of the present pointed many Germans not to hopes for the future but back on an imagined past. Just as there was a strange contradiction in Richard Wagner’s “music of the future,” employed to bring ancient and medieval myths back to life in order to offer redemption to the attentive, the *Kaiserreich* offered national unity and the hopes of European and global dominance while only producing social and economic tensions and a consequent longing for simpler times. Wagner used mythology and music because he believed in their value as an antidote to modernity, but with industrialization government officials and academics concluded that educational reforms would mediate social inequities. Consequently, a great national debate broke out concerning the role of music in modern Germany. The music culture that had been carefully nurtured by bourgeois associational life in the early nineteenth century did not flicker out as a result of the stresses of modernity but reconstituted itself in dramatically new and dissonant spheres of influence in the decades before the Great War. I argue in this chapter that the act of “musicking” perpetuated a national sense of community in spite of dissonant forces at work in the pre-war years.

Tensions and reactions to social and economic transformations during the Wilhelmine era can be fruitfully compared to the structure of a symphonic work. Beethoven was universally appropriated by every layer of German society and his *Ninth Symphony* acclaimed by every faction from Brahms to Wagner to Bebel.⁷⁵² Dahlhaus’s summation of the symphonic form affords a suitable metaphor for nineteenth-century German history. “According to the rule established by Beethoven, the principle theme of a symphonic movement had a dual function: when broken down into particles, it served as material for

⁷⁵² We saw in Chapter Seven that Brahms and Wagner represented a split between the Classical-Romantic school of music and the New German School. August Bebel (1840-1913) was a leader of the labor movement in Germany and one of the founding members of the Social Democratic Party (SPD).

the development section; when reconstituted, it served as the development's triumphant goal and destination."⁷⁵³ The liberal-bourgeois faction that emerged during the Napoleonic era and fought for freedom from French armies established the “principle theme” in this historical metaphor—German independence and unity. The “development section” with its “particles” represented the decades of the 1820s to 1860s when nationalism, unity, and freedom were contested. Post 1871 Germany differed from the original vision of Arndt, Uhland, Zelter, Nägeli, and Kreutzer (the names embellished on the masthead of *Die Sängerkhalle*)—but it was not a totally new thing. As Theodor Herzl remarked in 1895, “Bismarck merely shook the tree that fantasies had planted.”⁷⁵⁴ Those fantasies had been planted by contemporaries of Beethoven—among them Carl Maria von Weber, the poets and composers of the Napoleonic era listed above, and the students who fought in the Wars of Liberation (*Befreiungskriege*). By the late nineteenth century the “triumphant goal and destination” of political unity had been achieved, but just as late nineteenth-century composers had taken Beethoven's compositional forms to another level, adding more complex harmonic structures that threatened to rupture tonal cohesiveness, this too seemed to mirror German society. Arnold Schönberg suggested however, discordant sounds could be woven into a network of relationships just at the point they threatened to become isolated. Social, economic, and political stresses in Germany in the decades before World War I paralleled this metaphor closely—this is where the drama between teachers, workers, and youth played out.

4.3.1 Teachers and Education Reforms

Ultimately it was not composers but teachers who proved the connecting link among the German choral movement, students, and the drive for political unity.⁷⁵⁵ Long before the twentieth century German

⁷⁵³ Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 266.

⁷⁵⁴ Quoted from Ryan Minor, *Choral Fantasies: Music, Festivity, and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 163. Herzl's entire quote was: “Do you know what the German Empire arose out of? Out of dreams, songs, fantasies and black-red-gold ribbons—and in short order. Bismarck merely shook the tree that fantasies had planted.”

⁷⁵⁵ I am using the term “teacher” rather broadly here to include university professors as well as teachers on the *Gymnasium* and *Volksschule* levels. *Volksschule* was the elementary level of schooling and was compulsory and free; the *Gymnasium* was for upper level students who planned to continue with further education; the *Hochschule* and *Universität* were comparable to colleges and universities, but only universities could confer doctorates.

professors were instrumental in leading students to fight in the battles that drove French forces back to the west bank of the Rhine in 1813 and who continued to campaign for German unity in the *Vormärz* (1830-1848). Ernst Moritz Arndt who wrote the song “Was ist des deutschen Vaterland,” which inspired singers of the German Choral Association to continually claim they spoke for all German-speaking singers from north, south, east, and west, and Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) who was closely associated with the *Burschenschaften* movement were two of the most influential of the German nationalists (and professors) who influenced the next generation.⁷⁵⁶ Jahn was particularly active in creating a group of schools whose curriculum was meant to be relevant to *German* needs and interests as opposed to the classical education offered in the Gymnasiums. Jahn’s ideas were “democratic”—students and teachers addressed one another with the informal “du,” they dressed in a common uniform, believed in a healthy lifestyle, and promoted a sense of community (*Gemeinschaft*).⁷⁵⁷ Jahn’s secondary-school students perpetuated his vision generationally because so many of them went on to become teachers themselves. They kept many of his original dreams alive connecting Jahn’s influence to turn-of-the-century youth movements.

Innovative teaching techniques such as Jahn’s were not the norm, but the upper-level training for teachers implemented after early nineteenth-century Prussian educational reforms reinforced the importance of music to a general education and to daily life.⁷⁵⁸ Young men were not even accepted into a teacher training school unless they could prove an aptitude for music. The training consisted of twenty-nine seminar courses, six of which dealt with music. Teachers were meant to have the ability to sing as

⁷⁵⁶ Both teacher/professors and students were influential in the early choral associations and the struggle for national unity. Jahn did not found the *Burschenschaft* movement but became closely associated with it. The students trained in these schools frequently became teachers and passed these ideas down from one generation to another.

⁷⁵⁷ Rolland Ray Lutz, “‘Father’ Jahn and his Teacher-Revolutionaries from the German Student Movement,” *The Journal of Modern History* 43, no. 2 (1975), 11. Jahn wrote about his vision of education in *Deutsches Volkstum* and worked in a couple of schools in which he implemented his ideas—one was the Plamann Institute in Berlin attended briefly by Otto von Bismarck in the 1820s. Bismarck was apparently not “converted” by the experience. See Lutz, 13.

⁷⁵⁸ Dietmar Klenke, „Volksschullehrer und Gesangverein: Über das außerschulische Engagement in der Vereinskultur vom Deutschen Kaiserreich bis in die 1980er Jahre,“ in *Volksschullehrer und außerschulische Musikkultur*, ed. Friedhelm Brusniak and Dietmar Klenke (Augsburg: Wißner, 1998), 31. See also, Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, “The Singing Muse? Three Centuries of Music Education in Germany,” *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (2004): 8-27. Kertz-Welzel notes that it was Carl Friedrich Zelter who encouraged including music in the general curriculum of Prussian schools. He was also the founder of the *Berlin Liedertafel* and director of the *Berlin Singakademie*.

well as play the organ, piano, and violin—a suitable preparation for instructors who were also expected to lead church music.⁷⁵⁹ Upon graduation most young men took jobs in small towns where they taught in the *Volksschule* (elementary schools) and also became the church organist and/or cantor, participated in choirs, and led the local *Gesangverein* (choral society).⁷⁶⁰ Music historian Dietmar Klenke explains that because teaching in a *Volksschule* was a low-paying, less-prestigious job, teachers “were omnipresent in the male choral societies” and used them as stepping-stones to careers as choir directors and leaders of the choral movement.⁷⁶¹ We saw a prime example of this in Chapter Four. Gustav Wohlgemuth not only directed the 250-member Leipzig *Männerchor* but served on the executive board of the German Choral Association, became editor of *Die Sängerkirche*, composed a number of *Lieder*, and was one of the principal conductors of national choral festivals before World War I. However, his first training was as a teacher, and it was from his teaching post at the Leipzig *Volksschule* that he gradually became one of the key figures in the male choral movement.⁷⁶² Wohlgemuth was undoubtedly talented, but he also had the advantage of teaching in a larger, musically-famous city. Not all teachers were able to escape the humdrum existence of small-town life, but I like to think that Germans looking at the painting below were instantly brought back to their school days and nostalgic thoughts of their own “Herr Lehrer.” In Chapter Five we saw that the Feuchtwangen school teacher was the person who prepared the children for their parts in the Christmas program, and he also sang with the men’s chorus. Based on the information about teacher training, he probably also played the organ and/or was the cantor at Feuchtwangen’s St. Johannis church. Teachers like these were an integral part of a town’s everyday life and its music culture.

⁷⁵⁹ There was no separate department of music in German universities until the 1920s. See Wilfried Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung: Eine Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte vom Gesangunterricht der Aufklärungspädagogik zu ästhetisch-kultureller Bildung* (Hofheim: Wolke Verlag, 1993, 2003), 242-252.

⁷⁶⁰ Eckhard Nolte, “Außerschulische musikalische Tätigkeiten des Volksschullehrers im 19. Jahrhundert, ihre Voraussetzungen und deren Abbau,” in *Volksschullehrer und außerschulische Musikkultur*, ed. Friedhelm Brusniak and Dietmar Klenke (Augsburg: Wißner, 1998): 31-54. In addition to these duties, elementary teachers often taught private piano, organ, or violin lessons; they contributed to educational journals, published collections of *Lieder* sometimes creating new arrangements for older songs or composing new *Lieder*; they participated in concerts and festivals, played in local orchestras, and performed as soloists.

⁷⁶¹ Klenke, „Volksschullehrer und Gesangverein,” 57.

⁷⁶² The Wohlgemuth biographical information was in Chapter 4 page 40. Another example of a teacher who became famous outside of the classroom was Friedrich Silcher who was one of the more acclaimed composers of *Lieder* for men’s choruses. He wrote the music for Heinrich Heine’s *Die Lorelei* which was a perennial favorite of German singers.

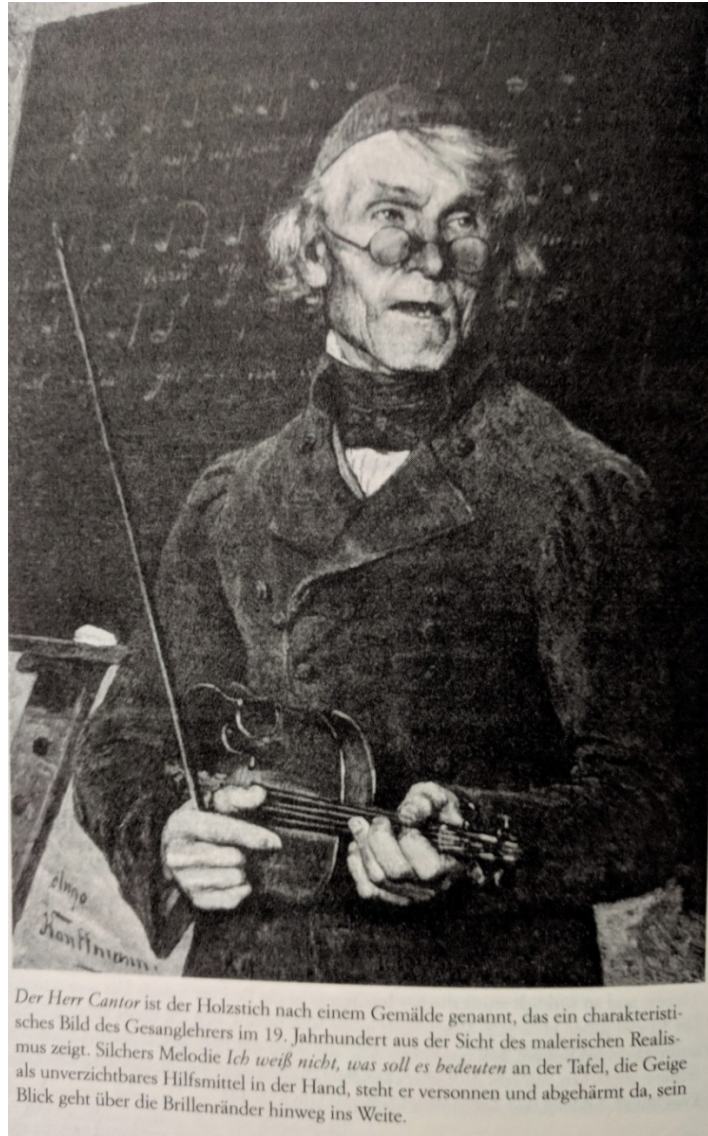


Figure 24 Characteristic image of a nineteenth-century singing teacher

In the woodcut above the teacher has written Silcher's melody, *I Do not Know What it Means* on the blackboard, and with the violin as an indispensable tool in his hand, the teacher stands pensive and haggard while his gaze sweeps across the rims of the glasses. I conceptualize contemporaries looking fondly or nostalgically at this familiar image of a weary, hard-working teacher whose face and hands reflected a long, tedious life juggling classroom and church duties. In reality, teachers as a group impacted the cultural life of the *Kaiserreich* in a significant way. They created their own *Lehrergesangverein* (Teachers' Singing Association) whose members sang together, gave concerts, and

offered continuing education courses, but the association was not meant to function purely for their own benefit. Communities expected teachers to use their opportunities to perform as a means of enriching and facilitating improvements in church music as well as advancing a general “*musikalische Volksbildung*.”⁷⁶³ Teachers were trained to teach a broad array of subjects but were also expected to foster a general appreciation of music within the community. Just as festivals (as we saw in the last chapter) were meant to facilitate an “*innere Nationsbildung*,” elementary school teachers were meant to affect “*musikalische Volksbildung*.” *Bildung* expressed a concept that grew out of the Enlightenment—that individuals were responsible for cultivating knowledge within themselves and that this would raise them out of the stresses of everyday material concerns.⁷⁶⁴ Education that joined the arts with other subjects as an organic whole grew out of the belief that the arts served to “renew one’s life.”⁷⁶⁵ Although this was characteristic of the bourgeoisie, the *Bildungsbürgertum*, it became one of the goals of late nineteenth-century reformers to spread the appreciation of the arts (especially music) beyond the upper classes. Teachers served as cultural “missionaries” to bring an appreciation of musical arts to the scattered masses enabling them to participate as the emblematic “people of music.” Every musical performance that took place in the German states (Christmas, Fasching, fall and spring celebrations) was an act of musicking that involved the entire community and established overlapping emotional communities.

Emotional communities are composed of groups of people that value the same things, and throughout the nineteenth century composers, teachers, and members of choral associations promoted not just a general enjoyment of music but also a deep appropriation of it in combination with what they believed were traits rooted in the German people—a love of history, nature, myth, *Heimat*—all expressed in the form and performance of *Lieder*. The education reforms of the early nineteenth century produced

⁷⁶³ Nolte, „Außerschulische musikalische Tätigkeit des Volksschullehrers im 19. Jahrhundert,“ 35. The word (*musikalische Volksbildung*) means something like “music appreciation for the general population,” and it carried with it the notion that this was an on-going process.

⁷⁶⁴ Wilfried Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung: Eine Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte vom Gesangunterricht der Aufklärungspädagogik zu ästhetisch-kultureller Bildung* (Hofheim: Wolke, 2003), 25-26

⁷⁶⁵ Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 186. „Den Anspruch der Kunsterziehung wollte er nicht bloß auf denn künstlerischen Unterricht im engeren Sinne bezogen wissen, sondern dieser sollte einer generellen Erneuerung des Lebens dienen.“

teachers who promoted a general appreciation of these values, but by the time of unification, as industrialization began to change how and where people lived, an accompanying concern arose for nationwide education reforms. Schools that previously focused on a humanistic approach to learning, emphasizing the Classics as well as German literature and the arts, were now expected to prepare students for jobs in industry and modern technology. Government officials, and those in charge of training teachers, began to question how the arts fit into a world transformed by rapid transportation and communication, mass produced postcards, sheet music, and phonographs. On the one hand a nineteenth-century industrial and economic powerhouse such as the German Empire needed a workforce trained to develop and create competitive goods and technologies. On the other hand Germans had an identity to maintain as the people of *Kultur* and the “people of music.”

This reputation drew two English visitors to Germany in the 1880s, and the subsequent report of John Hullah (1812-1884) spawned general educational reforms that were gradually implemented in Germany over the next three decades.⁷⁶⁶ Broadly speaking, German music education had focused on teaching children to sing as a rote exercise without teaching them to *read* music. The true “people of music” were those who could afford private lessons or proved talented enough to enroll in a music conservatory. Most of the well-known German musicians of the nineteenth century, as well as those who are now lesser known, came from families in which piano instruction began at a young age, followed by lessons in theory and composition. Englishwoman Ethel Smyth who came to Leipzig to study composition in the 1870s rapturously described German families who could create small ensembles and orchestras within their own or extended circles. However, the families she knew were from the *Bildungsbürgertum*, and she also reported on the indifference of many of the students she encountered in the Leipzig Music Conservatory—the students who planned to obtain teaching certification and were thus

⁷⁶⁶ Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, “The Singing Muse? Three Centuries of Music Education in Germany,” *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (2004), 17-18. John Hullah was an English educator who was sure he could learn how to improve music education in English schools by studying the German education system, but he was disappointed in many of the examples he saw.

obliged to take a certain number of music courses.⁷⁶⁷ Her critique was a prelude to Hullah's preliminary findings that appeared in a British newspaper and which provoked an indignant response in the May 1880 edition of the Leipzig *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*:

Mr. Hullah is not the least bit afraid to laugh and deride the so-called musical power of the Germans, and believes that the musical fruitfulness of this race is only a recent phenomenon and likely temporary! The truth is this—completely false opinions are entertained, both in terms of Germans' musical skills and their abilities, and this is because of the lack of musical talent among Englishmen.⁷⁶⁸

The editors of the Leipzig *General Musical Newspaper* may have been indignant, but it was not surprising that Hullah's complete published report drove German educators and musicians to address some of the problems in the German education system. Our concerns here deal primarily with music reforms and what these meant for workers and young people.

The impetus to make music a skill open to anyone grew out of the late nineteenth century, and I plan to focus on two men who worked to that end beginning with musicologist Hermann Kretzschmar (1848-1924), who in response to Hullah's report announced "By no means should all Germans become musicians, but all Germans can become musical for the facilities are found in everyone."⁷⁶⁹ Kretzschmar had the prototypical German background that led to a musical career. His father was the church organist and cantor in Olbernhau, Saxony and gave his son his earliest piano lessons. Kretzschmar went on to study composition in Dresden and in Leipzig. He received a doctorate from the University of Leipzig in 1871 and began teaching at the Leipzig Conservatory after completing his university degree.⁷⁷⁰ In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he also directed several musical societies—he was the successor to Carl Riedel in directing Leipzig's *Riedel-Verein* (Chapter 6) from 1888-1898.⁷⁷¹ However, from 1904 Kretzschmar gradually gave up conducting choirs in order to focus on education. He moved to Berlin and

⁷⁶⁷ Ethel Smyth, *Impressions that Remained: Memoirs of Ethel Smyth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1919), 145-46. Smyth herself later left the Conservatory to study privately remarking that the Leipzig Conservatory was "merely trading on its Mendelssohnian reputation," and the teachers (who nevertheless had impeccable qualifications) were indifferent to their duties.

⁷⁶⁸ Quoted in Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 149.

⁷⁶⁹ Quoted in Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 212-13.

⁷⁷⁰ Gaynor G. Jones and Bernd Wiechert, „Kretzschmar, (August Ferdinand) Hermann“ (Oxford Music Online, 2001). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.15523>

⁷⁷¹ Albert Göhler, *Der Riedel-Verein zu Leipzig: Eine Denkschrift zur feier seines fünfzigjährigen Bestehens* (Leipzig: im Selbstverlag des Vereins, 1904), 119-120.

taught music courses at the University of Berlin, succeeded Joseph Joachim as director of the *Hochschule für Musik*, and took the directorship of the *Institut für Kirchenmusik*. These activities represented a three-fold approach to music training—at the academic level (university), upper-level teacher-training (*Hochschule*), and church music.⁷⁷² As a further endeavor to change the attitudes of educators and musicians about teaching people to be “musical” rather than “musicians,” he became general editor of the *Denkmäler Deutscher Tonkunst* (Memorials to German Composition). All of his post-1904 positions reflected his growing interest in reforming music education to make it less academically-oriented and more accessible to a wider public—and he did this by working *within* the institutions that trained musicians. Here we see the intersections between teachers and the choral movement more distinctly. The men and women who joined amateur choral societies in smaller towns and villages received the bulk of their music training as children, and Kretzschmar’s reforms aimed specifically to improve singing instruction from childhood on. The reforms implemented from 1905 were intended to develop the intellectual and aesthetic training of school children, to give them a lasting love of singing and a foundation in music theory—so they could enjoy music as a life activity and not just to perform at school festivals or church services.⁷⁷³

Kretzschmar’s ideas were not widely implemented before World War I, but he laid a foundation for the transformational post-war reforms of Leo Kestenberg. Like Kretzschmar, Kestenberg received his first music training from his father, and like Kretzschmar he believed in the “musicality of every child.”⁷⁷⁴ Kestenberg (1882-1962) was born in the Austro-Hungarian empire and his roots were Russian-Polish-Jewish, but through his mother’s influence he was raised speaking German and learned to treasure German folksongs and folktales.⁷⁷⁵ At the time of Kestenberg’s birth his father Adolf was a teacher in the

⁷⁷² The school and church duties of teachers became separate concerns as a result of the education reforms—school teachers were only required to focus on classroom activities and cantors and organists trained separately.

⁷⁷³ Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 213-215. Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, “The Singing Muse?” adds that Kretzschmar began with reforms at the Gymnasium level—improving teacher training and revising examination regulations (1910) and then revised the curricula for lower level schools.

⁷⁷⁴ Kertz-Welzel, “The Singing Muse?” 22.

⁷⁷⁵ Wilfried Gruhn, *Wir müssen lernen, in Fesseln zu tanzen: Leo Kestenergs Leben zwischen Kunst und Kulturpolitik* (Hofheim: Wolke, 2015), 15-16.

local Jewish school (now in Ruzomberok, Slovakia), but by 1889 he had obtained a more prestigious position as head cantor of the synagogue in Bohemia's second largest city. Reichenburg had a thriving textile industry and the majority of the population spoke German. Kestenbergs parents introduced him from the beginning of his life to music—folksongs from his mother and piano lessons from his father. He would combine a love of music with a second great influence from his father—one that took root in the industrialized confines of Reichenburg. Kestenbergs described the occasion when his father took him to watch a workers' demonstration on May 1, 1892.

I was already familiar with the meaning and significance of this march, and I felt with a drumming heart how daring these men and women were, who—despite the large squad of gendarmerie, police and reserve military—quietly continued on their way, red flags waving and singing their songs. . . . Already at that time, as a little boy, I had a feeling of belonging to these masses, certainly thanks to the socialist realization of my father.⁷⁷⁶

Four years later when Kestenbergs was only fourteen years old he joined the Social Democratic Party in Reichenberg and at the same time began to formulate how art and socialism could be unified—he speculated that art was not meant to be a luxury item to be consumed only by those who could afford theater or concert tickets but should be an essential part of everyone's life. In the following years he developed his ideas about music, education, and socialism into a maxim: "Achievement of Humanity with and through Music."⁷⁷⁷ Kestenbergs concern for humanity and his love of music conjoined in an effort to bring art to the working class.

Berlin proved to be a magnet for many reform-minded Germans at the turn of the century—not just Kretzschmar but also Kestenbergs. Recognizing Leo's skills as a pianist, Adolf Kestenbergs sent his son to Berlin in 1897 to study, and two years later he was accepted as a student by Ferruccio Busoni—an enthusiastic proponent of the New German School of music.⁷⁷⁸ Busoni was an Italian composer, conductor, and writer, and had an excellent reputation as a piano and composition instructor, and he

⁷⁷⁶ Quoted in Gruhn, *Leo Kestenbergs Leben*, 25. The elder Kestenbergs was converted to the socialist cause when the family moved to Reichenberg and he saw the desperate living conditions of the textile workers.

⁷⁷⁷ Gruhn, *Leo Kestenbergs Leben*, 88. „Diese allgemeine Erziehungsmaxime fand in der immer wieder verwendeten Formulierung von der *Erziehung zur Menschlichkeit mit und durch Musik* seinen markantesten Ausdruck.“

⁷⁷⁸ When Leo Kestenbergs made his debut as a concert pianist in 1908 he played an all-Liszt program cementing his reputation as an interpreter of that composer. Liszt was one of the "founding members" of the New German School.

launched Kestenberg on a career as a concert pianist. At the same time, Kestenberg became involved with the SPD in their workers' societies giving piano lessons. He supported the *Berliner Volkschor* (Berlin People's Choir) which was a member of the *Deutscher Arbeiter-Sängerbund*—a parallel choral association to the *Deutscher Sängerbund* (DSB). Kestenberg would gradually give up his concert career to focus on teaching as a means of raising workers out of the tedium of mere survival. He became actively involved with the *Freien Volksbühne* (Free People's Theater) in Berlin organizing lectures and concerts. His philosophy of education and the arts closely mirrored that of Hermann Kretzschmar—although their focus was slightly different. Kretzschmar's was more indirect as he concentrated on educational institutions while Kestenberg went directly to the workers themselves. Because the role of the arts in working class society was hotly debated within the ranks of the SPD, it is helpful to look at a short history of labor in Germany and its relationship with the choral movement before exploring Kestenberg's theories about music and workers in more detail.

4.3.2 *Workers and their Choruses*

Craftsmen, tradesmen, artisans, and handymen had always been part of the singing associations, and a history of the choral movement printed in the *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung* (German Worker-Singers Newspaper) applauded the contributions of Hans Sachs and the Meistersingers—who were after all guildsmen and proletarians.⁷⁷⁹ The article went on to praise Hans Georg Nägeli who, as we saw in Chapter One, was an early proponent of the democratic character of the choral movement—encouraging the participation of “hordes of people” who would receive “like-minded impressions from all the others.”⁷⁸⁰ In spite of the stereotypical bourgeois nature of the choral movement, it had generally made

⁷⁷⁹ Albert Hertel, „Hans Sachs. Meistersinger und Männergesangskunft,“ *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, 15. Mai 1926. The article was written on the 350th anniversary of Sachs's death and he was acclaimed as the forerunner of the men's choral movement. In opposition to the knightly Minnesingers, who the author considered violent and crude, Sachs and the Meistersingers (craftsmen and citizens) spent their long winter evenings creating beautiful *Lieder*, and concluded, “We need a working class equipped with artistic taste and purified sentiment to take over the art of our ancestors, and all the more to create our own proletarian art!” (Denkt daran, daß unsere Sängerbewegung eine hohe Funktion innerhalb der proletarischenn Bewegung ist, daß wir zur Uebernahme der Kunst unserer Altvorderen eine mit künstlerischem Geschmack und geläutertem Gefühl ausgerüstete Arbeiterschaft benötigen, zur Schaffung einer eigenen proletarischen Kunst aber erst recht!)

⁷⁸⁰ Quoted in Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 47.

room for common laborers.⁷⁸¹ An individual choral society that demonstrated this point was the *Zöllnerbund* in Leipzig. Carl Friedrich Zöllner (1800-1860) was a choir director and composer and the association named for him was made up of nineteen individual men's choirs founded between 1840 and 1865. Most of these choirs had between eighteen and twenty members except the *Arbeiter-Bildungsverein* (Workers' Education Society) which had fifty members, and in contrast to the other members of the *Zöllnerbund*, the worker's choir practiced twice a week instead of only once. Their motto was one that was common to men's choirs since their founding years in the post-Napoleonic period—*Grüß Gott mit hellum Klang! Heil deutschem Wort und Sang!* (Greetings with a brilliant sound! Hail to the German word and song!).⁷⁸² The article in *Die Sangerhalle* that mentioned the *Zöllnerbund* and its member choirs was very short and to the point, but it opens a window to examine the impact of industrialization on German society on the eve of political unification.

Leipzig was not only one of the most significant centers of music culture in the nineteenth century—it was also one of the first cities to become heavily industrialized, and early attempts to organize workers politically and educate them culturally took place here. August Bebel, Ferdinand Lasalle, and Wilhelm Liebknecht all converged in Leipzig in the 1860s and while their activities were most closely associated with organizing workers and founding the political group that became the *Sozialdemokratische Partei*, Bebel was originally concerned with education. As one of the founding members of the *Gewerblichen Bildungsverein* (Industrial Educational Association) in 1861 he helped organize lectures about history and literature and chaired the “Library and Theater Department.”⁷⁸³ Several years later Bebel presented an “Annual Report” to the Leipzig City Council and won approval to establish the *Arbeiterbildungsverein* (Workers' Educational Association). In his foreword Bebel wrote: “All workers' education societies are rooted in the spirit of the people, go hand in hand with their interests, and flourish

⁷⁸¹ James M. Brophy, *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere in the Rhineland, 1800-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 56. Brophy says that songs/singing “cut across conventional social barriers of rank, occupation, and gender as well as dissolving urban/rural, male/female, and public/private divisions.”

⁷⁸² *Die Sangerhalle: Allegemeine deutsche Gesangvereins-Zeitung fur das In- und Ausland*, 30 April 1870, 62-63. The Gunstenhausen invitation that we looked at in Chapter 5 also used this motto as part of its opening lines.

⁷⁸³ Uwe Klussmann, „Ein preuischer Sozialist,“ *Der Spiegel Geschichte* no. 3 (2013), 46-47.

with the growth of participation.”⁷⁸⁴ Bebel went on to say that education was part of the bigger picture of economic and political involvement. To that end the *Arbeiterbildungsverein* endeavored to continue and expand the programs offered by the *Gewerblichen Bildungsverein*. Under the category of teaching Bebel considered singing a “far-reaching avenue of enlightenment,” and in the first year of the founding of the *Gesangabteilung* (Choral Department) eight-five men joined the workers’ choir.⁷⁸⁵

Musicologist James Garratt claims that the organizations founded by Bebel and Lasalle “constantly appropriated and redefined elements of middle-class thought and culture, putting them to work in the service of the inner freedom and political emancipation of the workers.”⁷⁸⁶ The December 1927 edition of the *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, looking back on the origins of the Workers Choral Association, noted Bebel’s contributions to the worker’s choral movement and listed some of the songs the men performed from 1865-1878. They included “Schottischen Bardenchor” by Friedrich Silcher, “Marsch” by Carl Friedrich Zöllner, “Lindenbaum” by Franz Schubert, “Daheim” by Julius Borsdorf, “Scheidelied” by Netzler, “Blücher am Rhein” by Reitziger, “Liedesfreiheit” by Marschner, “Wanderbursch” by Abt, “Die Nacht” by Schubert, and “Mein Lieben” by Adam.⁷⁸⁷ The significance of the list is that these are the same *Lieder* sung by the men’s choirs that began organizing from 1820 to 1840—with themes of ancient bards, nature, love, the Napoleonic wars, and home. Dieter Dowe concurs that as a whole, the repertoire of the working class choirs was “very far indeed from being hymns to

⁷⁸⁴ „August Bebel und die ersten Männerchöre der Gesangsabteilung des Leipziger Arbeiterbildungsvereins,“ 15. Dezember 1927, *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, 215.

⁷⁸⁵ The choir that belonged to the *Zöllnerbund* had the same name as that of Bebel’s organization (*Arbeiterbildungsverein*) but it is not clear whether these were the same. Possibly the original men’s choir later joined Bebel’s organization—or perhaps only some of them did. The *Die Sängerkirche* article appeared in 1865 which was the same year the *Gesangabteilung* was founded so some men may have migrated over from the choir that belonged to the *Zöllnerbund*.

⁷⁸⁶ James Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform in the Age of Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 197.

⁷⁸⁷ “August Bebel und die ersten Männerchöre der Gesangsabteilung des Leipziger Arbeiterbildungsvereins,“ 15. Dezember 1927, *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*. The song titles: „Scottish Bard Choir“ by Silcher, „March“ by Zöllner, „Linden Tree“ by Schubert, „At Home“ by Borsdorf, “Departure Song” by Netzler, “Blücher on the Rhine” by Teitziger, “Song of Freedom” by Marschner, “Hiking Lad” by Abt, “Night” by Schubert, and “My Love” by Adam. Works by Silcher, Abt, Adam, and Schubert were commonly sung by member choirs of the DSB—these were some of the most prolific composers of part-songs for men’s voices in the nineteenth century.

revolution and class warfare.”⁷⁸⁸ The first song in Cologne’s ‘Lyra’ Workingmen’s Choral Society songbook was not the *Workers’ Marseillaise* but Schubert’s “Lindenbaum”—included in the list above sung by the men’s choir in Leipzig.⁷⁸⁹ In fact the only song from those listed above that had something of a worker’s theme was Marschner’s “Liedesfreiheit” (Song of Freedom)—but freedom was one of the more common themes of the nineteenth-century choral movement. The song links freedom with nature, with the season of spring, and with joy.

“Liedesfreiheit” by Heinrich August Marschner

Frei wie des Adlers mächtige Gefieder
er hebe sich, er hebe sich zur Sonne der Gesang
er hebe sich zur Sonne, zur Sonne der Gesang
und ungehindert wie des Sturmes Drang ergießt sich,
ergießt sich der Strom, der Strom der Lieder.

Free as on the eagles mighty wings
he rises, and raises his song up to the sun
as unhindered as a storm’s surge
the song pours out,
streams of songs pour out.

Denn in der Freiheit nur gedeiht das Schöne
nur fessellos, nur fessellos ergreift es das Gemüth,
wie uns das Reich des Lenzes frei umblüht
umwog uns auch umwog uns auch das Reich
Wie uns das Reich des Lenzes frei umblüht
umwog uns auch das Reich der Töne.

For only with freedom the beautiful flourishes
only without chains it captures the mind,
as the empire in its spring blumed freely
we were surrounded by the realm of sounds.
As the empire in its spring flourished freely
We too were enveloped by the wealth of sounds.

Dann ruht der Himmel auf der Lieder Schwingen
das Höchste, was die freie Seele kennt
die freudig sich vom Druck des Staubes trennt,
zum Acther zelt empor, empor zu dringen
Die freudig sich von Druck des Staubes trennt
zum Acther zelt empor zu dringen.

Then heaven rested on the rising sound of songs
the highest of the high that the free soul knows
joyfully separating itself from the dust
to ascend to the tent of the sky.
Joyfully rising from the dust of the earth
ascending to the tent of the sky.⁷⁹⁰

The composer, Heinrich August Marschner (1795-1861), was born into a family whose father was a craftsman who fashioned ivory or horns into various objects (*Horndrechsler*), and both parents were musical. Although Heinrich Marschner studied law at the University of Leipzig, he spent his life composing music and was considered the most important composer of German opera between Weber and Wagner. Best known for his works for musical theater, he also composed a number of *Lieder*, and the one

⁷⁸⁸ Dieter Dowe, “The Workingmen’s Choral Movement in Germany before the First World War,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 2 (1978), 285.

⁷⁸⁹ Dowe, “The Workingmen’s Choral Movement,” 288.

⁷⁹⁰ *Gesänge der Augsburger Liedertafel*, (Augsburg: Anton Bohm, 1846), number 35. My translation—with help from Christine Vieira, my German tutor. The biographical information about Marschner notes that many of his compositions were lost during World War II, and it is only possible to date works by when they appeared in publication.

above was written for a four-part unaccompanied men's choir.⁷⁹¹ Certainly it had clear tones of human freedom representing a theme that was popular for all-male choirs in the years between 1815 and 1848. The eagle, the German empire (Reich), and the repetition of song pouring out, blooming freely, ascending from the dust to the sky captured many of the themes of the first half of the nineteenth century. Marschner's "Liedesfreiheit" was not only a representative song of Romanticism and the early years of struggle for political freedom, it could also represent an ongoing struggle for social and economic freedom. Whenever this song was sung the choir and audience joined together in an experience of expressing freedom joined with themes of nature and the German Empire—and this extended across the dramatic social and economic changes of the nineteenth century.

Industrialization and urbanization went hand in hand and the craftsmen and artisans who formed choirs before 1850 eventually moved into cities like Leipzig or Berlin where they joined organizations like Bebel's *Arbeiterbildungsverein* and began to create their own dense network of associations.⁷⁹² Did they disengage with the choral societies which had begun as a means of expressing aspirations of unity and freedom? Apparently not. Historian Dieter Dowe notes that a large proportion of working class singers "stayed behind in the bourgeois associations which professed an ideology of class harmony and claimed that they were pursuing artistic aims without reference to politics."⁷⁹³ Thus workers did not take a uniform approach to associational life, while at the same time they believed in singing as a valuable tool of expression. Working people were part of the choral movement throughout the nineteenth century. What changed was the type of work—agricultural workers and small-town craftsmen provided the labor for urban factories after 1860 and many were not new to the associational life whose intent was political as well as convivial.⁷⁹⁴

⁷⁹¹ A. Dean Palmer, "Marschner, Heinrich August," *Oxford Music Online* (2001). [article.17858]

⁷⁹² Gerhard A. Ritter, "Workers' Culture in Imperial Germany: Problems and Points of Departure for Research," *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 2 (1978), 172-73.

⁷⁹³ Dowe, "The Workingmen's Choral Movement in Germany," 275. Also see, Vernon Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

⁷⁹⁴ Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals: The Democratic Movement and the Revolution of 1848-1849* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); and James M. Brophy, *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere in the Rhineland, 1800-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Shifting political and economic circumstances opened up new avenues for social organizations, but the budding socialist clubs were soon quashed by the new imperial government. Socialist activities and many of the workers' associations were driven underground when the Anti-Socialist laws went into effect in 1878, and some working-class choirs found a home in the *Deutscher Sängerbund* and its associated regional organizations. One example comes from a list of the member choirs of the *Pfälzischer Sängerbund* published in *Die Sängerkirche* in the 1870s.⁷⁹⁵ This Palatine Choral Association had 120 clubs and among them were the *Sängerbund im Arbeiterverein* from the city of Kaiserslautern and the *Männerchor des Arbeiter-Bildungsvereins* in Haßloch—both workers' choirs. In addition there was a Catholic choir in Frankenthal and a Protestant men's choir in Ingenheim, as well as the usual *Liedertafeln* and *Gesangvereine* found in any regional association.⁷⁹⁶ Because workers' choirs did not disappear altogether during the 1870s and 1880s they were able to re-emerge in the 1890s as thriving organizations. A look at a few of the men who led workingmen's choirs gives us a good snapshot of the evolution of the worker's choral movement, for without these musicians who worked in relative obscurity, the workers would not have had the leadership to organize their own national choral association in the 1890s. A certain Rudolf Brenner (1854-1927) trained as a xylograph operator, but through self-study and then later at the Württemberg Conservatory he acquired a musical education. From 1878 he directed several choirs—one of the earliest was the *Stuttgarter Buchbinder-Männerchor* (Stuttgart Bookbinder's Men's Choir). In 1885 he took over the leadership of a choir called *Liederlust* (later renamed *Lassallia*) and directed this group for forty years. In 1889 his *Buchbinder-Männerchor* sang so well at the Singing Festival of the Swabian Choral Association that he attracted national attention. As we saw with school teachers, one way to acquire a better reputation/standing in society was to direct choirs and Brenner was able to combine several Stuttgart choirs into the *Freie Volkschor* (Free People's Choir) and in 1897 was

⁷⁹⁵ This was a region in the Rhineland where Sperber and Brophy have highlighted the political activities of common laborers. The list of choral groups in the *Pfälzischer Sängerbund* pointed to the religious and social diversity in the region.

⁷⁹⁶ *Die Sängerkirche*, 27 Dezember 1875. The *Pfälzischer Sängerbund* had 120 clubs with 3574 active members. The clubs demonstrate the diverse population of this region of Germany. The Palatinate (*die Pfalz*) was in southwest Germany and religiously mixed; it was a forested region and known for its wine industry.

invited to be director of the *Württembergische Arbeiter-Sängerbund*—an association with thirty-four choirs and a total of 1200 members.⁷⁹⁷ For thirty years he was the regional director of the choirs in Württemberg and organized six choral festivals. Another early organizer of workingmen’s choirs was Heinrich August Oppermann (b. 1857) who won acclaim as a choir director and veteran of the labor movement in Kassel. A tribute written about him on his 70th birthday described his background as a gardener and farmer (*Gärtner und Landwirt*) who joined the labor movement in the 1870s and whose choir, the *Gesängverein Freiheitslieder* (Freedom Songs Choral Society), was often under police surveillance. He was remembered as a director who was able to “achieve notable successes with his own choir as well as large combined choirs by means of his strong empathy and fiery temperament.”⁷⁹⁸ Both Brenner and Oppermann served as a bridge between the choral societies of the 1860s to the workers’ choirs of the Wilhelmine period.

The 1890s marked a break between the founding years of the German Empire characterized by the policies of Bismarck and the post-Bismarck policies of Kaiser Wilhelm II—between the years when Bismarck tried to impose political and religious uniformity and when social democrats came into their own amidst the growing imperial aspirations of Wilhelm II. The corresponding debate over education reforms put the arts in the midst of broader social/political/economic conflicts between SPD leaders like Bebel and the ambitions of Wilhelm II, who saw education reforms as a means of indoctrinating people against social-democracy and for the German Empire. Music instruction played an essential role in instilling patriotism and facilitating the *innere Nationsbildung* that was critical to the festival culture of the *Kaiserreich*.⁷⁹⁹ Socialists did not reject the arts—as we saw, Bebel believed lectures and singing were valuable tools that enabled workers to participate more broadly in society and politics. However, in the

⁷⁹⁷ Information about Rudolf Brenner comes from two articles written about him in the *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*. 15. März 1926, „Vierzig Jahre Dirigent eines Arbeitergesangvereins,“ and his obituary in 15. April 1927.

⁷⁹⁸ *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, 15. Mai 1927.

⁷⁹⁹ In Chapter Seven we saw that the Luther birthday celebrations were associated with celebrations of a Protestant German state and Luther’s hymn, “Ein feste Burg” was conflated with songs about the Kaiser. Other yearly celebrations included Sedan Day, the Kaiser’s birthday, and annual celebrations of the founding of the German Reich. In 1895 the Kaiser initiated a yearly singing competition acknowledging that the German *Lied* and German singing had “always exerted a beneficial influence on the refinement of the people’s soul and strengthened the nation in fidelity to God, throne, fatherland and family” (quoted in Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 145).

decades between 1865 and 1890 the workers tended to continue in the traditional choral societies singing the same *Lieder* as their bourgeois counterparts. After the repeal of the Anti-Socialist laws this practice was challenged, and Hermann Duncker, a representative of the Association of German Workingmen's Choral Societies in 1905, offered this critique.

Workers' choral societies are not associations of performing concert musicians nor of 'pure' artists guided solely by the interests of musical art and music history. Workers' choral societies are a part of the class-conscious proletariat which may not deny for one moment, even in their capacity as choirs, that they belong to the great army of freedom fighters. Certainly, when a workingmen's choral society gathers its members together, they flock to it in order to give expression in music to feelings common to all men; however, first and foremost it is the proletarian fighting spirit and the hope of victory which should fill the singers' lungs.⁸⁰⁰

Workers were expected by their political leaders to sing "proletarian" songs, to sing in unison, and to sing in massive choirs—these represented socialist values. One thing the socialists lacked were well-educated composers and musicians who were dedicated to their cause—this brings us back to Leo Kestenberg.

Kestenberg was still a teenager when he moved to Berlin in the 1890s to study piano, and although he trained as a concert pianist he turned his attentions more and more to ways to bring music to the working classes. Hermann Kretzschmar's reforms dealt primarily with singing instruction, but Kestenberg took this idea a step further and focused on "music education" (*Musikunterrichtung*). His formal reforms did not go into effect until the 1920s, but he worked through many of his ideas as part of his involvement with the *Freie Volksbühne* (Free People's Theater), teaching piano lessons, leading choirs, and organizing lectures and concerts. He considered the *Volksbühne* an antidote to the militarization of society as well as an attempt to found a new intellectual and cultural life. Rather than presenting musical performances as mere entertainment, Kestenberg wanted workers to acquire artistic understanding.⁸⁰¹ Lectures in combination with performance might raise the level of appreciation for music and bring "humanity" and "community" to the working classes.⁸⁰² A performance of Beethoven's

⁸⁰⁰ Quoted by Dowe in "The Workingmen's Choral Movement," 280. The passage came from Hermann Duncker, 'Kritik der Kritik' in *Lieder-Gemeinschaft* 11, (July 1905)

⁸⁰¹ Kestenberg made a distinction between *unterrichtung* (the activity of teaching) and *erziehung* (instruction that cultivated *Bildung*). Gruhn, *Leo Kestenbergs Leben*, 96.

⁸⁰² There were two "People's Theaters," and they represented a split within the SPD over the role of the arts in a socialist society. The original *Freie Volksbühne* was founded by Bruno Wille in 1890 and primarily offered plays.

Ninth Symphony as part of a commemoration of the 1848 March Revolution demonstrated this goal.

Socialist journalist Kurt Eisner left this description of the March 18, 1905 performance.

Thousands of people were crowded together in the tightly-filled, hot room, silent, struggling in deepest devotion for understanding. They had all sacrificed a significant portion of their barren pay to hear the work. The event was not a benevolent offering from casual patrons. On their own, the workers had made it possible. The proletariat has become too mature and strong to be subject to well-intentioned education in artistic matters. Everywhere they strive for the highest and reach for the stars and out of their own fate experience the human drama of the *Ninth Symphony*. And this feeling became all-powerful when, in the final chorus, the human voice translated the language of the instruments. From the deepest came the redeemed feeling. Joy!⁸⁰³

Kestenberg first offered lectures—in this case many of the workers who attended this concert had already heard explanations about the structure of a symphony, the meaning of “sonata form,” and how a composer offered the theme of each movement as particles in relation to the whole. Eisner described the audience “struggling” to hear and understand these features as they listened; and their desire to “reach for the stars” was intense enough that they had paid for this performance from their own meager wages.⁸⁰⁴ This particular symphony was especially apropos for expressing humanity in art because Beethoven’s translation of Schiller’s poem began with three orchestral movements in which the final movement’s chorus translated in human voice the “language of the instruments” in an Ode to Joy. Here we can envision how Christopher Small’s concept of “musicking” pulled the audience into an experience that was previously unfamiliar to them. The musicians had performed Beethoven’s *Ninth* before, but this time they did so for an audience that was hearing it as though it was its premiere performance. And at this time and place (1905, Berlin, the Free People’s Theater), according to Eisner, the performance evoked the

Wille broke off and formed the New Free People’s Theater. The original Free People’s Theater that Kestenberg was involved with functioned as part of the SPD. While the Freie Volksbühne was meant to represent “democratic” principles and socialist ideals, it was heavily influenced by Kestenberg’s notions of art which followed traditional bourgeois ideals. This does not represent a lack of socialist beliefs on Kestenberg’s part but rather his belief that the arts and socialism could function together to bring about “humanity.”

⁸⁰³ Quoted in Gruhn, *Leo Kestenbergs Leben*, 58.

⁸⁰⁴ Carl Dahlhaus explains that *Bildung* meant “gaining an inner detachment from the ‘realm of necessity,’ and that music could only fulfill its educative role when the listeners listened quietly in order to understand the music. This was in contrast to earlier periods of history where music was merely a background stimulus to conversation. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 50.

deepest feelings of joy for neophytes who heard it as a Schiller/Beethoven expression of the brotherhood of all humanity.⁸⁰⁵

Kestenberg continued to offer lectures and concerts throughout the war years and in 1918 he was appointed to a position in the Prussian department of education. His book, *Musikerziehung und Musikpflege* (published in 1921) described his philosophy of “education for humanity with and through music.”⁸⁰⁶ Kestenberg’s beliefs about music and education were rooted in his own training that was a product of the nineteenth-century concept of *Bildung*. In the title of his book he used a word that can be translated “education” (*Erziehung*) but more properly carries the meaning of “up-bringing” or “training.” Gruhn explains that Kestenberg’s ideas about education were more influenced by German Idealism than socialist materialism, therefore music education meant exposing children to knowledge about music, and appreciation for it, from their earliest days and then continually nurturing this by repeated exposure. He created a comprehensive, unified educational concept from kindergarten to university thus ensuring that laymen would develop a proper knowledge and appreciation of music as part of their general schooling.⁸⁰⁷ Prior to the enactment of all of Kestenberg’s reforms, his efforts with the *Freie Volksbühne* in Berlin and workers’ choral association gave German laborers a chance to participate in “*musikalische Volksbildung*” and the opportunity to share the status as “people of music.”⁸⁰⁸ The German Workers Choral Society (DASB) was a parallel movement to the German Choral Society (DSB) and in the 1920s their leaders strongly urged workers to learn about nineteenth-century composers and to sing works like Mendelssohn’s *Walpurgisnacht*, Brahms’s *German Requiem*, Schumann’s *Paradies und die Peri*, as well

⁸⁰⁵ Wiebke Rademacher, “Beethoven’s Leonore in Berlin around 1900: On Contextual Factors of Music Performances as Source Material for Past Emotional Practices,” *Cultural History* 7, no. 2 (2018): 167-186. Rademacher makes the point that the bourgeoisie first appropriated Beethoven as their champion of freedom from aristocratic control of the arts and that workers later used him in the same way in their struggles against the bourgeoisie.

⁸⁰⁶ Gruhn, *Leo Kestenbergs Leben*, 56.

⁸⁰⁷ Gruhn, *Leo Kestenbergs Leben*, 96; and Kertz-Welzel, „The Singing Muse?“ 22-23. The implementation of Kestenberg’s reforms are outside the timeframe of this dissertation, but he first focused on elevating the standards of training for teachers requiring them to pursue music education as an academic subject and then to acquire a second university degree. He thus raised the standing of music teachers and brought their education level up to that of teachers of scientific studies.

⁸⁰⁸ In the 1920s when Kestenberg’s reforms were implemented the editors of the *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung* continued to stress the need for workers to sing the music of German composers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and to avoid songs that did not have artistic quality.

as Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* or Haydn's *Creation* oratorio.⁸⁰⁹ As we have already seen, workers formed choirs and joined choral associations throughout the nineteenth century, but they could not acknowledge their labor associations until the 1890s.

The emergence of working-class associational life coincided with efforts of men like Kestenberg to bring the arts into workers' neighborhoods. Paul Michael (1867-19?) was a key figure in the *Arbeiter-Sängerbewegung* (workers' choral movement) from the early 1890s and conducted a choir in Leipzig that included men and women—the *Männer- und Frauenchor Leipzig-Thonberg*. Although he was born into a working-class family his father gave him a chance to learn the piano as a child, and he must have received enough of a musical education in his *Volksschule* days to continue developing his talent while apprenticing as a lithographer. After a few years in Stuttgart and Frankfurt he returned to Leipzig and founded a choir in 1886.⁸¹⁰ Like so many other German conductors and directors, he worked with more than one choir and in 1890, he became involved with the “*Sänger-, Turner- und dramatische Abteilung*” (Singers, Gymnasts, and Dramatic Department) in neighboring Thonberg. This group had organized a stonemason's singing club that was broken up during the 1870s and 1880s. At the time Michael encountered them he characterized them as “old party comrades, bearded, vigorous figures who had fought and suffered.” They distrusted the young, beardless Paul Michael, but after two rehearsals the “trust and friendship between the old singers and the young leader was forged . . . and they became inseparable.” (*unzertrennlich zueinander*). In 1892 Michael was able to obtain a scholarship to the Leipzig Conservatory where he studied for four years all the while continuing his work with both choirs—renamed the *IV. Sängereabteilung*. He introduced them to the music sung by “*burgerliche*” (bourgeois) choruses, his choir members supported him, and they even went on tours. An 1894 concert in Berlin drew an audience of 4000, and 7000 people came to hear them in Mainz in 1911. The article in *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung* honoring Michael on his thirty-fifth anniversary with the choir noted

⁸⁰⁹ *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, 15. Januar 1926

⁸¹⁰ *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, 15. Februar 1926. The article did not have a title, but it was written on the 35th anniversary of Paul Michael's leadership of his Leipzig choirs and gave a history of his involvement with them.

that he was a passionate socialist whose motto was *Kampf im Gesang!*⁸¹¹ Michael represented the aims of the DASB—workers who sang *Lieder* and the works of German composers like Bach, Haydn, Schubert, and Mendelssohn while also adhering to the goals of the SPD—challenging the institutions of a class society which exploited labor conditions and caused immeasurable suffering to the working-classes. In 1895, choirs from eight other cities joined them to create the *Bayerischen Arbeiter-Sängerbundes* which was the forerunner to the *Deutscher-Arbeiter Sängerbund* (DASB) founded in 1908.

The emergence of a choral association composed of working-class men (and some women) presented members of the DSB with a conundrum. Although the original choral movement began as a protest against authoritarian government policies, and singers were active participants in the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, committee members of the DSB unanimously agreed in 1895 that they could not formally affiliate with the working-class choral associations because their (DASB) antinational tendencies contradicted their own goals.⁸¹² When the Bavarian Workers Choral Festival was held in Nuremberg in 1910 it drew crowds of 50,000 to hear 8000 singers but Friedhelm Brusniak remarks that this event was ignored by *Die Sängerkirche* and the *Deutscher Sängerbund*.⁸¹³ Some workers did remain members of the DSB, and they received a strong rebuke by the Bavarian Workers Choral Association. “Unfortunately there are still a large number of workers’ singers who believe they find salvation in the opposing camp,” claimed a recorder for the festival book of the DASB. “They should gather their strength, become aware of their class situation, and join the flourishing workers’ federation.”⁸¹⁴ A similar sentiment had been expressed in 1905 by a representative of the national workers’ choral organization. Brusniak concluded

⁸¹¹ “Paul Michael zum Gruß!” *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung* 15. Oktober 1927, 169. The motto means „Fight in Song.“ Michael was the director chosen to lead a 40,000 member choir at the national festival of the DASB in Hannover in 1928.

⁸¹² Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 145.

⁸¹³ In the 1880s the editors of *Die Sängerkirche* still reported on the activities of workers’ choirs and performances. The 29. Juli 1882 edition had stories about a concert given by the *Handwerken-Bildungsverein* (Trades-Educational Society) in Halle and the founding of an *Arbeiterheim* (Workingmen’s Club) by eighteen Leipzig workers’ choruses. The change in attitude came when the workers were free to form their own national organization which articulated separate goals from those of the DSB.

⁸¹⁴ Quoted by Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 160. This was recorded in the *Festbuch* of the 8th Bavarian Workers Choral Festival in 1912. The *Deutscher Arbeiter-Sängerbund* was the largest workers’ cultural organization in Germany in 1914, and it was independent from the SPD—only a little more than half of all workers were members of that political party in 1912 (Dowe, 270-71).

that an “irreconcilable attitude” prevailed in both camps although the festival rituals and songs of the two groups differed very little.⁸¹⁵

From the turn of the century on, both national choral associations attempted to introduce better quality music into their repertoires, to train skillful musicians, and to continue fostering community through festivals. The memberships of the two choral associations (DSB and DASB) were roughly equal in numbers in the years just before World War I, and although their leaders’ (and members’) views clashed, the rituals and practices of the singers were in tune. At the German Choral Association’s national festival in Nuremberg in 1912 the chairman of the DSB gave a speech in which he began by asking, “Why do we actually sing?” He summed it up this way: “Art is supposed to be the guiding star, whose fullness of light penetrates and shines through it, and in this world of art, as Hans Georg Nägeli has already said, the most essential and most evocative of all things remains: the word sung in beautiful tone. That is why we sing.”⁸¹⁶ Members of both bourgeois and working-class choral societies universally claimed Nägeli as their guiding star and sang *Lieder* that encapsulated themes of nature, history, and *Heimat*. Christopher Small’s term “musicking” runs a thread through German choral music that connects their rituals and practices into something more essential and evocative to German life than mere amusement and that tied singers together in spite of their competing claims to separate “camps.” In an echo of the speech given at the DSB festival in Nuremberg (Why do we sing?), the DASB executive committee announced in 1914, “What we workingmen singers want to do is sing, and the workingmen’s choral organization henceforward intends to raise the level of its performance to as near the point of perfection as possible.”⁸¹⁷ Ultimately “musicking” built community, it involved audience and singers, and it was a concept that crossed class boundaries.

Singing the word in “beautiful tone” and raising performance to a “point of perfection” enabled the bourgeoisie and especially workers to regularly achieve goals, and the work that went into translating

⁸¹⁵ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 159-60.

⁸¹⁶ Quoted by Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 166. “Die Kunst soll der Leitstern sein, dessen Lichtfülle sie durchdringt und beglänzt, und in dieser Lichtwelt der Kunst bleibt, wie Hans Georg Nägeli schon gesagt hat, ewig das Wesentlichste und Bildendste: das in schöner Tonform gesungene Wort. Darum also singen wir.“

⁸¹⁷ Quoted in Dowe, “The Workingmen’s Choral Movement in Germany,” 281.

marks on a sheet of music into a musical performance relieved the drudgery of everyday life and provided a respite from daily chores for all kinds of German workers.⁸¹⁸ Industrial labor was not the only work that alienated workers from a sense of accomplishment in a finished product—although the jobs that came about as a result of industrialization and the development of interchangeable parts especially deadened the sense of personal achievement, and socialization in the workplace was hindered by the pace of work and noise of machinery. Participation in a choir gave people a chance to experience a completed “work” on a regular basis and in a congenial social setting. We saw previously that Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* was a favorite among workers (as among most Germans) and another was Mendelssohn’s *Walpurgisnacht*.⁸¹⁹ This Mendelssohn piece was once performed by the *Berliner Volkschor* (amateur, working class men and women) in 1913 at an SPD function. Sung by soloists and a mixed choir accompanied by an orchestra, this work would take weeks to learn, and to perform it well required skill at learning your own part as well as cooperation with all the other choristers and musicians. It was performed at the 1913 event because of its underlying themes of resistance to oppression—a theme that “created” the early nineteenth century choral movement. Singing continued to hold a place of honor in the Wilhemine period, and we will conclude this examination of the worker’s choral movement by examining the Eighth National Festival of the DSB (1912 in Nuremberg) and a 1912 DASB festival in Saalfeld to examine how emotional communities overlapped in spite of claims of “opposing camps.”

4.3.3 *Two Festivals*

We saw earlier that the first workers’ choral associations sang the same *Lieder* as those of the DSB—primarily because there were few “working class” composers before the late-nineteenth century.

⁸¹⁸ Chapter Three, which dealt with women’s choirs, illustrated this point. One of Susanne Schmaltz’s friends (Franziska Meier) married and moved away from Hamburg and led women’s choirs throughout her life in the town of Cuxhaven.

⁸¹⁹ This is listed as one of the preferred pieces for workers to learn in *Deutsche Arbeitersänger-Zeitung*, and see Wiebke Rademacher, “Beethoven’s Leonore in Berlin around 1900.” Rademacher looked at settings where Beethoven’s Leonore Overture was performed and one was the Festkonzert anlässlich des vierten Parteitages der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Preussens on 6 January 1913. The entire program consisted of the Leonore Overture, some political poetry readings, Gustav Uthmann’s “Das heilige Feuer,” and Mendelssohn’s *Walpurgisnacht*, Berlioz’s “Rakoczy-Marsch,” and Wagner’s overture to “Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg” and Rademacher concluded that these musical works all had “themes of oppression and emancipation” (174). The Mendelssohn work is based on a Goethe poem which described Harz Mountain pagans resisting Christian conversion.

And, as previously noted, craftsmen and laborers sang in choral clubs and associations from the beginning of the nineteenth-century choral movement. Thus it is not surprising that once workers formed their own organizations they continued to sing the songs they were familiar with and to employ the same rituals. For the comparison of the Eighth National Festival of the *Deutscher Sängerbund* in Nuremberg and the *Deutscher Arbeiter-Sängerbund* in Saalfeld I am primarily looking at their programs of music. The ritual of speeches, greetings, the parade of banners, a festival ball, shopping, and sightseeing were essentially the same for the two groups.⁸²⁰

The organizers of each festival printed a program book for the attendees with the schedule of events, the music to be performed, advertisements, and information about the surrounding area and sightseeing opportunities. (See images below) A look at the covers of the two programs show themes we have seen associated with the choral movement in previous chapters. The lyre surrounded by a wreath appeared on both programs as it was the nearly obligatory symbol of the choral movement. It was also quite common to display an idealized image of the host city on stationary or programs, and here Saalfeld appeared in a pastoral setting and Nuremberg as the sixteenth-century home of Meistersinger Hans Sachs. This was the occasion of the 50th anniversary of DSB national festivals so the Nuremberg cover appeared more celebratory with Sachs riding triumphantly into the city where he was greeted by enthusiastic crowds. Heraldic shields representing the city of Nuremberg appeared prominently in front of Sachs (the lyre in the center) while a large banner with the double-headed eagle of the German Empire appeared over his head. In the background we can just glimpse the castle tower that stood on the highest point of the old city. Although Hans Sachs did not appear on the cover of the Saalfeld program, workers who came to that *Sängerfest* from July 6-8 could attend a play featuring him during their stay demonstrating the significance of Sachs to the entire choral movement—he represented both the bourgeois and working

⁸²⁰ As usual, *Die Sängerkasse* had quite a bit of information about the Nuremberg festival beginning in May 1912 through the follow-up articles in August 1912. Friedhelm Brusniak's *Das grosse Buch* also included details from DSB records of the festival. For the Saalfeld festival I only had the program book of the festival for a source which I acquired from a second-hand book dealer in Germany.

class elements of society.⁸²¹ The cover of the Saalfeld program appeared simple in comparison to the Nuremberg one, but throughout the program booklet were artistic sketches of the Saalfeld Johanniskirche, the Rathaus, local castles, a medieval tower, and then a poem in praise of the city accompanied by a sketch that hinted at its timeless presence. Both program covers echoed themes of *Heimat*, history, and nature. In Chapters 4 and 5 we looked at festivals and programs of the DSB, and there was subsequently nothing in the form of these two 1912 festivals that differed greatly from what we have already examined, but there was a difference in scale between the two.

The Eighth National Festival of the German Choral Association was the largest national festival by far, and the hall built to host the event was not large enough for the combined choirs to give a joint performance. There were 75 associations (*Bünden*) represented and 2,600 clubs (*Vereinen*), and the parade included almost 2000 flags and banners. Faced with the dilemma of how to stage a single massive performance, the organizers announced in June 1912 that the 38,000 singers would need to be divided into several choirs. Two groups of 15,000 sang in each day's performances, and several of the larger choirs performed on their own without participating in the massive joint performances.⁸²² Musicking was not always harmonious; it embraced whatever happened during the act. In spite of these arrangements, the leaders of the DSB complained that the crowds inside the festival hall were so large that it was difficult to

⁸²¹ Program book, *Deutsch.Arbeiter-Sängerbund Festschrift*, 27. The play must have been planned especially for visitors and participants at the festival. The advertisement read: "Theater performances of the *Hans Sachs Spiele* are recommended for honored education committees, associations, and hall owners." The image of the DSB festival program comes from Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 171. Sachs could represent workers because he trained as a shoemaker and worked his way up through the guild system. He was from Nuremberg, a free city controlled by burghers rather than a royal family, and as a guild master he was part of the "middle class," therefore he was claimed by the bourgeoisie.

⁸²² *Die Sangerhalle*, 22. Mai 1912.



Figure 25 Festival program covers from Nuremberg (1912) and Saalfeld (1912)

get people to listen to the speeches or the singing, and even the parade received criticism. One of the representatives of the DSB was indignant over a report that many choral groups “trampled along like the defeated Grand Army of 1812 on their return from Russia.”⁸²³ In spite of the problems inevitably caused by controlling huge numbers of participants, several of the performances received “generous applause” and the works performed by the *Brooklyner Sängerbund* and *Kärntner Sängerbund* were so enthusiastically received that those choirs were obliged to perform encores.⁸²⁴

The Brooklyn Choral Society was representative of American choirs that made their way to the DSB festival as part of the German community from abroad, and they demonstrated continuity in not only goals but also rituals that had developed over the course of almost a century as German-speakers from north-south-east-west gathered to proclaim and preserve the *Lied*.⁸²⁵ The entire festival took place over four days from July 28-31, and the afternoon and evening programs included between nine and thirteen performances by choirs of regional associations and two or three pieces by a combined choir. The opening speeches and banner parade took place on Sunday the 28th and on the following three days there were practices in the mornings followed by performances at four o'clock in the afternoon and nine o'clock in the evening. These performances were open to the public and cost between 30 and 50 *Pfennig* (children under twelve could attend for 10 *Pfennig*). Below is a postcard of the impressive festival hall built for the Nuremberg festival and the list of what was performed in the first program of the second day's activities.

⁸²³ Quoted by Brusniak in *Das grosse Buch*, 164. (Brusniak is quoting from the “Festführer für das VIII. Deutsche Sängerbundesfest in Nürnberg,” 222).

⁸²⁴ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 166. The Brooklyn choir sang “Warnung vor dem Rhein” (Warning Concerning the Rhine) by M. Neumann and their director was listed as Fred Albeke from Brooklyn.

⁸²⁵ *Die Sängershalle*, 10. Juli 1912. All the information about works performed, times, and prices come from this edition of the paper.



Figure 26 Postcard created for the Eighth German Choral Association festival in Nuremberg (1912)

- I. Hauptaufführung, Monday, July 29, 1912 4 pm in the Sängerhalle
1. *Leonorenourertüre* by Beethoven
 2. “Die Allmacht” by Franz Schubert for Men’s Choir with Soprano solo and Orchestra (directed by Max Meyer-Olbersleben)
 3. „Morgenlied by J. Rietz (directed by Gustav Wohlgemuth)
 4. Wiener Männergesangverein:
 - „Zum Walde“ by J. Herbeck accompanied by horns.
 - “Um Mitternacht” by A. Bruckner (directed by Eduard Kremser)
 5. „Am Siegfriedbrunnen“ by Franz Volbach (directed by Felix Schmidt)
 6. Berliner Sängerbund:
 - „Der Tiroler Nachtwache 1810“ by R. Heuberger (directed by Felix Schmidt)
 7. „Rosenfrühling“ by H. Jüngst (directed by Karl Hirsch); „Wie’s daheim war“ by G. Wohlgemuth (directed by Wohlgemuth); „Frühlingszauber” by M. Meyer-Olbersleben (directed by Meyer-Olbersleben)
 8. Schwäbischer Sängerbund:
 - „Die Freiheit“ by H. Zöllner (directed by Wilhelm Förstler)
 9. „Deutscher Heerbann“ a cantata for soloists, men’s choir, and orchestra by Felix Woysch

I included the names of who directed each piece because it demonstrates the point made in Chapter Four that the repertoire was dominated by living composer/directors after the turn of the century. Wohlgemuth, Meyer-Olbersleben, Kremser, and Zöllner led an attempt to compose quality music that could be sung by large groups, and although they were not always successful, some of these performances were well-received as we saw above. The festival began with an orchestral overture by Beethoven followed by a Schubert *Lied*—these represented artistic works from the early nineteenth century. Anton Bruckner was the other best-known name in this part of the program and further demonstrated the efforts

of organizers to include quality music rather than the beerhall favorites with which the men's choral movement was often associated.⁸²⁶ This afternoon's program was followed by a dinner and another round of performances at nine o'clock that evening. The Tuesday and Wednesday performances continued the theme of including both old and new compositions, those sung only by members of the larger regional associations and those by the collective choirs of 15,000 men. The musical offerings paid homage to more than fifty years of celebrating the German *Lied*.

It would be tedious here to list the more than sixty choral or instrumental works from the entire festival, but what is of interest was the leadership's efforts to include as many musicians as possible in the Eighth National DSB Festival on its 50th anniversary by offering a far-ranging scope of compositions. The emphasis was, as always, on the *Lied*. In an article for *Die Sangerhalle* concerning the upcoming festival, Leipzig singing teacher Hugo Lobmann described the goal of the gathered singers. "In Nuremberg a clamor will rise and storm the sky with this moving prayer: Lord, give us strength and courage to live faithful to death for our glorious German song, and to be faithful stewards of the holy inherited song of our fathers."⁸²⁷ Although this expressed a century-old belief in the meaning of poetry and song to unearth the true nature of the German people (per Herder and Goethe) there were new elements at this festival. For the first time the DSB board allowed women to sing at a national festival. The opening night's ceremonies included the concluding scene from Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg* and a mixed choir from the Franconian Choral Society and the Nuremberg Singing Association performed this Wagner work.⁸²⁸ One of the members of the Franconian Choral Association (and a member of the DSB board) Ferdinand Ritter von Jager later concluded with relief that this was one of the most successful

⁸²⁶ Number 4 of this performance was by the Vienna Men's Choral Society. Bruckner (composer of "Um Mitternacht") and the director Eduard Kremser were both Austrian. The choir was paying tribute to their home within the context of the German Choral Association.

⁸²⁷ Hugo Lobmann, "Zum 8. Deutschen Sangerbundesfest in Nurnberg," *Die Sangerhalle*, 10. Juli 1912. "In Nurnberg wird ein Streit sich erheben und den Himmel besturmen mit der ergreifenden Bitte: Herr, gib Kraft uns und Mut, da wir fur unser herrliches, deutsches Lied leben, treu bis in den Tod, da treu wir verwalten heiliges, ererbtes Gut unserer Vater."

⁸²⁸ *Die Sangerhalle*, 10. Juli 1912. They published the entire program a few weeks prior to the festival.

performances of the entire festival.⁸²⁹ Alongside the newer composers' works (from Meyer-Olbersleben to Wagner) appeared old favorites like Silcher's arrangement of Heine's "Die Lorelei" and Weber's "Lützows Jagd"—a tribute to the founding days of the choral movements' origins rooted in the Wars of Liberation in 1813. The Nuremberg festival for all its rowdiness and stodginess was a tribute to the entire German choral movement. In the wake of events, the leaders of the governing board questioned whether it was practical to continue the large-scale national festivals after 1912—massed choirs were meant to mirror the entire German people expressing themselves in a unanimous fashion, but the reality was rather chaotic. Herein lay an interesting point of comparison with the goals of the Social Democratic Party and choirs of workers.

The ideal choral festival, according to the governing bodies of the German Choral Association, was one in which the speeches and performances were attentively absorbed by both participants and audience members, the parade was truly representative of the variegated unity of the German people, and the *Lieder* not only beautifully performed but also affecting a renewed inner belief in the German nation. In a sense these were the same ideals, somewhat modified, of an SPD political rally or May Day demonstration. Their leadership encouraged singing and valued the mass effect of thousands singing in unison "The Workers' Marsellaise," "The Internationale," "Brüder, zur Sonne, zur Freiheit," or "Empor zum Licht."⁸³⁰ These affected belief in a unified body of workers who held the same aspirations. However, I think it is important to make a distinction between a *crowd* singing inspirational songs and a *choir*. A crowd of people belting out "The Workers' Marsellaise" certainly represented unity and articulated communal longings, and singing enabled people who failed to grasp the complexities of Marxist ideology to absorb the ideas more easily than when hearing a speech. Thus *crowd-singing* affected mass agreement and enthusiasm, but a *choral performance* was more complex. Take for instance

⁸²⁹ Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 164. Brusniak also noted that the inclusion of a mixed choir was a response to the more inclusive nature of the DASB.

⁸³⁰ "The Worker's Marsellaise," was sung to the tune of the French Marsellaise with words written by Jacob Audorf in 1864. This was the theme song of the SPD sung at all workers' rallies and SPD meetings. "Brüder, zur Sonne, zur Freiheit" (Brothers, to the Sun, to Freedom) and "Empor zum Licht" (Up to the Light) both expressed themes of raising oneself up. Heavy labor and economic oppression weighed workers down. The songs encouraged them to work together to overcome their exploitation.

the *Berliner Volkschor*, which was a group of workers who sang together every week working on new pieces, perfecting others, and occasionally performing. The choristers thus created community—a genuine requirement when preparing for something like the performance of Mendelssohn’s *Walpurgisnacht* at the SPD event in 1913. Singing with thousands at a political rally was a less strenuous activity requiring only short-term bursts of enthusiasm. Choral festivals were a combination of these—choir members who worked together week after week created close bonds among themselves, and when they came together as a crowd of singers, facilitated unity in the larger group. The relationships created by “musicking” always depended on the setting in which making music took place. A massive SPD rally (or the crowds who gathered in 1867 to dedicate the Luther Monument in Worms) generated strong emotions and these were enhanced by crowd-singing, but those relationships were short-term. A group of men and/or women meeting together on a weekly basis to work on a body of musical works that they would perform on any number of occasions over the years created a more lasting bond—especially when these also involved ritual acts like those embedded in a choral festival.

The DASB festival that took place in Saalfeld in 1912 was a regional event with a far simpler program than the elaborate four day Nuremberg festival and provided a different vantage point from which to view the overall choral movement and worker’s movement. The sources for DASB festivals are not as extensive as those for the DSB—partly because the men’s singing movement did not split into two organizations until the 1890s. However, the Saalfeld program book provides us with enough written information to make some useful comparisons.⁸³¹ The members of the Festival Committee asked everyone to follow the order of the program exactly and be in place promptly—this was a common request in *Die Sangerhalle* too, but not always adhered to as became evident in Nuremberg. As well, the Saalfeld organizers informed participants that there was an “artistic festival postcard” printed for the occasion which all participants were expected to purchase—along with a commemorative publication.

⁸³¹ There were several other workers’ programs that I utilized while working through this material including the 1913 SPD music performance, in which Mendelssohn’s *Walpurgisnacht* was performed, and the programs for several performances of the *Arbeiter-Gesang-Verein* “Einigkeit” in Caputh.

Finally there was a “Welcome!” poem included in the program that surely echoed the speeches the visitors later heard in person.⁸³²

Willkommen, Kampfgenossen!
Ihr tragt nicht Schwert und Speer,
Nicht Fahnen, blutbegossen,
Nicht Schilde vor euch her.
Frei hebt ihr eure Stirnen
Zum leuchtenden Zenith,
Und aus den heißen Herzen
Entströmt der Freiheit Lied.

Welcome, Comrades!
You do not carry sword and spear,
Not flags, bloodied,
Not shields before you.
You raise your free heads
to the shining Zenith,
And out of burning hearts
Stream songs of freedom.

The poem continued to describe how song was the weapon that would bring hope and victory for the future. The *Lied* was worth a thousand weapons and would create a new empire for them. (*Ihr neues Reich zu schaffen . . . Das Lied auch ist ein Schwert!*). The tone was more militant than that heard in the DSB festival greetings and speeches in which German unity from “north, south, east, and west” was the persistent theme, but in terms of the idealistic hopes enshrouded in singing *Lieder*, the tone resonated in a similar fashion.

As always the highlight and *raison d’etre* of the festival was the music. Below is the list of musical works performed at the Saalfeld festival.

1. *Begrüßungslied*, by Uthmann
2. Festival speech
3. (Instrumental piece, a march) *Bannerweihe*, by Nowowisky
4. *Das heilige Feuer* (combined choirs), by Uthmann
5. (Instrumental piece) *Jubel-Overture*, by Bach
6. (Harmonie-Rudolstadt) *Vom Rhein*, by Bruch
7. (Liederkranz-Zeulenroda) *Sonnenuntergang* (mixed choir), by Zöllner
8. (Sängerlust-Pößneck) *Rosenzeit*, by M. Filke
9. (Instrumental piece) *Fantasie* from *Lohengrin*, by Wagner
10. *Frühlingsruf* (massed choir), by Zöllner
11. (Instrumental piece) *Walzer* aus der Operette, *Die keusche Susanne*, by Gilbert
12. (Frohsinn-Schwarza) *Ich hört ein Bächlein rauschen*, by Gaugler
13. (Arbeiter-Gesangverein Königsee) *Walther von der Vogelweide*, by Uthmann
14. (Gutenberg-Rudolstadt) *Möchte wandern*, by Henkel
15. (Instrumental piece) *Florentiner Marsch*, by Fucick
16. (Liederkranz-Leheften) *Tausendschön*, by Dinß.

⁸³² All the information about the Saalfeld program comes from the program booklet. The instructions from the Festival Committee were on page 2, and the poem, “Willkommen!” was on page 3.

17. (Gutenberg-Saalfeld) *Unser Rheingau*, by Wengert

Just as the “Welcome!” poem demonstrated something distinctly different from DSB speeches while still maintaining a strong emphasis on the *Lied*, many of the musical offerings on this program carried the same themes and some of the same composers as those on DSB programs with a few distinguishing features. There were quite a few instrumental works at this Saalfeld festival, and the composers names are either familiar (Bach and Wagner) or obscure (Nowowisky, Gilbert, and Fucick). Wagner’s *Fantasie* from *Lohengrin* regularly showed up on music programs and Wagner, like Beethoven, was often appropriated by people with widely diverse points of view.⁸³³ Most of the composers of the *Lieder* listed on the program are now little known, but the themes were popular. The poem “Rosenzeit” (Time of Roses) was written by Goethe—a poem many people had set to music, and “Ich hört ein Bächlein” (I Hear a Little Brook) was a poem more famously set to music by Franz Schubert (rather than Gaugler). Number 6, “Vom Rhein” had a popular theme (the Rhine River) and Max Bruch (1838-1920) who composed the music had a better pedigree than the other obscure *Lieder* composers represented here. Bruch was acquainted with Brahms and taught at the Berlin *Hochschule für Musik*—the conservatory founded by Joseph Joachim. From this program we see that each choir chose their own piece to perform, and while some chose well-known works, others chose those with familiar themes but new composers. Based on the information about directors like Rudolf Brenner or Heinrich Oppermann (considered earlier), I think these composers were working class people who began to study music as part of the efforts of people like Hermann Kretschmar or Leo Kestenberg to make music education more accessible. The other thing that reflected this more expansive nature was the number of instrumental works. Although there was no mention of who played these, the participants listed in the Saalfeld program included *Turnvereine* (gymnast clubs) from several cities as well as a number of groups (*Verband*) associated with a specific type of work: graphic arts, metal-workers, painters, woodworkers and carpenters, brewers, millers, transporters, builders and roofers. These may have had singers and/or primarily instrumentalists

⁸³³ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, 75-76. Dahlhaus explains that Beethoven began to be mythologized even within his lifetime. “The mythical figure in the ‘romantic image of Beethoven,’ whether revolutionary, sorcerer, or saint, cannot be conveniently equated with the persona behind his works, however close the connection between them.”

who performed—they were listed as part of the *Festzug-Ordnung* (parade order) and instrumental music commonly accompanied the banner parades. This was a festival that could have taken place among Feuchtwangen and its neighbors where the participants were members of gymnast clubs and carpenters, firefighters, and builders, and local, lesser-known composers were frequently highlighted.

The name that dominated this program though was that of Gustav Adolf Uthmann—the most prolific writer of songs for the German workers’ movement at the turn of the century. Here we can see that this was clearly a festival celebrating laborers through music. Uthmann was born in Barmen in 1867, and though he had ambitions to become a teacher, the early death of his father left him with the responsibility of caring for his blind mother and younger siblings. He apprenticed as a dyer (*Färber*), but a friend, noticing his musical talent, arranged for him to take lessons in piano and violin, and the city *Kapellmeister* gave him lessons in composition.⁸³⁴ Through the piano teacher Uthmann became acquainted with the labor movement.⁸³⁵ From 1891 Uthmann led the *Freier Sängerkreis* (a workers’ choir) and soon took on the direction of eight other choirs in the Wuppertal—all the while continuing his day work as a dyer. He became one of the most prolific composers of the German labor movement, writing music for more than 400 songs whose texts dealt with labor, freedom, and peace.⁸³⁶ At the Saalfeld festival the very first item on the program was a song of greeting (*Begrüßungslied*) by Uthmann, and the program later featured a song he wrote in honor of Minnesinger Walther von der Vogelweide. But the more famous of his songs on this program was *Das heilige Feuer* and the words were included in the program booklet.

Das heilige Feuer

Das heilige Feuer schüren wir
Zum hochauf lodernden Brande
Und brennt die Flamme,

We stoke the holy fire
To a blazing flame
And the flame burns,

⁸³⁴ This was the same pattern we have seen with bourgeois musicians—first piano lessons and then instruction in composition.

⁸³⁵ Teachers were frequently associated with radical causes—from the Napoleonic period up to the time of unification. This was partly a result of their low standing in society. See Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals: The Democratic Movement and the Revolution of 1848-1849* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

⁸³⁶ Jan Niko Kirschbaum, „Gustav-Adolf-Uthmann-Denkmal,“ 27. Februar 2013. www.denkmal-wuppertal.de/2013/02/gustav-adolf-uthmann-denkmal.html

Dann leuchtet sie weit hinunter in alle Lande
 Dann leuchtet sie grell in das Elend hinein,
 Ein warnendes Ungeheuer,
 Wir stehen beim flackernden Flammenschein,
 Wir schüren das heilige Feuer.

Das heilige Feuer schüren wir,
 Darin wollen wir schmelzen die Retten,
 Darin wollen wir Raubsucht und Lug und Trug
 Zur ewigen Ruhe betten.
 Wir wollen erlösen aus Qual und Not euch,
 Die ihr uns lieb feid und teuer.
 Werft Holz in die Flamme, das weithin es loht,
 Wir schüren das heilige Feuer.

Das heilige Feuer schüren wir.
 Es soll durch die Nacht euch leuchten,
 Damit ihr den Weg zum Ziel nicht verfehlt,
 Ihr Müden und Schwergebeugten!
 Die letzte Nacht ohne Sternenschein:
 Ein Morgen dämmert, ein neuer,
 Mit himmelsblau und Sonnenschein.
 Wir schüren das heilige Feuer.

And shines far into all lands
 For it shines a glaring light into misery,
 A warning monstrosity,
 We stand by the flickering flames,
 We stoke the holy fire.

We stoke the holy fire,
 For we want to smelt the rescuers,
 We want to lay plunder, lies, and deceit
 to eternal rest.⁸³⁷
 We want to save you from affliction and need,
 who we indeed dearly love.
 Throw wood on the flames, that widely blazes,
 We stoke the holy fire.

We stoke the holy fire.
 Let it shine on you through the night,
 So you don't fall short of the goal,
 You tired and heavy-laden!
 The final night without starlight:
 Morning dawns, a newer one,
 with blue heavens and sunlight.
 We stoke the holy fire.

The text of this song was written by Ludwig Lessen, and Uthmann's setting of it for four-part men's voices was published in 1892. The lyrics were striking for the images they brought to mind—stoking fires was a common enough activity. Peasants stoked cooking fires; blacksmiths stoked fires to forge tools and equipment; industrial steel-workers stoked fires. The painting below by Adolph Menzel represented one aspect of stoking fires that tied industrial labor to the resistance sentiments expressed in Uthmann's song. The workers stoked the fire to get it hot enough to smelt the iron and roll it into bars or sheets, and the light of the fire shone on the straining workers—and on the supervisor who stood in the background looking nonchalantly away from the heat and danger of the open fire. While *Das Heilige*

⁸³⁷ The second line of the second verse of this song is difficult to translate, but in the context I believe the poet was expressing the desire to purify society by getting rid of the oppression of capitalist means of production—those business and factory owners who claimed to care about their workers but really only cared about profits. “Schmelzen” means to melt or smelt and if you combine that with the idea of stoking a fire the image is of purification. “Retten” can mean rescue but it also means salvation in a religious sense. I could not find a full rendition of the song but found a website with the melody line of the first staff of the composition and it was written in a minor key.

Feuer condemned the misery and the burdens industrial laborers faced, it also used fire/light as a symbol of a new day dawning. The workers also wanted hope.⁸³⁸



Figure 27 The Iron Rolling Mill by Adolph Menzel (painted 1883-85)

The only other song from the Saalfeld program that had the words printed in the program was Zöllner's *Frühlingsruf* (Call of Spring) and this echoed the same theme of a new day and a new season for German workers.⁸³⁹

Frühlingsruf

⁸³⁸ *The Iron Rolling Mill* by Adolph Menzel (painted 1883-85). A review in *Die Neue Zeit* of a collection of poems by Franz Dieterich praised his poetry for telling of the sorrows of the poor and the pressures that weighed on the proletariat while not painting a miserable image of their lives. His poetry was accompanied by a more hopeful, freer, and living impulse and the reviewer, Ernst Kreowski, said Dieterich needed to find an Uthmann to put his poetry to song. *Die Neue Zeit* 24, no. 1 (1905-06), 799-800. Accessed through books.google.com

⁸³⁹ There were two well-known Leipzig composers (father and son) with the last name Zöllner. Because this is such a common theme for a song, it is difficult to track down which one wrote it.

Wieder erwacht sind das Licht und die Wärme,
 Wieder erstanden sind Farbe und Duft,
 Wiedergekehrt sind der Zugvögel Schwärmer,
 Wohlklangerfüllt ist die würzige Luft!
 Alles, was Odem hat, dehnt seine Schwingen,
 Alles, was niedrig, strebt hoffend empor;
 Alles, was Stimme hat, läßt sie erklingen,
 "Schallend und wirbelnd in weckendem Chor,"
 Wachtet auf! Die ihr duldend der Liebe und Freiheit entbehrt.
 Der Frühling, der Frühling ist wiedergekehrt! Wachtet auf!

The light and the warmth wake again,
 Color and scents arise again,
 Returned are the swarms of migratory birds,
 The air is filled with sharp freshness!
 All that has breath stretch their wings,
 All that are low push hopefully upwards;
 All who have a voice sound forth,
 "Resounding and swirling in an awakening choir,"
 Wake up! You who suffer from deprivation of love or freedom.
 Spring, spring has returned! Wake up!

There were three more verses to Zöllner's song but the repeated refrain was that spring had returned to give "life and love and freedom" to the land. The last four lines were: "Everywhere we see the poor awaken; Everywhere the fighters arise; Wake up! You who are tired and lonely and burdened with chains; Spring, the liberator has returned! Wake up!" This song struck the hopeful note that workers longed to realize and demonstrated why "Spring" was a common theme for socialist causes. Now when we look at the rest of the program we see how the songs of a little brook bubbling, the time of roses, hiking, or exploring the Rhineland all fit together to create a program of music that offered a festival of hope for worker-singers. However, there was also a sense of escape. Uthmann's style was that of the Classic-Romantic school, and in the other offerings the poetry of Goethe, a song about a medieval Minnesinger, the Bach and Wagner choices also represented a longing for a simpler, pre-industrial past.⁸⁴⁰

There was another movement afoot that echoed these longings.

⁸⁴⁰ The history of the *Arbeiter-Gesang-Verein „Einigkeit“* in Caputh (Brandenburg) notes that political songs were important to sing, but songs that had a nature or homeland theme were equally popular in the years before World War I. www.maennerchor-caputh.de/pages/chronik.php

4.3.4 German Youth Movement

Themes of fire, light, rising up, and yearning for a simpler past was not unique to the workers' movement as can be demonstrated by a poem entitled *Sonnenwende* (Solstice) which appeared in a journal called *Wandervogel, Monatsschrift für deutsches Jugend* in 1911.⁸⁴¹ It is worth looking at the entire poem because it evoked so many of the themes threaded through the entire nineteenth century movement for national meaning, and it connected the early Romantics with early twentieth-century nationalists and the turn of the century workers' movement.

“*Sonnenwende*”

<p>Tiefe Nacht, Rings lagert schwarzes Dunkel, Hoch vom Firmament in heiter Pracht Glänzt der Sterne feierlich Gefunkel.</p>	<p>Deep night, Darkness lies like a ring around us, In the sky, a cheerful splendor Stars festively sparkling against the dark.</p>
<p>Ruhig, leis Liegt die Welt in tiefen Schlaf versunken, Sieh, da lodern Feuerflammen heiß, Gegen Himmel springen tausend Funken.</p>	<p>Ever so quietly and softly The world is sunken in sleep, Look, there are flames of blazing fire, A thousand sparks jump up against the sky.</p>
<p>Leuchtend glüht Dort ein Brand auf waldgen Bergeshöhn, Laut und markig klingt das alte Lied, Eine Schar sieht man ums Feuer stehn.</p>	<p>A glowing gleam A fire on a wooded high mountain, A loud and powerful sound of olden song, From a crowd seen standing around the fire.</p>
<p>Feierlich Dringt der Sang hin durch den stillen Wald, In den Felson allen regt es sich, Und das Tal die Töne wiederhallt.</p>	<p>Festively The song penetrates through the still woods And all the rocks cry out While the valley echoes the sound.</p>
<p>Flamme empor! Steig hinauf in leuchtend hellem Schein, Heb dich hoch und höher noch hervor Von den Bergen hier an unserem Rhein.</p>	<p>Flame up! Rise up in a shining bright light, Lift yourself higher and higher to it From the mountains here on our Rhine.</p>
<p>Jugendstark Standen sie vor mir die blonden Jungen, Aus den Augen glänzte Kraft und Mark, Tief ist mir ihr Sang ins Herz gedrungen.</p>	<p>Strong youth Standing before me strong, blond youths, and out of your eyes shine power and strength, Your song deeply penetrates my heart.</p>
<p>Sonnenwend Feiern heute wir nach altem Brauch,</p>	<p>Soltice We celebrate today like those of old,</p>

⁸⁴¹ Directly translated *Wandervogel* means “wandering/migrating bird,” but the organization was made up of a young peoples’ movement that embraced hiking, singing folksongs, and a healthy lifestyle. This poem was merely attributed to a Berlin *Wandervogel* member.

Und das Feuer schon herunterbrennt,	and the fire is already burning down,
In die Lüfte zieht ein leichter Rauch!	In the air a light smoke wafts!
Vaterland,	Our Fatherland,
Treugeloben wir bei diesen Flammen,	Faithfully we stand by these flames,
Uns umschlinget all ein einig Band,	and claim an encircling band
Stark zu Wehr und Schutz stehn wir zusammen!	Strongly we defend and protect one another! ⁸⁴²

Sonnenwende offered a poem within a poem. You could take just the first short phrase of each stanza and follow a progression—deep night, soft and quiet in which a gleam appeared and suddenly there was a festival. Flames rose up and now strong youth appeared celebrating Solstice and the Fatherland. There was an oft repeated image of darkness preceding dawn. In this case it was the darkness of the decades between the death of the Holy Roman Empire and the birth of the *Kaiserreich*. It was also a *Heimat* poem that celebrated nature, ancient customs, the Rhine, and song. “Strong, blond youths” signaled a particularist vision, but there were some ideas and aspirations that mirrored those of the workers. There was the darkness of a period of oppression and hopes for a new dawn, as well as the use of nature to describe human aspirations. These demonstrated what Rosenwein calls *norms* of emotional expression and values—in this case the poets were all drawing on their German-Romantic roots. It was not as obvious in the Lessen/Uthmann work until the final stanza in which a starry night (points of light even in the darkness) gave way to a new day (blue heavens and sunlight) for the workers. The Zöllner composition had more references to nature—especially to spring and its hopes for a new beginning. One line offered an especially apt, though unintentional, means of connecting the themes of workers with youth. “Returned are the swarms of migratory birds, The air is filled with sharp freshness!” The name *Wandervogel* means wandering (or migratory) bird, and the youth involved in this movement believed that they were bringing about a renewal of life, a sharp freshness, to a world threatened by industrialization. However, the use of fire also carried a common meaning—burning to reveal something new. While the youth stood by their campfire flames and promised to defend one another and the Fatherland, the workers stoked a fire that would usher in a new day of justice and equality—a modern,

⁸⁴² „Sonnenwende“ was printed in *Wandervogel, Monatsschrift für deutsches Jugend* Februar 1911 and attributed to a Berlin *Wandervogel*.

industrialized version of a sound-rich text. At the dawn of the twentieth century two seemingly dissonant emotional communities expressed hopes for a future in the language of flames, dark, light, and song.

The youth movement brings us to the end of our examination of societal dissonance that threatened to alienate and isolate groups of Germans even as Europe lurched to the brink of war in 1914. The generation of 1914 was born into a world in which dissonance of religion and class, of workers' aspirations versus those of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the military, of modernity and failed hopes of political unity formed the backdrop of their youth.⁸⁴³ There were several parallel youth movements, and I am presenting a snapshot of two groups who in divergent degrees challenged bourgeois norms and saw themselves as vanguards of change and renewal—the *Wandervogel* and the *Akademische Jugend*.⁸⁴⁴ Some young people developed an entire counter-movement because they believed the bourgeois associations with their concerts and festival performances were merely for show having lost any authenticity of human and national expression. Others joined that movement but in a more stringently nationalistic fashion. Between 1900 and 1918 the youth went from the heights of asserting their identity as reformers and renewers of culture to the trenches of world war and inhumanity. They rejected materialism and conformity to search for other authentic German folkways with the hopes of re-creating genuine community rooted in the people of the land or a strong attachment to Wilhelmine goals.

One young man out hiking through the woods and humming a song did not constitute a movement or a community, but when dozens more young men took up this activity and adopted a unique style of dress and behavior their actions became ritualized. Per Christopher Small “it is in the bodily experience of performing the actions in company with others that the meaning of taking part lies.”⁸⁴⁵ The *Wandervogel* movement began in the 1890s when a teacher challenged his students to awake from their

⁸⁴³ Robert Wohl, *The Generation of 1914*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979). Wohl deals with the generation who marched off to war as not just a German phenomenon but a European one in which middle-class, highly educated young people were united by common grievances regarding the modern state and the need for cultural renewal.

⁸⁴⁴ Wohl, *The Generation of 1914*, 229. Wohl deals primarily with the bourgeois youth mentality, but Wilfried Gruhn notes that in the pre-war years the working class youth were mostly apolitical and their movement closely resembled that of the *Wandervogel*. See Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 177-179.

⁸⁴⁵ Small, *Musicking*, 105.

lethargy and explore the German countryside.⁸⁴⁶ By 1901 Karl Fischer, a sometime teacher and soldier, had created a national organization for the hikers, but his heavy-handed leadership led to a splintering of the original group into a number of separate groups that all had similar goals and outlook.⁸⁴⁷ In 1911 a *Wandervogel* (last name Seckendorff) explained:

Away with all special interests; extend your hand to fresh-happy hikers; Go out into the fields and woods and seek the trail that we youth must take! We all want only one thing, whether we call ourselves *Wanderer*, *Wandervögel*, *Altwandervögel* or *Pfadfinder*—to elevate and strengthen the physical, mental and moral ability of our German youth!⁸⁴⁸

The hiking movement was influenced by the life-reform movement (*Lebensreform*) which was not exclusive to youth—in fact it was embraced by such diverse individuals as Richard Wagner and Leo Kestenberg’s father. *Lebensreform* originated in late-nineteenth century Germany, Switzerland, and Austria and emphasized a back-to-nature lifestyle which included eating healthy food, abstaining from alcohol and tobacco, the use of alternative medicines, nudism, sexual liberation, and religious reforms. For the members of *Wandervogel* groups healthy living (hiking through the German countryside as well as practicing gymnastic skills, swimming, rowing, ice-skating, and mountain-climbing) also prepared them to be battle-ready (*Wehrfähig*). Seckendorff cheerfully asserted, “Ready for the struggle for existence! Ready for the benefit and piety of our German fatherland!”⁸⁴⁹ Robert Wohl in *The Generation of 1914* explains that the youth were united by a sense of common grievance and believed that a shock was needed to shake Europe out of its bourgeois complacency—war was not something to avoid but was

⁸⁴⁶ Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 165; and Engels, *Zwischen Wandervogel und Wissenschaft*, 15.

⁸⁴⁷ Fischer himself was not one of the original student hikers but came from a traditional fraternity background and was introduced to the new hiking experience by one of the original students. He took it upon himself to come up with a hierarchical leadership structure which prevailed throughout the pre-war and war years even though his original organization split into varied associations. Although the various groups each had their own organizational names, I am using the term *Wandervogel* throughout because it is an effective umbrella term for all the young people involved in the hiking, back to nature, nationalist movement.

⁸⁴⁸ *Wandervogel*, February 1911, 17. The article, “Pfadfinderleben und -streben” was written by a leader (Oberleiter) of the *Wandervogel* whose last name was Seckendorff. Two *Wandervogel* organizations cooperated to publish this monthly journal, to organize hikes, and to publish postcards. The journal was filled with articles written by members describing hiking trips, and they were encouraged to submit drawings of plants and animals and to advertise hikes so others could join them. They used the older Germanic names of the months (Wintersegen, Hornung, Lenzmond, Ostermond, Wonnemond, Brachet, Heuet, Ernting, Scheiding, Gilbhart, Nebelung, Christmond) and after the first few months switched from Latin script to Gothic which they used until the end of World War I.

⁸⁴⁹ “Wehrfähig für den Kampf ums Dasein! Wehrfähig, zu Nutz und Frommen unseres deutschen Vaterlandes!”

instead a solution to the decadence of modern society.⁸⁵⁰ *Wandervogel* groups hiked, played sports, practiced gymnastics, and abstained from tobacco and alcohol in order to make themselves *Wehrfähig*. Defense was one goal, and renewal of society was a related goal. For our purposes in this chapter the renewal aspect was more relevant to the pre-war years.

Historian David Blackbourn describes the Wilhemine period as “an age of fads, fashions, reform movements and instant utopias” in which cultural revolt was “the mirror image of the materialist, ordered society that Germany had become, a very bourgeois response to the established bourgeois order.”⁸⁵¹ *Wandervogel* youth were drawn almost exclusively from the *Bildungsbürgertum* and while they embraced some of the current fads and reform movements, they had been raised to incorporate music into the fabric of their lives, so it was not surprising that singing became the “decisive binding agent” of their clubs.⁸⁵² Broadly speaking singing served a two-fold purpose. First, song accompanied tramping/marching through the German countryside, helped set a pace, and facilitated community—marching in time and singing songs everyone knew engendered a *Wandervogel* ritual that endured into the war years when many of them became soldiers. Second, *Wandervogel* youth had an appreciation of folk songs that was similar to the German Choral Association whose stated goal was to preserve the *Lied*. *Wandervogel* youth, however, made a distinction between their own body of *Lieder*,*r* which had the power to renew society because they were pure folk songs, and those of other bourgeois choral groups who sang art *Lieder* and songs written merely *in the style* of old *Lieder*.⁸⁵³ “Like an ever-blooming, never fading tree . . . the folk-song rises from the thorns that threaten to suffocate it.”⁸⁵⁴ This was the judgement of a frequent contributor to the journal

⁸⁵⁰ Wohl, *The Generation of 1914*, 229.

⁸⁵¹ David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 398-99.

⁸⁵² Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 167.

⁸⁵³ Erwin Schwarz, “Lied und Laute,” *Wandervogel*, Mai 1912, 45-47. In this article Schwarz claimed the superiority of the guitar for accompanying folksongs from the middle ages through the eighteenth century, and he claimed that folksongs came from the simple people of the past whereas the art *Lied* was an invention of the nineteenth century. Schwarz wrote a number of articles about *Lieder* for *Wandervogel* and always with the same emphasis on singing older folksongs and avoiding art *Lieder* written to be accompanied by orchestras and sung in concert halls.

⁸⁵⁴ Erwin Schwarz, „Die Liederbücher des Wandervogels,“ *Wandervogel*, September 1912, 141-143.

of the *Wandervogel*. The difficulty in the early years of the movement lay in finding songs that truly were ever-blooming and could serve as tools of renewal from the suffocating effects of modern life.

Numerous collections of folksongs appeared in the nineteenth century, but the most successful collection of the early twentieth century was a little pocket-sized book published in 1909 that by 1920 had sold at least half a million copies.⁸⁵⁵ *Der Zupfgeigenhansl* was compiled by Hans Breuer (1883-1918) a medical student in Heidelberg. Breuer and Karl Fischer were early leaders of the *Wandervogel* movement. In the foreword of Breuer's song book he wrote, "So, then, little booklet, the traveling journeymen are on their way! Let the guitar be your joy, and if you are good friends, your journey will be most fun."⁸⁵⁶ Breuer playfully first addressed the songs themselves and joined hiking, guitar-playing, and song with a life of travelling along the byways and trails of the German countryside. In the conclusion to his foreword, Breuer spoke to the hikers:

If this or that song seems strange and incomprehensible to you, do not forget: the melody often has a difficult point which wants to be grasped. Sing the song a lot. . . . In the midst of the open countryside the single human voice is a strange and beautiful thing. . . . Thus, the booklet is ultimately intended to serve the art of singing with a focus on our contemporary cultural aspirations: love for the people and reverence for their imperishable works.⁸⁵⁷

Breuer began collecting the songs for this book in 1904 and explained elsewhere that folksong was "drawn from the roots and soil of a common nourishment"—a very Herder-like explanation for why the *Wandervogel* wanted to recapture the songs of the German people. Singing these songs as they hiked through the German countryside would give them a love for the genuine people, the people of the land, and allow the youth to become a means of German renewal.⁸⁵⁸ *Der Zupf*, as it was known, became a cult object for the *Wandervogel* and although the grand total of their membership by 1914 was about 50,000, sales of *Der Zupf* far exceeded the official membership of their organizations.⁸⁵⁹ Kaschuba concludes that the songbook's popularity lay in its traditional arrangement with categories like *Abschied* (Departure),

⁸⁵⁵ Wolfgang Kaschuba, „Volkslied und Volksmythos, Der ‚Zupfgeigenhansl‘ als Lied- und Leitbuch der deutschen Jugendbewegung,“ *Jahrbuch für Volksliedforschung* 34 (1989): 41-55.

⁸⁵⁶ So geliete denn, kleines Büchlein, denn fahrenden Gesellen hinaus auf seinen Weg! Die Zupfgeige sei dein Genöß, und wenn ihr gute Freunde seid, wird eure Reise fein lustig werden.

⁸⁵⁷ Hans Breuer, *Der Zupfgeigenhansl* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1909), Foreword to the first edition.

⁸⁵⁸ Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 170.

⁸⁵⁹ Kaschuba, „Der Zupfgeigenhansl“ als Lied- und Lietbuch,“ 42.

Abend or *Sommerlust* (Evening, Summer Joy), *Soldatenlieder* (Soldier Songs), and genres like ballads, hymns, spinning songs, or dance songs which made the collection something familiar to *Wandervogel* youth from their childhoods. Singing the songs gave Germans a sense of connection to their past and an assurance of an enduring heritage in the midst of rapidly changing social and economic conditions—not such a different aspiration to that of DSB members, pilgrims to Bayreuth, or even the workers who gathered in Saalfeld in 1912. However, it was not enough to merely sing songs and hike. There was a further way German youth could contribute to renewal rather than merely escaping from modernity.



Figure 28 The songbook of the *Wandervögel* was small enough to fit in a hiker's pocket

The songs in *Der Zupf* reminded German youth of past noble and heroic times, but there were more definite actions they could take to reconnect with their roots. *Wandervogel* member Arthur Krachke wrote an article for the *Wandervogel* journal about *Lieder* in 1912 in which he pointed out that although folksong was the purest expression of “our being and will” there was another source that also quickened the spirit and that was *Heimat* culture (*Heimatkultur*)—to sing *Volkslieder* apart from the whole culture of

the *Volk* was senseless.⁸⁶⁰ To that end, German youth took advantage of long weekends and holidays to participate in village festivals and even to put on their own “folk” performances. *Wandervogel* Hans Jaeger explained that from olden times festivals were a relief from isolation and offered three ways to demonstrate community: “rhythm in sound, line, and color” (*Ton, Linie, Farbe*), in other words song, dance, and dress. Festivals gave the folk an opportunity to express their humanity to its fullest extent. Jaeger went on to say modern festivals were “empty” in the music, “mindless” in dance, and colorless in dress—here he was critiquing the festival life of bourgeois choral organizations like the German Choral Association. Instead the youth wanted to celebrate four festivals: Solstice, the Equinox, May Day, and Harvest—these were rooted in pre-Christian days and by reconnecting with the oldest and simplest customs they could escape the artificiality of modernity and at the same time renew it.⁸⁶¹ Nietzsche had decried the sickness of his contemporaries—a sickness resulting from succumbing to the struggles and torments of modernity rather than developing the will to overcome. *Wandervögel* believed they could be agents of renewal.⁸⁶²

A Mayfest (*Maienfest*) offered an especially good opportunity to enjoy a hike, escape modernity, and travel back in time—the weather would be pleasant and spring in full bloom. Carlos Koth-Firgau described a *Wandervogel* outing in 1912 where 500 young people gathered at the Hamburg train station and took a fourth-class train to the tiny village of Sprötze.⁸⁶³ There another group of *Wandervogel* (dressed in peasant attire) met them with two wagons decorated with flowers, wreaths, and colorful *Bändern* (ribbons). The youthful parade wound its way from the train station through the narrow streets of the village accompanied by the sounds of their guitars, mandolins, flutes, and strumming (*Geigen, Mandolinen, Flöten und Klampfen*)—some were uncertain of the words, and others sang out—in all it

⁸⁶⁰ Arthur Krachke, “Unsere Lieder,” *Wandervogel*, Dezember 1912, 234-236.

⁸⁶¹ Hans Jaeger, “Das Fest,” *Wandervogel*, August, 1912, 109.

⁸⁶² Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887). I used the plural of *Wandervogel* by adding an umlaut.

⁸⁶³ The current day website of Sprötze (sproetze.de) gives a little history. It was first mentioned in 1105 CE and had only a few families living there until the railway lines were built in the second half of the nineteenth century. Then the population soared from 153 inhabitants to 343. (In 2003 the population was 2,439). It is located in Lower Saxony and surrounded by woods. The *Wandervogel* hikers would have overwhelmed the population of the village when they arrived in 1912.

affected an “informal and natural character.”⁸⁶⁴ Here we see elements of a DSB festival—gathering at the train station, parading through city streets festooned with greenery, and processing to a central performance location accompanied by music. However, the youth were in a remote, rustic setting, and their program was designed to blend in with the customs of the local people.

The *Wandervogel* made their way outside the village to a little grove of trees (rather than a *Rathaus* or a *Festhalle*) where someone had decorated a cottage with more branches and ribbons giving it a farm-like character (*bauerlichen Charakter*)—and here the main action of the Mayfest took place. The young people performed a play by Ibsen (*Das Hünengrab*) as the villagers circled around to watch. Koth-Firgau continued his description of the Mayfest: “Enthusiasm glowed in their eyes and enthusiasm gave their words substance giving us picture after picture from the distant past,” however, “This old German heroic legend placed great demands on the abilities of the young amateurs.”⁸⁶⁵ But the youth were undaunted and the *Wandervogel* girls changed into white dresses and put flowers in their hair for an afternoon of dancing and music. They played favorite games with the children and had coffee and cake with the villagers, while the young men laid their guitars and mandolins aside to sing old folksongs until the day faded, and the *Wandervogel* made their way back to the train station. Carlos Koth-Firgau, who submitted this report to the *Wandervogel* journal, seemed caught up in the color and joy of the day’s festivities, but it would be interesting to know what the villagers thought of this strange event—a group of well-to-do young people staging what they obviously believed were genuine peasant customs and then getting on a train to return to civilization.

Christopher Small’s concept of “musicking” gives us a less cynical way to look at this Mayfest. If we consider the entire event a ritualized activity in which each participant played a role, the villagers were just as important to the festival as the young people. The villagers joined in the festive procession of wagons enjoying the music and colorful decorations. They did not sit in a theater or concert hall but gathered closely around as the young people performed the play—audience and performers blended into

⁸⁶⁴ Carlos Koth-Firgau, “Das Maienfest des Hamburger Wandervereins,” *Wandervogel*, Juli 1912, 69-74.

⁸⁶⁵ Koth-Firgau, “Das Maienfest.”

one crowd where facial expressions and moods parlayed back and forth. In a sense the villagers were both guests and hosts, and it was a reciprocal role for the *Wandervögel*. It was in the acts—playing games, having cake and coffee together, dancing and singing—that a meaningful relationship between all participants was formed. If we combine “musicking” with the concepts about emotions, place, and objects developed by Harris and Sørensen (Chapter Four) we notice the atmosphere of the village woods created an affective field in which the white dresses of the girls, the garlands and ribbons on the wagons and cottage, and the guitars and mandolins generated joyful and festive emotions quite different from walking through the woods on any other day. Looked at in this light, *Wandervogel* acts *did* have a renewing effect on all the participants, and the villagers were not mere props to a youthful experiment. The *Wandervogel* journals were filled with stories about these adventures as well as beautiful artwork—some of the drawings (and photographs) were from well-known artists, but many were drawn by the students themselves. The art and the experiences together affected an emotional community of cultural renewal and knowledge.

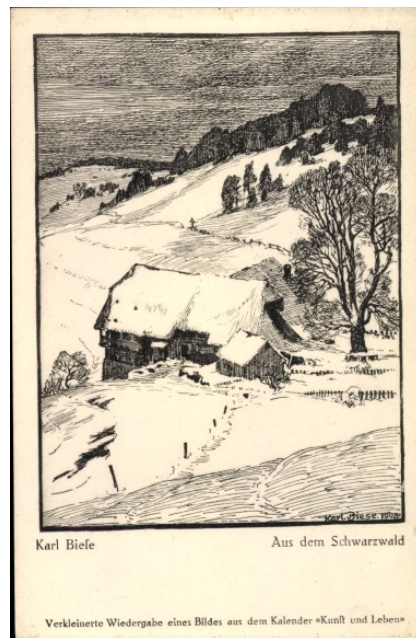


Figure 29 A *Wandervogel* calendar featuring images of the German landscape

The *Wandervogel* movement was specifically designed to lure college preparatory school (*Gymnasium*) students out of the cities and into the countryside to hike, learn about nature and local geography, sing, and practice a healthy lifestyle so they could contribute to the renewal of German society—but what happened when they left their *Gymnasiums* and went on to higher education?⁸⁶⁶ The university student societies with the longest traditions of communal activity dated to the fourteenth century and involved rituals like dueling, fencing, and drinking.⁸⁶⁷ Reforms of those traditions initiated during the Napoleonic period led to the *Burschenschaften* fraternities. These were a network of fraternities that grew up after 1806 and were strongly influenced by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, who introduced gymnastics and singing as essential features of the student associations—many of the affiliated university students fought in the *Befreiungskriege* (Wars of Liberation) in 1813-14.⁸⁶⁸ Young men who graduated from universities throughout the nineteenth century consequently joined *Turnervereine* (gymnasts clubs)—a movement closely associated with the political struggle for unification.⁸⁶⁹ The motto of the *Burschenschaften* was *Frisch, Fromm, Fröhlich, Frei* (fresh, pious, happy, free)—an inspiration for the articulated goals of the *Wandervogel* movement (“extend your hand to fresh-happy hikers . . . to elevate and strengthen the physical, mental, and moral ability of our German youth”). Father Jahn, the founder of the gymnast movement and a major figure in the *Burschenschaft* movement, a teacher with democratic, hands-on methods of instruction, and a hero to the freedom movement of the first half of the nineteenth century, was the one important connecting link between youth movements of the first decades of the nineteenth century and those of the first decades of the twentieth. The *Turner* movement was second in popularity to the choral movement and it drew members from both bourgeois and working class elements of society.⁸⁷⁰ *Wandervogel* youth often joined university fraternities that were connected to the

⁸⁶⁶ From *Gymnasium* students generally went on to Hochschule (college) or universities and then to professions like law, medicine, government positions, church offices, professorships. The values of the life reform movement set the *Wandervogel* youth apart from the standards of most university fraternities.

⁸⁶⁷ Bias-Engels, *Zwischen Wandervogel und Wissenschaft*, 33.

⁸⁶⁸ Harald Lönnecker, “‘Sieg und Glanz dem deutschen Reich!’ Die akademischen Sängler im Ersten Weltkrieg,” *Lied und populäre Kulture* 50/51 (2005/2006): 9-53.

⁸⁶⁹ Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century*, 122-23.

⁸⁷⁰ There were members of four different *Turnervereine* at the DASB Saalfeld festival in 1912.

Turner movement—the *Akademische Turnverein*, *Turnerschaft*, or *Sängerschaft*—or the *Freistudentenschaft* (Free Student Union) created by groups of students who wanted a university organization separate from the traditional fraternities. They rejected dueling, courts of honor, and drinking and thus formed common ground with the *Wandervogel* or life reform movement.⁸⁷¹

The above narrative presents a more or less straight trajectory from the action-minded, nationalistic youth of the early nineteenth century to the *Wandervogel* movement of the early twentieth century, but I want to look at the traditional university students in a little more detail because although they did not adhere to many of the “life reform” practices of the *Wandervogel*, both groups had a common belief in battle-readiness (*Wehrfähig*). University students had formed choirs as early as the 1820s as a result of the emergent choral movement and these were often part of a particular fraternity like St. Pauli or Arion—both national fraternities. In 1896 a number of the *Hochschule* and university choral groups joined together to create the *Deutsch-akademischen Sängerbund* (Academic Singers), which by 1914 had a membership of 5,500.⁸⁷² An article in *Die Sängerkhalle* announced the founding of this association and explained their statement of purpose. They wanted to preserve the *Lied* and supported the men’s choral movement in this regard; they planned to hold regular choral festivals; they created a representative form of government and would publish a monthly newspaper. They abjured singers who out of pride and particularism avoided “the aspirations of ordinary people” (*einfacher Leute*) because they were training to be doctors, judges, and theologians and planned to spend their lives serving people. They meant to do that through singing, as well as through their professions.⁸⁷³ Historian Harald Lönnecker adds to this noble statement of purpose that the Academic Singers were fierce supporters of the Kaiser’s imperial and naval

⁸⁷¹ See Bias-Engels, *Zwischen Wandervogel und Wissenschaft*, 35-38; and Gruhn, *Geschichte der Musikerziehung*, 171-173.

⁸⁷² Lönnecker, “Sieg und Glanz,” A *Hochschule* was a “college” (as opposed to a university) but they represented the top level of the education system. Because the acronym for the *Deutsch-akademischen Sängerbund* (DASB) is the same as that for the Workers’ Choral Association, I am using Academic Singers as a designation for this group.

⁸⁷³ *Die Sängerkhalle*, 5 November, 1896, 513-15. „Wehe den akademischen Sängern, welche, von akademischen Hochmut und Sondergeist getragen, in das bürgerliche Leben eintreten und dann fernstehen von den Bestrebungen einfacher Leute für dieselben Zwecke, die sie in der akademische Jugend verfolgt haben. Wie der Theologe, der Jurist und Mediziner als Pfarrer, Richter und Arzt mit und unter dem Volkes und zu ihrem eignen Segen verwenden sollen, so soll der frühere akademische Sänger mit und unter dem Volke stehen und seine gesangliche Bildung unter dasselbe verpflanzen, nicht fernabstehen im pharisäischen Hochmut und spötteln über Schwächen und Leistungsunfähigkeit.“

policies and increasingly saw international conflict as a matter of win-or-lose rather than negotiation and compromise: “A radical all-or-nothing-mentality had spread in this ‘age of nervousness.’”⁸⁷⁴ Lönnecker attributes this to the dueling/fencing culture of the fraternities in which every insult or dispute was settled by physical violence. He uses various song themes to demonstrate this point—lines about answering the call of the Kaiser appeared frequently.

Daß, wenn ruft der Kaiser wieder,
Auch der Sänger ist bereit.

Then, when the Kaiser calls again
The singer is ready, too.⁸⁷⁵

Doch, wenn einst in schweren Tagen
Tönt der Ruf: Fürs Vaterland!
Auch der Sänger wiß zu sterben
Für den Kaiser und das Reich!

But if again in hard days
The cry sounds: For the Fatherland!
The singer also knows how to die
For the Kaiser and the Reich!⁸⁷⁶

The *Wandervogel* youth hiked and lived a healthy lifestyle in order to be “battle ready,” but they did not dwell on fighting for Kaiser and Reich. An article that appeared in the *Wandervogel* journal in 1915 explained that the young men’s earlier emphasis on hiking was primarily so they could get to know the countryside and its people whereas now (the second year of the war), games were beneficial for building up the body and developing “comradeship.”⁸⁷⁷ The writer of this article went on to say that the boys who were too young to go off to war needed to play these “war games” because it was not only healthy to be out in the open air but it prepared them for future service. There was a far greater emphasis on health and folkways among the *Wandervögel* than among the Academic Singers from the universities. But look again at the last stanza of *Sonnenwende* (Solstice). The *Wandervogel* youth who penned the poem ended with, “Our Fatherland, Faithfully we stand by these flames, and claim an encircling band, Strongly we defend and protect one another!” If there was a subtle difference it was in the Academic Singers’ emphasis on fighting for *Kaiser* and *Reich* versus defending “one another” and the Fatherland. There were twenty-two *Soldatenlieder* in *Der Zupf*—but most were centuries-old songs and did not refer to a specific war or ruler, only the universal experience of marching off to die. Singing songs in company

⁸⁷⁴ Lönnecker, “Sieg und Glanz,” 16.

⁸⁷⁵ Quoted from Lönnecker, “Sieg und Glanz,” 13. These are just two lines from *Treueschwur*, a song published in the *Kommers-Blättern* (1887).

⁸⁷⁶ Quoted from Lönnecker, *Vor 100 Jahren* appeared in *Akademische Sängszeitung* 1898.

⁸⁷⁷ Gerhard Weißer, “Der Kriegswandervogel,” *Wandervogel*, February 1915, 46-47.

with other young men who anticipated fighting and dying for *Kaiser* and *Reich* eventually engaged most of Germany's young men—a topic for the final chapters.

The generation of 1914 had a foot in two worlds—that of *Kultur* and *Bildung* that encouraged cultivating an appreciation of the arts from within in addition to that of Nietzsche's modern world that was sick in mind and spirit. Like the generations before them they found solace in the German countryside, the comforting ambiguity of *Heimat*, and the songs of the folk as well as the art of the German masters. Six years after the 1912 May festival staged by *Wandervogel* in the village of Störtze, *Wandervogel* youth from Elberfeld put on a very different type of concert for their parents. It was Christmas 1917, and they performed works by Mendelssohn, Grieg, Haydn, Beethoven, Bach, and Mozart in a rented hall. Some were works for piano or violin, there was a solo and a duet, and only three “folksongs” on a program that included a total of fifteen offerings. Martha Clarenbach who submitted an article (“Hausmusik”) to the *Wandervogel* journal justified the program as a homage to their parents' tastes and their own upbringing. But Clarenbach specified that these works only held value when performed from the heart.⁸⁷⁸ At her conclusion she quoted a line from Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*: “*Verachtet mir die Meister nicht und ehrt mir ihre Kunst!*” (Despise not the masters and honor their art!)⁸⁷⁹ Ironically, that was the same message embraced by the bourgeoisie, workers, and youth in the early twentieth century.

An invisible connection existed between each group of performers whether in Berlin or Bayreuth, Nuremberg or Saalfeld, and also a tangible emotional connection. What “musicking” allows us to do is to see each performance as an individual event and not the isolated effort of a composer—workers began by singing the same repertoire as their bourgeois counterparts, but they put a different spin on songs about spring or Mendelssohn's *Walpurgisnacht*. At the same time they realized they were stepping into a long line of other performers who knew this same piece of music. Beethoven died long before industrialization

⁸⁷⁸ *Wandervogel*, Dreizehnter Jahrgang 1918. This particular issue of the journal that appeared at the end of the war was written entirely by women—after the title and date there was a drawing of a young man on a horse and below that: „von den Mädchen.” (By the young women)

⁸⁷⁹ The quoted line is from Act III, Scene 2 of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* by Richard Wagner.

created a new class of laborers, and when he penned the *Ninth Symphony* he could not picture a choir and orchestra of amateur working class people performing the work at Berlin's Free People's Theater—or at the ground-breaking ceremony of Wagner's Bayreuth *Festspielhaus*. Imagine the *Ninth Symphony* being performed in numerous locations at the same time (and each group thinking of the original performance), and we have a sense of the complex web of emotional connections that arose from “musicking”. The efforts required to learn a composition allowed each performance to be a new creation because each group of performers, each location, and each audience affected something unique, but the composition itself generated an atmosphere that transcended time and space. Within individual groups of teachers, workers, and youth emotional communities were created and contested, and they continually overlapped.

The other side of this story was the historical setting of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in which political, economic, and social forces pulled at the threads of potential cohesion created by “musicking”. Dissonance was real—anti-Catholicism, antisemitism, opposing musical camps (Brahms versus Wagner), the rise of socialism, imperialism, and militarism, youth culture and life reform movements, rapid technological changes, urbanization and alienation from traditional communities. However, dissonance only existed because a tonal center had been established. The dissonance came from deviations in the established norms, but Germans found ways to weave dissonance into networks of relationship. This musical metaphor and Schönberg's analysis of dissonance was especially effective for the German Empire in the decades before World War I.

Movement III was designed to uncover the essential elements among divergent social groups, religious groups, and age groups in the decades between 1890 and 1914 and to demonstrate ways society adhered in the midst of tensions. Dahlhaus offers this insight into the structure of musical composition that, like the Schönberg thoughts about dissonance, offer further clarity into the Wilhelmine era. “Anyone trying to discover how a piece of music coheres internally will automatically look for what Hans Mersmann called a ‘relationship of substance’ between its ostensibly divergent parts.”⁸⁸⁰ In the classical-romantic tradition a composer first established a tonal center and then progressed from within that center

⁸⁸⁰ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, 272.

to develop themes. The musical notion of atonality allowed the composer to stray from a tonal center and stretch tonality to the limits of dissonance—all the while maintaining the work’s “substance.” Pre-war German society was dissonant, yet it cohered. The *Berlin Liedertafel*, *Riedel-Verein*, *Allgemeine Cäcilia-Verein*, German Workers’ Choral Association, *Wandervogel* youth, Luther devotees, and Wagnerians represented a multidimensional music culture in which each group held to individual goals and values, and when taken together represented a complex, sometimes dissonant collective construct.⁸⁸¹ Rather than a two-dimensional web of connections, it is more appropriate to envision it as three-dimensional—like sound itself. Without this quality there is no interest to the music—it is flat and motionless. It was the dissonance and complexity that gave German culture color and interest without insurmountable incoherence.

On the eve of the World War, some singers from the *Fränkische Sängerbund* held a festival and a retrospective about this *Bamberger Sängerbundesfest* that appeared in the annual report from 1920 stated: "As splendid as the Bamberger festival days were, there was an uncanny pressure on all minds, heavy, dark clouds darkening the political horizon and a distant, dull rumble hinting at the outbreak of a thunderstorm. Ten days later, the catastrophe came over Germany. On August 2, 1914, the mobilization of all armed forces took place, and two days later the first German troops crossed the western border."⁸⁸² Rudolf Mehnert, a *Wandervogel*, echoed this premonition—but not as a retrospective reflection. On August 1 Mehnert had been hiking with a group of fellow *Wandervögel* through Denmark when they heard that war had been declared, and they began to make their way back home to Leipzig. On hearing that Russia had entered the war, the boys sang a song together, “*Rein schön’rer Tod ist in der Welt, als wer vom Feind erschlagen.*” (No Purer more Lovely Death than to be Slain by the Enemy). It took them three more days to find trains with enough vacant seats to make it home, and in Leipzig they found the station filled with soldiers moving to the front. Mehnert’s last diary entry on August 5 concerned his mother. “My mother stood comfortless next to me and said, ‘This is a fearful war.’ And her words echoed

⁸⁸¹ Daniel Barenboim, “Wagner, Israel and the Palestinians,” <https://danielbarenboim.com> I paraphrased Barenboim’s quote about Wagner’s music. .

⁸⁸² Brusniak, *Das grosse Buch*, 171.

in my ears just like the old days when she woke me in the middle of the night to say, ‘There is a terrible thunderstorm over us!’”⁸⁸³ War created its own dissonance, but it temporarily drew Germans together in a resolution to put aside differences for the sake of national defense.

5 MOVEMENT IV REQUIEM FOR THE LIVING, 1914-1918

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall have comfort. Yea, I will comfort you as one whom his own mother comforts.” Johannes Brahms, *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, 1866

Just days after war was declared in August 1914, an article appeared in *Die Sangerhalle* entitled “Des Vaterlandes Hochgesang” (The Exalted Song of the Fatherland) that called for German soldiers to bring their songbooks with them to battle. “Brothers, you who are moving out with arms, bring the knightly weapon of songs along. Be singing armies, and you will be victorious armies. . . . If in the thunder of battle you call out like an echo of thunder, you know that thousands of brothers in the homeland (*Heimat*) swear allegiance to Germany with the same song; all are one and united by the same song.”⁸⁸⁴ In these few lines we see allusions to medieval singing knights, *Heimat*, and the characteristic use of tumultuous noise (thunder)—a feature of ancient poetry.⁸⁸⁵ Brave soldiers marching to battle in 1914 stepped into a long line of heroic German warriors, and the weapon of song was as significant as the tools of modern warfare—a message that was steeped in the Romantic imagery in which nineteenth century German culture was rooted. At the same time the soldiers were not marching out alone, but “thousands of brothers” at home were with them in spirit because they all sang the same *Lieder*—conjuring visions of nature, the seasons, love, religious faith, the Rhine, and departures.

Surely a more appropriate sentiment for the war years was Johannes Brahms’s *Ein deutsches Requiem* (*German Requiem*). A traditional requiem included musical prayers and chants for the repose of

⁸⁸³ Rudolf Mehnert, “Heimkehr aus Danemark nach Kriegsausbruch,” *Wandervogel*, February 1915, 42-45.

⁸⁸⁴ *Die Sangerhalle*, 8. August 1914. „Bruder, ihr, die ihr auszieht mit Waffen und Wehr, nehmt Lieder mit, diese ritterliche Waffe; seid singende Heere und ihr seid siegende Heere. . . . Das sollt ihr wissen. Wenn ihr vorm Donner der wurgenden Schlacht den Ruf wie Donnerhall anstimmt, wisset, da in der Heimat vieltausend Bruder mit dem gleichen Sange die gleiche Treue an Deutschland schworen, all Volk ist eins, durch Lied verbunden.“

⁸⁸⁵ The references here to the noise of battle, of victorious armies, and of thousands of people singing remind us of *Lieder* that referenced the Ossian saga (or the German *Nibelungenlied*) such as Podbertsky’s „Tausendjahrige Linde,” (Chapter Five) or Uhland’s “Siegesbotschaft,” (Chapter Two) Brahms’s “Fingal Gesang,” (Chapter Three), or “Ossian” from the *Berlin Liedertafel* performance in the Zoological Gardens (Chapter Six).

the dead, but Brahms's composition aimed to console the living. Prayers for the dead were replaced by lyrics that emphasized comfort, and although the title referenced "German" sorrow, Brahms meant it as an expression of a "universal human experience."⁸⁸⁶ Because Brahms used passages from Martin Luther's Old and New Testament Bible translations, this was a German rather than a Latin requiem. The *Requiem* was Brahms's most ambitious choral work and established his musical reputation. Carl Dahlhaus claims that it "was one of those works in which the nineteenth century recognized its own identity."⁸⁸⁷ The integration of religious texts not directly linked to a Christian ritual, but which represented a universal human experience, was a culmination of the liberation of music from its service to church and court to its cultivation of the individual spirit (*Bildung*). In this final Movement I argue that Germans used their uniquely cultivated notion of *Kultur* as a tool of comfort and reassurance both on the front lines of battle and on the homefront. In doing so they drew on the established themes and genres which we have examined in the previous chapters. Webs of emotional community that stretched to include Catholics, Protestants, Jews, industrial workers, and others offered the "people of music" a further means of comfort during the war years as singing continued to reassure the living.

Germans living through the early days of August 1914 could still revel in nineteenth-century ideals like those expressed by the editors of *Die Sangerhalle* who proclaimed the companionship and unity of thousands of Germans. There are two important observations to be made from that August 8, 1914 article mentioned above, and these set the stage for this Movement's organization. First, although the sentiments articulated by the editors of *Die Sangerhalle* represented the confident mood expressed in many songs and poems written in the first months of the war, those quickly turned more sober. And second, it revealed the awkwardness in attempting to separate music into dissimilar arenas belonging to either the frontline soldier, the wounded and convalescing, or civilians. According to *Die Sangerhalle*, all were united by song. Certainly the front line soldiers experienced something their mothers could not

⁸⁸⁶ Robert Shaw, *The Robert Shaw Reader*, ed. Robert Blocker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 230. Brahms first began working on the idea for a requiem after the 1856 death of his friend and mentor Robert Schumann. He took up serious composition after the death of his mother in 1865.

⁸⁸⁷ Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 184.

imagine, but citizens of the German Empire lived in overlapping worlds in which they experienced different degrees of deprivation and suffering and yet relied on music's power to comfort, encourage, and remind them of their shared duties and common heritage. Therefore in this Movement the realms of war fronts and homefront are taken together and their practices treated as parts of a whole.⁸⁸⁸ The war years demonstrated that shared norms, rituals, symbols, and values both generated national unity and tied Germans together in a shared experience of grief and loss.

Chapter Nine deals with the themes of myth, nature, history, and *Heimat* and ways they were utilized throughout the war years—for comfort and encouragement, as well as propaganda. It was not only in particular songs that these themes were repeatedly invoked but even more evocatively through images in newspaper mastheads, on postcards, and other visual arts. Material objects revealed not only what the government wanted people to believe about the nation and the war effort, but they also reflected certain societal norms—in order for propaganda to be effective it has to resonate with the target audience. Poetry was often woven through visuals, and it is important to remember that the *Lied* was a genre specifically created to express poetry through song. From the days of Goethe and Herder the belief had been cultivated that poetry and music represented the authentic expression of the people, and that belief seeped into the common German consciousness over the course of the nineteenth-century in which *Bildung* meant the cultivation or training of one's mind to comprehend the meanings of history, science, music, and so forth. Therefore the repeated evocations of these intertwined themes (myth, nature, history, *Heimat*) expressed the values of a single emotional community in which there were, of course, exceptions.

⁸⁸⁸ Nicolas Detering, „Kriegslyrik im Ersten Weltkrieg: Germanistische Perspektiven,“ in *Populäre Kriegslyrik im Ersten Weltkrieg*, eds. Nicholas Detering, Michael Fischer, and Aibe-Marlene Gerdes, (Münster: Waxmann, 2018), 15-18, 22 and 33. Detering credits teachers, students, professors, and both Evangelical and Catholic preachers/priests with the majority of the published poetry in the first months of the war with notable exceptions from the so-called “Arbeiterdichtern” (Heinrich Lersch, Karl Bröger, Gerrit Engelke, or Alfons Petzold) as well as some women poets (Clara Blüthgen, Ina Seidel, or Isolde Kurz). After 1915 the themes of war poetry (and the contributors to this volume conflate poetry with song—per the *Lied*) changed to resignation, martyrdom, and sacrificial heroism. The editors of this volume claim there was a “genuine literary communication between the Front and Heimat” that is represented by common themes in poetry, stories, and songs.

In Chapter Ten we turn to themes that were not new but which moved to the forefront as the war dragged on. As opposed to enthusiastic heroism and the optimism tied to earlier victories over the French in 1813-15 and 1870-71, a sense of resignation and sacrifice characterized the years after 1916. But lyrics from numerous songs assured the war generation (both at home and on the front lines) that they sowed seeds for the survival of the German people.⁸⁸⁹ Alongside resignation and sacrifice I examine specific uses of fortress imagery and how this demonstrated a shift in focus from national triumph to national preservation. Words and images from Martin Luther's hymn, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," provided a rich source for propaganda as it could be associated with any number of actual fortresses along the French-German border or German settlements in the conquered territories of the East (*Ober Ost*).⁸⁹⁰ The fact that the 400th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation fell in 1917 enhanced the use of Luther symbolism.

Movement IV is not meant to be a chronological approach as much as a thematic one, because there was not a single moment in the war when there was a shift from singing, victorious armies to those of resignation and sacrifice. Nevertheless, one can see a shift in the national mood even in censored sources like letters and newspapers. Christopher Small claims that myth and ritual are needed most urgently in times of crisis, and in this Movement I use the term myth in a more expansive sense than that of Germanic foundation stories or heroic tales.⁸⁹¹ The conception of *Heimat*, the narratives of early nineteenth-century liberation battles, soldiers' battle experiences, and even holiday celebrations like Christmas could become mythologized—especially as they became tools of propaganda. In this broader sense, I explore the themes previously encountered. Singers, artists, politicians, students, newspaper

⁸⁸⁹ See Detering, *Populäre Kriegsliteratur im Ersten Weltkrieg*, 33-38; also, George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 70-106. Germans might have drawn inspiration from church father Tertullian who wrote that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church" (Apologeticus, Chapter 50) or from the French national anthem. The *Marsellaise* is replete with the image of blood cleansing the land of enemies, but the last verse is more apropos: "We'll enter on the battlefield; To find our elders there no more; On their glorious dust we'll tread; And their virtues will chart our course . . ." (trans. Jean Migrenne and Sylvere Monod, www.marsellaise.org) More significantly were the many biblical passages that Brahms used in his *Requiem* that expressed these themes.

⁸⁹⁰ Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁸⁹¹ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 101.

editors, propagandists, and military authorities mythologized the past to reassure themselves that the nation was worth fighting for. The sources for this Movement reflect a control of information, a delicate manipulation of it, and at the same time a shared sense of purpose to comfort the wounded and sorrowing and to maintain continuity in a world where so much was falling apart.



Figure 30 Image created in honor of the 100th anniversary commemorations of World War I

5.1 Chapter 9 Arise Comrades, Without Freedom Life is Worthless

*Wohlauf Kameraden, aufs Pferd, aufs Pferd!
 Ins Feld, in die Freiheit gezogen.
 Friedrich Schiller, 1798*

The fact that World War I occurred almost exactly one hundred years after the Napoleonic Wars of Liberation (*Befreiungskriege*) offered propagandists and ordinary citizens rich fodder for fabricating glorious recreations of the past. The heroes of the battles of 1813-1815 faced the legendary French demigod Napoleon, defeated him, and liberated the German states from foreign oppression. In the wake of these events the earliest members of the male choral movement considered themselves “carriers of a culture of remembrance,” and not only that, they were those who never gave up on the idea of a unified German nation-state—a modern reformulation of the Holy Roman Empire. The poetry, songs, deeds in battle, and zeal for German unity of early nineteenth-century nationalists like Ernst Moritz Arndt, Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, Ludwig Uhland, Conrad Kreutzer, and Theodor Körner inspired a new generation

to replicate the deeds of their grandfathers both on the battlefield and in song. In 1914 grandsons could take up the torch, reignite the attempt to unify the nation thus reaffirming the wholeness of a society that had been fractured by urbanization, industrialization, and mass culture.⁸⁹² Much of the propaganda produced in World War I aimed at stirring the memories of the early nineteenth-century struggle for a *national* mission of survival. The fact that images and lines of poetry were effective one hundred years later proved the degree to which twentieth-century Germans had internalized a narrative of the nation that included valuing myth, nature, history, and *Heimat*. In this chapter I argue that Germans drew on all the familiar tropes that gave meaning to national identity to not only reinforce what they believed about themselves as the people of *Kultur*, but they also continued to sing together and attend concerts as a means of comfort and reassurance.

Common German values, nurtured over the course of a century, reinforced the multi-layered and overlapping webs of connection between combatants, convalescing soldiers, and civilians, and for my purposes these revolved around music. To demonstrate this, I plan to examine the themes of *Heimat*, nature, mythology, and history as they were portrayed in student letters, publications, personal accounts, and material objects. It is not possible to draw clear lines between the themes because of the intertwining nature of their use in language, images, and especially in song. For all choirs, the war interrupted their practices and performances to some extent. In July 1914, the choral records of the Feuchtwangen *Gesang- und Musikverein* ended abruptly and without explanation, but the publication of *Die Sangerhalle* continued throughout the war years and offers us an important perspective into how choral societies continued to function. Some Germans who had participated in the choral music culture of the *Kaiserreich*

⁸⁹² Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003); Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983 and 2003). These two sources are valuable for linking the belief system of the German *Frühromantiks* to mid- to late-nineteenth century ideas about geographic expansion and national survival. The early Romantics (Friedrich and Wilhelm Schlegel, Ludwig Tieck, Novalis, Friedrich Schleiermacher, F. W. J. Schelling, and others) established the notion that all of society (the arts, sciences, nature, humans, and the state) should be engaged in a “restless striving for wholeness” and an “eternal longing for unity” and this would be achieved through *Bildung*—the education of humanity and development of all human powers into a whole (Beiser, 8, 12, 25). Kern does not reference the early Romantics, but discusses the work of German geographer Friedrich Ratzel who developed a system for incorporating physical geography with human history in which “spatial extension is a source of spiritual rejuvenation and national hope” (quoted by Kern, 224-225).

became soldiers; subsequently the ranks of the hometown choirs were diminished. Frontline soldiers who had been members of choirs and choral societies took their songbooks and musical instruments with them to the theaters of war, and although the regional and national music festivals were suspended, music was so deeply embedded in German culture that performances continued as benefits and fundraisers offering audiences a chance to hear patriotic music and to financially support war efforts. Wartime newspapers, letters, and memoirs demonstrated that although many of the common activities of the *Deutschen Sängerbund*, the *Fränkischen Sängerbund*, or the *Feuchtwangen Musik- und Gesangverein* were put on hold, music continued to play an important role in the lives of German civilians and soldiers.

To explore this history, I first examine responses to the events of August 1914 and the opening months of war, and I then focus more specifically on the concept of *Heimat*. Finally I return to choirs and how singing served the emotional needs of front line soldiers and convalescing soldiers. Some choristers remained at home and continued the activities of their local choral societies and supported the war efforts. Music in all venues incorporated the themes of myth, nature, history, and *Heimat*, weaving these into the war experience. War represented rupture and destruction, but the continued use of Lieder and Romantic tropes fostered a sense of continuity, and comforted those who mourned.

As events played out in diplomatic and political venues in the last days of July and the first of August 1914, there was a ripple effect among the German populace that mirrored foreign and domestic tensions. Modris Eksteins emphasizes the extent to which some Germans saw impending war as a “spiritual necessity” and a “deliverance.”⁸⁹³ The Youth Movement that we looked at in Chapter Eight was driven by several factors that fed this belief. There was the “life reform” aspect (not limited to young people) with its emphasis on healthy living, exercise, and abstinence in order to be “battle ready.”⁸⁹⁴ A related feature of the movement was restlessness and a desire to escape from what they saw as a “petrified

⁸⁹³ Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 92.

⁸⁹⁴ *Wandervogel, Monatsschrift für deutsches Jugend*, Harnung/February 1911, 20.

society” in which war appeared to offer excitement and relief from “the dreariness of daily life.”⁸⁹⁵

Historian David Blackbourn concurs: “War appeared as a form of emancipation, particularly for bourgeois youth reacting against the stifling materialism and conformity of Wilhelmine Germany.”⁸⁹⁶

Literary scholar Nicolas Detering adds that many young people (not exclusively bourgeois youth) were reacting to what they saw as the decadence, alienation, and materialism of the age—something they saw as un-German and influenced by French and English values.⁸⁹⁷ Taken together these represented a restless discontent with modern industrial life, and while there were parallel movements in other European nations, many Germans saw the problems of sickness, alienation, dreariness, and materialism as a product of fundamentally foreign elements.

Not everyone embraced war in August 1914, but historian Christopher Clark notes that men mostly went to war willingly. Clark claims that the acceptance of war represented “a defensive patriotism” rather than genuine enthusiasm—an attitude often endorsed by the older generation.⁸⁹⁸ When students and alumni (*Altherren*) of the *Weimarer Chargierten-Convent* (a choral association for university fraternity members) met for their annual meeting in 1912, the chairman of the WCC alumni gave a speech in which he addressed fissures in German society and exhorted the young people to remain committed to the nation as a whole (*Volksganze*) and to the Fatherland and closed with this warning: “These are serious and difficult times and it appears that in the not so distant future you young people who are now in the bloom of youth, will have to show by a baptism of fire in war whether you are worthy of our heroic

⁸⁹⁵ George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 56. Mosse addresses several movements that specifically grew out of the frustrations of young people from 14-30 years of age in the chapter of Fallen Soldiers, “Youth and the War Experience” (53-69). Members of Futurists, Expressionists, and the various groups that fell under the umbrella designation of *Wandervögel* each expressed their aspirations and frustrations in different ways (art, hiking, theater and dance, return-to-nature) but they all reacted to the ennui of modernity and what they saw as its solution—one of these was “action,” and war seemed to provide that release. And see David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 398-99. Blackbourn makes the point that there was no universal response to the “materialist, ordered society” of pre-1914 Germany—the response of some youth was nevertheless genuine.

⁸⁹⁶ David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 462.

⁸⁹⁷ Detering, “Kriegslyrik im Ersten Weltkrieg,” 16. Also Davies, *Home Fires Burning*, 11-12.

⁸⁹⁸ Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2012), 553.

ancestors.”⁸⁹⁹ There was a sense of looming crisis in which war seemed to offer a better solution than creative activity, study, or work. Going to war was a national necessity—and a chance to demonstrate heroism.

By the end of July 1914, a sense of trepidation mixed with enthusiasm characterized the mood in both large and small German cities. Blackbourn, like Clark, notes that accounts of a widespread, enthusiastic response to war is a “half-truth;” indeed there were patriotic demonstrations in some cities, but there were also large anti-war rallies.⁹⁰⁰ In general, however, once war was inevitable anti-war sentiment faded. On August 2, 1914, an open-air interdenominational church service took place in Berlin in which both Protestant and Catholic hymns were sung and the court preacher gave a sermon entitled “Faithful unto Death.” Eksteins concludes (writing in present tense as though he was there), “Protestant and Catholic are reunited in Germany,” and comments that the “secular crowds” sang hymns and the religious crowds sang “secular songs.”⁹⁰¹ On the same day in Schneidemühl, a town close to the Eastern Front, twelve-year old Piete Kuhr took part in a similar ritual. She wrote in her diary: “Countless people sat and stood in church. The air was hot and stuffy. The minister preached a very fervent sermon, speaking of Germany’s exaltation and the fight for justice. . . . We sang ‘A mighty fortress is our God’ The minister said the Lord’s Prayer and ended with ‘God give victory to our brave troops.’”⁹⁰² The next day at school they learned “new songs that glorified war.”⁹⁰³ Events such as those described by Kuhr and in Berlin took place across Germany, and two weeks later *Die Sangerhalle* reported that although enemy armies were driving from east and west, and that the most powerful sea force in the world was driving against them from the north, “the old, immortal, powerful song ‘Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott’” sounded in their souls. Although surrounded by enemies, Germans might take heart in a fortress mentality. The

⁸⁹⁹ Quoted by Harald Lonnecker, “‘Sieg und Glanz dem deutschen Reich!’ Die akademischen Sanger im Ersten Weltkrieg,” *Lied und populare Kultur* 50/51 (2005/2006), 18.

⁹⁰⁰ Blackbourn, *Long Nineteenth-Century*, 462.

⁹⁰¹ Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 62.

⁹⁰² Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 61-62. Piete Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again: A Young German Girl’s Diary of the First World War*, trans. Walter Wright. (Freiburg: F. H. Kerle Verlag GmbH, 1982; London: Walter Wright, 1998), 3. Kuhr recorded in her diary that the headmaster of her school had been in Berlin on the first days of August and told the school children the same story about the open-air church service that Eksteins related (Kuhr, 6).

⁹⁰³ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 5.

writer said it was as though the sixteenth-century Martin Luther had written the words of “Ein feste Burg” expressly for them in the past few days rather than 380 years previously.⁹⁰⁴ Members of the German Choral Association had confidence in both the German nation and in God as a “mighty fortress,” and in spite of a willingness to fight and expressions of faith in Luther’s God, few had any conception of what faced them in the next months and years.

In the early months of the war Germans had more than just hymns to call on, and one of the more fascinating windows into how some viewed those days came from the *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter* published in Berlin. The reader who picked up the September 7, 1914 edition (see below) saw a soldier riding off to battle in a fashion reminiscent of the first lines from Friedrich Schiller’s poem *Reiterlied*: “Arise comrades, To horses, to horses! In the field, we will fight for freedom.”⁹⁰⁵ Schiller (1759-1805) was a favorite poet and dramatist of the previous century, and his poem first appeared as an incidental element of the three-part historical drama *Wallenstein*, first performed in 1798-99. The September 1914 cover illustration was a classic example of the use of Napoleonic era poetry and song to inspire a new generation of Germans to fight for freedom. *Reiterlied* was set to music by Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg and it became a popular soldier song between 1805 and 1814. The theme of freedom (exemplified by Albrecht von Wallenstein) was equated with the soldier who alone could look death in the face, raise his heart to battle, and challenge a world threatened by oppression.⁹⁰⁶ Schiller scholar William Jones credits the poet and dramatist with inspiring the German states to drive out Napoleon’s forces and to rally around the idea

⁹⁰⁴ “An die deutschen Sänger,” *Die Sängerkhalle*, 15. August 1914. „Von Ost und West ziehen die feindlichen Heere gegen Deutschland heran, und von Norden bedroht uns die mächtigste Seemacht der Welt. Durch unsere Seele klingt in diesen ernsten Tagen das alte, unsterbliche, gewaltige Lied: ‚Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.‘ . . . So tief, mo mächtig bewegen die Worte das deutsche Herz, als wären sie gestern für diese ernste Zeit unseres Volkes geschrieben.“

⁹⁰⁵ “Friedrich Schiller: Gedichte-Kapitel 55,” gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/gedichte-9097/55 The lines here are a translation of the words in the epigram for Chapter Nine, „Wohlauf Kameraden, aufs Pferd, aufs Pferd! Ins Feld, in die Freiheit gezogen.“

⁹⁰⁶ Katherine Hambridge, “Staging Singing in the Theater of War (Berlin, 1805),” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 68, no. 1 (2015): 39-98. Hambridge examines 1805 performances of the second act of Schiller’s *Wallenstein* (*Wallensteins Lager*) after which the audience and actors frequently broke out singing war songs (*Soldatenlieder*). The singing of Schiller’s “Reiterleid” was commonly followed by “Heil dir im Siegerkranz” (Hail to the Victor’s Crown). Hambridge claims that the popularity of this portion of the three-part drama was based on its martial themes and the portrayal of common soldiers as important participants in history who could regard themselves as members “of a great whole, of which he, at the same time, must be an active part” (56).

of a unified nation partly based on dramas like *Wallenstein*.⁹⁰⁷ Throughout 1914 and 1915 the editors of the *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter* printed drawings and poems referencing Schiller's *Reiterlied* demonstrating the worth of Napoleonic era poetry and song for World War I propaganda purposes.⁹⁰⁸

⁹⁰⁷ William Jones, "Friedrich Schiller and His Friends," *Fidelio* 14, no. 1-2 (2005): 54-79.
archive.schillerinstitute.com/fidelio_archive/2005/

⁹⁰⁸ In the 9. Dezember 1914 issue an anonymous poem "Reiterlied" appeared that was actually about German soldiers departing for Belgrade. The 16. Dezember 1914 edition had a drawing of soldiers on horses with the title "Reiterlied," and in the 24. März 1915 edition there was a drawing labeled, "Der verwundete Kamerad," and a poem in which each stanza began with "Wir reiten . . ." The Napoleonic period and the First World War are both remote enough from our own time period that we might overlook the significance of resurrecting old songs. However, imagine today's military personnel going to Afghanistan singing "Over There" or "Keep the Home Fires Burning," and it situates the value Germans placed on the historical connections between the Napoleonic period and World War I into sharper perspective.

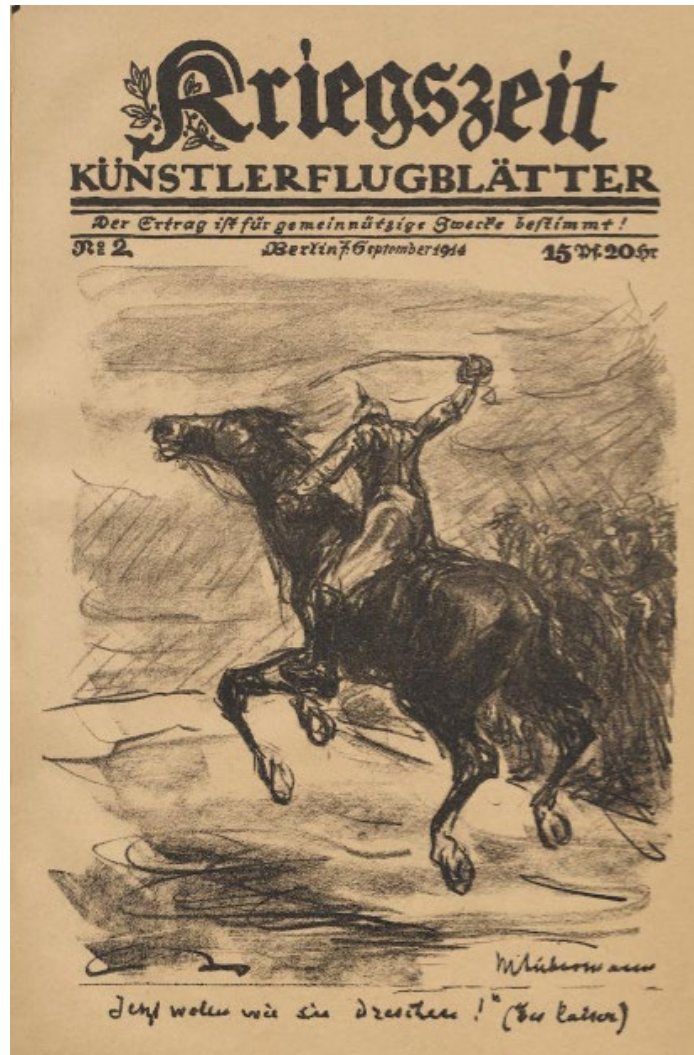


Figure 31 The caption reads: Now we will thrash them!⁹⁰⁹

Musicologist Katherine Hambridge offers another insight suggesting why Schiller’s “Reiterlied” was a popular theme in the opening months of World War I. The song was sung between the first and second movements of the *Wallenstein* drama and set the stage for the movement that portrayed common soldiers and mercenaries as heroes of the action: “Aufs Pferd, aufs Pferd!” (To your horses!). In the environment of the Wilhelmine period this song allowed Germans from various backgrounds to embrace their reputation as a militarized state by invoking a romanticized image of riding off to a war of

⁹⁰⁹ *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter*, 30. September 1914. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldstgkrzeit1914bis1916/0003

liberation.⁹¹⁰ Freedom and liberation were the by-words of early nineteenth-century nationalists, but these terms resonated powerfully during the Kaiserreich in labor unions and in SPD rallies.⁹¹¹

Warfare was not actually splendid, but in the first months of war the reality was not acknowledged as much as the myth of courage and heroism. British literary scholar Paul Fussell observed that the Great War not only relied on inherited myth but generated new myth.⁹¹² A collection of letters written by student-soldiers is illustrative of Fussell's claim. I quote from a number of these in both this chapter and Chapter Ten. The sentiments expressed by the students are best understood in light of myth—a narrative informed by the German Gymnasium/University system with its emphasis on the Classics and philosophy, theology, law, history, natural sciences, and medicine. The German professor who collected the letters aimed to reinforce a patriotic, idealistic image of the *Bildungsbürgertum*. Bearing that in mind, the writers' accounts give us insights into how they were educated and perhaps how they hoped to shape the perceptions of their recipients. One of these young men, Alfred Buchalski, had been a student of philosophy at Giessen when he volunteered for the German army in August 1914. In a letter home from Flanders on October 28, 1914, he expressed the dichotomy between the pre-war frustrations of youth and the reality of war. "With what joy, with what enthusiasm I went into the war, which seemed to me a splendid opportunity for working off all the natural craving of youth for excitement and experience! In what bitter disappointment I now sit here, with horror in my heart."⁹¹³ Buchalski was not horrified by the "shedding of blood" but objected to "the whole way in which a battle is fought. . . . The attack, which I thought was going to be so magnificent, meant nothing but being forced to get forward from one bit of

⁹¹⁰ Hambridge, "Staging Singing in the Theater of War," 61, 87.

⁹¹¹ Vernon Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 109.

⁹¹² Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), ix.

⁹¹³ Philipp Witkop, *German Students' War Letters*, trans. and arranged from original edition A. F. Webb (London: Methuen, 1929; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 41. Witkop published two books of student letters. The first was published towards the end of the war in 1918; after the war he collected other letters and published a larger edition in 1929. The Englishwoman who later translated this later edition did so because she wanted non-Germans to see that World War I German soldiers experienced the same hardships and suffering as Allied soldiers, and she felt their voices had not been heard. The students who wrote the letters collected by Witkop all died during the war. Buchalski, quoted above, died on November 10, 1914.

cover to another in the face of a hail of bullets, and not to see the enemy who was firing them!”⁹¹⁴ This letter did not express an antiwar sentiment so much as a frustration with the modern nature of warfare. Buchalski thought he would be part of a nineteenth-century charge in which the combatants could come face to face with one another and demonstrate physical prowess, but instead he found himself caught between the expectations of early-modern warfare and the reality of industrial warfare.⁹¹⁵

Throughout the war, propaganda was aimed at perpetuating myths of German courage, heroism, and undaunted defiance—often through the use of actual mythology. The 7 October 1917 issue of *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter* had a drawing of the Kaiser sitting majestically on a horse (see below). In front of him was an enemy soldier whose body lay awkwardly under a broken wagon wheel, his dead horse and discarded bugle next to him. But the most fantastic part of the picture was the army behind the Kaiser showing Wagner’s Valkyries riding through the clouds. Mounted on mighty horses, they raised their spears triumphantly to the sky. The single word caption read *Walkürengruss* (Greetings from the Valkyries).⁹¹⁶ The implication was that the Kaiser himself was Wotan (a god) and that he controlled the fate of enemy forces. This was an ironic contrast to the experiences of soldiers like Alfred Buchalski who died only days after writing his letter about disillusionment over the impersonal nature of industrial warfare.

⁹¹⁴ Witkop, *German Students’ War Letters*, 41.

⁹¹⁵ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 154-289. In these two chapters Keegan contrasts the Battle of Waterloo (1815) and the Battle of the Somme (1916) and what the experience meant for participants.

⁹¹⁶ The *Flight of the Valkyries* is possibly the most well-known of Wagner’s compositions from his *Ring Cycle*. The Nordic god Wotan had eight daughters, *Valkyries*, to whom he gave the power to determine which soldiers would die in battle and which would live.



Figure 32 The Kaiser as Wotan with Valkyries

The *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter* in which the Schiller and Wagner images appeared is of particular interest because it was one of the first of the war papers to be published (appearing in August 1914) and because its contributors were well-known artists and writers.⁹¹⁷ Eksteins notes (surprisingly to twenty-first century sensibilities) that artists and intellectuals were among the first to support the war

⁹¹⁷ In August 1914, Paul Cassirer began publishing *Kriegszeit*, a weekly, four-page broadsheet of artistic responses to World War I. Most of the featured artists were represented by Cassirer and were also affiliated with the Berlin Secession. Ultimately, fifty-one artists contributed 265 lithographs, including portraits of military leaders, scenes of military victories, sanitized images of daily life as a soldier, and caricatures of the enemy. All proceeds benefited an organization supporting destitute artists. www.moma.org/s/ge/collection_ge/artist/artist_id-11881_role-3_sov_page-106.html There was an exhibition of the art work from *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and their website offers an easier way to see all the images rather than scrolling through the digitized pages on the Heidelberg website.

because they believed it would deliver them from the trivial conventions of mass culture. Popular music and commercialization of the arts did not represent the ideals Germans had cultivated over the course of the nineteenth century. A war to legitimate the traditional superiority of German *Kultur* fulfilled an aspect of German Romanticism that called for continual growth and rejuvenation of the nation in all its facets. There were few articles in this paper—it primarily consisted of drawings, poems, and *Lieder*—their readers were naturally meant to understand all the literary allusions.⁹¹⁸

A frequent contributor was the poet and writer Richard Dehmel (1863-1920), and while he was a champion of the working class, he became a devoted supporter of Germany's war effort. He volunteered for military service in 1914 and subsequently served on the Eastern Front from 1916 as part of the *Kultur* program dreamed up by Erich Ludendorff to “project a compelling image of the state” to the conquered territories of Ober Ost. Ludendorff recruited well-known authors, artists, and intellectuals to advance this mission.⁹¹⁹ The poem below appeared in the 25 November 1914 edition of *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter* and expressed patriotism in a fashion that belied the banal sentiments attributed to the all-male choirs of the German Choral Association. The lyricism of Dehmel's poetry led musicians to say that he wrote as though he was writing music, and his poems were set to music by composers like Richard Strauss, Max Reger, and Arnold Schönberg.⁹²⁰

Deutschlands Fahnenlied
von Richard Dehmel

Song of the German Flag

Es zieht eine Fahne vor uns her
herrliche Fahne
Es geht ein Glanz von Gewehr zu Gewehr
Glanz um die Fahne
Es schwebt ein Adler auf ihr voll Ruhm
der rauschte schon unsern Väter zu

A flag goes out before us
glorious flag
A splendor that goes from rifle to rifle
A splendor about the flag
A glorious eagle waves on it
Even as it waved for our fathers

⁹¹⁸ A familiarity with German literature and history were prerequisites for understanding many of the illustrations in *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter*, and this illuminates a problem with many of the sources used in this movement. The student letters were written by university and Hochschule students, the military papers were written by the same class of people and even Piete Kuhr who kept the war diary, was solidly bourgeois. But the war experience threw together men who would not normally socialize with one another—suffering and deprivation became a common experience.

⁹¹⁹ Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 115, 119, 190-91. Eventually Dehmel became disillusioned with the Ober Ost civilizing project of Germanization and requested a transfer from the position he held in the “Book Checking Office.”

⁹²⁰ Tamara Levitz, “Dehmel, Richard,” *Oxford Music Online* (2001).

Hütet die Fahne
 Der Adler, der ist unsre Zuversicht
 Fliege, du Fahne
 Er trägt eine Krone von Herrgotts Licht
 Siege, du Fahne

Guard the flag
 The eagle—that is our confidence
 Fly high, you flag
 He wears the crown of the Lord God’s light
 Victorious, you flag

Lieb Vaterland, Mutterland
 Hinterland
 Wir schwören’s dem Kaiser in die Hand
 Hoch, hoch die Fahne

Beloved Fatherland, Motherland
 Hinterland
 We swear it to the Emperor
 Hail, hail the flag⁹²¹

A sketch accompanied the poem in which a German soldier held his rifle forward and upright in his arms as he ran towards an unseen goal. We can only view the soldier’s profile, but he moved easily, almost relaxed, to join millions of other soldiers who followed the flag, their rifles shining as light reflected off them. The flag shared in that “splendor” (*Glanz*), and the poem chided the reader—this was not just any flag, and it did not hang limply on a flag pole, but this flag, like its eagle image, waved and raised itself up victoriously. Responses to the first days of war, these images, the poetry, and even the soldier Buchalski’s letter open a curtain to a past where we view, if only in shadow form, how values were fashioned that bound “the people of music” together in emotional communities that sustained them in the first months of war. There was a shared sense of fighting for the nation and rallying behind the Kaiser, and the propaganda insisted on hopes of glory. These were effective because they were firmly rooted in nineteenth-century events and cultural expressions.

The concept of *Heimat* is one of the more compelling lenses through which to view how Germans negotiated their experiences of war, because it was a concept that was transferrable to various media. *Heimat* poetry and *Lieder* were not new but wartime offered new reasons to compose and sing them. Soldiers referenced *Heimat* in letters, and artwork abounded that portrayed visions of the idealized German countryside and its towns and villages. It was a fluid concept that was, as Alon Confino claims, “a product of collective negotiation and exchange between the many memories that exist in a nation.”⁹²²

⁹²¹ The poem appeared in 25. November 1914 edition of *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter*. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgkrzeit1914bis1916/0053 The translation is mine.

⁹²² Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 31.

Heimat could consist of an idealized notion of the German village or town, of the natural features of the land like birds, mountains, or flowers, or of a loftier mental or spiritual ideal. Piete Kuhr, mentioned earlier as a twelve-year old diarist, recorded the departure of the 149th Infantry Regiment that was stationed in Schneidemühl, her hometown. On August 4, 1914 the men marched through town preceded by the regimental band and the soldiers sang, “Wacht am Rhein” while the crowd joined in, and then as the men boarded the train the band played “Deutschland über Alles,” and Kuhr then wrote:

I knew that was the end, now they were off! The 149th became agitated, only a few joined in the singing. . . . Gradually the train began to move. The cheers grew into a roar, the soldiers’ faces crowded into the open doorways, flowers flew through the air, and suddenly many people in the square began to cry. . . . Now the soldiers began to sing a song I had never heard before, which suddenly drowned all else. I could only understand a few lines: ‘The little woodland birds, Sang such a wonderful refrain: In the homeland, in the homeland, There we’ll meet again.’”⁹²³

Songs about *Heimat* (the homeland) were pervasive in the nineteenth-century *Lieder* repertoire, as well as *Abschiedslieder* (departure songs), and we looked at some of them previously. But this particular song held a special place in the hearts of soldiers who marched off to war in 1914, and Kuhr heard it frequently as soldiers repeatedly passed through Schneidemühl.⁹²⁴ Her brother read to her from their local newspaper on September 14, 1914: “What is the best-loved and so far most frequently sung soldier’s song? You can hear it in every barracks, on every parade ground and from every troop train.”⁹²⁵ And the newspaper printed the words that Piete and Willi Kuhr had heard six weeks earlier when their own regimental soldiers departed on the train. The first lines explained why young men joined up: “I had the very best of friends, Unequaled far and wide; The drum-beat called to battle, And he was by my side.” Alfred Buchalski, the philosophy student, enlisted for battle hoping for excitement and a heroic charge into battle. Most soldiers, however, may have been more motivated by family or peer pressure, financial concerns, or the mood of the moment. They went to serve the Fatherland, but the last lines about the little

⁹²³ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 10-12. “Die Wacht am Rhein” was a popular song from the 1840s when the French threatened to cross the Rhine and remained a popular expression of patriotism and anti-French sentiments during the Franco-Prussian War and World War I. “Deutschland über Alles” was one of the most popular songs of German unity and national pride but did not become the official national anthem until 1922.

⁹²⁴ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 43. One of Kuhr’s teachers asked her if she was sleeping poorly and she responded that the soldiers marching through town sang so loudly that even in her sleep she heard “in the homeland, in the homeland, there we’ll meet again!”

⁹²⁵ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 47.

birds singing and the belief that they would meet again in the homeland offered a note of poignancy to the otherwise sappy sentimentality of the message.

Kuhr's diary is notable because it was not censored and offered a sincere impression of how she, her family, and friends experienced the war.⁹²⁶ She wrote it at her mother's urging, and although she attempted to include patriotic accounts of the war (for her mother's sake), she was starkly honest about food and coal shortages, the hardships of everyday life after 1915, growing antisemitism, and her own experiences with wounded and dying soldiers and her disillusionment about warfare. She wrote, "Probably not many children will write a war diary, and it will perhaps be important later on to learn how children in particular came through this war."⁹²⁷ Some of her most frequent references are to the soldiers marching through town or coming and going from the train station—always singing the song, "In the Homeland, in the Homeland; there we'll meet again." Kuhr mentioned this song so frequently that the English translator of her diary entitled it *There We'll Meet Again*. Her account of the war years was particularly valuable for my research because of the frequent references she made to music and singing.

The soldier letters collected by German professor Philipp Witkop are equally useful but need to be considered through a more critical lens. World War I specialist Jay Winter wrote the "Foreword" to the English translation of Witkop's 1928 edition and noted that although we may not be able to discern war as it actually was from the student-soldier letters, what we can find is "the elaboration of a set of representations of war and warriors by those who went through it as combat soldiers."⁹²⁸ Witkop himself (who was a literary scholar) had a "mission" in mind—to solidify a particular "cultural memory" of the war experience that projected a "highly idealized portrait of the German soldier."⁹²⁹ Several lines from letters written by philosophy student Rudolf Fisher and theology student Johannes Haas demonstrate both

⁹²⁶ Kuhr's diary ended up among the possessions of her brother Willi, and it was not until Piete was going through his effects that she came across it again (1974). It was published in Germany in 1982 and Walter Wright found it in a second-hand bookshop in England in 1993. He subsequently met Kuhr's daughter (Anja Ott) and she assisted Wright in preparing the English translation and giving further details about her mother's life. After the war Kuhr became a dancer and writer and used the name Jo Mihaly. Kuhr's mother who encouraged her to keep the war diary had a music school in Berlin called the Leading School of Music and Drama. Piete and Willi lived with their grandmother in Schneidemühl—today part of Poland.

⁹²⁷ Kuhr, *There We'll Meet Again*, 70.

⁹²⁸ Witkop, *German Students' War Letters*, 11.

⁹²⁹ Witkop, *German Students' War Letters*, 10-12.

Winter's assertion that Germans created a stylized image of the war experience and also how national sentiments were part of a "collective negotiation and exchange" as postulated by Confino.⁹³⁰ Both scholars deal with memory and its role in shaping historical narratives.⁹³¹ Student-soldier Fischer wrote home on November 18, 1914 that things were not so bad at the Front—they had food and warm clothes, and he enjoyed being outside all the time. Then he added that he was "proud to be allowed to help and to fight for parents, brothers and sisters, for the dear Fatherland and for all that has stood highest in my estimation—for we are fighting for poetry, for art, for philosophy and culture. It is tragic but magnificent."⁹³² In the letter Johannes Haas wrote to a friend five weeks before his death at Verdun (1916) he described an evening when the "musical part" of his unit spent the evening around a piano playing Beethoven sonatas, Chopin, and Schumann. And he closed by writing, "Old, dear friend, when will we walk together again through our woods? Heimat, o Heimat—it is worth fighting for."⁹³³ Both student-soldiers expressed sentiments that were part of the *Bildungsbürgertum* rhetoric of the nineteenth century and whether they really believed it was a "tragic but magnificent" experience to live in a muddy trench and watch their friends die around them, these verbal expressions were part of negotiated historical memories that drove so many young men to volunteer to fight in World War I and that perpetuated a myth of the "idealized portrait of the German soldier."

It would be disingenuous to ascribe all the wartime sentiments and reflections of soldiers whose letters Witkop collected to pure patriotic expectations or their own idealism, and my concern is to determine what these narratives revealed about shared values that continued to nurture emotional communities. The student letters gleaned by Witkop represented a certain aspect of German culture that he felt was valuable and should be preserved, and the parents and friends who turned these letters over to

⁹³⁰ Winter and Confino both situate their works within the framework of "memory" and how that serves a cultural-political narrative.

⁹³¹ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Site of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). While Confino deals with *Heimat* as both an actual physical place but also a mental conception, one constructed from memories, Winter deals more explicitly with memorials constructed to cope with the grief associated with World War I—anything from a monument to a film.

⁹³² Witkop, *German Students' War Letters*, 14-15.

⁹³³ Witkop, *Kriegsbriefe gefallener Studenten*, 64.

Witkop were also making decisions about which letters reflected the best virtues of the writers. Recognizing this problem does not negate their worth. Taken together the letters offer a broad range of emotions and beliefs that reflected the personalities of their authors and their experiences of war. Just as an individual soldier's account cannot be taken as representative of the whole, Kuhr's diary, as valuable as it is, cannot be taken to represent the experience of all German children—or of all German towns. She lived near the Eastern Front and volunteered with the Red Cross so she came in close contact with orphans, refugees and wounded soldiers, as well as soldiers who were marching off to the front—experiences that every German child did not have. However, these sources do reveal something about values and rituals passed down over the course of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Historic memories are not the product of a blank slate, and though the pictures we get are filtered or mediated in some way, taken as a whole we can see what some Germans valued and the means they chose to express these values.

After the first days and weeks of the war, soldiers and their families came face to face with the reality of death, and though memories were continually constructed to project an image of stoicism and courage in the face of suffering, simple prewar rituals helped maintain emotional community. Choral societies (which we will deal with in more detail below) committed themselves to two goals. First, strengthening the homefront by music and singing and second, caring for the frontline fighters by means of letters and packages containing everything from cigars to books.⁹³⁴ In addition to letters, thousands of postcards were produced and circulated during the war years. German publishers dominated the market for producing high-quality postcards in the decades before 1914, and during the war years their value as tools of propaganda as well as convenient communication soared in all combatant nations.⁹³⁵ In Germany postcards had been popular since the Franco-Prussian War and became a wildly popular collectors' item

⁹³⁴ Lönnecker, "Sieg und Glanz dem deutschen Reich!" 30. Lönnecker's research here dealt specifically with the Academic Singers, but the leadership of the DSB and its choruses as well as those of the *Wandervogel* and DASB expressed similar goals.

⁹³⁵ John Fraser, "Propaganda on the Picture Postcard," *Oxford Art Journal* 3, no. 2 (1980), 40-42. Fraser says that after the war began the French and British public rejected German-produced postcards and each country took advantage of the picture postcard format to put out inexpensive images of enemy atrocities as well as to conduct money-raising campaigns.

during the *Kaiserreich*. Postcards produced during the war years were a way to combine images of *Heimat* with a convenient means for soldiers to keep in touch with their families. Scenes like the one below reminded Germans that soldiers at the front and wives and mothers at home were not in separate worlds but were bound together by virtue of something stronger than physical space. The family at home was able to maintain an idealized vision of their husband or son at the front (clean uniform and space to carefully aim his gun) while the soldier echoed that vision with his idealized version of *Heimat* in which the family left at home continued with their lives as usual. The soldier believed he was defending his family so his wife could sit safely at home and knit socks for him. Both trusted God to rescue them all from the ravages of war. There was a comforting sense of continuity in the picture—the father continued to protect his home and the mother continued to care for the family’s needs although they were far apart. Postcards were printed by the hundreds and the people who chose ones like these may have wanted to believe in a message that seemed genuine to them—or they wanted the receiver to believe in it.



Figure 33 World War I German postcard: Fate is in the hands of God; May glory and victory blossom.

Another postcard (below) projected the same idea but from the perspective of the soldier in the field. He told his wife/sweetheart, “I stand in the dark midnight,” and he imagined her in her “little room” (*Kämmerlein*) with the soft glow of a lamp while she said her nightly prayers—also praying for him as he was far away. The soldier’s circumstances appeared safe—he stood in an open space with a spotless uniform and sturdy boots, his gun in his hands and his sword by his side. She protected him with her prayers, and he protected her (and the Fatherland) with his weapons—even in the middle of the night. Postcards offered an opportunity to send a quick message to let the family know the soldier was still alive (at least when he wrote it) and the accompanying picture projected a comforting message all its own. The written lines on the second postcard are a poem, or as was often the case, also a song. Dozens of similar postcards with homes surrounded by flowers, picturesque villages, soldiers marching off while a woman stood in the garden or leaning out an open window produced a *Heimat* image that was importantly both local and national—all Germans shared in these departures and in what they meant even though most Germans lived in urban areas by 1914. Like the soldiers who wrote letters home projecting noble, idealized notions of war, buying and sending these postcards preserved a common ideal that Germans were people who valued nature, history, folklore—in general, *Kultur*.



Figure 34 World War I image of a German soldier defending the Heimat

Actual soldier letters, even those eloquently written by university students and censored for content, sometimes offered a more realistic picture of life at the Front. Martin Drescher who studied philosophy in Berlin before enlisting in August 1914, wrote home a few weeks later about his life at the Front. “So it goes on from day to day: alternately awful marches and then a whole day’s inactive vegetating; heat and cold; too much to eat and then a long spell of hunger. One talks about nothing but these material things and about the question of whether we shall be dead to-morrow or not.”⁹³⁶ Drescher went on to reflect on death and its meaning—re-reading Goethe helped him come to a place of peace so that he could “listen more calmly to the shells screaming overhead.”⁹³⁷ Nearly two years later Friedrich Oehme (former law student in Leipzig) wrote to his family from the Somme on August 21, 1916. After

⁹³⁶ Witkop, *German Students’ War Letters*, 38.

⁹³⁷ Witkop, *German Students’ War Letters*, 39. Drescher died on November 3, 1914.

describing several days of desperate fighting, he concluded his letter: “In rain and cold; without overcoats or blankets; without anything warm to drink (all we had was seltzer-water), we spent three days in the line. Spare me from giving any description of the condition of that company of men—frozen, dead-tired, and broken down by shell-fire.”⁹³⁸ It is difficult to imagine that the letters were comforting to parents in the same way as the postcards with their idealized versions of life at the Front, and while the words described the horror of war, there was also a sense of the writers’ stoic acceptance of these conditions—representing an ideal that drew on past historic events and would create a future mythology of German manliness in the face of total war. The grandfathers who fought in the Napoleonic battles left a legacy of heroic sacrifice which their sons and grandsons preserved; the sons who fell in the Great War were leaving a legacy for future generations of Germans.

Scholars who deal with material culture emphasize the need to place items like postcards, the visuals in the *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter*, or even the soldier letters within a larger context—what do these tell us about values and belief systems?⁹³⁹ In Chapter Four we observed how choral societies created objects like banners or wore identifying items of clothing as part of the ritual of festivals thus facilitating a sense of unity in the midst of diversity. Likewise, for the *Wandervögel* the *Zupfgeigenhansl* song book along with a characteristic style of dress made a statement about having a unique place within the nation. For both of these groups and for others, *Heimat* images, historical references, poetry, myths, and songs expressed German values and became part of the grander concept of *Kultur*. During the war years, these symbols and images resonated powerfully with the general population and became useful tools for propagandists. Newspapers produced for soldiers serving on the front lines proliferated from the first weeks of the war, and just as we have seen from the *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter* they were a valuable source of propaganda—civilians at home and soldiers on the frontlines were unified by official news from

⁹³⁸ Witkop, *German Students’ War Letters*, 311-312. Oehme died on October 25, 1916.

⁹³⁹ Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance*, 48. Confino says World War I epitomized the “Heimatization” of Germany because it created a “collective image of the homeland.” Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 259. Per Rosenwein it is specific situations that elicit emotions and people then construct narratives (or in this case objects) that impart meaning to these experiences.

government or military officials, and photographs or drawings, poetry or quoted lines from Napoleonic-era heroes accompanied news stories.

With the introduction of the Field Press Office in the spring of 1916, the army command gained comprehensive access to military newspapers and subjected them to censorship—oftentimes submitting their own articles for publication by which they could generate a positive outlook on the war and maintain public support.⁹⁴⁰ Bearing in mind that the content of newspapers was “controlled,” they are yet a valuable source for material culture as much as for the written content. Often the images conjured folk songs or *Lieder* and most editions printed lines from poems or songs throughout. We can see several examples below. The *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung*, published from July 1916 to December 1918, had a masthead with a view of a typical German village—rooftops, church steeple, a fortress, surrounded by fields of crops and hills. This image offered a perspective as though the viewer looked from a window of a stone castle with gargoyles and a heraldic crest and reminded convalescing soldiers of their nation’s history and perhaps their own hometown.⁹⁴¹ It reminded them perhaps of boarding a train and singing “In the Homeland, there we’ll meet again.” They defended German *Heimat* and defended freedom—just as heroes of the past had done.

⁹⁴⁰ *Feldzeitungen aus dem 1. Weltkrieg* ub.uni-heidelberg.de/helios/digi/feldzeitungen

⁹⁴¹ The *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung* was published from July 1, 1916 to December 10, 1918. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/badener_lanzarett_zeitung

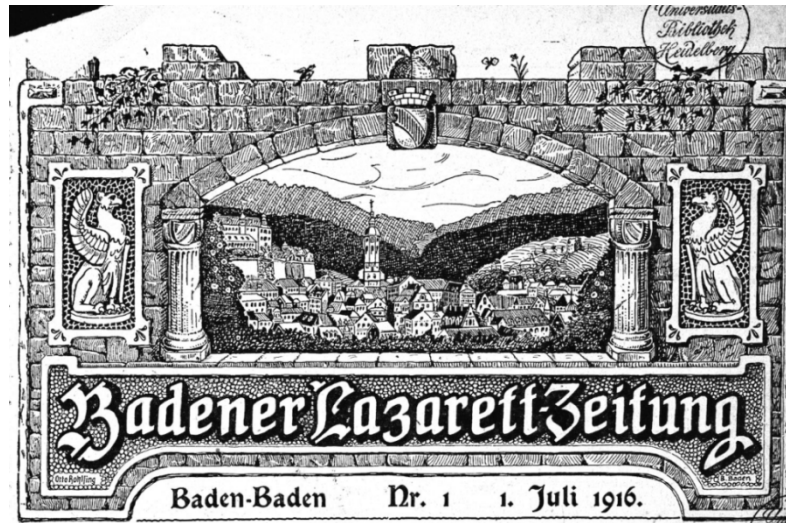


Figure 35 Masthead of the Baden Field Hospital newspaper

The newspapers of the First, Third, and Seventh Armies had more militant but equally symbolic mastheads. The *Feldzeitung der 3. Armee* displayed the German eagle foregrounding the rising sun in a way that was reminiscent of Ludwig Uhland's "Die Siegesbotschaft" written in 1813. In the fourth stanza of that song the "proud eagle" flew towards the sun celebrating victory in driving the French out of German territory.⁹⁴²



Figure 36 Masthead of the German Third Army newspaper

The *Kriegszeitung der 7. Armee* had the imperial crown in the center while soldiers on each side rested one hand on the crown and held a rifle in their other hand. Oak leaves surrounded the soldiers and crown,

⁹⁴² Editions of this newspaper can be found in the University of Heidelberg digital collections. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/champagne_kamerad Chapter Two of this dissertation includes the words of *Die Siegesbotschaft*. The *Lied* was performed at DSB national festivals in 1874 and 1896.

and the slogan, “Gott mit Uns” hovered over the crown. Here ancient imagery (the oak leaves and crown) combined with modern conceptions of the German Empire (the emperor supported by military might), and the slogan dated back to the twelfth century Teutonic knights and the eighteenth century Prussian state.⁹⁴³



Figure 37 Masthead of the German Seventh Army newspaper

On the Eastern Front the *Zeitung der 10. Armee* had a simple image of a fist holding the hilt of a raised sword (not pictured), and the *Feldzeitung der 12. Armee* showed a soldier leaning forward on his horse—facing the East. The image suggested that although soldiers stationed on the Eastern Front

⁹⁴³ Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 87. “Gott mit Uns” was a phrase used in Prussian heraldry from 1701 and later by the German military from 1871-1918. Newspapers can be found at digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/kriegszeitung_7_armee and digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/wacht_im_osten



Figure 38 Masthead of the German Twelfth Army newspaper

faced a cold and alien landscape (the barren snowy land and Slavonic crosses) they did not hesitate to go forward.⁹⁴⁴ Such artwork was crafted to appeal to Germans who understood the symbols and the references to history and at the same time offered a subtle message of pride in the nation and exhortations to steel oneself to the challenges of war. Rather than using depictions that highlighted Germany's industrial or economic superiority, the publishers chose “old-fashioned” scenes and symbols that emphasized the enduring features of German-ness worth preserving—even by means of war.

When soldiers on the Western or Eastern Fronts picked up newspapers to get news about the progress of the war, or to read about events at home, the first thing they saw was the masthead of the paper that fixed a certain image in their minds of who they were. Together the images were part of a larger whole. *Heimat* was the German town with its church, castle, and fields, and in addition, oak trees, eagles, or a monarch's crown also signaled the Fatherland and connected those on the Fronts of battle with the people at home. The mastheads of the military papers played on images that demonstrated the idealized vision of Germany that musicians and poets had nurtured throughout the nineteenth century—

⁹⁴⁴ Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 22-29. German soldiers arriving in the East found it a “chaotic, ragged patchwork of nationalities and culture,” and even the woods were uncultivated and disorderly. It was a strange land that needed *Kultur*—meaning civilization. A fundamental precept of German romanticism was unity and order of the whole among disparate parts and this was what Ludendorff, among others, attempted to impose on the conquered lands of the East.

reassuring soldiers that they were still spiritually connected with those at home just as the postcard images did. An illustration of how a drawing like that of the oak leaves could generate a common expression of German-ness on the Homefront came from a soldier who had been a *Wandervogel* youth. The *Wandervogel* continued publishing their journal throughout the war and their members represented a group of young men who continually moved from homefront to war fronts as the younger ones came of age. Albrecht Meyen wrote an article for the *Wandervogel* journal in 1915 entitled “Heldeneichen” (Hero’s Oaks).⁹⁴⁵ He began by lamenting nine fellow soldiers who died in Flanders where there was no wood to mark their graves. After his own injuries sent him to convalesce in a military hospital, he read of an idea that he wanted to pass on to his homefront readers—build monuments for fallen soldiers by planting oak trees in their memories. Meyen reasoned:

Oaks would represent a resurrection of all the fallen: growing in physical form in German soil from which the [soldiers] were taken, and transforming the last breath of foreign earth, when the winds blow from east and west and south and north, from distant lands where the heroes fell. . . . Since 1813 the oak of the German folk has become the tree of freedom, and therefore it now fights again after 100 years!⁹⁴⁶

Oak trees were more than the substance of their wood or the material from which to construct a grave marker. They had a mysterious power to transform the distant foreign soil in which German soldiers were buried to wholesome German dirt—the wind blew in all directions to accomplish this miraculous deed and free the soldiers from an eternity of alienation. In our minds’ eyes we can imagine thousands of oak trees representing the fallen soldiers of World War I scattered throughout Germany, but to Meyen and others of his generation, the oaks represented an *ideal*—a unified whole between the ancient German people, modern freedom, and the forces of nature.

⁹⁴⁵ Albrecht Meyen, “Heldeneichen,” *Wandervogel*, März 1915, 79. George Mosse in *Fallen Soldiers* attributes landscape architect Willy Lange with first suggesting the concept of “heroes’ groves” where an oak tree would be planted for every fallen soldier. Lange’s proposal must have been what Meyen read about and passed along to fellow *Wandervogel*.

⁹⁴⁶ „Und ein Auferstehen wäre es aller Gefallenen: Im Körperlichen wachsend aus deutschem Boden, wovon sie genommen sind, verwandelnd inn sich den letzten Hauch von fremder Erde, wenn von Ost und West und Süd und Nord die Winde wehen, aus Fernen, wo die Helden fielen. . . . Seit 1813 ist die Eiche der deutsche Volksbaum geworden, der Baum der Freiheit, und darum wird jetzt nach 100 Jahren wieder gekämpft!“

Oaks were an important symbol of Germany, and by extension, the soil in which they grew was sacred. The creator of the German Choral Association's banner had used the image of a mighty oak and a young oak to exhort the younger generation to be stout and enduring—sing *Lieder* to preserve the nation (Chapter Four). The thoughts expressed in Albrecht Meyen's article bring other nineteenth-century figures or events to mind. Every choral festival featured a speech that referenced German singers coming from “east and west and south and north”—a line taken from Ernst Moritz Arndt's “Was ist des deutschen Vaterland?” Arndt was a favorite of nineteenth-century singers and nationalists. Finally, there are hints of Wagner in the notion of (symbolically) bringing the dead back to rest in German soil. Wagner's “An Weber's Grabe” was written for the occasion when Carl Maria von Weber's body was returned from England to Germany for burial. Wagner also died abroad, and when his body returned to Bayreuth, a men's chorus sang “An Weber's Grabe” at his funeral (Chapter Seven). German musicians and soldiers needed to find their final rest in German soil—even if only in the form of an oak tree. The creator of the Seventh Army masthead may not have had these exact thoughts in mind, but it echoed these familiar sentiments. Oak leaves were not a mere artistic adornment, but represented Germanic values surrounding the imperial crown and slogan—*Gott mit uns*.

Some of the most evocative images, stories, and poems from World War I emerged during the month of December because Christmas was an element of *Heimat* that reflected carefully cultivated German values most clearly. The Christmas tree, carols, angels, Bible readings, and presents had come to encapsulate German Christmas.⁹⁴⁷ Pietie Kuhr penned a description of this time-honored event when she wrote in her diary December 24, 1914:

We exchanged presents at six o'clock. Before that Grandma, Willi and I went to the old Town Church for Christmas Service. . . . We went through the porch and sat in our seats. Suddenly the organ began to play, first a voluntary, but the tune of ‘Silent Night, Holy Night’ could definitely be recognized. Everybody bowed their heads, as if an order had been given, and began to sob and cry. Then the melody was brought out clearly and we sang as well as we could. Then our Senior Minister Schammer went up to the altar, gazed for a time at the Christmas tree with its lighted

⁹⁴⁷ Joe Perry, *Christmas in Germany: A Cultural History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 47.

candles and said: 'Peace on earth! And goodwill to men!' Then everybody sobbed and cried still more.⁹⁴⁸

When they came outside the military band was playing Christmas music in the town square, and Kuhr's mother had prepared Christmas dinner for them—carp in beer and gingerbread sauce. After the family celebration, they went to the train station where the Red Cross held festivities for the soldiers where they offered a decorated Christmas tree, presents, and gingerbread while the gramophone played carols. The soldiers were nevertheless melancholy, and Kuhr called it a “sad end to Christmas,” but all the fundamental elements of a German Christmas had been kept.⁹⁴⁹ Germans exchanged presents on Christmas Eve, they went to church and sang carols, and in Schneidemühl, they ate fish for dinner. What made this Christmas exceptional was the pervasive sorrowful mood among the living as they mourned the loss of family, friends, and former, happier Christmases.

The December 1914 *Kriegszeit Kunstflugblätter* showcased Christmas through artwork and poetry, and several moods were represented by these offerings. One was almost whimsical—a drawing of a seal (Britain) kissing a bear (Russia) under the mistletoe while a rooster (France) looked on. This mocking display of enemy forces celebrating Christmas was followed by the solemn portrayal of German soldiers enjoying their presents and letters from home while looking subdued and reflective. The third image showed German soldiers standing with their guns resting on the top of their trenches illustrating another of Dehmel's poems, “Krieg auf Erden,” an ironic take on Peace on Earth.⁹⁵⁰

“War on Earth,” by Richard Dehmel

Over a powerful chain of trenches
 from the mountains to the sea
 the light of the full moon lies over the silent cemetery.
 No soul speaks;
 and the glimmer of the evening star spans
 from the peace of the homeland to that of the enemy's land.
 The guns are silent.

Suddenly there is a hissing fire bomb

⁹⁴⁸ Kuhr, *There We'll Meet Again*, 92.

⁹⁴⁹ Kuhr, *There We'll Meet Again*, 93.

⁹⁵⁰ Richard Dehmel, “Krieg auf Erden,” 24 Dezember 1914 digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgkrzeit1914bis1916/0074

flying between star and moon through the pale dark:
 crashing--grenade after grenade.
 Rifle barrels jerk straight in thousands of hands,
 sending death sparks into the gray world;
 fighting orders, abruptly invigorating,
 the guns pound their soaring
 music of the spheres.

Purring, rolling, spraying, whizzing and whizzing;
 Thunder and lightning in the human fist,
 gloriously stretching over valley and hills
 your god-sprouted victorious wings
 heavenward.
 Would you stir up the earthly specter
 to wrest eternal peace?
 Speak up! You are being questioned by a dying man.
 The guns are silent.⁹⁵¹

Dehmel's poem contrasted the mental picture pre-war Germans had when they sang "Silent Night, Holy Night" on Christmas Eve with a picture he painted in poetry. The moon shone over the silent cemetery that was the Western Front, and the evening star sparkled in a sky that reached from the English Channel to the peaceful homeland (*Heimatfrieden*). But instead of angels proclaiming a transcendent message to unsuspecting shepherds in a field, French incendiary bombs and grenades broke the silence of the night.⁹⁵² Instead of a host of angels singing "Peace on Earth! and goodwill to men!" the guns smashed a cacophony of noise and sparks into the grey heaven. And finally instead of the event that brought a baby to earth with the promise of heavenly peace, the guns ripped away human life and earthly quiet away on this holy night. Dehmel used one of the most treasured German Christmas carols as a platform not so much for an antiwar message as an indictment of the French. The bombastic aggression of the French contrasted with the German soldiers who were, according to their own wartime interpretation, merely defending their peaceful homeland.⁹⁵³ German soldiers rested in their trenches, guns ready but not looking for a target, while the French grenades and bombs violated the silent night of Christmas.

⁹⁵¹ Dehmel's German language poem is at the end of this chapter, and this is my English translation.

⁹⁵² A literal translation of "Feuerboden" is "Ground fire." Flamethrowers were not used until February 1915, but incendiary bombs were used in the Argonne-Meuse sector as early as October 1914. The dating of Dehmel's poem led me to use incendiary bombs for Feuerboden.

⁹⁵³ Robert L. Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Nelson argues, among other things, that officialdom worked to create an image of a defensive war in which

Music was woven through the war experience, but it can also be considered a separate category because of the role choristers played in German society throughout the long nineteenth century. We have already seen that in August 1914 the editors of *Die Sangerhalle* exhorted soldiers to take songs with them into battle and then encouraged them by saying that many thousands of their brothers would be singing the same songs at home. Two years into the war the paper printed part of a letter from a soldier in the field who wrote, “The winner of the World War is the German song! Without song, without music, we would have long become a victim of the enemy.” He added a contrast to the French of his own—the French only cared about material things while the Germans made music *and* “all higher goods.”⁹⁵⁴ The soldier sentiments here were clearly part of the same idealistic, patriotic tenor as those of the student-soldier letters collected by Witkop. Germans were superior in *Kultur*—and also, by the way, in their ability to produce superior “goods.” However, Germans did privilege music both formally and informally throughout the war because choral music provided a respite from the drudgery of daily life, a means of camaraderie, and a sense of continuity.

The first months of the war saw the directors of choral societies grappling with how to proceed and then adapting to the circumstances of ongoing war. The leaders of the German Choral Association (DSB) announced to their members within the first month of the war that those left at home should continue to sing and remember what their directors had taught them so that returning soldiers would feel comforted when they came home and they would all be able to pick up where they had left off.⁹⁵⁵ National, regional, and local festivals were put on hold but patriotic “vaterlandisches Konzert” (Fatherland concerts) took their place. In late August 1914 a concert in Halle packed the venue and the music was received with enthusiasm—*Lieder*, orchestral pieces, mixed choirs as well as men’s choruses. In the midst of the music performances someone gave a report from the Eastern Front, everyone cheered the Kaiser, and the evening concluded with the entire crowd singing “Deutschland, Deutschland uber

the “hard-working, loyal comrades both fighting at the front in the trenches and at home ploughing the fields and working in factories” joined together to protect the homeland (Nelson, 9).

⁹⁵⁴ Feldpostbrief von Adolf Prumers, *Deutsche Sangerbundeszeitung*, 25 August 1917. The name of *Die Sangerhalle* was changed to *Deutsche Sangerbundeszeitung* in January 1915.

⁹⁵⁵ “Draußen im Felde stehen die Bruder,” *Die Sangerhalle*, 5. September 1914.

alles.”⁹⁵⁶ *Die Sangerhalle* reported that similar patriotic performances took place in Bonn, Hannover, Berlin, and smaller towns. The Berlin *Liedertafel* and the Berlin Symphony Orchestra opened their season earlier than usual and performed works with war themes. Many of these concerts were held to raise money for the war efforts and to benefit the families of choral members who had already been killed—a recurring subtitle to announced performances was “Das deutsche Lied im Dienst der Kriegshilfe” (The German Song in Service to War Relief). By 1916 the DSB leadership subtly acknowledged the unending nature of the war by encouraging choirs to give more concerts and performances—professional musicians needed the work and music provided comfort to those who mourned.⁹⁵⁷

Although the *Deutsche Sangerbundeszeitung* published nothing about battles or the progress of the war, the editors did continue to update members of the DSB about music performances and, some of these reports came from singers who became soldiers and reinforced one of the original missions of the men’s choral movement—to preserve the *Lied*. A valuable link was Gustav Wohlgemuth who not only was on the leadership board of the DSB and the editor of *Deutsche Sangerbundeszeitung*, but was also the director of more than one choir in Leipzig. Many soldier-singers sent him letters from the field which he published in the DSB paper. As published, letters had a date, locations were mostly given as “Schutzengraben” (trenches), and only the writers’ initials were printed. One dated 7 December 1915 began “Sehr geehrter Herr Musikdirektor!” (Dear Mr. Music Director) and the writer, only identified as W. B., Unteroffizier, proceeded to relate a story he believed Wohlgemuth would enjoy.⁹⁵⁸ W. B. was leading a group of tired, filthy soldiers who finally had a chance to find a place to bathe. Along the way they met up with a group of singers from Leipzig, and after bathing W. B. wrote that “an indescribable feeling of well-being and happiness came over them.” He continued:

Suddenly from the corner, first very softly but then slowly stronger, a *Lied* ‘Wie daheim war’ [sic] from our honorable Leipzig song master. A first tenor started, then a bass, and so forth until the entire choir joined in. As the sound filled the room, the assembled workers and soldiers came

⁹⁵⁶ *Die Sangerhalle*, 19. September 1914.

⁹⁵⁷ “Aus dem Musikleben der Kriegszeit,” *Deutsche Sangerbundeszeitung*, 3. Juni 1916.

⁹⁵⁸ Published in *Deutsche Sangerbundeszeitung*, 8 January 1916 the letter was dated 7 December 1915 and the writer evidently did not know Wohlgemuth personally but knew of him—he signed the letter “Mit treudeutschem Gru unbekannterweise ergebenst” (with sincere and humble regards from someone unknown to you).

nearer and eavesdropped. So singular was the image—you cannot grasp the effect of the ‘heimatlichen Liederklage’—and the singers gathered heart and in spite of the war, sang it to the end.

Soldiers far from home, dirty and tired, found as much refreshment in a chorus of men singing about home as they did in their bathes, and the singers, though they seemed to begin on the spur of the moment, found their voices when they realized the effect of their song. The power of the impromptu performance lay in its ability to encapsulate images of home both through the words and by means of the men’s voices. There is good reason to believe the Leipzig soldiers sang in one of Wohlgemuth’s choirs—he spent years directing choirs in that city and the song they sang, “Wie’s daheim war” was composed by him. As well, the letter was written by someone who did not know Wohlgemuth, but it was sent to him because W. B. wanted him to hear this story. In another rendition of this story, a later edition of *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung* printed a letter written by H. G. to an uncle who presumably then passed it along to Wohlgemuth. H. G. began by thanking his uncle for sending a care package—one that included a *Lieder* book. Then he shared this bit of information, “Our choir of around 150 singers is at its greatest number and Herr Wohlgemuth would be pleased at how beautifully his ‘Wie’s daheim war’ sounded.”⁹⁵⁹ This second letter is of particular interest because it was sent from a prisoner of war camp in England (Camp Dorchester). The German prisoners had formed a choir, H. G. welcomed the new song book so they could learn what he called “beautiful fresh, new songs,” and they continued to sing old, beloved ones that reminded them of *Heimat*. The readers of *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung* could take heart that the German *Lied* still lived wherever German singers gathered—in an alien, enemy land or a prisoner of war camp.

The success of this simple *Lied*, “Wie’s daheim war” secured the reputation of Gustav Wohlgemuth who was a major figure in the amateur men’s choral movement after the turn of the century. He began his career as a teacher and after attending the 1896 DSB national festival in Stuttgart became a devoted supporter of the all-male, amateur choral movement. Although largely unrecognized today, he

⁹⁵⁹ This letter listed an address: Camp Dorchester, 12. January 1916. It was published in *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung* 5. February 1916.

had a profound impact on the DSB and the direction of its music before World War I. The text of “Wie’s daheim war” was written by Peter Cornelius set to music by Wohlgemuth in 1908. The original sheet music was published with this cover.⁹⁶⁰ The words expressed a vague *Heimat* sentiment out of which singers (or listeners) might imagine specific scenes reminiscent of their own home, or their grandparents’ hometown—like the cover image of the printed song’s sheet music with oak branches hovering protectively over the village church and its houses. It was the kind of *Lied* that perfectly met the emotional needs of lonely soldiers.

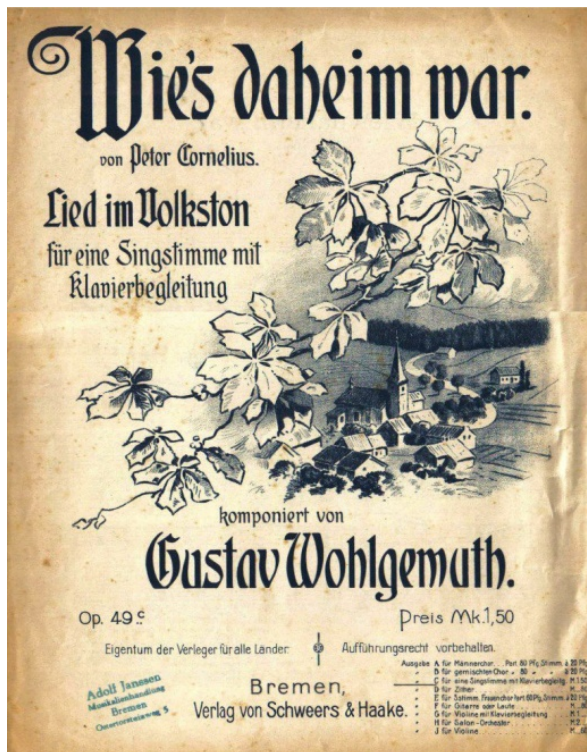


Figure 39 Cover of "Wie's daheim war"

“Wie’s daheim war,” by Gustav Wohlgemuth

Wie's daheim war, wo die Wiege stand
 wo der Mutterarm dich weich unwand
 frag dein eigen Herz frag es im fremden Land
 ob es nicht tiefer Lust und Schmerz empfand

As it was at home, where the cradle stood
 where the soft wrap of Mother’s arms held you
 ask your own heart, ask it in a strange land,
 if it did not feel deeper pleasure and pain

⁹⁶⁰ It was later included as part of a collection of World War I soldier songs.

wie's daheim war, wie's daheim war	as it was at home, as it was at home
wie's daheim einst war	as it once was at home.
Wie's daheim war, ist ein Zauber mild	As it was at home, casts a soft spell
ist ein heimlich farbenreiches Bild	it is a furtive, richly colored image.
Wenn ein Blick ein Wort wenn's dein Sehnen stillt	If a glimpse or a word satisfies your longing
ist es nur weil etwas drinnen quillt	it is only because something inward wells
wie's daheim war, wie's daheim war	As it was at home, as it was at home
wie's daheim einst war	as it once was at home.
Wie's daheim war findest du's nimmermehr	As it was at home you will never find
wandre nur auf Erden hin und her	wandering here and there on the Earth
müh und sehne dich, sehn dich noch so sehr	weary and longing, ever so longing
wird es schön doch nimmer, nimmer mehr	it will never ever be as beautifully rediscovered
wie's daheim war, wie's daheim war	as it was at home, as it was at home
wie's daheim einst war	as it once was at home.

The first impression of this song is that the repetitive use of the phrase “wie’s daheim war” was overdone, but when sung the repeated phrase produced a hungering longing for an idealized home.⁹⁶¹ The poem was penned in the nineteenth century when millions of Germans immigrated to the Americas, so for them this song spoke of a magical image of a homeland to which they might never return. It was the place where a mother’s soft arms had first cradled them, but otherwise there was only a vague remembrance of pleasures or pain, of hazy, colorful scenes. For soldiers it reminded them of a homeland that was only a train ride away, but battle pushed out real pictures of home, and the song replaced them with an idealized home to which many of them knew they too would never return. Wohlgemuth’s musical setting reinforced the meanings of the words by shaping the repeated phrases to heighten the sense of longing, and it must have been touching for him to hear reports from his singers about the song’s emotional impact.

Something about reports of soldiers spontaneously joining in singing has a more authentic ring than published newspapers, printed postcards, or composed letters all of which reflected various degrees of editing. Soldiers singing together on the spur of the moment represented common emotions that singers were most comfortable expressing through song—and represented previous choral training. Some further examples reinforce this. Hans Stegemann, a former student of forestry in Eberswald who received the Iron Cross in September 1916, wrote some of the more blatantly patriotic student-soldier letters collected

⁹⁶¹ There are a number of current recordings of “Wie’s daheim war” on YouTube and hearing a performance gives more impact to the words.

by Witkop. Stegemann clearly had a cheerful disposition because while he concluded a letter from the early days of war in 1914 with the statement, “One gets quite cold-blooded and indifferent,” his other letters reflected a comfortable acceptance of war’s grim realities. He served on the Eastern Front, and in a letter dated November 23, 1915 he told about a long day’s march somewhere in Russian territory until his men finally found an open barn in which to sleep. “Our poor chaps under open sheds on a December night, but they all crawl in as quickly as possible. Here and there a last cigar glimmers. Finally somebody starts a song, and the singing gradually increases in volume.” It was Stegemann’s favorite song—a song about their beloveds in the *Heimat* that perfectly mirrored the postcard images. “In billets on the hard, hard straw, I stretch my weary feet, And send a message through the night, My far-off Love to greet.”⁹⁶² Soldiers lying safely at rest sang about their loved ones who they pictured safely ensconced in a little room at home. In a similar vein Piete Kuhr recorded a summer night when the bright moon awoke her and “the only sound was the gentle, friendly ticking of the long-case clock in our living room,” until a distant, ever-growing sound of singing reached her. “Finally it was a great choir as at a concert or in church. Why were the soldiers singing in the night?”⁹⁶³ The first song was one that seemed fatalistic to her—“It is laid down in God’s own plan, That from his dearest must every man be parted. . .” But finally they took up a more cheerful song, although in the meantime she had crept into her grandmother’s bed, and they both listened while “crying so bitterly.”⁹⁶⁴ Music had the power to comfort the impromptu choir gathered at the Schneidemühl train station while Kuhr and her grandmother were deeply disturbed by the mournful thought of the soldiers’ contemplation of their own death.

One final account of the spontaneity and comfort of music came from a *Wandervogel* youth. A. Kurella submitted an article to the *Wandervogel* journal describing his first days at war. Kurella spent thirty days in fierce battle as a telephonist for an artillery unit, and his remembrance of the chaos, noise, stress, and bloody bodies left him with a feeling of disbelief that he was still alive. At some point the battle abated, and he heard music that brought him back to life and gave him much-needed peace. “God,

⁹⁶² Witkop, *German Students’ War Letters*, 275-278.

⁹⁶³ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 149.

⁹⁶⁴ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 150.

what a wealth of memories this first note brought! . . . My head was burning and my whole body seemed to want to melt. Everything was dancing within me. My hands sank to my knees and tears slowly flowed one after the other from my eyes.”⁹⁶⁵ He did not remember what song was played, but his pained body, sick soul, the daily stress, the fearful experiences, tired eyes, the nights of death and devastation that had half-deafened him fell away like a heavy burden when he first heard music at the front. This was an entirely distant world from Brahms’s nineteenth-century attempt to address the universal sorrow the living felt in the midst of death, and yet music retained its ineffable power to comfort those who mourned even in the most extreme circumstances.

The frontline soldiers, prisoners of war, soldiers moving through train stations, newspaper readers, a young diarist and her grandmother who spent the war years as a Red Cross volunteer—some but not all—clearly had the bourgeois backgrounds that centered music in their lives. However, there were also traces of information about the general population in the songs they sang, personal accounts they wrote, or articles and drawings they submitted for publication. People who attended church, gathered to send off soldier sons, husbands, and fathers, and soldiers themselves represented a cross-section of German society who sang as part of their daily lives. John Meier (1864-1953), a folklorist and philologist, was intensely interested in tracing the types of *Lieder* German soldiers sang or wrote. He hoped to prove that war brought Germans of different regions and social classes together through a shared folk-singing experience.⁹⁶⁶ Meier’s belief that soldiers were a “likeness of the folk in miniature” launched him on a search for the songs that demonstrated that through a shared experience of war, a “strong feeling of community” developed.⁹⁶⁷ In 1915 he created a questionnaire that was published in several of the wartime newspapers both on the Eastern and Western Fronts. The survey had a list of questions in fifteen “categories” asking things like: Which songs are sung by your unit? Do you sing songs at the front you

⁹⁶⁵ A. Kurella, “Musik,” *Wandervogel*, November 1915.

⁹⁶⁶ Aibe-Marlene Gerdes, „Soldatenlieder als Volkslieder—Volkslieder als Soldatenlieder: John Meier und das deutsche Soldatenlied,“ in Nicolas Detering, Michael Fischer, Aibe-Marlene Gerdes, eds. *Populäre Kriegsliteratur im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2013): 191-216.

⁹⁶⁷ Aibe-Marlene Gerdes, “Populäre Kriegsliteratur als Sammelgegenstand: Die Weltkriegssammlungen im Deutschen Volksliedarchiv“ in *Populäre Kriegsliteratur im Ersten Weltkrieg*, 107. „Abbild des Volkes en miniature“ and „einem starken Gemeinschaftsgefühl“

did not previously know? Have you noticed that soldiers from different regions of Germany sing/know different songs? What songs are sung on marches? Have you observed songs being composed by men in the field? Could you write down and send the words, and if possible the music of the best-known songs that are sung in the field to the *Deutsche Volksliedarchiv* in Freiburg?⁹⁶⁸ Meier very much wanted to find a collection of soldiers' songs from the war years that he could publish to demonstrate the "role the German *Lied* played in the Great German War."⁹⁶⁹ He had mixed success with this project. He did eventually publish some of his results, and the letters he received are preserved today in the *Volksliedarchiv* in Freiburg, but later analysis of his research led to questions about some of his conclusions. He received about 604 responses, and they were mostly from music teachers, pastors, or men who had been involved with organized music associations before the war—not from the ordinary men in the field from a variety of backgrounds. There was certainly evidence that soldiers sang both formally and informally, but the majority did not take the time to respond to Meier's survey.⁹⁷⁰

Meier's belief that the war experience would draw Germans of different regions and social classes together as they shared their music with one another became part of an ongoing debate about what *did* create unity among Germans during the war years. Historian Robert Nelson argues it was an ideological solidarity that drew soldiers and civilians together—they created a strong narrative about fighting a defensive war both in the trenches and in the factories and farms. Nelson's argument stems from his claim that Germans did not have a "shared popular culture," as Meier hoped, but pulled together as a defensive unit to protect the homeland.⁹⁷¹ This is along the lines of Alon Confino's argument that *Heimat* was "the ultimate German community" and World War I represented the epitome of a unity of

⁹⁶⁸ The complete survey can be found on pages 193-195 in the book *Populäre Kriegsliteratur im Ersten Weltkrieg. Die Wacht in Osten*, the field newspaper of the Twelfth Army printed the survey questions in its 6. Januar 1916 edition.

⁹⁶⁹ Gerdes, "Soldatenlieder als Volkslieder," 191.

⁹⁷⁰ Gerdes points out first that the questions were worded in such a way to "lead" the soldiers to give patriotic responses. Further, Meier's project was funded by government and military sources and so approached the topic of what songs soldiers sang from a conservative pro-war stance. Finally, so many different songs were offered in the responses that it was difficult to make any definite conclusions about which songs most resonated with soldiers. However, Gerdes concludes that the survey offers an important contribution to current research because it offered soldiers a chance to tell what they actually sang as opposed to what was published in collections of soldier songbooks.

⁹⁷¹ Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*, 13.

local and national images of their home—something to protect and preserve.⁹⁷² Most of the images in propaganda sought to create a myth of wartime “community”—other than the Kaiser or famous military figures the soldiers depicted were “every man” types. The poems/songs were those common to all regions of Germany, or at least their themes were. My argument throughout has been that music was the shared cultural feature of German society. Germans from different backgrounds formed choral societies, celebrated choral festivals, received at least a rudimentary music education, and while sometimes operating in different spheres, these created overlapping emotional communities in which *Heimat* was one of the shared values and proved effective for World War I propaganda visually and musically. Meier may have had an unrealistic view of how soldiers engaged with music, but as a contemporary of those who fought, he understood the role music played in German society as a whole. Music had the power to remind Germans of every class and locality of their common values, brought soldiers from these disparate realms into closer contact with one another, and comforted them in death.⁹⁷³

War offered opportunities for German soldiers from all backgrounds and hometowns to have common experiences as they were thrown together while marching off to the frontlines of battle, convalescing in hospitals, or languishing in prisoner of war camps. One snapshot of this came from the *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung* and a prize-winning essay written by Private Curt Patzer published on the front page. Patzer began by positing a motto: “The war is a school for all humanity and aims to teach: Remember that other people ask to be considered as human, then there will be only people.”⁹⁷⁴ Patzer’s theme was the unity of German soldiers and he followed the motto by quoting from the *Heimat* song that Kuhr frequently referenced expressing the common sympathy of all German soldiers. “The little woodland birds, Who sing and sing beautifully, In the homeland, In the homeland, There we’ll meet

⁹⁷² Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance*, 35, 51.

⁹⁷³ Vernon Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Lidtke argues that it is an oversimplification to claim that there was a “coherent dominant culture” in Germany between 1870 and 1914 (Lidtke, 10). Rather, there were a number of separate segments whose borders often overlapped and workers did not make up a separate subculture but were often integrated socially and intellectually into other groups of German society.

⁹⁷⁴ Der Krieg ist eine Schule für die gesamte Menschheit und will all lehren: Bedenke, daß die anderen Menschen verlangen können, auch von dir als Mensch betrachtet zu werden, dann wird es erst Menschen geben.

again.”⁹⁷⁵ Patzer affirmed Kuhr’s account that this song was sung at almost every train station when the troop transports passed through. The rest of his story centered on a particular group of soldiers who had gathered in a German train station and then made their way to enemy territory. (It was never clear where Patzer personally fit into this narrative although it was titled, “Experience of the War”). The soldiers represented various types of backgrounds from which soldiers were drawn: there was a young husband and father who volunteered because his job in Germany was uncertain, a nineteen-year old university student who was full of enthusiasm, a socialist who hated the English, a factory worker, and a brewer. Patzer went on to relate that a year later, the brewer had received the Iron Cross, some had died or been wounded, and subsequently other soldiers replaced them. This story was a prime example of the type of articles government and military authorities actively solicited for the military newspapers in order to promote a picture of soldier camaraderie and solidarity.

Patzer’s account came from his experience on the Western Front, but on the Eastern Front soldier solidarity was of supreme importance because there was always the threat of “going native.” German *Kultur* was the antidote to the strangeness of the East and the temptation to assimilate with the locals.⁹⁷⁶ In the trenches that stretched from the English Channel to Switzerland, Germans still felt an affinity with the land, villages, and people—people whose deepest roots were sunk in primeval Germanic soil. But in the East, German soldiers faced what historian Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius calls an alien “mindscape.”⁹⁷⁷ Soldiers faced a vast, open landscape that was uncultivated and disordered—something distinctly un-German. As German forces conquered and occupied this terrain they embarked on a “civilizing mission” but also found it imperative to offer their soldiers a refuge from this alien land. “Soldier homes” were established throughout this conquered territory to help German soldiers re-create community and identity.

⁹⁷⁵ Curt Patzer, “Erfahrung des Krieges,” *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung*, 15 November 1916. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgbadlaz1916bis1918/0055 Patzer was in the Weisbaden Lazarett and his story was submitted as part of a writing competition. (IV Preisausschreiben).

⁹⁷⁶ Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 113-150. Liulevicius offers German-Jewish writer Arnold Zweig as an example of someone who embraced the culture of eastern Europeans (Liulevicius, 191-92).

⁹⁷⁷ Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 151. Liulevicius uses the term to denote the way Germans processed what they saw when confronted with lands and peoples unlike their own and whose organizational concepts of how land should be settled and cultivated differed from German villages, towns, and cities.

These homes offered inexpensive bed and board, coffee, reading rooms, piano rooms, evening entertainments, lectures, poetry readings, and theatrical evenings.⁹⁷⁸ A favorite drama was Schiller's *Wallenstein* which Liulevicius calls the "theme drama" of the occupation because of its story line of unity in the midst of diversity and the role of the soldier in bringing freedom.⁹⁷⁹ Military newspapers were also a vital aspect of bringing German life to soldiers stationed in these strange, uncultivated lands and the editors eagerly announced and reported on cultural activities and encouraged soldiers to submit articles. A telegraphist rhapsodized about the ideal German *Heimat* with clean, red-gabled roofs, wagons loaded with hay, small summer gardens, happy children playing, and the simple village church.⁹⁸⁰ Several months later this newspaper of the Tenth Army reported on a "Vaterländische Abend" in a large hall in Wilna where a choir sang *Lieder*, performed scenes from Wagner's *Siegfried*, and the regimental band played pieces by Gluck, Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart.⁹⁸¹ Theater and concerts were vitally important in the East because they were the ultimate representation of German *Kultur*, and stories, poems, and songs about *Heimat* reminded the German soldiers of the importance of defending their own homeland and their important mission of bringing order and culture to the conquered lands.

Music performances took place formally and informally as we have seen in the examples above, but as soldiers arrived at the frontlines (whether east or west), choirs were organized on the fields of battle and in military hospitals giving soldiers and guest performers a chance to entertain and be entertained. For instance, an article in the Seventh Army newspaper in December 1916 commemorated the second anniversary of the formation of the Laon *Kriegsmännerchor* (Men's War Choir) whose first performance had been given on Christmas Eve, 1914.⁹⁸² During 1915-16 about 75 soldiers had been members of the

⁹⁷⁸ Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 134-35.

⁹⁷⁹ This was the Schiller work referenced in this chapter's opening lines and in the first edition of *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter*.

⁹⁸⁰ Otto Webner, „Heimatlied," *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, 6. Hartung 1917. The newspapers of the Tenth Army used the Germanic names of months. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztg10armee1916bis1917/0145

⁹⁸¹ „Vaterländische Abend," *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, 30. Gilbhart 1917. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztg10armee1916bis1917/0146

⁹⁸² „Der deutsche Kriegsmaennerchor Laon in der Champagne," *Kriegszeitung der 7. Armee*, 5 Oktober 1916 digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/digilit/feldztgkr7armee1916/0195 Laon was a French city captured by the Germans early in the war and the launching ground for several major offensives. The Germans were not driven out until the end of the war.

chorus, but the number had dropped to 29 by Christmas of 1916, only four of whom were original members. The article went on to say that because the membership changed frequently, the men practiced almost daily in order to maintain the high quality of their “art.” In two years they had 370 rehearsals, usually practicing from 8 until 10 o’clock at night. They sang at worship services, funerals, in the hospital, and at evening entertainments. It was reported they had given 155 religious concerts (*musikalische Andachten*) and 86 secular concerts (*Liederabende*) of both serious (*ernst*) and cheerful (*fröhlich*) musical works, and had performed in 89 cities along the Western Front. A number of well-known German soloists had travelled to Laon to perform with them.⁹⁸³ The fact that so many of the young men who became soldiers had participated in organized choral groups before the war made it almost inevitable that singing would continue in the trenches. Although there is not an exact means of proving this, it is not difficult to believe that these came from different backgrounds—members of the *Berlin Volkschor* sang the same repertoire as those from the *Riedel-Verein* in Leipzig or the *Feuchtwangen Gesangverein*. For some it apparently provided relief from the drudgery of life at the front. But it also gave them an opportunity to practice skills learned in school, their homes, or from private teachers. Singing with other men from other regions of Germany was similar (and very different) from joining a combined choir at a regional or national choral festival—overlapping emotional communities were formed on battle fronts as well as in Würzburg, Munich, or Gunzenhausen. And for many soldiers the military choirs gave them a chance to reconnect with their humanity in the midst of the violence and destruction for which they were themselves responsible.

Wounded and convalescing soldiers, who had escaped trenches or graves and subsequently spent some time in military hospitals, also organized choirs. The *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung* was printed two times a month and regularly advertised various activities and excursions for soldiers who were well enough to participate. This was the paper which had the beautiful *Heimat* scene on its masthead (from

⁹⁸³ The people mentioned were Reinhold Gerhardt and his sister Agnes Braunfels. The 24 August 1916 edition of the Seventh Army newspaper mentioned a concert by Elena Gerhardt—another of Reinhold’s sisters. She was a mezzo-soprano known for singing classic German *Lieder*, and had a worldwide reputation. She had performed in every major European city and made her U. S. debut in 1912 at Carnegie Hall.

page 33), and the very first issue of the paper announced a concert that was planned for the following week. “Kantate für Männerchor, Baritone und Orchester zum Geburtstag des Großherzog Friedrich II von Baden.”⁹⁸⁴ This was not a performance by musicians brought into the hospital to perform for the sick men but by singers who were residents of the hospital. The paper regularly announced choir practices in which the injured and convalescing men could participate:

Army Choir

Practice takes place three times a week on Monday, Wednesday
and Saturday, 7 o'clock in the evening, in the dayroom of the hospital barracks.⁹⁸⁵

The men's chorus (*Gesangverein*) was made up of wounded soldiers, and the words of the cantata were printed in the *Badener Lazarett* below the notice about the birthday performance. The first chorus was written for a four-part men's choir and the text extolled the beauty of nature:

“Der deutschen Kriegslied” by Rudolf Herzog

Nature shines in the sunlight
The roses bloom on heavy branches
Like a magnificent birthday wreath
Offered to the beloved father of this land.
Oh beautiful day with your bright sounds
Celebrating the mountains and valleys of Baden!
You call us today not to exultant song.
You call us today to a fervent prayer.⁹⁸⁶

The words of the chorus dwelt on the beauty of Baden—its roses, mountains, and valleys which were suitable for celebrating the birthday of Friedrich II and for reminding the soldiers of their own *Heimat*.

The next part of the cantata was sung by a baritone soloist and was a prayer for victory, for Germany's salvation, and for peace, but it also had a line in which the prayer was for men to be brothers again.⁹⁸⁷ In

⁹⁸⁴ “Kantate für Männerchor, Baritone und Orchester zum Geburtstag SKH des Großherzogs Friedrich II von Baden.” *Badener Lazarett*, 1. Juli 1916. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/badener_lazarett_zeitung

⁹⁸⁵ The opportunity to join the choir was listed under things wounded soldiers could participate in.

“Vergünstigungen, welche die in den Lazaretten in der Stadt Baden-Baden untergebrachten franken und verwundeten Soldaten genießen.“ digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgbadlaz1916bis1918/0001

⁹⁸⁶ „Der deutschen Kriegslied,“ 1 July 1916 *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung*; my translation. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgbadlaz1916bis1918/0005

⁹⁸⁷ “Den Frieden, der endlich die Menschen wieder zu Brüdern macht.“

1916, the Baden paper still expressed hope that the war's end would bring true peace. The final chorus sounded a more defiant note.

We stand true and fast for the Fatherland,
We fear God, but not the enemy.
And inwardly ever more tightly bound together—

Around Prince and folk in battle and victory, united!
Does the world still call us barbarians—
Who freed them from the Roman yoke?
We will preserve Germania,
A monument to our forefathers, undefiled.

This verse was reminiscent of the 1905 Gunzenhausen Singing Day or *Die tausendjährige Linde* (both Chapter Five) in which choirs gathered to sing together about their heroic past—defeating the Romans, establishing their own Germanic lands under its princes, dukes, bishops, et al, and affirming themselves as the people of *Kultur* rather than barbarians. The ability to form a choir, practice music together again, and perform offered men who had been involved in the choral movement as civilians a chance to heal and to reconnect with the nation by singing about their distant past and their continual fight for freedom and national unity. Love of the homeland and defense of the Fatherland were echoed in the article that reported the accomplishments of the Seventh Army choir.

It is not at all exceptional that Germans continually revive their inner lives and this gives them, wherever possible, a mode of artistic expression. This is part of the very nature of Germans. In particular the love and care of singing is native to our musical people. In the *Lied*, the *Heimat* is embraced, and the soul sings. The heightened spirit and vulnerability created by the war causes the soldier to be doubly passionate about hearing music.⁹⁸⁸

Heimat and the *Lied* were values that continuously resonated to affirm national emotional community.

Although these words were clearly written to remind Germans about why they were fighting and to stir up patriotic sentiments, it echoed themes from old German folksongs and *Lieder* written over the course of the nineteenth century, speeches given at national choral festivals, banner parades, the rhetoric in choral society correspondence, mottos, slogans, mastheads and choral society letterheads.

⁹⁸⁸ Friedrich Stein, „Vom Deutschen Kriegsmännerchor Laon,“ 17. Dezember, 1916 digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgkr7armee1916/0319

In spite of the positive stories and articles presented by the military newspapers, by the mid-point of the war Germans were in need of more than upbeat rhetoric and frequent reminders of their cultural superiority. Piete Kuhr recorded in her diary on December 23, 1916, “No one speaks of peace any more. On Christmas Eve we shall have turnip and potato puree with horsemeat balls in mustard sauce.”⁹⁸⁹ Likewise, in the *Kriegszeit Kunstflugblätter* the patriotic images and poems of the early months of the war had been replaced by December 1915 by grimmer images reflecting the realities of ongoing war, suffering, and deprivation. It was the mid-December edition of the paper, but this time only the date on the masthead indicated the formerly festive German Christmas season.⁹⁹⁰ The front page drawing by Otto Hettner was of a kneeling nude man, his hands stretched out as though begging and his face a mask of agony. The title read, “The Defeated.” The next two pages had several drawings of graveyards, but it was the final image and its accompanying poem that most vividly replicated the national mood. Three soldiers occupied a trench—two had their backpacks and rifles while one was curled on the ground in a fetal position—or kneeling in prayer? The other two were bent double but standing, and one even attempted to climb out of the trench—a smooth unscalable wall. Underneath the drawing was the title, “Avanti! Avanti!” (Forward). The corresponding poem, “Gruppe aus dem Tartarus,” was written by Friedrich Schiller and based on Book IV of Virgil’s *Aeneid* whose subject was a group of damned souls in hell. The third stanza asked, “Will these torments ever cease?” And the answer, “Punishment in Tartarus lasts forever.”⁹⁹¹ In this drawing and poem all the poetic power of the Romantic era was on display. The allusion to an ancient classic in Schiller’s poetry was paired not with the heroic confidence of the first editions (*Wohlauf Kameraden, aufs Pferd, aufs Pferd!*) but with grim stoicism in the midst of unceasing torments. The soldiers experienced a universal familiarity of suffering that was as real in 1914-1918 as when Virgil penned the *Aeneid* almost two thousand years earlier. Robert Shaw’s assertion that the arts are a means of expressing the inexpressible were borne out as references to classical mythology offered a

⁹⁸⁹ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 212.

⁹⁹⁰ *Kriegszeit Künstlerflugblätter*, Mitte Dezember, 1915. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgrzeit1914bis1916/0236

⁹⁹¹ Marjorie Wing Hirsch, *Schubert’s Dramatic Lieder* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 4.

means of couching the pain Germans were suffering in 1915 with a literary tradition. It was one with which the *Bildungsbürgertum* were well-acquainted. However, one did not need a classical education to understand the emotions expressed by the drawing and those in the poem—the sorrows of a seemingly eternal agony with no hope of peace.

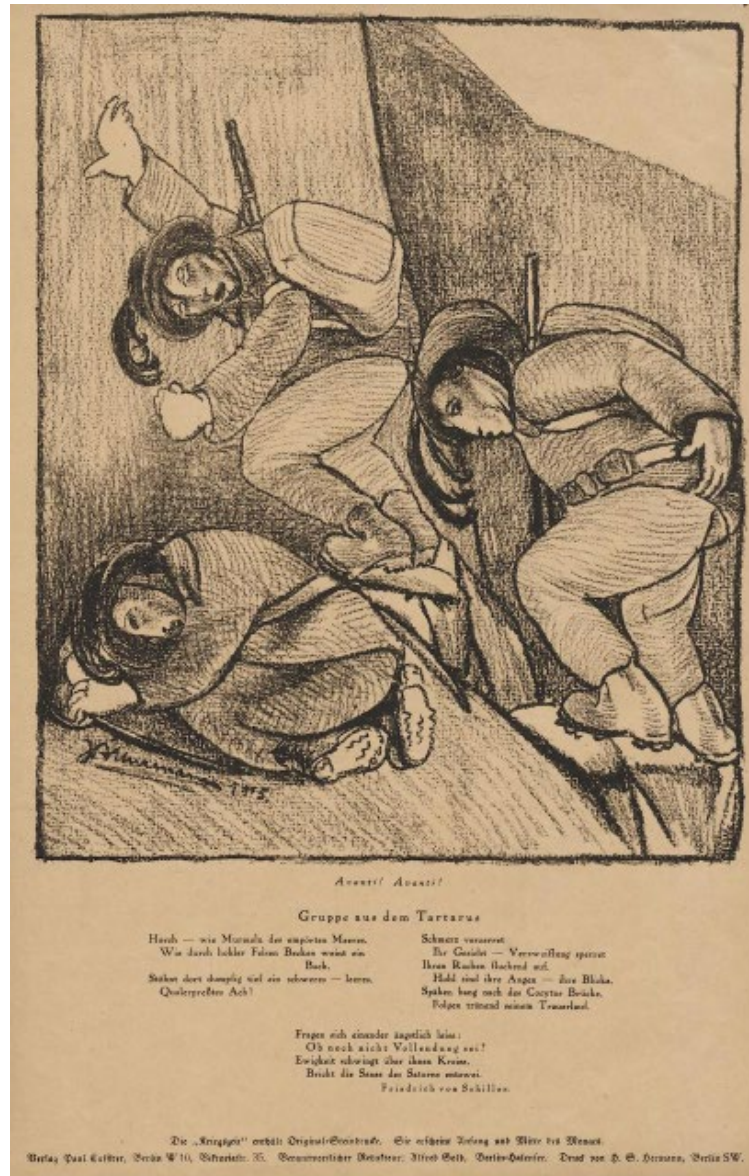


Figure 40 Image that accompanied Gruppe aus dem Tartarus

Grief was not only an intensely personal emotion, but it could also be a group experience in which the arts and rituals lent some comfort to the suffering. The French, British, Russians, and all other combatant

nations suffered, but there was no collective comfort to be found from the losses of the Great War for decades. In the midst of war, each nation developed its own means of dealing with loss. For Germans this often meant reaffirming shared expressions of *Heimat*, Christmas, their history, and music. Prewar conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, workers and the bourgeoisie, socialists, nationalists, conservatives, youth and their stodgy elders were to some extent set aside.⁹⁹² The belief that they were the people of *Kultur* had been carefully cultivated over the course of the nineteenth century and war propaganda assiduously crafted propaganda around these themes to rally Germans around a common cause. As war disrupted daily life, Germans needed to solidify the concept of who they were and used it to justify the belief that they were fighting a defensive war—to protect the homeland, their way of life, and their freedom like the German patriots of the past had done. Curt Patzer who wrote the story about the common humanity of German soldiers published by the *Badener Lazarett* in 1916 concluded his narrative by describing a soldier's trip home. There he encountered people waiting in long lines for bread, meager food supplies at home, and depleted bank accounts. But he concluded that their will, like that of soldiers in the field, was strong. Cut off from all other lands with only themselves to depend on, Germans still had the spiritual will to preserve their culture.⁹⁹³

Music was a connective thread that reassured Germans fighting in the field, as well as those left at home, that not everything about life had changed. Choral festivals came to a halt, but choirs still practiced together and put on concerts. And they did this not only in Berlin or Leipzig but on the fields of battle and

⁹⁹² Brian K. Feltman, "Visualizing Death: Religious Imagery in Visual Memorials to Germany's Fallen Soldiers, 1915-18 (Paper presented at Southeast German Studies Workshop, College of Charleston, March, 2017). There is some evidence that confessional differences became less contentious during the war years—the Iron Cross became a universal symbol of Christian heroism, but antisemitism did increase during the war years. Pieter Kuhr was deeply disturbed by the treatment of a Jewish classmate (Kuhr, 32, 33, 52, and 56). Kuhr's mother reassured her that the Jews were not responsible for the war and said the Jews were a "highly respectable and gifted race" (Kuhr, 56). Anna Ettliger made frequent references to the growth of antisemitism at the turn of the century in her memoirs, but reported almost nothing about the war years. In 1920 she wrote, "I am not yet able to read my war and revolution diary again. Everything we experienced back then - and what we now have to experience - is doubly painful (Ettliger, 364)." The influence of Richard Wagner can be seen in a heightened belief in the spiritual, Christian roots of the Germanic people—but it is important to remember that Wagner's Christianity drew on Catholic as well as Protestant symbolism.

⁹⁹³ Patzer, "Erfahrung des Krieges," digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgbadlaz1916bis1918/0056 Durch die eiserne Umspannung seiner Grenzen, von allem Auslandsverkehr abgeschnitten, nur auf sich selbst angewiesen, konnte es seine Kraft und Eignart zur vollsten Entwicklung bringen, unabhängig in wirtschaftlicher Beziehung, ohne fremden Einfluß, hoffen wir für immer, auf geistigen und kulturellen Gebiet.

in internment camps. Musicians travelled to the battle fields to give performances and lectures about the significance of the *Lied* or to perform dramas like Schiller's *Wallenstein*. Music like simple folk songs or Christmas carols as well as that of the German masters (Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms) evoked the strongest sense of German-ness and resonated with most factions of society. This brings us back to the question of what unified Germans during the war years. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma has recently travelled the world performing Bach's *Cello Suites* and making an argument for culture as a unifying force—that it “helps the edges of society communicate with the center of society,” and “turns ‘the other’ into us.”⁹⁹⁴ Ma defines culture in the same sense as the early Romantics as a unity between literature and mathematics, biology and music. Using *Cello Suite No. 5* to prove this point he explains that the tension between the high notes and the low ones eventually lead to “a reinvigorated center, a strengthened reflection of the beginning.” He tied this concept to society by explaining that “both culture and politics seek equilibrium between order and chaos.” Ma expresses an understanding of *Kultur* and society that early German Romantics developed and their descendants sought to hold onto throughout the nineteenth century. Industrialization and mass culture intruded into this vision of a living, organic wholeness, and one reason many Germans embraced war in August 1914 was because they felt it was an opportunity to return to equilibrium. That proved to be an empty promise, but music did hold Germans together emotionally in the first years of war as we have seen from the first-hand accounts of music as a force of comfort and renewal. Unending war, the lack of food and energy sources, and grief could not be sustained interminably only by means of *Kultur* and eventually the chaos overwhelmed order.

5.2 Chapter 10 Endure Courageously You Millions! Endure for a Better World!

*No indeed, it was not my brother.
It was the enemy of my Heimat,
It was the enemy of my mother,
It was the enemy of my sister,
Therefore I killed him—out of love.* Helmut Weiß, 1917⁹⁹⁵

⁹⁹⁴ Peter Dizikes, “Yo-Yo Ma calls for ‘culture in action’ to build a better world,” *MIT News*, March 20, 2018. news.mit.edu/2018/compton-lecture-yo-yo-ma-culture-action-build-better-world-0320

⁹⁹⁵ Helmut Weiß, “Das Gericht,” *Wandervogel*, Juni/Juli 1917

Wandervogel Rudolf Piper wrote from the field of battle in 1916, “This war shows us with unequivocal clarity that only one thing will lead to victory: the iron-hard will to win. The will to awaken and steel oneself is the order of the day. This also applies to our people, whose renewal we hope for in this war. We cannot each be more than one seed growing for a better and truer time of peace - but to be a seed, that is our sacred duty.”⁹⁹⁶ Rudolf Piper expressed a determination that became a repeated theme as war dragged on—that of persevering in order to sow seeds for the future. Universal grief and loss could be endured for the sake of the Fatherland and the national community (*Gemeinsamkeit*). Student-soldier Johannes Philippsen echoed these sentiments when he wrote home after returning to the Western Front from leave in the summer of 1917. He had first marched to war in 1914, and now he reflected that the “impatient longing to fight, the wild joy” of defeating the enemy had been replaced by “a deep-seated determination to stand by the Fatherland whatever happens.”⁹⁹⁷ Themes of resignation and sacrifice, stoicism and martyrdom prevailed in newspaper articles, soldier letters, and personal accounts—but with the hope that the combined civilian and military sacrifices sowed seeds for the nation’s survival and rebirth.⁹⁹⁸ Piper’s and Philippsen’s reflections represented not a different motivation but a different tone from that of soldiers who marched off to war in August 1914 inspired to battle for the freedom expressed in Friedrich Schiller’s *Reiterlied*. “Arise comrades! To your horses! Without freedom life is worthless.” It was not mere enthusiasm that was required after 1916 but an iron will. I argue in this final chapter that as German city-dwellers, workers, peasants, and even many of the bourgeoisie became increasingly

⁹⁹⁶ Rudolf Piper, „Liegt des Wandervogel Aufgabe im Kriege oder im Frieden begründet?“ *Wandervogel*, October/November 1916. Dieser Krieg zeigt uns mit unerbitterlicher Deutlichkeit, daß nur eins uns siegen läßt: der eisenharte Wille zum Sieg. Den Willen zu erwecken und zu stählen, lautet das Gebot der Stunde. Und gilt auch für die Erneuerung unseres Volkes, die wir von diesem Kriege erhoffen. Mehr als ein Samenkorn können wir alle nicht sein bei diesem Wachstum einer besseren wahren Friedenzeit--aber ein Samenkorn sein wollen, das ist unsere heilige Pflicht.

⁹⁹⁷ Philipp Witkop, *German Students' War Letters*, trans. A. F. Wedd (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 395. Johannes Philippsen had been a student of Philosophy at Kiel and died three months after writing this letter.

⁹⁹⁸ George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). Mosse explains that because so many of the soldiers who died were young, the memories of these fallen soldiers lent themselves to a narrative of eternal youth who symbolized a Greek ideal of harmony and strength alongside the Christian doctrine of eternal life after death. But in the case of *Wandervögel* or the soldier letters that Witkop collected, the German youth who were still alive in the war years also voiced a belief in their eternal value to the nation.

disenchanted with the war, they continued to find solace and express endurance using music and *Heimat* themes, but with the added goal of sowing seeds to preserve the values of the previous century—*Kultur*, freedom, and national unity.⁹⁹⁹

The threat to these values came from enemy armies and the British navy—from the outset military and government officials fostered a narrative that Germany was surrounded by implacable foes, and the nation itself was a fortress guarded by its land, air, and sea forces. The early Romantics fostered a notion of both a distinct German character (with roots in language, poetry, and music) but also a universal brotherhood of man. Schiller's historical dramas as well as *Ode to Joy* held both national and universal hopes. But as war dragged on through 1915, 1916, and into interminable hunger, deprivation, and death, the Romantic ideal of universal brotherhood that Schiller joyfully acclaimed and Beethoven immortalized was obliterated in the trenches of the Western Front. Those ideals were replaced by a more purely German version of brotherhood and the simple hope for military victory.

A picture of martyrdom, stoicism, determination, and pessimism emerged from newspapers and journals, letters and memoirs forcing us to once again critically assess these sources. Witkop's collection of student letters represented an attempt to preserve the ideals of heroic sacrifice and honor cultivated by elite bourgeois society, and the first collection of these was published in 1918. The military papers were pure propaganda—but people bought them and some readers surely held onto their messages of victory with a grim optimism that Germany would triumph in the end. Although religious belief remained a genuine comfort to some Germans, others like Pieter Kuhr could never reconcile belief in a loving God with the millions of people who suffered. The *Wandervögel* were a difficult group to pin down—Rudolph Piper, quoted above, bought into the notion of noble sacrifice that would preserve the German people. Other *Wandervögel* were anti-war and maintained faith in the German land and its folkways and healthy

⁹⁹⁹ David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 469. City-dwellers suffered most from food and fuel shortages; peasants suffered least but resented greater government control over agricultural production. Workers had initially been persuaded to support the war effort because the Wilhemine government allowed labor unions' greater freedom—that dissipated over the course of time.

living as an antidote to military aggression.¹⁰⁰⁰ Within the youth organization, as well as in many other social groups, there was a clash of interests that fueled the death of Romantic ideals of wholeness and unity. Elements of both continuity and change carried German citizens through the last years of warfare.

In this chapter I examine first, narratives of resignation and sacrifice, and second, those of Germany as a fortress surrounded by enemies. Although few programs of music or performances are available to analyze, certain aspects of music culture (and songs) were so ingrained in German society that images and phrases conjured complete tunes and lyrics in the same way program notes did. One must, however, think of the sources as leitmotifs. Any aficionado of Richard Wagner studies the leitmotifs associated with each character and the individual events of his music dramas. These reveal stories within the story, because the instruments speak in the same way as the singers. In this chapter phrases of music, images of fortresses, and snippets of news articles offer shorthand meanings of what festivals offered in more elaborate displays.

Choral music has been the focus of this dissertation, and while organized choirs continued to perform, after August 1914 they did not put on festivals or the celebratory rituals examined in Chapters Four through Eight. These were replaced by rituals of mourning and survival. Although the *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung* continued to report on the everyday doings of member choruses the contents were abbreviated and it was published only twice a month. Reports like the two that follow were the norm. In the town of Gumbinnen where there was a *Liedertafel* and a *Sängerverein* their ranks were depleted because of the war, but they still practiced regularly and put on performances. Although their facilities had been taken over for use as a military hospital (Lazarett), the choirs performed for the wounded in the

¹⁰⁰⁰ In the summer of 1916 there was a split in the wartime *Wandervogel* groups. One group wanted to stick with its original goals and focus on hiking and nature and leave behind the Volkisch aspects and just become a "Sportverein" while the other group saw the traditional fitness activities as a means of preparing for battle and building the camaraderie necessary for soldiers. And there were *Krieg Wandervögel* organized on the Western Front made up of all soldiers who had been civilian *Wandervögel*. (*Wandervogel*, September 1916). This group wanted to make it clear that they avoided sentimental patriotism but sang songs that came from the heart and expressed eternal themes of "friendship, faithfulness, love, courage in battle, pride, passion, and love of the Fatherland." (*Wandervogel*, May 1917).

lobby where “the friendly faces of the soldiers was all the thanks they needed for the songs.”¹⁰⁰¹ From Altona the *Allgemeine Altonaer Liedertafel* reported on a celebration of their 75th Anniversary. It was not suitable to have a festival but they celebrated with “silent thoughts of joy and satisfaction in the achievements, hopes, wishes and confidence in the future.”¹⁰⁰² Together with the *Männergesangverein* in Hamburg they gave a concert to benefit the 31st Infantry Regiment. The combined choirs numbered 500-600 men, and the performance “featured a rich treasure of *Lieder* and brought forth a feeling from the best and most beautiful” of those including “Gnädig und barmherzig” (Gracious and Merciful) by Grell, and “Dem Andenken der gefallenen Kameraden” (In Memory of the Fallen Comrades) by Wohlgemuth, and concluded with “Deutschland, Deutschland über alles.”¹⁰⁰³ A song invoking God’s grace and mercy, one remembering fallen brothers, fathers, and sons, and finally the national anthem concluded the concert. The other songs, the rich treasure of *Lieder*, were presumably ones sung in the preceding decades, but the three listed deserved special notice. An article in a January 1916 edition summed up the mood of many of the DSB performances. “The war years of 1914 and 1915 were not rich in musical memorial days, and because of the seriousness of the times, the commemoration ceremonies were usually held quietly.”¹⁰⁰⁴ In spite of reduced numbers and the hardships of daily life, the choirs continued performing for the sake of their own consolation and that of fellow Germans. The simple rituals of practicing together and presenting music for an audience was a comfort in itself and reminded everyone of former days.

Wandervögel who remained at the Homefront followed a similar pattern. They continued to hike together singing for themselves and local villagers, and they published their journal until the end of the war. Throughout the early years of publication, the *Wandervogel* journal used heavy paper and printed beautiful illustrations—mostly nature drawings or scenes associated with *Heimat*. These images reminded

¹⁰⁰¹ *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung*, 5. February 1916.

¹⁰⁰² *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung*, 20. January 1917.

¹⁰⁰³ A. Eduard Grell (1800-1886) was a director of the *Berlin Singakademie*. His composition “Gnädig und barmherzig ist der Herr” (The Lord is Gracious and Merciful) was written for an acapella four-part men’s choir and had a particularly mournful sound. Wohlgemuth wrote “Der Andenken der gefallenen Kameraden” (Memories of Fallen Comrades) in 1915. The choices of music were both sorrowful, as for a funeral, and patriotic—“Germany, Germany over All.”

¹⁰⁰⁴ Julius Blaschke, „Gedenktage namhafter Musiker und Sänger im Jahre 1916,“ *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung*, 8. Januar 1916. Die Kriegsjahre 1914 und 1915 waren nicht reich an musikalischen Gedenktagen, und bei dem Ernst der Zeit sind die Erinnerungsfeiern meist in aller Stille begangen worden.

Wandervögel at home and on the frontlines that the beauty and meaning of *Heimat* and the German natural landscape endured, therefore suffering was not meaningless but was the only way to ensure the preservation of the nation. During the war years the paper became increasingly thinner and the font size tiny, but it was still filled with artwork. There were also artistic contributions from *Wandervögel*

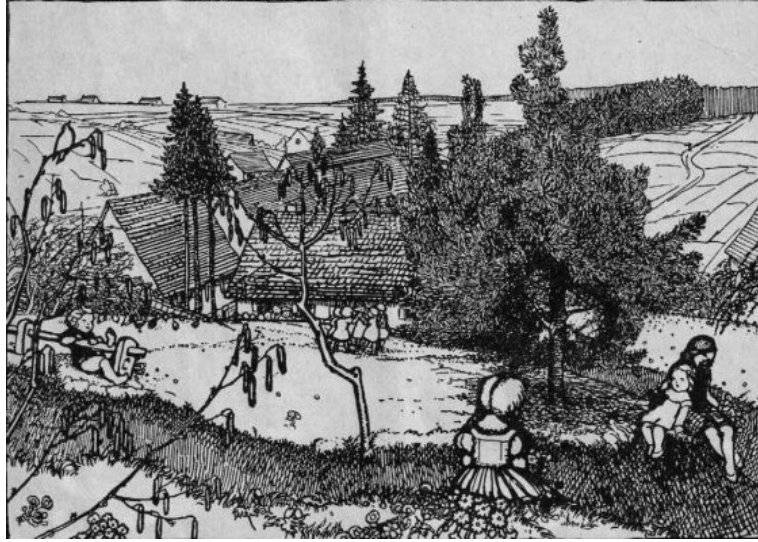


Figure 41 *Wandervögel* art by Auguste Langbein (1880-1927), from a collection entitled "*Obersmusbach--Dorfgeschichte*"¹⁰⁰⁵

on the warfronts—they made up the age groups most likely to be called up to enlist (or who volunteered) and they continued to demonstrate their appreciation for their natural surroundings by sketching them and submitting them for publication in the *Wandervogel* journal.

We looked in Chapter Eight at a May festival the Hamburg *Wandervögel* celebrated in 1912, and a festival celebrated by a Thüringian group in 1915 offers a comparison to how their festivals changed as a result of war. Ludwig Wutschke was a *Wandervogel* soldier who was on leave at the time of this festival, and the younger members were concerned about whether they should dance as usual. Wutschke assured them that certain songs “demanded” dancing, and he reassured them that the soldiers did not sit in

¹⁰⁰⁵ Auguste Langbein (1880-1927) trained as an artist but gave up most of her artistic activities after her marriage in 1907. Her husband was a pastor with a church in the village of Albdorf Erkenbrechtsweiler and the drawing here was part of a set that she did depicting life as a village pastor’s wife.

their trenches and “groan all day.”¹⁰⁰⁶ This festival took on both a commemorative mood as well as a celebratory one. On the main day of the festival, the young people were up early to hike and climb, but at 10:45 a.m. they gathered at the town’s castle and walked down the hill together to a church in order to honor their “fallen brothers.” The young people quietly made a circle around the pews and sang “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,” to an organ accompaniment, and then sang several other *Lieder* one of which was “Innsbruck, ich muß dich lassen,” a popular *Abschiedslied* (departure song) from the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁰⁷ The students then collected colorful flags which had been placed around the altar and waved them to honor the fifty-seven members of their regional group who had died in the war while the organ and a violin played more music. After a speech and some more singing, they marched with the flags back up the hill to the castle where they spent the rest of the day playing games (relay races, spear- and stone-throwing, *Ballweitwurf*, and sprints) in which both the young men and women participated. The day ended with a bonfire and more singing—*Soldatenlieder* (soldier songs) and finally, “Heilige Flamme, glüh’ glüh’ und verlösche nie fürs Vaterland!” (Holy Flame, glow, glow, and never go out—for the Fatherland). Instead of convening in a grove of trees for the May festival, the young people met in a church and sang songs reminiscent of a worship service. There was no mention in the journal account of the city’s citizens joining in the festivities as they had in the village of Sprötze in 1912, but the young people still hiked and played games. The song sung around the campfire in 1915 echoed the words of the poem, “Sonnenwende” published in the 1911 edition of *Wandervogel*: “Our Fatherland, Faithfully we stand by these flames, and claim an encircling band; Strongly we defend and protect one another!”¹⁰⁰⁸ In spite of the wartime occasion of the *Wandervogel* May festival described here, the young people who participated were solemn when they gathered in the church but not morbid, and the celebration held

¹⁰⁰⁶ Max Sidow, „Der Thüringer Kriegsgautag in Lobeda,“ *Wandervogel*, July 1915.

¹⁰⁰⁷ “Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen” by Heinrich Isaac (1450-1517) was one of the most popular *Abschiedslieder* (departure songs). We looked at this song previously in Chapter Two. It was particularly popular because it was old and therefore represented the true nature of the German people and its melody was incorporated in larger works by Bach and Brahms. It was also the melody and theme of a Lutheran chorale, “O Welt ich muss dich lassen” (Oh, I must depart this World).

¹⁰⁰⁸ „Sonnenwende,“ *Wandervogel*, February, 1911.

elements of former practices—parading with flags, playing games, and ending the day around a bonfire. The simple, carefree rituals of pre-war years took on a more sober note, but they endured.

The other youth group examined in Chapter Eight was representative of the students who wrote the letters that Witkop collected, and many of them had been involved in the *Wandervogel* movement before their university days. At their universities they often joined fraternities, and German fraternities frequently had their own choirs. These Academic Singers continued to use the *Zupfgeigenhansl*, and that little book contained a number of *Soldatenlieder* (soldier songs). One became a favorite of the Academic Singers, “Die Rosen blühen in Tale,” from the operetta *Waldmeisters Brautfahrt*.¹⁰⁰⁹ The text of the operetta was based on a work by Otto Roquette (1824-1896)—a tale of the Rhine, wine, and hiking (*Rhein-, Wein- und Wandermärchen*). Although it never achieved critical attention, Roquette’s tale—related through a series of poems—was steeped in romantic imagery, and “Die Rosen blühen in Tale” (The Roses bloom in the Valleys) was about a young man who marched off to war only to be betrayed by the young woman he loved. He subsequently stabbed her—“So it goes when a girl loves two boys, Wonder well. We have seen yet again, What wrong love does.”¹⁰¹⁰ Unrequited love was a common enough story, but in this song there was a symbolic relationship between the blooming roses and the blood that flowed from the young woman’s chest. This popular song took on a more tragic meaning that belied the noble tone of many of the student letters when a Leipzig student from the St. Pauli fraternity penned a parody version in 1915.¹⁰¹¹

„Krieg und Rosen,“ Gotthard Richter

Was sollen wir singen von blühender Zeit,
Vom goldenen Tagen der Rosen,
Wenn grauses Vernichten und brandendes Leid
Die Marken der Heimat umtosen?

What shall we sing of the blooming time,
of the golden days of roses,
as gruesome, burning destruction and pain
Rage around the lands of home?

¹⁰⁰⁹ Harald Lönnecker, „‘Sieg und Glanz dem deutschen Reich!’ Die akademischen Sänger im Ersten Weltkrieg,“ *Lied und populäre Kultur* 50/51 (2005/2006), 20-21, Lönnecker says this was the only student song regularly performed in concert. *Wandervogel* youth generally went on to universities or Hochschule where there was a continuation of practices and traditions from their early teen years.

¹⁰¹⁰ *Der Zupfgeigenhansl*, 178-179. The *Zupf* did not list the author of the text and music but remarked that it was a song known throughout Germany.

¹⁰¹¹ Lönnecker, “Sieg und Glanz,” 11. Lönnecker’s source is Richard Kötzschke, *Geschichte der Universitäts-Sängerschaft zu St. Pauli in Leipzig 1822-1922* (Leipzig, 1922), 485.

Was wollen wir sagen von blühendem Tag,
 Von Jubel und Blumen und Sonnen,
 Wenn im dröhnenden Weltengewitterschlag
 Die Schönheit so blutig zerronnen?

What would we say of a blooming day
 with its jubilation of flowers and sunshine,
 when in a roaring bombardment
 Its beauty dissolves into blood?

Was sollen wir schwärmen mit singender Lust
 von holdgeliebten Mädchen im Maien,
 Wenn der Jugend Blüte hinweggemusst
 Und im Haß sich die Völker entzweien?

Why should we gush passionate songs
 about heroically loved May maidens,
 If the bloom of youth must disappear
 And the nations divide in hate?

Und dennoch! Nicht fragen, nicht klagen so laut!
 Wir Blauweißblumschlungenen singen
 Und grüßen im Liede die Eisenbraut,
 Mit ihr uns den Sieg zu erzwingen!

Hey! Don't ask questions; don't complain!
 We blue-white-blue sing¹⁰¹²
 and greet in song the „iron bride,“
 With which we force victory!

Die uns rauben wollen, was uns beglückt,
 Und die Tage der Rosen verderben,
 Sie sollen's erfahren! Den Degen gezückt,
 So singen wir, siegen und sterben!

Those who would rob us of our happiness,
 and spoil the days of roses,
 They'll find out! Draw the knife,
 as we sing, win, and die!

Drum drauf! Noch ist die blühende goldene Zeit
 In dem Kampfe, dem blutigen großen!
 Und färbt uns die Wunde so rot das Kleid:
 Draus blühen der Heimat die Rosen!¹⁰¹³

Now out! It's yet the blooming, golden time
 In the battle's great bloodiness!
 And it dyes the wound as red as the dress:
 In the Heimat the roses are blooming!

Richter inverted the object of anger from the young woman who betrayed a soldier in the operetta version to anger against the promises of an easy victory in August 1914. What good did it do the soldier to sing songs of blooming flowers and days of roses (the songs Richter and his fellow students marched off to war singing in August) when the reality was only death and international strife? But they were forbidden to complain; their duty was to fight on. Betrayed by the promises of glorious charges and honor in confronting enemies face to face was painful enough, but to be ordered to hold onto shattered dreams was an infidelity too deep for some young men. This group had enlisted as a personal response to the call of Schiller's *Reiterlied*; Leipzig students were steeped in Romantic literature and the tales of the glorious victories of 1813—the *Völkerschlachtdenkmal* had been completed only a year before the world war began—and although myth, history, and the Fatherland failed their generation, they fought on.¹⁰¹⁴

¹⁰¹² Blue and white were the colors of the St. Pauli fraternity.

¹⁰¹³ Quoted in Lönnecker, „Sieg und Glanz,“ 20-21. The translation is mine.

¹⁰¹⁴ The *Völkerschlachtdenkmal* (The Monument to the Battle of the Nations) was completed 100 years after the battle also known as the Battle of Leipzig. *Burschenschaft* students whose roots lay in the Wars of Liberation (*Befreiungskriege*) traveled in groups from all parts of Germany in 1913 and coordinated their arrival in Leipzig for

Richter had the social and educational background that fostered ideals Witkop wanted to immortalize, and although the mood expressed by “Krieg und Rosen” was antithetical to the image of the heroic German youth of Witkop’s collection, the juxtaposition of death and life (blooming roses) was an age-old theme. It could, however, be a theme of comfort rather than tragedy, and I offer several examples. Brahms’s *German Requiem* was written to comfort those who mourned the death of a beloved family member or friend. His sources were not German poems but Hebrew psalms and New Testament writings. Psalm 125: 5-6 reads: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” A passage from the epistle of James echoes the agrarian theme in the psalm. “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandmen waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.”¹⁰¹⁵ The comfort offered here was that given to planters—sow the seed, endure difficulties of drought or disease, be patient—the end result brought joy. A final chorus from the *Requiem* addressed human death. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord . . . their works do follow them.” (Revelation 14:13). The seeds that were buried in the earth produced a crop and human deeds produced fruit even after the body lay in a grave. There was spiritual comfort here—life amidst death—but Brahms was not particularly religious and believed these passages offered universal comfort. American conductor Robert Shaw described the experience of performing the *Requiem*: “However varied and personal its comfort-bearing qualities may be to the listener, there can be no doubt about its exhilarative effects upon those who perform it.”¹⁰¹⁶ Shaw went on to correct the notion that singing about death was exhilarating, rather it was a “life-fulfilling” joy to participate in the performance. And here I think Christopher Small’s observations about performance as an encompassing activity is fruitful. The singers might be exhilarated by the skill and cooperation involved in singing the choruses

the dedication of the monument on October 18, 1913. A large percentage of them marched off to France or to the Eastern Front less than a year later.

¹⁰¹⁵ “Text—Brahms Ein Deutsches Requiem” web.stanford.edu/group/SymCh/performances/S1995/text.html

¹⁰¹⁶ Robert Shaw, *The Robert Shaw Reader*, ed. Robert Blocker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 231.

that made up the *Requiem*; the audience was comforted by the meaning of the words. The living need not mourn in vain; the life of their loved one would produce a harvest of joy.

The themes of death and life were not restricted to Judeo-Christian scripture but could be found in any number of folksongs and *Lieder*. One that fits especially well here was “Die Kapelle” that I examined in Chapter Four. A chapel stood on a hill where a burial took place while down in the valley a shepherd boy tended his sheep—the message was “Listen shepherd boy! Life is very short!”¹⁰¹⁷ Like the young oak and the ancient oak pictured on the German Choral Association’s banner, life continued even in the midst of death, and death was an exhortation to the living to live mindfully. A final example that ties this more closely to the existence of the German Empire was the 1907 performance of “Die tausendjährige Linde” in Feuchtwangen (Chapter Five). The composer Theodor Podbertsky presented a musical story of the German states from the time of the bards until the founding of the Second Empire. In dramatic fashion, Podbertsky titled the final chorales “Zerfallen” (Decay, 1806) followed by “Auferstehung” (Resurrection, 1871).¹⁰¹⁸ Just as plants die leaving seeds for regrowth, the old empire died and was then resurrected. The farmers’ patience gave way to joy at the harvest; patient citizens could also expect victory after patient endurance. Dozens of examples could be used here—spring songs, workers’ songs, even love songs articulated the hope that life followed death, as well as preceding it.

The cycles of nature paralleled the cycles of life and as these themes frequently appeared in simple songs and in concert music, it was not a concept restricted to a particular social class. Vernon Lidtke gives an example from the “Workers’ Marsellaise”—the most symbolic song to the German labor movement.¹⁰¹⁹ The last stanza of this song alludes to Lassalle as a “sower.”

Even if the sower has fallen,
The seed fell on good soil,
For us, however, remains the courageous act,
May it be a holy heritage for all of you.¹⁰²⁰

¹⁰¹⁷ “Die Kapelle” was written by Ludwig Uhland and set to music by Conradin Kreutzer.

¹⁰¹⁸ Archiv der Stiftung Dokumentations- und Forschungszentrum des Deutschen Chorwesens, Bestand Gesang- und Musikverein Feuchtwangen, Bestandssignatur B 71 1.1.2 (90.5) 70.

¹⁰¹⁹ Vernon Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 113.

¹⁰²⁰ Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture*, 114. Lidtke’s translation.

Ferdinand Lassalle died in 1864 but his legacy lived on in the efforts of German workers who participated in the labor movement and supported the political agenda of the SPD. Using similar terms, student-soldier Walter Stock wrote his mother (“*Meine liebste Mutter!*”). “Would it not be wonderful if only precious, valuable things came about as a result of the sacrifice of our generation! New life grows only from death, and over corpses the way leads to freedom. . . . Should I not come home from this war, then I depart with the joyful certainty that noble humanity will live on in your deeds and in the spirit of the people—new seed shall spring out of the soil.”¹⁰²¹ The young men who wrote the letters Witkop gathered and published were educated to believe in the ideals of heroic sacrifice and had been raised on the deeds of their forefathers. It was an idea shared to some extent by a great number of Germans because it drew on themes that were more deeply rooted in culture than the nineteenth-century educational system.

Expressions of the nobility of death and renewal in poetic language and song were ubiquitous, but the reality of loss was sharper and more gut-wrenching. Thus, twelve-year old Piete Kuhr’s reactions were more honest than those assembled by Witkop. She wrote about a neighbor’s son who was killed at Tannenberg (September 1914). “Frau Schön kept calling out ‘If only I knew just how he was killed! Whether he had to suffer much . . . and whether he remained whole, without losing any limbs.’” In making her own sense of this grief Kuhr remarked, “When a mother’s son is killed, she will cry her eyes out, not because he had died a hero, but because he has gone away and is buried. No more will he sit at the table, no longer can she cut a slice of bread for him or darn his socks. So she cannot say, ‘Thank you’ that he has died like a hero.”¹⁰²² Kuhr, in her twelve-year old naiveté, expressed more honestly the contradictions of noble ideals and the realities of senseless war.

From the first weeks of 1914 there was an often unrecognized reciprocal sacrifice between the soldiers on the front lines and their relatives on the homefront. Mothers were expected to accept their sons’ deaths as heroic and endure courageously. Kuhr’s grandmother represented the type of German citizen who steeled her will to do her “sacred duty” as expressed by *Wandervogel* Rudolf Piper at the

¹⁰²¹ Witkop, *Kriegsbriefe*, 144-45.

¹⁰²² Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 48.

beginning of this chapter. She worked with the Red Cross throughout the war—feeding soldiers as they passed through the Schneidemühl train station, caring for wounded soldiers in the military hospital, and donating her linens, copper pots, wool blankets, and most of her financial means to the war effort.¹⁰²³ She supported the war because she was German, and her strength of will to persevere revealed a realistic approach to life and war often glossed by official narratives. If there were an index in Kuhr’s diary, the topics of food and music would occupy the bulk of the listings. Kuhr’s interest in music was inherited from her mother who had a music school in Berlin, and the frequent references to music in Kuhr’s diary were certainly reflective of the family’s concerns. Comments about music ran through her diary like a repeated melody. From the first weeks of the war, however, Kuhr wrote almost as frequently about the decreasing amounts of food. From 1917 on her family suffered from severe shortages. In March 1917 she recorded, “We have only a few potatoes in the cellar now. When we come to the end of those, what then? . . . The families in Germany live mainly on turnips.”¹⁰²⁴ She went on to comment on the long lines of mothers queuing for food and the little babies in their prams who looked “as if they are at death’s door.”¹⁰²⁵ She added that anything with nutritional value was reserved for the soldiers.

Soldiers at the Front could be forgiven for being unaware of the suffering on the Homefront because families often shielded them from that knowledge just as the soldiers tried to protect their loved ones from the horrors of war. Willi Bohle wrote his mother, brother, and sister after fighting at Arras in 1917. First he described the horror of battle and then a long march back to reserve positions. “In spite of all fatigue I was full of joy and gladness. I had sufficient strength to carry a comrade’s rifle for hours, and to sing when everybody’s spirits were drooping from sheer exhaustion.”¹⁰²⁶ This was one of the classic examples Witkop sought out to demonstrate German student-soldiers’ valor in the midst of combat. Bohle

¹⁰²³ Kuhr’s grandmother received a Red Cross medal in 1916 for her work caring for soldiers as they passed through the Schneidemühl train station. Kuhr described the attention and congratulations her grandmother received but then recorded that her grandmother locked it away saying, “When we have won the war I will wear it at the victory celebrations.” (Kuhr, 188).

¹⁰²⁴ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 227.

¹⁰²⁵ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, 227. Kuhr worked in a Children and Infants Home in the last months of the war and described their condition as „little starving bodies“ (Kuhr, 286). In August 1918 a little seven-month old baby died in her arms and she explained, “Nothing wrong had happened, but he was just a wartime child and apparently not strong enough to live (Kuhr, 290).”

¹⁰²⁶ Witkop, *German Students’ War Letters*, 357.

continued, “Darling Mother, darling little Mother, and you too, my brother and sister, I am ready to endure anything for your sakes, so that you may never see what ruined villages and shell-destroyed fields look like; so that you may never learn what the word *war* really means.” The war for Germans was a defensive war—Bohle wanted his family to know they should be thankful to know “nothing of the serious side of life.” Rather they should appreciate their snug home with a roof over them, free of torment by “vermin,” beds to sleep in, meals “at the proper times,” never knowing what hunger and thirst was.¹⁰²⁷ At least some front line soldiers believed they stood like a wall protecting the nation, its way of life, and an idealized notion of *Heimat*. And they comforted those at home with an expression of their willingness to sacrifice so that way of life could survive—a narrative embraced by military commanders and propagandists.

An image that captured the sentiment of defense, and also brought one of the most-beloved songs of the Protestant confession to mind, was printed on the masthead of the Fifteenth German Army newspaper. Soldiers stood at attention facing forward as part of an unending wall of armed might. Behind them, high on a mountain was a fortress—a symbol of Germany protected by the unbroken line of soldiers. The stationing of this army offered an opportunity to draw on a rich body of symbolism centered on fortresses and the Rhine River. When the Fifteenth Army newspaper combined editorial forces with

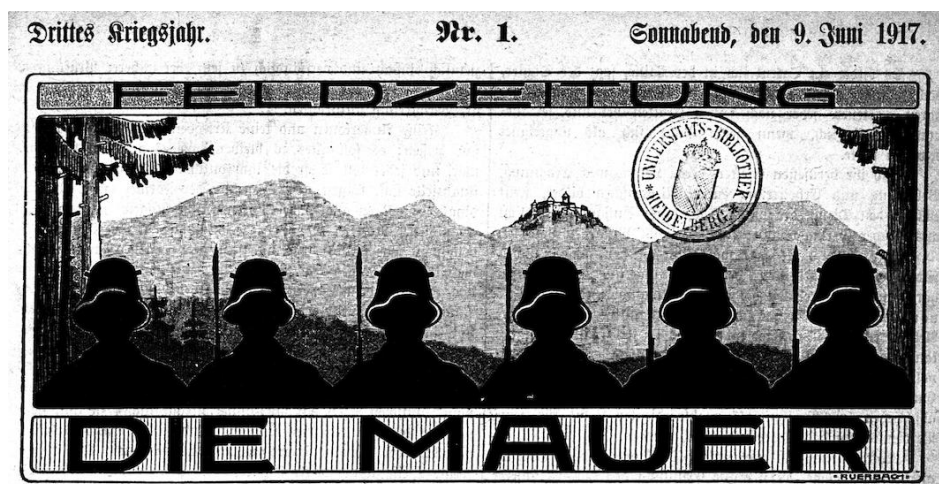


Figure 42 Masthead of German army newspaper entitled: *Field Newspaper, The Wall*

¹⁰²⁷ Witkop, *German Students' War Letters*, 358.

stood at attention facing forward as part of an unending wall of armed might. Behind them, high on a mountain was a fortress—a symbol of Germany protected by the unbroken line of soldiers. The stationing of this army offered an opportunity to draw on a rich body of symbolism centered on fortresses and the Rhine River. When the Fifteenth Army newspaper combined editorial forces with the *Feldzeitung* of the *Armeeabteilung B* that masthead drew on the same imagery. The forces who read the paper were stationed in southern Alsace on the German-French border. The *Hohkönigsburg* was the fortress depicted on the masthead (below) and an article in the paper explained its significance. The depiction was more than an artistic whim, rather it was a “holy symbol of the call to battle.”¹⁰²⁸ The writer went on to address the castle as though it personally took part in an unfolding drama.

At your feet lie the blessed Alsatian meadows with their beautiful villages and towns. Like faithful knights facing the enemy are the dark, wooded castle-crowned mountains of Wasgen wald. As you look over the German countryside you see the shimmering band of the Rhine and in the dusty distance the Black Forest. And your eyes proudly wander west to the land of the French. You are a symbol of the iron defense which our Alsace proves against greed, a symbol of the strong wall which stretches over the heights of Wasgenwald to Switzerland. You stand tall, a mighty fortress! Whether golden sun shines on your battlements or threatening winter storms roar around your towers, you are always beautiful and a glimpse of you raises up our thoughts.

All the familiar themes of German *Heimat* were present here—the beautiful landscape was prominently featured, and the woods and mountains were enfolded with memories of ancient castles and valiant knights. The Rhine River was a frequent topic of patriotic songs because the river was a border between German lands and France.¹⁰²⁹ Songs about forests were not necessarily patriotic, but the Black Forest was one of the most revered natural features of the German lands and brought to mind fairy tales and the *Nibelungenlied*—the source of Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*. One might imagine Rhine maidens and *Valkyries* hovering behind the wall of soldiers who protected not just German soil but German *Kultur*. Towering

¹⁰²⁸ “Die Hohkönigsburg,” *Aus Sundgau und Wasgenwald: Feldzeitung der Armeeabteilung B*, 19. Dezember 1917. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgsunwas1917bis1918/0002 and [0003](http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgsunwas1917bis1918/0003). The Hohkönigsburg occupied the highest mountain in Alsace and was originally built in the thirteenth century. After being destroyed in the Thirty Years War it remained burned ruins until the city of Schlettstadt offered it to Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1899. He rebuilt the fortress between 1901-1908 and at its dedication recounted its history as part of the Hohenstaufen, Hapsburg, and various German princes’ domain, now returned to the possession of the German Empire and a symbol of German culture and power.

¹⁰²⁹ *Rheinlieder* comprised an entire category of songs. One already examined in this dissertation was “Das Lied vom Rhein” (Schenkendork/Nägeli). A perusal of my lists of *Lieder* reveals at least fifteen separate songs about the Rhine. Other songs without Rhine in the title, but in which the river was the setting of the song, were “Lorelei” (Heine/Silcher) and “Die Siegesbotschaft” (Uhland/Kreutzer).

above the human wall was the mighty fortress—a further layer of protection. These images were not unique to this military newspaper, because all the ones I examined featured drawings of *Heimat*, poems, stories, and reports about theater and music performances, but the editions from 1917 and 1918 seemed to especially privilege these—editors hoped to raise the soldiers’ thoughts to these lofty themes in order to steel their wills to win.



Figure 43 German field army newspaper masthead

As a reinforcement of the significance of the fortress mentality *Aus Sundgau und Wasgenwald* published an article about the most famous fortress along the German-French border—the *Ehrenbreitstein*. Located on a hill at the juncture of the Rhine and Mosel rivers, the site was originally a Roman fortification and later that of a medieval fortress. Napoleon’s forces captured and burned the *Ehrenbreitstein* in 1801 lending it increased emotional valence when it was rebuilt by the Prussian government as part of a regional refortification project between 1817 and 1828.¹⁰³⁰ Throughout the nineteenth century it became a symbol of guarding the Rhine border from French aggression. “This mountain is not like other mountains; it is a holy symbol of the people of the Fatherland. This fortress is not like other fortresses; it is the holy symbol of the great community of the people (*die Gemeinsamkeit*

¹⁰³⁰ Today the fortress is part of a UNESCO World Heritage site. It was not destroyed after World War I because of its historical and artistic significance.

des Volkes).”¹⁰³¹ With those two sentences the author of the *Aus Sundgau und Wasgenwald* article, identified as Sergeant Creutz, set the tone for an article that called for unity. The fortress was a symbol of German community—*die Gemeinsamkeit des Volkes* was a phrase that was repeatedly used in the short article. Being part of this community, according to Creutz, was a great calling that meant giving up individual freedom so one’s life could take on a higher meaning. This was what soldiers did when they left their homes, put on a uniform, and followed orders to charge into a barrage of machine gun fire, and Creutz exhorted the people at home to take up this same mentality—join with the soldiers, walk in step with one another and sing the song of comradeship. (*Jungen und Alter singen das Lied vom Kameraden*). Creutz invoked the most commonly-sung soldier song, “Ich hatt’ einen Kameraden,” to urge all Germans to consider themselves comrades in the battle for national survival.¹⁰³²

It is not unreasonable to imagine that German readers looking at these images and reading about well-known fortresses along the French-German border also called to mind the historically significant fortress of Wartburg Castle. The Wartburg was well-known before Martin Luther’s time as the legendary venue for a Minnesingers’ Competition (the basis for Richard Wagner’s music drama *Tannhäuser*) and the home of St. Elizabeth whose basket of bread was miraculously replaced by roses, but Luther made it a symbol of German Protestantism. This was where Luther hid from Catholic authorities after his trial and excommunication and where he translated the Bible into the German language. In addition, the hymn most closely associated with Luther and the Reformation, “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,” although understood by Luther to be a spiritual fortress, became understandably associated with the physical fortress of the Wartburg. In Chapter Seven we looked at Luther and how “Ein feste Burg” became shorthand for Germany itself. It was the German *Marseillaise*, a rallying cry for freedom, and in the nineteenth century took on a war-oriented meaning with its imagery of a refuge/fortress, war and its

¹⁰³¹ Vizefeldwebel Creutz, „Ehrenbreitstein,“ *Aus Sundgau und Wasgenwald: Feldzeitung der Armeecabteilung B*, 26. Dezember 1917. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgsunwas1917bis1918/0013

¹⁰³² Ludwig Uhland wrote “Ich hatt’ einen Kameraden” in 1809, and it became the traditional lament of the German army. The song Pieter Kuhr heard repeatedly sung by the soldiers marching through Schneidemühl began with the line, “Ich hatt’ einen Kameraden” and ended with the lines about meeting once again in the homeland.

weapons (bows, spears, chariots) and God’s deliverance.¹⁰³³ Because it was based on a Hebrew psalm (Psalm 46) it was impossible for Protestants, or Christians, to claim exclusive rights to it, and Germans of all persuasions were familiar with it.¹⁰³⁴ The richness of its language and imagery made it a valuable source for propaganda postcards or posters, themes in newspaper articles, or poems and drawings. Two lines from Luther’s hymn were most commonly used—its title, “A Mighty Fortress is our God” and the other, “und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär” (Though devils all the world should fill).¹⁰³⁵ Although the entire song or psalm was not usually referenced, phrases from the hymn were commonly used even in everyday communication. Just one example came from the August 13, 1916 Seventh Army Newspaper which printed a “look back and a look ahead” in the third year of war and concluded that though a world of enemies opposed them (*gegen eine Welt von Feinden*) they still had confidence (*Zuversicht*) that they would be victorious—the language of Luther shone through.¹⁰³⁶ Below are the first and third stanzas of “Ein feste Burg” which had the most commonly used phrases for World War I propaganda.

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,
 ein gute Wehr und Waffen.
 Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
 die uns jetzt hat betroffen.
 Der alt böse Feind
 mit Ernst er's jetzt meint,
 groß Macht und viel List
 sein grausam Rüstung ist,
 auf Erd ist nicht seins gleichen.

A mighty fortress is our God
 A trusty shield and weapon;
 He helps us free from every need
 That hath us now o’ertaken.
 The old evil Foe
 Now means deadly woe;
 Deep guile and great might
 Are his dread arms in fight;
 On Earth is not his equal.

¹⁰³³ Michael Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg: der Lutherchoral Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott zwischen Befreiungskriegen und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2014). Fischer argues that “Ein feste Burg” took on a nationalistic and war-oriented meaning rather than a purely religious one during the Napoleonic era and was continually used to exalt the nation as an object of worship until the First World War.

¹⁰³⁴ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 71-78. Fischer claims that Heinrich Heine’s interpretation of “Ein feste Burg” as the German Marsellaise was universally appropriated by various oppositional groups. Socialists, revolutionaries, workers, and even Catholics used the tune and the “mighty fortress” imagery to pen their own expressions of liberty and freedom. Per Fischer, “The song was used because it was present in the collective memory and because it was suitable for disseminating political content due to its existing connotations (solemn, militant, identity-forming). From a formal point of view, there was no difference from the bourgeois or conservative national reception (Fischer, 78).”

¹⁰³⁵ Michael Fischer, “Zur lyrischen Rezeption des Lutherliedes ‚Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott‘ im Ersten Weltkrieg,” in *Populäre Kriegsliteratur im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Münster: Waxmann, 2013), 72. The entire second line reads, “And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, We will not fear for God has willed his truth to triumph through us,” but just the first words were needed to evoke the entire meaning.

¹⁰³⁶ „Ins dritte Kriegsjahr: Rückblick und Ausblick,“ *Kriegszeit der 7. Armee*, 13. August 1916. GET URL (and author?)

Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär
 und wollt uns gar verschlingen,
 so fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,
 es soll uns doch gelingen.
 Der Fürst dieser Welt,
 wie sau'r er sich stellt,
 tut er uns doch nicht;
 das macht, er ist gericht':
 ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen

Though devils all the world should fill;
 All eager to devour us.
 We tremble not, we fear no ill;
 They shall not overpower us.
 This world's prince may still
 Scowl fierce as he will
 He can harm us none
 He's judged; the deed is done;
 One little word can fell him.¹⁰³⁷

The psalm's language of fortresses, mountains, raging seas, demons, weapons, armor, and battle gear, offered a rich palate from which Luther and World War I propagandists could choose.¹⁰³⁸ Historian Michael Fischer explains that the aesthetic value of Luther's hymn allowed it to be effective as a political tool—not merely the text but the visual effects allowed it to resonate with Germans.¹⁰³⁹ Luther himself had been a master of propaganda in his efforts to demonize the sixteenth-century Roman Catholic church and many of those images were recycled between 1914-1918. Early in the war images that referenced sixteenth-century propaganda were popular like the one below of Luther fighting the many-headed Hydra in which the heads represented the pope and other opponents of Luther.¹⁰⁴⁰ That image was reproduced in 1914 with a young German soldier (dressed in medieval armor) taking the place of Luther, and the heads

¹⁰³⁷ English translation is from the *Pennsylvania Luther Church Book* (1868). There are four verses but the ones above were those most utilized for World War I propaganda purposes. Luther's hymn was not a word-for-word version of Psalm 46. www.lutheran-hymnal.com/lyrics/tlh262.htm

¹⁰³⁸ Luther did not strictly adhere to the biblical language of Psalm 46—his chorale was based on the comfort he drew from the words. The wording of Psalm 46 speaks of raging seas, the earth quaking, nations in an uproar and their weapons of bows and spears being broken. People who used “Ein feste Burg” as propaganda, in the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, often drew on the biblical imagery as much as the words in Luther's chorale.

¹⁰³⁹ Fischer, *Religion, Nation, Krieg*, 19-21.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Hercules won the battle with the Hydra (in which each head cut off resulted in the growth of nine more) by setting a forest on fire and cauterizing the many necks of the Hydra so that it was destroyed. Renaissance Humanists regarded Hercules as their particular hero because the Hydra represented their battle with Scholastic debates that continually wandered into trivialities. Luther's own depiction as Hercules concerned his objection to Humanist skepticism that posited no definitive answers—just more questions. See Jan Lindhardt, *Martin Luther: Knowledge and Mediation in the Renaissance* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 219-220.

of the Hydra represented France, Britain, Russia, Serbia, Montenegro, Liberia, and Japan—the first seven



Figure 44 Image that mirrors sixteenth-century Luther fighting his opponents

countries to declare war on Germany. The caption read, “Though devils all the world should fill. . .”¹⁰⁴¹

Of course the message was that just as Luther prevailed over his many opponents, German soldiers would also prevail over enemy nations.

Other uses of “Ein feste Burg” remind us of some of the *Heimat* propaganda we looked at in Chapter Nine. In the image below the family sat around the table while the old grandfather read from the Bible: A mighty fortress is our God, a trusty shield and weapon; He helps us free from every need, That hath us now o’ertaken.¹⁰⁴² Grandmother held the baby while the older child completed the family circle—minus the father and mother. Father appeared in their minds (playing the tune of “Ein feste Burg”) as a

¹⁰⁴¹ This is reproduced in *Populäre Kriegslryik im Ersten Weltkrieg* edited by Nicolas Detering, Michael Fischer, Aibe-Marlene Gerdes (Münster: Waxmann, 2013), 91. I have used the *Lutheran Church Book* translations throughout.

¹⁰⁴² This is not the wording of Psalm 46 but was Luther’s musical rendition of it. The translation is from the *Lutheran Church Book* of 1868.

romanticized version of war that the people left at home wanted to believe in—this could have been an image from 1813 rather than 1914. The mother was missing, but we imagine her taking up a wartime task and filling in for the sons, husbands, and fathers who protected the Fatherland—everyone had a role to play in preserving what was most valuable to the national community. The message was that God was the fortress for both the family at home and the men on the field of battle. As noted previously the use of words from Psalm 46 meant this image could appeal to Germans from other confessions, but the fact that



Figure 45 Postcard depicting German family comforted by Luther's hymn: "Ein feste Burg"

the 400th anniversary of the Reformation occurred in 1917 offered an even richer opportunity to invoke Luther's memory as the model German, a "great man," and citizen, as well as the "champion of political and intellectual freedom," and scholar.¹⁰⁴³ This was the type of German needed as a role model as war dragged on. Luther penned "Ein feste Burg" in 1529 as his own confession of confidence in God in spite of human forces that raged around him at the time—the German princes and even other Reformers who opposed his theology, discouragement in the wake of the Peasants War of 1524-25, and Turkish troops

¹⁰⁴³ Karl Dienst, "Martin Luthers 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott' als Identitätssignal des Protestantismus im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert" 5. www.kreuzwacht.de/feste_burg.pdf

who endangered the existence of European Christendom. If Luther found the iron will to go on and stand constant, so could twentieth-century Germans.¹⁰⁴⁴

The coverage of the Reformation itself was spotty in the military papers, but in the Newspaper of the Tenth Army (*Zeitung der 10. Armee*) there was both a front-page article about Luther and the Reformation as well as a three-page supplement divided into sections about “Luther’s Time,” “The Ninety-Five Theses,” “The Historical Meaning of Luther’s Translation,” “Luther and Song,” “Luther as a School Teacher,” and “Luther and the Family.” This paper, published for military forces stationed in the East where they were immersed in an alien land, often featured stories and articles reminding the German men of the superiority of their own culture. Theodor Kappstein, who wrote the front-page article, credited Luther with “freeing the individual spirit” and he claimed this contributed to advances in science and knowledge of the natural world. In addition, Luther put a higher value on marriage and family life, on education of children, he unified the German language, and challenged unquestioned obedience to authority. Kappstein concluded, “Would Lessing and Herder, Goethe and Kant be conceivable without Luther?”¹⁰⁴⁵ The image below produced for the 400th anniversary of the Reformation showed a classic image of Luther nailing the *Ninety-Five Theses* to Wittenberg’s Castle Church door. Luther’s face conveyed the “iron-hard will to win” with the defiance *Wandervogel* Rudolf Piper called for in 1916. The caption was from the first four lines of verse three of “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.” (see verses printed above). Below the caption was a clever image connecting Luther, not to theological battles as depicted by the *Ninety-Five Theses*, but to a military assault. When Luther was whisked away to safety from his trial in Worms in 1522, he traveled in disguise as a knight. Knight George, Luther’s alias, was depicted slaying the dragon that represented the Roman Catholic church. This knightly image of Luther showed his strength to overcome a fearsome physical enemy as well as his courageous defiance against the forces of

¹⁰⁴⁴ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 132-140.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Theodor Kappstein, „Zum 400. Geburtstag der Reformation,“ *Zeitung der 10. Armee*, 30. Gilbhart 1917. The Tenth Army Newspaper used the Germanic names for the months—a further effort to remind German soldiers of their roots.

the papacy, Holy Roman Emperor, and German bishops—all of whom Luther considered tools of the devil, and the wings represented his heavenly authority to do so.¹⁰⁴⁶



Figure 46 Propaganda poster of Luther as a model for German soldiers

These images, and similar ones, were popular for postcards and posters. German historian, Michael Fischer, who has done extensive research on Luther’s “Ein feste Burg” as well as its use in the years before and during the First World War, claims that Germans became more religious during the war years—which is no doubt true and explains some of Luther’s popularity for war propaganda.¹⁰⁴⁷ But Hartmut Lehmann puts Luther’s influence in a deeper context. In an article published in the *Frankfurter*

¹⁰⁴⁶ MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, 132.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Michael Fischer, „Zur lyrischen Rezeption des Lutherliedes ‚Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott‘ im Ersten Weltkrieg,“ 68. See also, Michael Fischer, „Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,“ http://www.liederlexikon.de/lieder/ein_feste_burg_ist_unser_gott

Allgemeine Zeitung in 2008, Lehmann echoes what Dienst said about Luther's nineteenth-century transformation into a symbol of what it meant to be a German—a topic more thoroughly explored in Chapter Seven. Lehmann claims that after Luther's nineteenth-century mutations and the numerous Reformation celebrations, "It was predestined that Luther in 1917 would be appreciated [as the prototypical German]. Together with Hindenburg, in the fall of the third year of the war, he established himself as the savior of Germany in the time of their great need. If the Germans wanted to win, they needed to follow Luther's example of trust in God and his unbowed will to prevail."¹⁰⁴⁸ In the sixteenth century, Luther's faith was one that allowed him to transcend earthly battles and chaos; the mighty fortress was a figurative and heavenly one. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the German people used the words and images of Luther's hymn to assert their trust in themselves and the fortress of their nation.

Throughout the nineteenth century the middle classes cultivated practices and rituals that established them as the people of music, and when Germans looked at the images of the German soldier slaying the modern Hydra, the family seated around the table while the grandfather read Psalm 46, or the Reformation commemoration poster of Luther nailing the *Ninety-Five Theses* to the church door they "heard" the musical expression of "Ein feste Burg" as much as its text. Images like those in army mastheads or postcards were leitmotifs that matched historic and mythological events with a tune, a chorale, a *Rheinlied*, or a Wagner overture and with the emotions provoked by these. Music became a means of expression and of understanding that was part of the *Innerenationsbildung* project of the nineteenth century—incorporating the nation with its symbols and values within oneself. The German prisoners of war who sang "Wie daheim war's" or the soldiers who passed through the Schneidemühl train station for four years singing "In the homeland, there we'll meet again" expressed a longing for a German nation embodied by the Rhine, the Black Forest, oak trees, myth, history, and an idealized vision of *Heimat*. These features were couched in poetic and musical expressions that tied sympathetic Germans

¹⁰⁴⁸ Hartmut Lehmann, "Die Deutschen und ihr Luther," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 26.08.2008, S. 7.

from the countryside and cities, universities and workshops, offices and kitchens together in an “imagined community.” The military newspapers gradually stopped publication as the war ground to a conclusion, but all editors continued to hold out ideal images of the Fatherland to prove sacrifice was worth it. Up to the last weeks of October 1918 the *Kriegszeitung 7. Armee* continued to print information about theater and musical performances on the Western Front and to publish drawings of *Heimat*. A performance given on October 6 included a potpourri of marches including “Wohlauf Kameraden, aufs Pferd, aufs Pferd,” selections from Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*, and waltzes, and the journalist recorded that the band played on and on while each piece brought back memories. “Oh yes, that’s what carries us over many serious things: the memory of those distant, blessed times, and the hope that it will happen again. That’s why the melodies from past days float over us with such memories.”¹⁰⁴⁹ Even more evocatively the *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung* printed an anonymous poem that expressed the mood of the last days of war and invoked two pillars of nineteenth-century Romanticism—Schiller and Beethoven.

“Die ‘9.’ Symphonie,” frei nach Schiller

„The Ninth Symphony,“ based on Schiller

Freude, schöner Götterfunken.
Strahlst du bald durch Stadt und Reich?
Machst du selig, wonnetrunken
Wieder Alt und Jung zugleich?
Öffnet Herzen, öffnet Hände
Neuer Goldstrom, rausch empor!
Er bedeutet Weltenwende,
Denn die "Neunte" steht bevor.

Joy, beautiful spark of divinity,
Are you soon radiating through city and empire?
Are you blessed, drunk on wine
Again old and young at the same time?
Open hearts, open hands
Newer floods of gold, rush up!
It means the end of the world,
For the „Ninth“ is imminent.

Was mit Kunst der Meister fetzte
Wird als Gleichnis offenbart:
Diese Neunte ist die Letzte
Die sie’s bei Beethoven ward!
Dem vom Weltgeist ist erflossen
Eine Botschaft, die uns gilt:
Wenn die Neunte abgeschlossen,
Ist das ganze Werk erfüllt.

The thrill of the Master’s art
will be revealed in a parable:
This Ninth is the last
that was with Beethoven!
From whom the world spirit developed
A message applies to us:
When the Ninth was concluded
The entire work was fulfilled.

Chor:

Singt das Chorlied, deutsche Barden,

Sing the chorus, German bards,

¹⁰⁴⁹ W. Rdm., “Musik,” *Kriegszeit der 7. Armee*, 6. Oktober 1918. Ach ja, das ist es, was uns über manches Schwere hingesetzt: Das Gedenken jener fernen seligen Zeiten, und die Hoffnung, dass es doch noch einmal wieder so werden wird. Und deshalb mögen die Melodien aus jenen Zeiten mit ihren Erinnerungen über uns hinwehen. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgkr7armee1918/0462 The final edition of this paper was published on October 27, 1918.

Preist die Tat, die freibeschwingt
Mit den brausenden Milliarden
Unsres Wollens Zeugnis bringt!¹⁰⁵⁰

Praise the deed, which freely exhilarate
with the roaring millions
Our wills bear witness!

The first line was a direct quote from the first line of Friedrich Schiller's "An der Freude" (Ode to Joy), but the rest of the poem departed sharply in tone—it was not the ethereal rapture of Schiller's poem or the triumphant proclamation of the Fourth Movement chorus of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*—"Thy magic power reunited all that custom has divided; All men become brothers under the sway of thy [i.e. heaven's] gentle wings." Schiller's poem held out an all-encompassing version of heaven as a benevolent source of joy—a joy that could unite all mankind. Schiller exhorted *everyone* in the lines used in the title of this chapter: Endure you courageous millions! Endure for a better world! However, in the anonymous poem above, the writer instead expressed a belief that Schiller's was a wistful dream whose final and best expression concluded with Beethoven's last symphony (the *Ninth*), and the only hope for Germans at the end of 1918 was the strength of their own wills.¹⁰⁵¹ The short articles that came before and after the poem reaffirmed the superiority of German culture and achievements in contrast to those of the French and the British.¹⁰⁵² The hopes for a universal brotherhood of man died alongside the millions of British, French, Russian, German, and all other soldiers who fell in the Great War.

Germans who survived to the end of the war must have struggled to reconcile their belief in *Kultur* with the realities of defeat, starvation, and impoverishment. Schiller's articulation of a universal brotherhood of man was a product both of the Enlightenment project and the Romantic ideal of an organic wholeness of the arts, sciences, nature, humanity, and the state. In a similar way Brahms's *Requiem* was composed as an expression of universal grief, but the concept of the brotherhood of man could not stand

¹⁰⁵⁰ Anonymous, "Die '9.' Symphonie," *Badener Lazarett-Zeitung*, 1. November, 1918. digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/feldztgbadlaz1916bis1918/0342

¹⁰⁵¹ I think the poet was alluding to Napoleon in the second verse—he was considered an embodiment of the "world spirit" in the early nineteenth century, and the coup d'état that brought him to power was on the 9th of November. He associated Napoleon's feats with Schiller's dream of a universal brotherhood of man, but concluded that the best version of that came with Beethoven's symphony and not in a genuine future cooperation of humanity. Invoking the memory of Napoleon would represent a nail in the coffin of universal brotherhood for Germans reading this in 1918.

¹⁰⁵² The little article after the poem was entitled, "Der Zivilization-Unterschied von 'hüben' und 'drüben,'" and listed several statistics demonstrating the degree to which Germans out-paced the British and French in money spent for social security (*soziale Versicherung*), school funding, number of patents, and number of Nobel prize winners. The conclusion: "Compare the numbers and ask yourself, Now who is the barbarian?"

up to the realities of modern warfare. As *Wandervogel* Weiß explained in the few lines of poetry quoted at the beginning of this chapter, he did not kill his *brother*; he killed the enemy of his home, his mother, and his sister. Weiß well understood Schiller’s exhortation about the brotherhood of humanity, but he rejected it in 1917.

6 CONCLUSION

Ade zur guten Nacht! Jetzt wird der Schluß gemacht, daß ich muß scheiden.
Folksong from *Der Zupfgeigenhansl*¹⁰⁵³

“Too many concerts” became a familiar complaint in 1880s Berlin—an observation uncovered by music historian Sanna Pederson. By 1907 the Zoological Garden Exhibition Hall, built to seat 6000, boasted it could fit in 8000 seats if necessary, and in October of that year, all Berlin venues entertained thirty-six instrumental and choral concerts, as well as “too much Beethoven.”¹⁰⁵⁴ Although some performances featured professional musicians, there were a number of amateurs who took part in these concerts—either to advance their hoped-for careers or simply for the pleasure of creating music. This example confirms that I have only scratched the surface of musical performances in German cities, towns, and villages—Berlin was one among hundreds. Members of *Singakademies*, symphony orchestra choruses, and mens’ and womens’ choirs sang in hundreds of performances every year. The process by which musical Germans found common ground in performance, rituals, and practices forms the basis of my argument that singers thus generated a vast web of overlapping emotional communities. Germans would never have attained the status attributed to them as the “people of music” without the widespread, broad-based participation of enthusiastic amateurs.

It is impossible to understand this phenomenon without re-examining the early decades of the nineteenth century. The early Romantics rooted the soul of the nation in ancient poetic and musical expression, and then elevated instrumental music to the “infinite” and “inexpressible.” The same theorists joined with men whose primary interest was in reviving choral music—previously centered in church

¹⁰⁵³ This was a traditional departure song (*Abschiedslied*) which roughly translated means, “Good night! The conclusion is made, and I must depart.”

¹⁰⁵⁴ sannapederson.oucreate.com/blog July 4, 2019 and September 9, 2018

music. The result was the founding of the Berlin *Singakademie* and *Liedertafel*—the inspiration for every other amateur choral society in the succeeding decades. In one of those inexplicable historical coincidences, these events corresponded with the era when Napoleon’s armies annexed and conquered the German states. Consequently amateur musicians fused choral expression with nationalist ambitions, and throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the first and second generation choral members considered themselves "carriers of a national culture of remembrance."¹⁰⁵⁵ Their mission was to establish a unified nation of Germans—an ambition that originally was part of an endeavor to promulgate liberal principles of freedom of speech, religion, the press, a broad-based education system, and representative government. The reactionary governments of the post-1815 years created an atmosphere in which music became a covert means of political expression. Singing as political expression, and music as an aesthetic expression of the “nation,” combined to situate amateur choral societies in a position of influence and a target of government suppression in the decades between 1820 and 1860. Thousands of German singers, gymnasts, socialists, and other agitators left Germany; those who stayed kept the vision of a unified nation-state alive.

The informal “Singing Days” of the mid-1800s developed into more elaborate festivals and more formal connections so that by 1871 several large regional associations emerged that in turn created the *Deutscher Sängerbund* (German Choral Association). The stated purpose of this all-male association was to preserve the *Lied*—singing *Lieder* would train and educate the German people (participants and audiences) and bind the nation together. Implicit in this was the notion of *Bildung*. The bourgeois males who first claimed that music was the highest form of art also asserted that the individual must acquire the ability to comprehend the inexpressible aspects of music. This required repeated exposure and training, and the *Lied* offered a way to bring that possibility to broad groups of people. Large regional and national festivals not only forged webs of connection between choral members from north and south, east and west, they also offered an opportunity to display German-ness to a broader audience. When crowds

¹⁰⁵⁵ Dietmar Klenke, “Der Gesangverein,” in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte III*, ed. Etienne Francois and Hagen Schulze (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001), 393.

gathered to watch the rituals of parades or attend festival performances they saw the nation on display and entered into the emotional communities created by choristers.

Although the unity and freedom of the German nation had been the goal of amateur singers, once the German Empire was founded in 1871, fissures between regions, social classes, and religious confessions became more obvious—often exacerbated by government policies. Bismarck’s *Kulturkampf* privileged the nation as a Protestant entity, and festivals to Martin Luther celebrated his enduring contributions: language, music, freedom, bourgeois ideals, and religious exclusionism. The all-male choral movement was primarily composed of Protestants, but not exclusively. Although marginalized groups created their own choral societies, these groups frequently had as many similarities as differences. The rituals of performance laid the groundwork for practices that superseded conflicting religious beliefs or economic goals. In the process, overlapping emotional communities emerged.¹⁰⁵⁶ Historian Vernon Lidtke notes that the labor movement began as a “singing movement.”¹⁰⁵⁷ The aspirations of workers inspired lyricism rooted in Marxist socialism but could also be expressed in simple *Lieder*—spring songs, May songs, Napoleonic era songs about the people’s freedom—themes shared with their counterparts in the all-male choral movement. Working class singers were not a completely insulated group and neither were those of the Roman Catholic Cecelia Association. The practices and rituals of these groups mirrored those of the bourgeois associations and members of different groups occasionally sang together. The binding force was always a repertoire that included German *Lieder*, the music of renowned German composers, and a claim to be “the people of music.” *Bildung* was not an inherited trait; one cultivated it.

Circumstances in the late nineteenth century enabled more people to participate in music culture. Improved printing techniques made sheet music affordable, and the invention of the phonograph made recorded music accessible. Free or inexpensive public concerts allowed the general population to be exposed to music previously out of their realm of experience. Folk songs had always been part of life and part of historical memory, but instrumental music, choral ensembles, or art *Lieder* were new. On the other

¹⁰⁵⁶ Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

¹⁰⁵⁷ Vernon Lidtke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 108.

hand cheap music, easily accessible to the masses, did not reach the standard of aesthetics that only the cultivated could apprehend. By the turn of the twentieth century composers, directors, and leaders of the German Choral Association struggled with the tensions between the high ideals of absolute music and popular music that appealed to the masses. These were further factors that threatened cohesive emotional communities, but they also sparked educational reforms aimed at perpetuating German *Kultur*. The felt need to educate children to sing and play music, and to appreciate the German masters, was part of a movement to cultivate a broader swath of the population.

Richard Wagner, one of the most influential composers of the nineteenth century, responded to industrialization and mass culture with music dramas that combined the “music of the future” and a “new mythology.” In order to bring this vision to the public, Wagner built his theater at Bayreuth—a theater designed to facilitate a renewal of German society that had been corrupted by industrial values. Wagner’s *Gesamtkunstwerk* was a fusion of art, music, drama, and theater aimed at a renewal of the German spirit. Various youth movements followed parallel, and less sophisticated, paths—they sought a re-engagement with ancient folkways and myths to counteract the corrupting features of modern society. Nationalism became a prevalent drumbeat in both the youth movements and Wagner’s “new mythology.” National festivals celebrating German heroes, ancient myths, and folkways were endorsed by Kaiser Wilhelm II as a way to cultivate loyalty to the empire and imperial aspirations.

World War I offered an opportunity to bind fractious elements of society together more tightly, and propagandists took advantage of the themes cultivated by German singers over the course of a hundred years to convince Germans that they were fighting to preserve common German values. At the same time, music remained a genuine means of comfort during the war years reassuring Germans of their identity as the “people of music.” Nevertheless, the strains of total war, combined with pre-war tensions, tested the ability of music to hold diverse factions together. While the familiar tropes of nature, *Heimat*, history, and myth continued to resonate with the German populace, and German music continued to comfort, the ideals of Romanticism proved tenuous. As the war drew to a close, Pieter Kuhr’s mother wrote from Berlin in September 1918, “I long for freedom and music. . . . We shall lose everything if we

are defeated. . . . It must not be that so much blood has been shed in vain!”¹⁰⁵⁸ She expressed a belief, fostered by the government, that German soldiers had fought a defensive war to preserve not just the nation, but more importantly *Kultur*. Hers was the traditional, bourgeois belief in a nation uniquely rooted in music and *Bildung*.

To a certain extent this concept had filtered into every other sector of society over the course of the long nineteenth century. And while music and choral societies outlived the war, something else died. In 1924 Scottish music critic and composer Cecil Gray penned a solemn epitaph to the nineteenth-century Romantic movement that captured the German experience. “The art history of every civilization viewed collectively is the progress from classic to romantic values. All romantic art is a swan-song, the final expression of a civilization, the rich autumn tints of decay, the writing on the wall, the flaming comet heralding the approach of anarchy and dissolution.”¹⁰⁵⁹ The ideals and myths that had been postulated and later cultivated by German poets, philosophers, and musicians, the heroic tales of battles against the French in 1813-14 and 1870-71, the training of an entire population to be the “people of music,” and even the re-creation of the German Empire all went up in flames (in the same fashion as Walhalla at the conclusion of Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*) when the *Kaiserreich* dissolved in anarchy and dissolution in the final days of 1918.

In his reflections on the difference between German culture and that of other western European nations, Thomas Mann claimed that “Germans had dedicated themselves to the ‘pure humanity of the mythical age’ based in nature rather than political or social circumstances.”¹⁰⁶⁰ The early Romantics cultivated a belief that striving and longing for an ideal world in which the arts, sciences, nature, society, and the state might be totally integrated. Per Friedrich Schlegel: “All art should become science and all science art; poetry and philosophy should be made one.”¹⁰⁶¹ The ideals of the German Romantic

¹⁰⁵⁸ Piete Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again: A young German girl’s diary of the First World War*, trans. Walter Wright (Great Britain: Walter Wright, 1998), 296.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Cecil Gray, *A Survey of Contemporary Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), 19.

¹⁰⁶⁰ George S. Williams, *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 1.

¹⁰⁶¹ Friedrich Schlegel, *Kritische Fragmente*, 115.

movement formed the basso continuo of the nineteenth century—in the fugal form, a single voice begins, others join in and thicken the texture of the work, and finally the voices come together again as a single voice. Here is the application. In the early nineteenth century a “theme” was established by the bourgeoisie—elites like the Mendelssohn family who joined the Berlin *Singakademie* and resurrected Bach formed the first amateur choirs. This group was closely followed by general enthusiasts of music who created choral societies by the score. Eventually they were joined by groups with special interests—religious, occupational, class—but all adhered to the same thematic line (history, nature, myth, *Heimat*, the *Lied*). In essence, this was a fugue, or what we know today as a canon or a round. The voices joined in at different times, sang in harmony, added perhaps a minor key change along the way, but eventually the voices were meant to repeat the original theme as one voice. World War I shattered the final convergence of German unity in the Kaiserreich. The possibility of a society in which a fusion of all art, science, and the natural world might be realized was challenged throughout the forty decades of the empire’s existence. Striving and longing, however, were essential elements of the Romantic ideal. Dissonance was not fatal; disillusionment and defeat were.

Music is a unique art form in that it must be sounded—and heard. This of course applies to instrumental music as well as choral music, but the choir’s ability to produce sounds from their own bodies puts singers in a position to understand music performance in a more complex way. The demands of working together to create a blend of individual voices in which the strong singers do not overpower the weaker voices, but all come together to produce a single message, forces choristers to join together in an uncommon way—and to do this repeatedly. Every rehearsal, every performance is a re-creation of community. Because choral societies were such a vital part of German society, the men, women, and children who participated in them offer a way to understand the *Kaiserreich* beyond narratives of political, economic, and social discord. The ideal of striving for a society in which the arts, sciences, politics, the natural world, and the human spirit all blended as a whole may have been a Romantic dream—but German singers opened great potential for the realization of the vision, even though the stresses of total war eventually heralded its dissolution.

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