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**‘Sounds that float over us from the days of our ancestors’:**

**Italian Opera and Nostalgia in Berlin, 1800-1815**

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To talk of an identity crisis in Berlin at the end of the eighteenth century might sound curiously anachronistic, if not a little crass – but one writer in 1799 expressed the situation in exactly these terms, and at the level of the entire state:

All parties agree that we are living in a moment when one of the greatest epochs in the revolution of humanity begins, and which, more than all previous momentous events, will be important for the spirit of the state. At such a convulsion the character of the latter emerges more than ever, [and] the truth becomes more apparent than ever, that lack of character for a state would be yet as dangerous an affliction, as it would for individual humans.<sup>1</sup>

The anxiety underlying this writer’s carefully hypothetical introduction – which resonates in several other articles in the four-year run of the Berlin publication, the *Jahrbücher der preußischen Monarchie* – is palpable. Not only were Prussia’s values and organising principles called into question by the convulsion referred to here – the French revolution – and its rhetoric of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* (not to mention the beheading of the royal family); so too was the state’s capacity to defend them. Forced to settle with France at the 1795 Peace of Basel, Prussia witnessed from the sidelines of official neutrality Napoleon’s manoeuvres around Europe over the next ten years, each victory a threat to this ‘peace’. The very elevation of a non-noble to the status of emperor in 1804 shook the Berliners’ sense of the world order, with one journal editor declaring in 1805 that ‘what fifty years ago would have been impossible has become possible ... the corruption of morals, of religion, of governments is precipitating the dissolution of the usual order, war and misery are establishing a new period...’.<sup>2</sup> Upon

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Fragmente über den Charakter der preußischen Monarchie’, *JpM*, Vol. 1 (1799), 157: ‘Alle Partheien stimmen darin überein, daß wir in einem Zeitpunkte leben, wo eine der größten Epochen in den Revolutionen der Menschheit beginnet, welche mehr, als alle vorhergehenden folgereichen Ereignisse, für den Geist der Staaten wichtig seyn wird. Bei einer solchen Erschütterung tritt der Charakter dieser letzten mehr als jemals hervor, leuchtet heller wie je, die Wahrheit ein, daß Charakterlosigkeit für einen Staat noch ein gefährliches Gebrechen, als für einzelne Menschen sei.’

<sup>2</sup> August Mahlmann, ‘Das Jahr 1805’, *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, No. 157 (31 December 1805), 1249: ‘Unglücklich sind die, welche ihr ungünstiges Schicksal zu den Zeiten in die Welt warf, die eine neue Epoche in den Annalen der Weltgeschichte begründen. Verderbniß der Sitten, der Religion, der Regierung führt die Auflösung der gewohnten Ordnung herbei, Krieg und Elend begründen eine neue Periode, und das Glück der Gegenwart wird der Hofnung auf zukünftige bessere Tage zum Opfer gebracht. – Wir stehen jetzt am Schlusse eines Jahres, welches durch ausgezeichnete Begebenheiten, durch großes Elend, unter welchem der größte Theil von Europa geseufzt hat, und durch die

re-entering the Napoleonic wars in 1806, Prussia was defeated within a matter of weeks, burdened with heavy reparation payments (which would not be cleared until the 1860s) and relieved of a third of its territory. Berlin itself was occupied by French troops for two years until 1808, and saw many of its cultural treasures shipped to France to adorn the Musée Napoléon in Paris; the financial obligations to France, and the burden of supporting French troops left many short of food. The royal family – Friedrich Wilhelm III and Queen Luise – only returned from their exile in Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) in December 1809. The next four years brought yet more upheaval in the shape of reforms of Prussia's constitution, military and education systems, conducted under the watchful eye of France until the Wars of Liberation in 1813.

This catalogue of Prussia's woes is in many ways simply a local variant – or perhaps a particularly pronounced example – of the wider instability and perceived temporal rupture that we tend to diagnose in this period of European history.<sup>3</sup> It is a familiar story, which I shall summarise only briefly. Across the eighteenth century, processes of secularisation, industrialisation and urbanisation posed increasing challenges to traditional modes of thought and life; agrarian, liturgical and dynastic structures supporting cyclical conceptions of time were weakened and overtaken by a secular philosophy of progress, resulting in what Reinhart Koselleck has termed the 'temporalisation of history'. Where previously 'the present and the past were enclosed within a common historical plane', the past became conceptualised as a site of difference, the future as unknown and unpredictable.<sup>4</sup> If it is possible to see these developments occurring gradually (Koselleck, for example, views the process as

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unübersichtlichen Folgen, welche es nach sich ziehen wird, zu einem der merkwürdigsten und traurigsten gehört, welche die Geschichte aufgezeichnet hat.'

<sup>3</sup> Even prior to the French Revolution, it has been argued that Berliners were intensely sensitive to the passing of time and self-conscious in their attempts to account for their past, a legacy of a legacy of its extraordinary eighteenth-century expansion. It was only in 1701 that Prussia became a kingdom with the coronation of Elector Frederick III. The subsequent territorial acquisitions of his successors, in particular the annexation of Silesia by his grandson Frederick the Great, led to a sudden rise to European prominence.<sup>3</sup> This was reflected very tangibly in the growth of its capital city: in 1650, the Berlin population numbered a mere 12,000, but within 150 years would reach fifteen times that sum. In 1800, these developments were still recent, and to de Staël in 1804, had left a physical trace: 'The capital of Prussia resembles Prussia itself; its buildings and establishments are of the age of man, and no more, because a single man was their founder.' (See Staël, *Germany*, Vol. 1, 164). In other words, modernity was built into the city of Berlin more than other European capitals; the newness of the city was a constant reminder of its rapid and recent expansion – and of the accelerating pace of change. Erlin has argued that this singular rapidity of expansion and the sense of dynamism in the city in the eighteenth century challenged commentators 'to find appropriate temporal models with which to interpret recent changes in the city and to delve into its murky past to determine exactly how it did evolve into its present state'. (See Matt Erlin, *Berlin's Forgotten Future*, 26).

<sup>4</sup> Of course, as Reinhart Koselleck has pointed out, neither metaphors of cyclicity or linearity capture the complexity of conceptions of time. The French Revolution, for example, could be placed in the context of earlier revolutions of comparable scale – namely the English and American – thus establishing a (modified) idea of repeatability: Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, trans. Todd Samuel Presner and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 123. Michael Foucault characterised the shift in temporal conceptions in this period slightly differently, as the transition from analogy (the comparison of different phenomenon on the basis of similar characteristics) as the predominant organising principle, to chronology; see Michael Foucault, *The Order of Things* (London: Routledge, 2001), 236-237.

starting with the Lutheran Reformation), many, at the time and since, have viewed the late eighteenth century, and particularly the French Revolution and its aftermath, as leading to a decisive change: the advent of modernity. For Chateaubriand, ‘this quarter-century equalled many centuries’.<sup>6</sup> For Goethe, the rate of change was new and exhausting: ‘Our ancestors stuck to the lessons they received in their youth; we, however, have to relearn things every five years if we do not want to fall out of fashion completely’.<sup>7</sup> Even if the belief in progress was subdued by the apparent failure of the aims of the Revolution in France, the ensuing upheaval only reinforced the idea of history as a linear process: the past seemed yet more distant and unreachable. Though over-familiar, Benedict Anderson’s eloquence on this point warrants quotation:

All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesias. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives ... Awareness of being imbedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of ‘forgetting’ the experience of this continuity – product of the ruptures of the late eighteenth century – engenders the need for a narrative of ‘identity’.<sup>8</sup>

It is to this urge to compensate for a sense of historical disjuncture that the ‘rise of history’ towards the end of the eighteenth century is often attributed. In its multifarious forms – monumentalisation, nostalgia, museums, the historical novel, the Bach revival – the turn to the past reflected a need to make sense of the incomprehensible events and changes by defining a path through history up to the present: what in the social sciences has been termed an ‘identity narrative’.<sup>9</sup>

As in Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, scholars have often assumed that the principle identity narrative that emerged at this point was one focussed on nation. Certainly, in German-speaking lands, the growing literary public engendered a sense of public forum and community that reached beyond states and principalities; middle-class anti-aristocratic sentiment and the commercial imperatives of local professionals led to the emergence of a pro-German, anti-cosmopolitan rhetoric; Herder’s ideas of ethnic communities and national folk cultures were also increasingly influential; the eventual pan-German alliance against the French likewise contributed to German national.<sup>11</sup> Such factors should not be understated, but neither

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<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Bell, *The First Total War*, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 113.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 204-205.

<sup>9</sup> See for example Margaret Somers, ‘The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach’, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 23, No. 5 (October 1994), 605-649.

<sup>11</sup> Two accounts that also consider commercial and professional motivations for the emergence of the category of the ‘German’ in eighteenth-century music culture are Mary Sue Morrow, ‘Building a National Identity with Music: A Story from the Eighteenth Century’, in *Searching for Common Ground: Diskurse zur deutschen Identität 1750-1871*, ed. Nicholas Vazsonyi (Cologne: Böhlau, 2000),

should they be overstated: the tendency of histories of nationalism to trace its origins back to the early years of the nineteenth century and into the eighteenth has sometimes led to a treatment of the nationalist in isolation from other cultural and political affiliations.<sup>12</sup>

Towards the end of the 1990s, Celia Applegate identified musicology's 'new interest in nations and nationalism', motivated by a desire to 'demystify the Western canon in general and shake off German influences, whether musical or musicological', as falling into precisely this trap.<sup>13</sup> Holding up two articles on Berliners E. T. A. Hoffmann and A. B. Marx as examples, Applegate critiqued the presentation of nationalism as either a unified or a dominant phenomenon in the first decades of the nineteenth century, pointing instead to the existence of other competing and more established affiliations, whether local, religious or dynastic.<sup>14</sup> Instead of being recognised for the richness of its overlapping paradigms, the period 1800-1815 has more often served as a pre-history to later developments, because of our preference for beginnings over endings. With respect to musical identity narratives in this period, this absence has still to be properly addressed: attention is still too often focused on the rise of 'German' music history and historical music: the revival and celebration of German figures such as J. S. Bach, for example, or the increasingly xenophobic reception of non-German music in the press. It has also tended to prioritise music associated with the particular form of historical backwards glance found in the literary writings of the German Romantics, who were more attracted to pre-Enlightenment society than the immediate past: hence the scholarly recognition of the interest in folk music – or to 'Gothic' composers such as Bach.<sup>15</sup>

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255-269; and 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.

<sup>12</sup> A useful summary of the issues at stake can be found in John Breuilly, 'Nation and Nationalism in Modern German History', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (September 1990), 659-675. Recent accounts that acknowledge the continuation of older political affiliations in nineteenth-century German states include Hubertus Büschel, *Untertanenliebe: Der Kult um deutsche Monarchen 1779-1830* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, c2006).

<sup>13</sup> Celia Applegate, 'How German Is It? Nationalism and the Idea of Serious Music in the Early Nineteenth Century', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Spring 1998), 275. Applegate has given her own account of the emergence of 'German' music in her *Bach in Berlin: Nation and Culture in Mendelssohn's Revival of the St. Matthew Passion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 45-79.

<sup>14</sup> See Sanna Pederson, 'A. B. Marx, Berlin Concert Life, and German National Identity', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1994), 87-107; and Stephen Rumph, 'A Kingdom Not of This World: The Political Context of E. T. A. Hoffmann's Beethoven Criticism', *19th-Century Music*, No. 19, Vol. 1 (Summer 1995), 50-67.

<sup>15</sup> Recent, nuanced musicological accounts of the national, or rise of history in the early nineteenth century have continued to limit themselves to the pan-German, or at best, the North-German. See Matthew Head, 'Music with "No Past?" Archaeologies of Joseph Haydn and The Creation', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Spring 2000), 191-217; John Deathridge, 'The Invention of German Music c. 1800', in *Unity and Diversity in European Culture c. 1800*, edited by Tim Blanning and Hagen Schulze (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 35-60; and Alexander Rehding, *Music and Monumentality. Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

In this article I aim to draw attention to the way that Berliners identified with eighteenth-century Prussian musical heritage – and even more specifically, with Berlin’s musical heritage – in the early years of nineteenth century, as well as with the growing assemblage of pan-German greats.<sup>16</sup> Like the diagnosis of ‘identity crisis’, acknowledging the multiple identities that Berliners could occupy musically – where identities are understood, according to Stuart Hall’s working definition, as ‘points of temporary attachment to subject positions which discursive practices construct for us’ – is also less anachronistic that it might first appear; Prussians perhaps more than most European subjects were self-conscious about their multiple affiliations, owing to the heterogeneous, non-continuous linguistic, geographic and ethnic communities contained by the state.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, in an essay on the national importance of the *Volkslied* (also in the *Berlin Jahrbücher der preußischen Monarchie*), one Professor Hoche from Halberstadt concluded his argument with a striking evocation of the plural affiliations of Halberstadt citizens, and their musical expression:

We are German patriots and love German songs; we are patriots of Halberstadt and often give Lieder to our fellow citizens for their enjoyment in our charitable papers; we are Prussian patriots and create ... an expression of our sentiments for King and for fatherland.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> In evoking the concept of identity rather than nationalism, I am equally mindful of recent critiques of its reification and problematic usage as an analytical tool (such as that by Rogers Brubaker and Frederick: ‘Beyond “Identity”’, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (February 2000), 1-47). I proceed in the conviction that it still has heuristic value; that it refers, as Stuart Hall has put it, to ‘an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all’. See Stuart Hall, ‘Introduction: Who Needs Identity?’, in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 2, 5-6. ‘Identity’ is not a term with much purchase in Berlin around 1800, however. ‘Identität’, which was only infrequently used in this period, appears to be best translated as uniformity, in the sense of identicalness. ‘Nationalcharakter’ correlates more closely with our understanding of national identity, although it could refer to Herderian ideas of shared cultural predispositions, Germanness, Prussianness (when it was often used to bestow those concepts with a Herderian legitimacy), the cultivated characteristics of a legally defined community, or indeed to national morals. With similar ambiguity, ‘Nation’ and ‘Vaterland’ can imply the state or larger German-speaking communities, while ‘Patriotismus’, often classed as a moral virtue, referred to the identification of an individual with a larger community, and their subordination to its interests, whether Prussia or Germany. Such ambiguities in meaning are symptomatic of the multiple subject positions present in discourse in this period.

<sup>17</sup> In the same *Jahrbücher der preußischen Monarchie*, Friedrich Rambach remarked on the difficulty of encouraging patriotism in a vast state, ‘fragmented in minor parts and provinces’. See Friedrich Rambach, ‘Die Erziehung zum Patriotismus’, *JpM*, Vol. 2 (1798), 408-409: ‘Je ausgedehnter der Staat ist, je zerstückelter in kleinere Theile und Provinzen ... (wie z. B. das deutsche Reich, daher deutscher Patriotismus eigentlich so wenig denkbar, als brandenburgischer, österreichischer, sächsischer nothwendig ist) um so schwieriger ist dies zu bewirken.’

<sup>18</sup> Hoche, ‘Über den Werth der Volkslieder’, *Jahrbücher der preußischen Monarchie*, Vol. 2 (1799), 15-16: ‘Wir sind deutsche Patrioten und lieben deutsche Lieder; wir sind Halberstädter Patrioten und geben unsern Mitbürgern zu ihren Freuden oft Lieder in unsern gemeinnützigen Blättern; wir sind preußische Patrioten und machen ... Ausdruck unserer Gesinnungen für König und für Vaterland.’ The continued significance of the regional in German society, even after unification, has been demonstrated by Celia Applegate in *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990).

Hoche's articulation of multiple identities highlights the need to reject narrowly focusing on the way that any one political force shapes musical experience. In what follows, I shall pursue traces of the co-existence, interaction and conflict of subject positions that receive expression firstly in Berliners' historical interests, and then specifically in their appreciation of musical heritage, in search of a richer understanding of the way that music can cultivate and express relationships to the past. This approach – which yields some surprising associations between historical repertoire and identity narratives – then leads me to reflect more generally on the relationship between music and the expression of nostalgia.

### **Berlin's Pasts**

Unpicking the strands of historical interest that made up the 'rise of history' in the city of Berlin reveals fascinations with many different pasts. The familiar 'Romantic' approach to the past, for example, was a decidedly local phenomenon: Berlin is celebrated as one of the centres of the 'Frühromantik' (along with Jena and Heidelberg), on account of the concentration of important literary Romantics and philosophers in the city. Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, Ludwig Tieck, E.T.A. Hoffmann, the Arnims, Heinrich von Kleist, and Adam Müller all lived or stayed there during this period, while associated figures, such as Jean Paul and the Schlegel brothers were frequently published in the Berlin press. Often politically conservative, the Romantics turned to a medieval, feudal, pre-Reformation past as a reaction to the horrors of the French Revolution and the encroachment of industrialisation: medieval and folk cultures were portrayed as idylls of traditional values and often presented in national terms, with such patriotism projected as a necessary counter to the cosmopolitan, enlightenment values of the previous century blamed for the French Revolution.<sup>19</sup> In *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (1805-8), for example, Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano collected together, edited and pastiched folksongs and poetry to present an idealised German folk heritage.

Although Romanticism dominated the literary scene in Berlin, it co-existed with many other discourses at various levels of society, including, as Conrad Wiedemann has shown, a late bloom of classicism.<sup>21</sup> In contrast to the Romantics' horror of modern urban life and their retreat to a fantasy of unspoilt nature, neo-classical

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<sup>19</sup> As Ernst Tillich put it in 1806: 'Did the century of the enlightenment fling patriotism into the set of old-fashioned virtues? No, love of the Fatherland is no fantasy of the brothers in arms, no wicked chimera of the politicians, no narrowness of the mind; it is strength and requires energy of spirit' (Wirft nicht vielleicht das Jahrhundert der Aufklärung Patriotismus in die Reihe veralteter Tugenden? Nein, Vaterlandsliebe ist kein Hirngespinnst der Waffenbrüder, keine schalkhafte Chimäre der Kabinetter, keine Beschränktheit des Gemüths; sie ist Kraft und fordert Energie des Geistes'): Tillich, 'Einige Gedanken über Patriotismus', *ZeW*, No. 1 (2 January 1806), 2.

<sup>21</sup> See Conrad Wiedemann, 'Die Klassizität des Urbanen: Ein Versuch über die Stadtkultur Berlins um 1800', in *Kanonbildung: Protagonisten und Prozesse der Herstellung kultureller Identität*, ed. Robert Charlier and Günther Lottes (Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2009), 121-139.

architects and sculptors (such as Carl Gotthard Langhans, Johann Gottfried Schadow, Christian Daniel Rauch, Christian Friedrich Tieck and Karl Friedrich Schinkel) embraced and physically transformed the city. The continuing appetite for classical extracts in journals such as the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift* suggests that long-established relations to the ancient world and its 'universal' aesthetic standards were persistent, even as interest in national and medieval history grew.<sup>22</sup> These discourses interacted with others, of course, and the idolisation of the classical civilisations could be combined with Prussian identity projects: the idea of a 'Spree-Athens', first mentioned in 1704 but still current a century later, was to set Berlin on its path to greatness via the model of the ancients.<sup>23</sup>

Even if classical paradigms and enlightenment discourse remained active forces in Berlin at the start of the nineteenth century, however, the experience of disjuncture that led to the Romantics' retreat to a more recent past seems to have been widespread. But whereas the Romantics looked back to an idolised medieval past, at the level of general readership historical interest was more eclectic. This preoccupation with historical topics and objects is worth elaborating: the index for the 1805 issues of the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, for example, lists both a section for 'Antiquities' ('Alterthümer'), including 'A lady's toilette from Sparta', 'New discoveries in Pompei' and 'Old German Art', and a section entitled 'Old and New Chronicles and Anecdotes', including 'Minister Walpole, an anecdote', 'Peter the Great in Paris' and 'On a phenomenon in the history of mankind'. The inclusion of historical anecdotes in journals for the 'fashionable world', and the popularity of historical calendars, such as that giving 'a chronological overview of the (more) important world events, from Charlemagne to 1802', shows the dissemination of this interest at non-learned levels of society, as well as the need to bring past and present into some kind of dialogue.<sup>25</sup>

Within the wide range of historical interests catered for by the Berlin journals, there is a notable predominance of local and Prussian figures and events. A series of articles in the *Jahrbuch der preußischen Monarchie*, for example, entitled 'Have things changed for us? and how?', compared the Brandenburg of 1798 against its younger versions in 1598 and 1398 along axes including true and false religiosity, tolerance and intolerance, hierarchy, human rights, murder, nutrition, Kings and their wives, luxury, school-building, art, aristocratic titles and so on.<sup>26</sup> In 1802, the *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift* published 'Fragments of a history of sorcery and witch trials in Prussia' as well as 'Anecdotes from Berlin at the time of Friedrich Wilhelm I,

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<sup>22</sup> Volume 1 from 1805, for example, publishes extensive excerpts from the Aeneid.

<sup>23</sup> See Wiedemann, 'Die Klassizität des Urbanen', 121; and 'Einführung in das Projekt', accessed 20 July 2011, <http://www.berliner-klassik.de/projekt/conrad-wiedemann>.

<sup>25</sup> 'Historischer Kalender', *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, No. 137 (16 November 1802), 1097.

<sup>26</sup> 'Hat es sich bei uns verändert? und wie? Etwas aus einer Charakteristik der Märker', *Jahrbücher der preußischen Monarchie*, Vol. 1 (1798), 386.

taken from the authentic papers of significant people from the time'.<sup>27</sup> Most striking of all, however, is the popularity of articles about Frederick the Great, extracts from his correspondence and anecdotes from those who came into contact with him: the monarch was widely seen as the source of Prussia's greatness and the reference point for the state's identity.<sup>28</sup> His birthday, 24 January, was still a cause for remembrance in 1803, when the Berlin correspondent to the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* reported that 'the tongues of all Prussians are more eloquent today, the eyes more ardent, the pulse livelier, and the tread swifter'.<sup>29</sup> Slightly surprisingly for a monarch whose reign involved so many military campaigns (their relative success was the source of Prussia's prominence, of course), his era was increasingly looked back to with nostalgia as a time not only of strong leadership, but of stability. The determination to create a contemporary presence for him wasn't just expressed in ongoing discussions for a memorial, but also in more curious forms: in 1798 the *Jahrbücher der preußischen Monarchie* had published a poem from the dead King addressed to the current one, containing advice and encouragement, and this was by no means an isolated occurrence.<sup>30</sup> Back in 1796, at a Berlin performance by the illusionist Karl Enslen, the highlight of the evening was a sequence of projections depicting Frederick the Great emerging from an approaching star. When the sequence was reversed and Frederick appeared about to retreat, the ecstatic audience apparently called for him to stay: in response to two encores, Frederick did return twice more.<sup>31</sup>

This emotional connection with Frederick the Great – in which dynastic, national (in the sense of Prussian) and local identities could overlap in Berlin – was only boosted by the international recognition of Frederick's 'Greatness'; at the same time, Napoleon's reverential visit to the tomb of the King in Potsdam in 1806, after occupation of the city, drew yet more attention to same unwelcome comparison between the current leadership and the past that the lead-up to the military encounter had revealed with Prussia itself.<sup>32</sup> In other words, nostalgia for Frederick the Great

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<sup>27</sup> 'Fragment einer Geschichte der Zauberei und der Hexenprozesse in Preußen'; 'Anekdoten aus Berlin, zu den Zeiten Friedrich Wilhelms I aus authentischen Papieren bedeutender Personen damaliger Zeit': *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, Vol. 2 (1802), 223-231, 342-352.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, 'Bericht aus Berlin über die vorgehabte Entfliehung des Kronprinzen, und seine Gefangennahme, 1730', *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, Vol. 1 (1803), 324-348; and 'Merkwürdiger Brief Friedrichs 2. an Camas', *ZeW*, No. 76 (26 June 1802), 605-606.

<sup>29</sup> 'Aller Preußen Zungen sind heute beredter, die Augen feuriger, der Pulsschlag lebhafter, und rascher der Gang. Der Soldat kommt dem Bürger, der Patriot dem Patrioten mit dem elektrischem Schlagworte, des vier und zwanzigsten Januar entgegen, und sie drücken sich mit Rührung die Hand': 'Der vier und zwanzigste Januar in Berlin', *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, No. 14 (1 February 1803), 111.

<sup>30</sup> 'Friedrich der Große, an König Friedrich Wilhelm den Dritten. Nachgesungen von K. Fr. Kretschmann', *Jahrbücher der preußischen Monarchie*, Vol. 2 (1798), 399. Another poem written in the voice of Frederick the Great was performed for Queen Luise's birthday in 1806 by 14 boys (the sons of soldiers) dressed in the uniform of a grenadier at the time of the monarch, 'as if they were sent by the King from Elysium': see *Vossische Zeitung*, No. 35 (22 March 1806).

<sup>31</sup> See Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947* (London: Allen Lane, 2006), 274-275.

<sup>32</sup> King Friedrich Wilhelm III's decision to go to war was a famously drawn-out affair. He even formed a new alliance with Napoleon in December 1805 (the Treaty of Schönbrunn) while continuing

and pre-revolutionary, eighteenth-century Prussia, seems to have been characterised by the same sense of recuperation, loss and pride as the more familiar Romantic nostalgia for the medieval, and received expression in scholarship, journalism, poetry, visual art. I turn now to the expression of Prussian nostalgia in music, and the recuperation of Prussian musical heritage.

### **Berlin's Musical Pasts**

That this nostalgia for Frederick the Great – and the lost version of Prussia he represented – found musical expression, or indeed was fed by musical experience, is partly a consequence of the distinct musical identity that the monarch crafted for the court and the state during his lifetime – and his own celebrated status as musician (flautist and sometime composer). In the much-cited report ‘On the state of music in Berlin’ in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, the correspondent diplomatically suggested that Frederick the Great had regulated taste in Berlin in ‘such a particular direction’ – namely, the operas of C. H. Graun and J. A. Hasse – that newer musical developments from cities such as Vienna were ignored.<sup>33</sup> This led to a uniformity of musical style: Johann Friedrich Reichardt’s appointment as Kapellmeister to Frederick the Great in 1775 was granted on the basis of his capacity to imitate the style of the king’s favourites, and in 1805 Reichardt recounted how the Viennese, Italian and Mannheim schools, and even Gluck, were rejected by the court, leading to a certain ‘one-sidedness’ in Berlin’s music in its perpetuation of the Bachs, the Grauns, the Bendas, Fasch and Quantz.<sup>34</sup>

In a recent dissertation, Matthias Röder has departed from the traditional interpretation of Frederick’s decisions as the whim of an aging ruler, or a financial necessity after the strain of the Seven Years’ War, and presented them instead as a precocious example of ‘Kulturpolitik’: an attempt to shape a recognisable musical identity for Prussia after his father’s neglect of court music. In his argument, the patronage of a very small group of composers was an unusual variant of the typical monarchical use of culture for display and communication. Departing radically from ‘the time-tested ideal that splendour and representational display needed to go hand in hand with novelty and fashion’, he returned to these repertoires after the gap in court music-making during the Seven Years’ War (1756-63). Graun had died in 1759 – and Hasse departed from Dresden for Vienna in 1764; the repertoire did not merely remain stylistically consistent, but was repeated in the absence of new works from the favoured composers.<sup>37</sup> According to Roeder, not only might Frederick have wished to reinforce the musical identity he had created for the Prussian state in the first half of

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negotiations with Napoleon’s enemies, predominantly Russia. Meanwhile, Queen Luise headed up a pro-war lobby that gained much popular support. For accounts of this episode, see Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 284-311; and Simms, *The Impact of Napoleon*.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Ueber den Zustand der Musik in Berlin’, *AmZ*, No. 33 (14 May 1800), 585-588.

<sup>34</sup> Johann Friedrich Reichardt, ‘Etwas zur Einleitung’, *BmZ*, No. 1 (1805), 1.

<sup>37</sup> Matthias Röder, ‘Music, Politics, and the Public Sphere in Late Eighteenth-Century Berlin’ (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2009), 84.

his reign, but to distinguish court musical life from the growing public sphere and burgeoning musical industry – increasingly focussed around novelty – that had emerged in the court’s absence during the war years. By preserving the old repertoires in performance, Frederick established a ‘canon’ of works that were held up as being of decided worth on account of their lasting promotion by the court.<sup>38</sup>

Although Frederick’s preservation of this coalescence of composers set court musical life apart from public musical life, the perpetuation of these repertoires at court also perpetuated the status of old music within public culture. Because, as Röder has pointed out, early musical associations and public concert series imitated court life to garner prestige, court-favoured composers entered musical life external to the court – for both Kenner and Liebhaber; the emulation was made all the more powerful by the uniformity of the court repertoires, and their establishment as ‘Prussian’ music culture. So not only did the upper echelons of society, private societies, salons and educational establishments adopt the old repertoires, to *prove* their vicinity to the court, but concert series aimed at more populist audiences included ‘prestige’ composers in order to entice the socially aspirational, leading to the popularity of Graun’s sacred vocal works, even in more entertainment-orientated garden concerts. Pieces commissioned for – or associated with – political events, such as Graun’s *Te Deum*, first performed in 1757 to celebrate the Prussian victory against Austria in Prague and repeated at subsequent victories, were particularly frequently performed.<sup>39</sup>

When the court changed hands in 1786, and Frederick Wilhelm II introduced new Italian and French operatic music at court, in addition to the South German and Italian symphonies that had been becoming popular in Berlin’s concert life since the 1770s, the practice of gaining prestige by the direct emulation of current court musical taste would not have supported the perpetuation of this repertoire in the same way; under Friedrich Wilhelm III too, who ascended the throne in 1797, court repertoire was generally contemporary and varied, though he often repeated repertoire out of thrift. But a number of works from Frederick the Great’s reign were retained in Berlin’s musical life, and appear to have served a memorialising function. The most conspicuous of these are the works purported to be by the King himself – which in fact were not a common feature of public performances while he was alive. Thus a March apparently by him was included in a performance at the Nationaltheater of

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<sup>38</sup> Here William Weber’s ‘coalescence’ might be appropriate to refer to a collection of pieces or genres linked by an informal relationship within a repertory: see William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Certainly Christoph Henzel has recently designated this repertoire of the Graun brothers and Hasse the ‘Berliner Klassik’, on account of its stylistic coherence and its survival into the nineteenth century in Berlin and to some extent across North Germany. Christoph Henzel, *Berliner Klassik: Studien zur Graunüberlieferung im 18. Jahrhundert* (Beeskow: Ortus Musikverlag, 2009). See particularly Chapter 12, ‘Berliner Klassik: Ein Resümee’, 363-380.

<sup>39</sup> See Christoph Henzel, ‘Die Erstaufführung von Carl Heinrich Grauns “Te Deum”’, *Jahrbuch des Staatlichen Instituts für Musikforschung Preußischer Kulturbesitz* (1997), 58–61; and Röder, ‘Music, Politics, and the Public Sphere’, 116-120; 126-127.

Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* in 1809.<sup>41</sup> A 'Gedächtnißfeier' ('festival of remembrance') on the occasion of Frederick the Great's birthday in January 1811 included a symphony by the monarch from the 1740s, as well as Reichardt's 'Trauercantate auf den Tod Friedrichs des Großen', from 1786, prompting one reviewer to reminisce about the musical elements of the original burial service in 1786.<sup>42</sup> But musical works prestigious during Frederick the Great's reign were in many ways just as closely linked to the monarch's memory, and were programmed in the birthday concerts of the current rulers too. The performance of C. H. Graun's *Te Deum* at the Queen's birthday concert in March 1809, for example, was recognised by reviewers as a gesture to Prussia's glorious past: both the *Vossische Zeitung* and *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* reviews described the work as C. H. Graun's 'swan song, which he famously wrote after the battle of Prague in 1756 [sic]'.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, the 'Gedächtnißfeier' for the Queen on 20 July 1811, a year after her death, included an oratorio chorus by J. A. Hasse, one of Frederick the Great's favourite composers. Rather like the poem in which 'der alte Fritz' spoke beyond the grave to Friedrich Wilhelm III, the inclusion of his works in celebrations of the present generation of the Hohenzollerns seems to have been an attempt to convert the nostalgia for the dead monarch into the popularity of his descendants.<sup>45</sup>

A number of other works from Frederick the Great's reign survived in the wider musical life of the city. Key among these was C. H. Graun's oratorio, *Der Tod Jesu* (1755) – one of the most performed pieces in the nineteenth century – which could boast a continuous performance tradition in Berlin thanks to the annual performances on Good Friday, which started immediately after the Seven Years' War.<sup>46</sup> Sustained by strong institutional structures – those of Berlin's musical societies as well as the church – it also had a high profile in popular concerts in the eighteenth century, so its appeal was not confined to connoisseurs; at the same time, the royal approval given to

<sup>41</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, No. 13 (27 December 1809), 200.

<sup>42</sup> See *Vossische Zeitung*, No. 12 (26 January 1811) and No. 13 (29 January 1811). Going on the details given in the *Haude und Spenersche Zeitung*, No. 12 (26 January 1811), the symphony was most likely Frederick the Great's overture to the pasticcio *Il re pastore*, premiered in August 1747; some numbers were included in the pasticcio *Galatea ed Acide*, performed in 1748. I am grateful to Lena van der Hoven for sending me her book manuscript to clarify this detail; see Hoven, *Musikalische Repräsentationspolitik in Preußen (1688-1797). Hofmusik als Inszenierungsinstrument von Herrschaft im politischen Wandel*, Kassel, Bärenreiter, forthcoming 2015.

<sup>43</sup> *Vossische Zeitung*, No. 30 (11 March 1809); *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, No. 28 (12 April 1809), 442. Christoph Henzel notes that concert organisers of the eighteenth century tended to refer to the original context of the *Te Deum* when they advertised it, only adding to its function as 'preußische Staatsmusik'. See Henzel, *Berliner Klassik: Studien zur Graunüberlieferung im 18. Jahrhundert*, Beeskow, Ortus Musikverlag, 2009, 342-344. On the Berlin reception of Graun's *Te Deum* in the eighteenth century, see Röder, 'Music, Politics, and the Public Sphere', 119-126.

<sup>45</sup> To be sure, it was the King who was most in need of this boost. For more on these patriotic birthday concerts in Berlin, see my article 'From Dynastic Birthdays to National Festivals? Political Music-Making in Berlin, 1800-1815', forthcoming in the *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* in 2015.

<sup>46</sup> As Henzel has pointed out, the tradition of annual performances of *Der Tod Jesu* started after Graun's death, just four years after its composition. This raises the possibility that *Der Tod Jesu* was perceived as a musical memorial (to the composer) early on. See Henzel, *Berliner Klassik*, 6.

*Der Tod Jesu* by performances at the Berliner Schloss in 1758, 1768, 1778 and 1779 would have given the work a powerful symbolic worth.<sup>47</sup> Certainly, its popularity in Berlin was recognised by visiting performers, and used to tailor the programme to their public: the famous glass harmonica player, Marianne Kirchgessner, performed an arrangement of the chorale from *Der Tod Jesu* in her Berlin concert of 17 April 1800 at the Hotel der Stadt Paris.<sup>48</sup> Graun's oratorio, however, was not just seen as part of Prussian musical heritage, but performed across German-speaking lands, and increasingly described in music histories and criticism as a work of pan-German importance: J. K. F. Triest, in his history of music in 'Germany' described it in 1801 as a 'lasting national work', noting that 'even now it is always received with appreciation, despite the changes in taste',<sup>49</sup> Johann Friedrich Christmann grouped Graun together with Handel, Gluck and Hasse as the composers who had established respect of the genius of the Germans at the banks of the Thames, the Tiber, and the Seine'.<sup>50</sup>

Similarly, the survival of Georg Benda's operas in Berlin existed within the framework of both their local and pan-German significance. Georg Benda was briefly violinist at the Prussian court, and Reichardt included both Benda brothers (Georg and Franz) in his list of repertoires associated with the old regime. At the same time, when in 1804 Georg Benda's *Romeo und Julie* (1776) was performed at the Nationaltheater after an absence of four years, the Berlin correspondent for the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* excused the dated aspects of the work on account of the composer's significance to the history of German opera and German musical identity:

In the last days of August, *Romeo und Julie* by Georg Benda, an old, genuinely German work of art, was brought back to the stage after a period of several years, and the public accepted this apparition well ... He was one of the first German composers who used wind instruments to such effect, and who strived to render the poet truly through his moving melodies and his powerfully strong expression ... if the artist has also clung excessively to the common forms of his

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<sup>47</sup> One concert series, the Liebhaber Konzerte, performed *Der Tod Jesu* annually from 1775 until their dissolution in 1797. By 1800, Wilhelmine Bachmann, daughter of the co-founder of the Liebhaber Konzerte, had taken over the Good Friday performance tradition; a founding member of the Singakademie, she arranged for it to perform *Der Tod Jesu* every year in the opera house directed by Zelter, often with soloists from the royal Kapelle; see *Vossische Zeitung*, No. 41 (5 April 1800). From the early 1800s competition was provided by performances of the passion cantata in the Petrikirche by Gattermann and Hansmann's choir.

<sup>48</sup> *VZ*, No. 45 (15 April 1800).

<sup>49</sup> Johann Karl Friedrich Triest, 'Bemerkung über die Ausbildung der Tonkunst in Deutschland im achtzehnten Jahrhundert', trans. Susan Gillespie, in *Haydn and his World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 321-394. Interestingly, Triest attributes the popularity of this work above all others to the fact that in the cantata genre Graun was unfettered by Frederick the Great's restrictive demands: for Triest it was the *disassociation* of the work from the King that caused its survival.

<sup>50</sup> Johann Friedrich Christmann, 'An das scheidenden Jahrhundert', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* No. 13 (24 December 1800), 208.

time here and there in his works ... one should keep in mind that he was the one of the first German theatre composers and his shortcomings should be weighed against his mastery, and then only the eye of the caustic reviewer will be able to linger on these shortcomings.<sup>51</sup>

Likewise, Benda's melodramas *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1775) and *Medea* (1775) considerably outlived their composer's lifetime on the Berlin stage.

If the categories of Prussian and German heritage could sometimes be mutually reinforcing, the former paradoxically contained elements both local and cosmopolitan that could work against the latter. Johann Nicolaus Forkel's 1802 biography of J. S. Bach, in which Bach's music is presented as 'an invaluable national patrimony, with which no other nation has anything to be compared', provoked an angry review from Reichardt,<sup>53</sup> while accepting Bach's pre-eminence as an organist and contrapuntalist, he hinted that Bach's art can extend to artifice, declaring dramatically:

Woe to the artist who has not perceived and recognised the elevated spirit, the deep soul of many Handel fugues, not to mention many other fugues of Italian and German masters, whose magnificent circle our eternal Fasch so gloriously concluded.<sup>54</sup>

The defence of Italian composers in the field of counterpoint runs in the face of the already long-held (German) critical cliché that Italians excelled at melodic rather than contrapuntal writing. But in his celebration of Italian music in general and Fasch in particular, Reichardt shows a continuing attachment to Prussian heritage; old Italian repertoires in Berlin were associated with Frederick the Great, as we have seen, and Carl Friedrich Fasch had been a stalwart of the Prussian court and the founder of the Singakademie. In contrast to Forkel's transparent investment in a national, pan-German cultural tradition of which he presented Bach as the founder, Reichardt's own deep investment in German music was tempered by his loyalty to Prussian musical heritage and the eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism associated with it. The potential

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<sup>51</sup> 'Berlinisches Nationaltheater', *ZeW*, No. 113 (20 September 1804), 902: 'In den letzten Tagen des August wurde 'Romeo und Julie', von Georg Benda, ein altes ächtes deutsches Kunstwerk, nach einem Verlauf von einigen Jahren, wieder auf die Bühne gebracht, und das Publikum nahm diese Erscheinung gut auf ... Er war einer der ersten deutschen Komponisten, der schon mit so vieler Wirkung die Blasinstrumente anwandte, und sich bestrebte, den Dichter durch seine rührende Melodien und seinen kräftigen starken Ausdruck treu wiederzugeben ... Hat sich auch der Künstler in seinem Werken hier und da zu sehr den gebräuchlichen Formen seiner Zeit angeschmiegt ... so bedenke man, daß er einer der Ersten deutschen Theaterkomponisten war, und stelle das große Meisterhafte diesen Flecken entgegen...'

<sup>53</sup> Cited (and translated) in Celia Applegate, 'How German Is It? Nationalism and the Idea of Serious Music in the Early Nineteenth Century', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Spring 1998), 288.

<sup>54</sup> Johann Friedrich Reichardt, 'Einige Anmerkungen zu Forkels Schrift: Ueber Joh. Sebast. Bach', *BmZ*, No. 38 (1806), 149: 'Wehe dem Künstler, der den hohen Geist, das tiefe Gemüth vieler Händelschen Fugen nicht ahndet und erkennt, vieler anderer Fugen italiänischer und deutscher Meister nicht zu gedenken, deren herrlichen Kreis unser verewigter Fasch so glorreich schließt.'

for conflict between categories of the German and the Prussian – or the ‘berlinisch’ – comes out most clearly in my next case study, however, in which ‘German’ music’s traditional ‘other’, that most cosmopolitan of all musical repertoire, Italian opera, appears to have become a point of reference for Prussian identity.<sup>56</sup>

### **Mourning the *Ancien Régime***

The turbulence of the early years of the nineteenth century had obvious and direct consequences for Berlin’s operatic infrastructure, particularly for Italian opera. Although the Königliches Opernhaus had survived as the preserve of *opera seria* far later than many comparable North German institutions, the flight of the royal family from Berlin in 1806 removed its primary function – that of royal display.<sup>57</sup> It was closed in 1807 and all associated artists released to seek work independently. The Nationaltheater, established in 1786 for the performance of German language productions, continued to perform during the occupation to audiences of French troops and administrative personnel as well as the locals, and after the return of the King, a merger between the two establishments was negotiated; in 1811, the two institutions were united as the Königliche Schauspiele, under the direction of August Wilhelm Iffland, previously director of the Nationaltheater. From then on, the royal opera house seems to have been used as an alternative venue for the repertoire that was produced at the Nationaltheater – German language performances of all genres – with a slight emphasis on works of established artistic standing, and as the venue for dramatic productions marking state occasions such as royal birthdays. Opera sung in Italian became something of a rare occurrence.

Even before the defeat in 1806, the status of Italian opera and *opera seria* in particular, established under Frederick the Great as the prestige genre *par excellence*, had been under question. Although Friedrich Wilhelm II (1786-1797) had expanded the company and refurbished the opera house, Friedrich Wilhelm III reduced the size and salaries of the ensemble shortly after his accession in 1797; his cost-cutting measures led to the repetition of repertoire at Carnival, usually the preserve of spectacular premieres. The royal *opera buffa* companies, which had played at the Potsdam and Charlottenburg palaces, were also dissolved early in his reign. But whereas few *opere serie* were adapted for the Nationaltheater (one example is Giovanni Paisiello’s *Elfrida* in 1802), *opera buffa* in translation was a staple of the

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<sup>56</sup> See, for example, John Deathridge, ‘The Invention of German Music’. To be sure, such xenophobic sentiment is also easy to find in Berlin. An 1808 review of *Die vereitelten Ranke*, after Cimarosa’s *Le trame deluse*, for example, presents some familiar stereotypes: ‘The music is Italian. That means: it has little harmony (quite right, since it should be kept light), dainty melody, here and there a strong shock in the modulation, and many gimmicks’ (‘Die Musik ist italienisch. Das heißt: es ist wenig Harmonie (ganz recht, denn es soll leicht behalten werden), niedliche Melodie, hin und wieder ein starker Schlag in der Modulation, und viel Spielerei darin’): *Vossische Zeitung*, No. 8 (19 January 1808).

<sup>57</sup> In fact, Christopher Henzel goes so far as to call it anachronistic. See the list of the fates of other opera houses in Christoph Henzel, *Die Italienische Hofoper in Berlin um 1800* (Stuttgart; Weimar: Metzler, 1994), 19.

Nationaltheater repertoire, with spoken dialogue in the place of recitative.<sup>58</sup> Works such as *Die Dorfsängerinnen* (Valentino Fioravanti's *Le cantatrici villane*), or *Die heimliche Ehe* (Domenico Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*) were presented as *Singspiele* or 'komische' *Singspiele*, or sometimes 'komische Opern', 'after the Italian'. Italian opera was also represented in Berlin's concerts, in the form of excerpted overtures, ensembles and arias, with extracts from the *opere serie* of Vincenzo Righini, the Berlin Kapellmeister from 1793 to 1812, being a popular choice.

Even with the productions of Italian works at the Nationaltheater, however, Italian composers far from dominated operatic life in Berlin. If original German language opera only made up a third of the Nationaltheater's repertoire, by the reckoning of Christine Siegert, 43% of the repertoire was French.<sup>59</sup> But to divide repertoire along national lines in this way is fraught with ambiguity. Particularly popular with the audiences and critics, for example, were the operas of 'Parisian' Italians: Antonio Salieri, Antonio Sacchini, Ferdinando Paer, Niccolò Piccini. Quite what national category the works of Italian composers translated from the original French into German occupied is difficult to establish: the relative weight of genre and style, nationality of composer and language in performance seems to have changed depending on the critic and which axe he chose to grind. Similarly, when the King requested from Iffland a list of possible new German operas to be performed at the Nationaltheater for the Carnival in 1804, Iffland responded with Gluck's *Iphigenia in Aulis* and *Alceste*, Salieri's *Danaiden* and Jean-Philippe Rameau's *Castor und Pollux*, as well as Sacchini's *Oedip zu Kolonnos*, Piccini's *Dido*, and Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, which were already in the repertoire.<sup>61</sup> The generic designations of operas in advertisements do not clarify how such adapted works were conceptualised either, and they were rarely consistent. Although the description of *Oedip* as a 'lyrisches drama' appears to acknowledge its original French form, it was equally announced as a *Singspiel*, under which heading *opere serie*, such as Mozart's *Idomeneo*, were also presented.

Of course, this ambiguity of genre was partly a consequence of the transformative power of translation and adaptation, for better or – more usually – worse, at least according to the critics. In fact, the anxiety that accompanied translation in certain quarters might indicate an emerging commitment to an idea of

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<sup>58</sup> *Opera seria* arias were sometimes interpolated into works at the Nationaltheater: a Righini aria appeared in a version of Cimarosa's *Die heimliche Ehe* in 1805, and Henri Montan Berton's *Das unterbrochene Konzert* in 1807, for example. See Henzel, *Die Italienische Hofoper in Berlin*, 95.

<sup>59</sup> Christine Siegert, 'Französische, italienische und deutsche Oper am Berliner Nationaltheater', in *Der gesellschaftliche Wandel um 1800 und das Berliner Nationaltheater*, ed. Klaus Gerlach (Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2009), 239-240.

<sup>61</sup> Christoph Henzel, 'Zwischen Hofoper und Nationaltheater. Aspekte der Gluckrezeption in Berlin um 1800', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, (1993), 207.

*Werktreue*.<sup>62</sup> Certainly, it seems to have been used as a justification for the re-establishment of a French theatre in Berlin:

Both the accepted French masterpieces, a *Cid*, an *Andromache*, a *Zaire*, a *Misanthrope*, a *Tartuffe*, and the German, an *Emilia [Galotti]*, a *Minna [von Barnhelm]*, a *[Götz von] Berlichingen*, etc, remain untranslated, or at least, the translations remain unknown and unperformed. How could a French *Wallenstein* please? and how a German *Iphigenia in Aulis*? Masterpieces must never be translated: one owes this justice to the author, out of gratitude and admiration.<sup>63</sup>

It was not just the authenticity of language that was lost in the process of adaptation for the Nationaltheater, according to such arguments. For several reviewers, the spoken dialogue that replaced recitative in *opera seria* was felt to be at odds with the genre's heroic character,<sup>64</sup> the inability of German actors to render Italian comedy seems to have been even more troubling. A Nationaltheater performance of Cimarosa's *Die heimliche Ehe* in 1811 'was certainly not animated by that inexhaustible, all-pervading burlesque humour, which is peculiar to the Italians' but the critic goes on to allow that 'it would be unreasonable to require a perfect imitation of the national idiosyncrasy, since that would be quite impossible to achieve'.<sup>65</sup> Fioravanti's *Die Dorfsängerinnen* was thought to have been less successful than it might for the same reason:

Certainly this *Singspiel*, borrowed from the Italian, would have reaped more applause if it had been given with the liveliness and peculiar comic power of the Italian opera singers, or rather could have been given; for the indescribable comedy of the Italians' grotesque pantomime remains unachievable by the German actors and precisely here lies the especial amusement of such farcical *Singspiele*.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> The classic text on the emergence of *Werktreue* within music culture is Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*.

<sup>63</sup> *Neue Berlinische Monatschrift*, Vol. 2 (1801), 72: 'Sowohl die ausgemachten franz. Meisterstücke, ein *Cid*, eine *Andromache*, eine *Zaire*, ein *Misanthrop*, ein *Tartuffe*, als die deutschen, eine *Emilia*, eine *Minna*, ein *Berlichingen*, u. s.w. unübersetzt, oder wenigstens die Uebersetzungen unbekannt und ungespielt geblieben sind. Wie würde ein französischer *Wallenstein* gefallen können? und wie eine deutsche *Iphigenia in Aulis*? Meisterstücke müßten nie übersetzt werden: diese Gerechtigkeit ist man ihren Verfassern aus Dankbarkeit und Bewunderung schuldig.'

<sup>64</sup> *Haude und Spenersche Zeitung*, No. 93 (5 August 1806).

<sup>65</sup> 'Aus Berlin', *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, No. 240 (2 December 1811), 1918.

<sup>66</sup> *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, No. 3 (4 January 1811), 24: 'Gewiß hätte dieß komische aus dem Italienischen entlehnte Singspiel noch mehr Beifall eingeerntet, wenn es ganz mit der Lebhaftigkeit und eigenthümlich komischen kraft italiänischer Operisten wäre gegeben worden, oder vielmehr hätte gegeben werden können; denn deutschen Schauspielern bleibt besonders das unbeschreiblich Komische des grotesken Geberdenspiels [sic] der Italiäner unerreichbar, und gerade hierin liegt vornehmlich das Belustigende solcher welchen schwankhaften Singspiele.' Nor was it just Italian

The performance of Italian opera in German, by German actors, seems to have been experienced as a loss: a loss of the original language, of the original form in some cases, and of the genuine Italian spirit. But back in July 1805, two of the male leads of the Nationaltheater company had found a novel way of gesturing towards the Italian original in a performance of Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*: they sang the duet from the opening of Act 2 first in German – as would be normal for the Nationaltheater – and then repeated it in Italian. On this first occasion, the Italian encore appears to have both surprised the audience, and then enraptured them on account of the impeccable Italian pronunciation of the German singers.<sup>67</sup> In September 1805, one reviewer went further:

Italians who watch this production certainly have all reason to be satisfied (or so it appears to the Germans at least). The comic tone was grasped in exactly the Italian manner; that was achieved most clearly when Mr Gern and Mr Beschort (Roms and Graf Tiefenthal) repeat their duet in that [Italian] language; there one almost believes oneself to be hearing and seeing an *opera buffa* on the other side of the Alps.<sup>68</sup>

In October, the same practice was tried in a performance of Paisiello's *Die schöne Müllerin (La Molinara)*, again for the duet opening Act 2.<sup>69</sup> In time, the repetition of the Cimarosa duet ('Se fiato in corpo avete') in Italian seems to have become so established that it entered concert practice: at a concert in aid of the wives and families of Prussian civil servants in 1807, it was again performed this way, despite the norm at concerts for singing in Italian.<sup>70</sup> Perhaps the juxtaposition had come to symbolise some sort of synergy of national schools – at a time when the 'gemischter Stil' was still a popular interpretation of the German – or perhaps it was just a winning trademark of one of the singers involved in all these encores: Herr Gern. Christine Siegert has proposed that it was a way for the Nationaltheater to acquire some of the cultural status of the Italian performances at the Königliches Opernhaus,

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acting that was considered idiosyncratic: back in 1800, a journalist had reported on a production of *Der Gefangene*, a *Singspiel* by Alexandre Vicent Pineux Duval and Pierre Antonio Domenico Della-Maria (translated by Karl Alexander Herklots) at the Nationaltheater. While he credited the Germans with rendering French music convincingly, French acting was deemed 'untranslatable': *JpM*, Vol. 3 (1800), 65.

<sup>67</sup> *Haude und Spenersche Zeitung*, No. 86 (18 July 1805).

<sup>68</sup> *Haude und Spenersche Zeitung*, No. 108 (7 Sept 1805): 'Italiener die diese Vorstellung sehen, haben (wenigstens erscheint es dem Deutschen so) gewiß allen Grund zufrieden zu seyn. Man hat im Ton des komischen genau die italienische Manier gefaßt; am deutlichsten wird das, wenn Herr Gern und Herr Beschort (Roms und Graf Tiefenthal) ihr Duett in jener Sprache wiederholen, da glaubt man fast eine Opera buffa jenseits der Alpen zu hören und zu sehen.' The practice receives further notice in the *Haude und Spenersche Zeitung* in No. 141 (23 November 1805) and No. 150 (14 December 1805).

<sup>69</sup> *Haude und Spenersche Zeitung*, No. 124 (15 October 1805).

<sup>70</sup> 'Aus Berlin', *ZeW*, No. 186 (20 November 1807), 1485.

which in 1805, was still functioning.<sup>71</sup> An 1806 review, however, suggests a further reason:

None of our comic operas bears the imprint of the Italian *opera buffa* so significantly as this one does, exquisitely, since the brilliant acting of Misters Berschort and Gern has spoiled the audience, and imposed on themselves the flattering obligation to repeat their duet – and in Italian, to wit. Then one sees the spirit and character of the Italian opera nurtured there, and the spirit and character of Italian music suited to the acting; there emerges so vividly the desire for the *opera buffa* that existed here formerly, in which Frederick the Great found so much pleasure.<sup>72</sup>

Here, then, lies a key to one of the possible ‘meanings’ of Italian opera in Berlin at this time: like Graun’s *Der Tod Jesu* and *Te Deum*, it was linked to the idolised Frederick the Great. The singer Gertrud Elisabeth Mara played to this cult of remembrance when she programmed the aria ‘Mi paventi unfiglio indegno’ from Graun’s *Britannico* (1751) in a concert in 1803.<sup>73</sup> But Mara’s homage to Frederick is much more historically logical than the other Italian works that seem to have evoked the monarch. Although his favoured repertoire for cultural display was *opera seria*, we have already seen how he was also associated with *opera buffa*, a genre he enjoyed at the Potsdam palaces: this affinity with the *genre*, rather than through specific repertoire, seems to have been enough to summon up the King’s ghost. Certainly, a review from 1808 of Carlo Goldoni’s play *Der Diener zweier Herren* and Etienne Lauchery’s new ballet *Arlequin im Schutze der Zauberei*, suggests that the original setting of the play (and in this case, the golden age of a particular type of theatre) was a powerful force in its current reception. Welcoming the presence of Harlequin on stage, the reviewer remarked upon his popularity at the court of Louis XIV, before moving to Frederick:

The great Frederick also loved the *opera buffa* and its spirit, alongside the *opera seria* ... Let us always turn back again to our man with the bright jacket and the clumsy slapstick, and be

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<sup>71</sup> Siegert, ‘Französische, italienische und deutsche Oper’, 256.

<sup>72</sup> *VZ*, No. 121 (9 October 1806): ‘Keine unserer komischen Opern trägt das Gepräge der italinischen Opera Buffa so deutlich als diese [Die heimliche Ehe], vorzüglich, da das schöne Spiel der Herren Berschort und Gern das Publikum verwöhnt hat, und ihnen die schmeichelhafte Verbindlichkeit auferlegt, ihr Duett, und zwar Italienisch, zu wiederholen. Da sieht man denn so ganz den Geist und Charakter der Italienischen Oper entwickelt, den Geist und Charakter der Italienischen Musik dem Spiel angepaßt; da entsteht so lebhaft der Wunsch nach der sonst hier bestehenden Opera Buffa, welcher Friedrich der Zweite so viel Vergnügen fand.’

<sup>73</sup> Henzel, *Berliner Klassik*, 20.

comforted alternately by genuine German masterpieces and by genuine Italian comic tales.<sup>74</sup>

This source makes explicit the retrospective inclination of Berliners' tastes at this time, framed in terms of 'turning back' to repertoire from earlier times as a source of comfort. But it also highlights the impossible vagueness of this nostalgia: for the ancien régime *in toto*, here embodied both by Frederick the Great and Louis XIV; and at the same time, for the spirit of Frederick's *opera buffa*, here personified in Goldoni's Harlequin. After all, Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*, which could also conjure the spirit of Frederick's *opera buffa*, was in fact written for Vienna in 1792, several years after the King's death. In fact, the category of 'old' Italian works received with nostalgia seems to have been quite all-embracing; a reviewer in the *Vossische Zeitung*, reflecting on the revival of *Die Eifersucht auf der Probe* (an arrangement of Pasquale Anfossi's *Il Gelose in Cimento*, 1774), called for more revivals of 'masters' such as 'Anfossi, Piccini, Paisiello, Salieri and co': Salieri and Paisiello were still alive (and composing) at this point, but appear to have been associated with the older generation.<sup>75</sup> It was not even just that the tradition of the Italian opera belonged to the ancien régime, but that the style of Italian music could represent the old order. In a review of Heinrich Himmel's *Die Sylphen*, the reviewer tentatively identifies the gradual inclination of audiences 'in all places once again to the earlier Italian music: the strong simple phrase of the gentle, comprehensible orchestral accompaniment'.<sup>76</sup> The characterisation of Italian music as gentle, as strong, simple, and above all, comprehensible to the bewildered, post-Revolution Prussians, speaks powerfully of its ability to conjure up the charms of an earlier, apparently carefree age.

### **Some Conclusions [apologies for disintegrating into points]**

Of all the evidence I've presented for the musical expression or cultivation of nostalgia for the reign of Frederick the Great, it is notable the two most convincing/explicit statements in the reception materials come from the vaguest instances of any association between these two phenomena eg. Italian spoken comedy from before the monarch's birth standing in for *opera buffa* in toto, and *opera buffa* from after the monarch's death; both from elsewhere in Europe. This prompts some speculations:

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<sup>74</sup> *VZ*, No. 13 (20 January 1808): 'Auch der große Friedrich liebte neben der großen Oper die Opera buffa und die Seele derselben ... lasset uns immer wieder zu unserm Manne mit der bunten Jacke und der hölzernen Pritsche zurückkehren, und uns abwechselnd an echt-deutschen Meisterstücken und echt-italienischen Schnurren laben.'

<sup>75</sup> *VZ*, No. 105 (2 September 1806).

<sup>76</sup> 'Ueberhaupt aber scheint es, man neige an allen Orten sich mehr wieder zu der frühern italienischen Musik; den starken einfachen Satz der sanften faßlichen Instrumentalbegleitung': 'Aus Berlin', *ZeW*, No. 52 (1 May 1806), 423.

\*Does the reason for this lie in the role of the critic? After all, there might not be any nostalgic gushing about Frederick the Great at performances of C. H. Graun's *Te Deum* because the reference to the monarch's memory was obvious – and only the precise date of its first performance was thought to be of interest. [Objection to this: did critics generally avoid the opportunity to gush?].

\*To what extent is nostalgia usually a reminiscence of something one didn't personally experience? Is it possible to put this question historically, given that the term wasn't used at the time for these experiences? Did what-we-call-nostalgia at the time tend to be felt for fantasised versions of the past, like German Romantic nostalgia for the middle ages? And how far does this vagueness extend to the objects prompting experiences of nostalgia? Listeners would not have experienced Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto* during the reign of Frederick the Great, which it apparently recalled. Many listeners could not recall his reign at all, being too young. In contradiction to my general argument – and in contrast to the general popularity of Benda's stage works – are the remarks of one commentator in 1805, who drew attention to all the ways in which Benda's *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1775) was out-dated, and suggested that these features could only be enjoyed by the 'old listeners, on account of their memories'.<sup>77</sup> This reviewer, Julius von Voß, had revolutionary sympathies – does this political affiliation make him less susceptible to nostalgia for the *ancien régime*?!

\* Would the vagueness of the association be equally suggestive in another artistic medium? Did musical experience in particular enable experiences of nostalgia? Does the ephemerality of music in performance stand in for the ephemerality of time, and how far was this recognised at the time? Certainly, the potential for sound to evoke the past is eloquently expressed in a review of a new collection of folk proverbs, fairy tales and legends in 1811:

If the contemplation of the venerable monuments from national antiquity affords the particular attraction of the unusual and marvellous, it follows that we also like to listen to the same degree to the sounds that drift over us from the days of our ancestors.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Julius von Voß, 'Den 20ten December: Ariadne auf Naxos', *HSZ*, No. 154 (24 December 1805): 'Ihr [referring to the lead actress] Verdienst muß die eine Hälfte des Stücks (die nur noch den ältern Zuhörern, der Reminiszens halber, gefällt) übertragen.'

<sup>78</sup> 'Volkssagen, Märchen und Legenden, gesammelt von J. G. Büsching', *ZeW*, No. 162 (14 August 1812), 1289: 'Wenn uns die Beschauung der ehrwürdigen Denkmäler des vaterländischen Alterthums den eigenen Reiz des Ungewöhnlichen und Wunderbaren gewährt, so horchen wir eben so gern auf die Töne, die aus den Tagen unserer Väter zu uns herüber wehen.'

Here the use of language suggests that sonorous heritage, by its very ephemerality, might even have been more evocative for the writer than the solid physical presence of old objects. This ephemerality was recognised by the editor of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Friedrich Rochlitz, who in his plea for the commemoration of great composers, declared that no other artistic work ‘contains so much that is perishable within the imperishable, so much that is mortal within the immortal’, as the musical work.<sup>79</sup> Perhaps this temporal, perishable quality of music made it all the more effective as a representation of a lost past, forever ungraspable. It seems no coincidence, for example, that Georg Kellner’s 1800 description of a medieval castle is accompanied by music:

In the late evening of an autumn day, in the first quarter of October 1784, my aspect was the hill-top near Göttingen with the ruined wall of the Plesse castle. In the sepulchral silence of vast nature the adagio sounds of a flute faded away below in the village.<sup>80</sup>

The fading away of the flute music, which draws attention to its temporal/temporary nature, is here clearly juxtaposed with the ruined castle as a similar phenomenon, subject to the passing of time. Moreover, music was not just considered to parallel the ephemerality of history, but was increasingly presented in German Romantic literature as transportative, whether to the divine, as in the experiences of Wackenroder’s musical monk, Joseph Berglinger, or to the more abstract state of transcendence identified in Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony by E. T. A. Hoffmann – or to the past.<sup>81</sup> Such framing perhaps explains the power of a comic opera written in Vienna in 1792, six years after the death of the Prussian King, to conjure his spirit, or transport audiences to that past, in Berlin in 1805. Perhaps the Romantic aesthetics of music didn’t only affect the reception of music that fitted Romantic aesthetics.

\*This brings me back to the historiographical point that I made earlier – that we tend to be interested in beginnings rather than endings, and don’t pay sufficient attention to the spaces inbetween our (problematic) periodizations. Contrary to typical musicological narratives that have emphasized the growing discourse on German

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<sup>79</sup> Friedrich Rochlitz, ‘Monumente deutscher Tonkünstler’, *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, No. 24 (12 March 1800), 417. Translated in Alexander Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 19.

<sup>80</sup> Georg Christoph Kellner, ‘Ideen zu einer neuen Theorie der schönen Natur und Kunst überhaupt, und der Tonkunst insbesondere: ein Gedankenspiel’, *Deutsches Magazin*, Vol. 20 (1800), 258: ‘Am späten Abende eines herbstlichen Tages, im ersten Viertel des Oktobers 1784, war mein Standpunkt jene Berghöhe bei Göttingen, mit dem verfallenen Gemäuer von Schlosse Plesse. In der Grabesstille der weiten Natur verhallten die Adagiotöne einer Flöte unten im Dorfe.’ Kellner is referring to the Plesseburg a few kilometres to the north of Göttingen, on which stood the ruins of a medieval castle (restoration work started in 1821).

<sup>81</sup> Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, *Herzensergießungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* (Berlin: Johann Friedrich Unger, 1797); for E. T. A. Hoffmann review of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, see David Charlton (ed.), *E.T.A Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism*, trans. by Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 235-51.

opera and German musical heritage in this early period, my aim has been to show that the historical backward glance, the need for an identity narrative, was also expressed in the cultivation of Prussian musical heritage, and the nostalgic power of repertoires associated with Frederick the Great in Berlin— even Italian opera. This is rather different to earlier uses of Italian opera in nation-building projects: Catherine the Great, for example, promoted Italian and French opera in order to compete with other European capitals and raise the profile of Russia as a whole. But in early nineteenth-century Berlin, cosmopolitan Italian opera actually served to memorialise a local, Prussian ‘self’ via the idolised Frederick the Great. The twin styles model of music history, in which German and Italian repertoires functioned as polar opposites for Germans, as ‘self’ and ‘other’, has been deconstructed in so far as its discursive infrastructure has been analysed and demystified; here I actually show an alternative construction. It may have been less explicit, and only a transient phenomenon in Berlin, but it should encourage us to detach historical canon formation in the nineteenth-century from the national state-building context in which it has so often been exclusively viewed.

\*It *was* only a transient phenomenon in Berlin, as far as I can establish. The Italian vs German model – where Italian is the superficial, melody-driven foil to the harmonic profundity and contrapuntal complexity of the German – does become the dominant discourse in music criticism in North German states. And while music journalists were often representing the professional interests of local musicians, rather than the opinion of audiences, the popularity of the Italian operas of Rossini in the 1820s and 30s in Berlin— despite his persecution by German music critics such as A. B. Marx – tended to rest on his modernity, on his operas capturing the fast pace of the nineteenth century, rather than the qualities of simplicity, gentleness, or comprehensibility that one reviewer associated with the genre.<sup>83</sup> Even the more classical compositions of the new Kapellmeister, Gaspare Spontini, who arrived in Berlin in 1820, famous throughout Europe for his success in Napoleon’s Paris, seem not to have evoked nostalgia for the ancient régime. The alternative championing in some quarters of Carl Maria von Weber, and the success of Weber’s operas in Berlin suggest the increasing importance of a national operatic tradition; the xenophobia directed against Spontini in the press, meanwhile, stood in strong contrast to the prestige that the older generation of Italians had enjoyed only ten years earlier. The classical styling of Spontini’s operas – which were given in German – no longer seems to have resonated with an audience who appear to have moved on to the romantic, the magical and the

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<sup>83</sup> The one exception I’ve found to this is the comments of Carl Zelter, head of the Berlin Singakademie, in a letter to Goethe: in 1817, he describes the music of Rossini’s *Tancredi* as ‘charming, which means it is of the genuine Italian kind, *chiaro, puro e si sicuro* [clear, pure and assured]’. See Lorraine Byrne Bodley (ed), *Goethe and Zelter: Musical Dialogues* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 244. On A. B. Marx, see Sanna Pedersen, ‘A. B. Marx, Berlin Concert Life, and German National Identity’, *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1994), 87-107, and Celia Applegate’s critique, given above.

national.<sup>84</sup> Operatic alliances had started to be drawn along familiar ‘national’ boundaries, in other words – dictated by the nationality of composer.

\* Does this say something about nostalgic appeal relying on a certain distance from the object prompting it? That is to say, when the reviewer of Himmel’s *Die Sylphen* noted the inclination of audiences towards Italian repertoire, it was the *earlier* Italian repertoire. Even if the temporal distance from the operas of Cimarosa or Anfossi was not very great – nor comparable to the temporal distance of the King they evoked – they were not contemporary - nor were they composed in Berlin. At least those among the ‘old Italian masters’ identified in 1806 who were still alive not along belonged to a different generation from Spontini, but were composing elsewhere, at some geographical remove, if not temporal. The nostalgia for Italian opera and the monarch represented was linked to a parallel sense of loss for *both*: not just the death of the Frederick the Great, but the loss of status of the Italian opera and traditional representative culture in Berlin that he had established. In many ways, this is paradoxical, given the simultaneous presence of modernising, bourgeois attitudes among the populace towards the institution of the royal opera house.<sup>85</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm III was known and respected for his dislike and reduction of stuffy court ceremony and empty displays of wealth and had actually suggested merging the two opera houses at the turn of the century, partly in response to lively public debate about the wastefulness of operatic performances, and the inaccessibility of the repertoire. That the active, increasingly emancipated bourgeois musical public of Berlin, with their autonomous musical structures, would find a regression to the time of Frederick the Great remotely appealing – as evoked by the exclusive genres he patronised – therefore seems paradoxical. But the charm of this retreat perhaps suggests the acceptable unreality of the imaginative dimension, perhaps even the unreality of these repertoires, which were explicitly conceived as temporally distant. Once Spontini arrived in Berlin and composed for the present, his gestures to the ancien régime did not seem elegiac, but anachronistic.

\* This raises the thorny question of the political preconditions for nostalgia. It would be convenient to suggest casually some neat parallels eg:

a) pre 1815, monarch modernises cultural politics and reduces prestige of Italian opera = ‘people’ nostalgic for Italian opera

b) post 1815, monarch reinstates more traditional representative use of Italian opera = people not nostalgic for it.

OR

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<sup>84</sup> More detail about Spontini’s operas and his reception needed (eg. his *Agnes von Hohenlaufen*’. For classical, see Schinkel’s designs for *Die Vestalin*....

<sup>85</sup> See discussion of this issue in Matthias Röder, ‘Music, Politics, and the Public Sphere’, 210-245.

- a) pre 1815, state lacking strong leadership in time of political and military crisis = nostalgia for *ancien régime*-Frederick the Great-Italian opera constellation.
- b) post 1815, peace once more, 1819 Carlsbad decrees restricting freedom, absolutism all too present = people not nostalgic for cultural representation of *ancien régime* eg. Italian opera.

However, the idolisation of Frederick the Great continued, but his celebration, like that of C. H. Graun, could easily be framed within the context of German greatness, rather than dynastic. However much both Friedrich Wilhelm III and IV wanted to keep Frederick the Great within dynastic framing in on-going discussions of his monument, as Thomas Nipperdey as shown, when it came to the most explicit/official operatic commemoration of the monarch, the opera *Ein Feldlager in Schlesien* (1844) commissioned by Friedrich Wilhelm IV in from the new Kapellmeister, Giacomo Meyerbeer, who had replaced Spontini in 1842, it was composed as a *Singspiel*, the most indigenous form of German music theatre possible.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps the nostalgia for Frederick the Great was compatible with the growing German nationalism – in the way that nostalgia for the culture of the *ancien régime* was not. Perhaps this is what Svetlana Boym is referring to when she suggests that ‘when nostalgia turns political, romance is connected to nation building and native songs are purified. The official memory of the nation-state does not tolerate useless nostalgia, nostalgia for its own sake.’<sup>87</sup> Was it that the nostalgia for Italian opera could not be forward-directed?

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<sup>86</sup> As Dana Gooley has recently discussed, Meyerbeer ‘undermined’ the King’s desire for a German-authored opera by secretly commissioning the Parisian librettist, Eugène Scribe, and then passing his work off as that of Berliner Ludwig Rellstab. On Frederick the Great’s monument, see Thomas Nipperdey, ‘Nationalidee und Nationaldenkmal in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert’, *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 206, No. 3 (June, 1968),

<sup>87</sup> Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, p. 14.