

The Berlin Performances of Christoph Gluck's *Alceste* during the 1848 Revolution

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Throughout the 19th century, Berlin was central in promoting and cultivating Gluck's operas in Europe. During his visit to the city in 1854, Berlioz commended King Frederick William IV of Prussia for the "magnificent revivals of Gluck's masterpieces, which are no longer heard anywhere but in Berlin."ⁱ In 1840, the British writer Henry Chorley made a "pilgrimage" to Berlin in order to hear a performance of *Iphigenia in Tauris*.ⁱⁱ

Using the example of *Alceste*, I want to focus on the overall political context in which the revivals of Gluck's operas occurred and how the evolving political and cultural landscape of early 19th-century Berlin changed audiences' understanding of his works. As Christoph Henzel notes, the Berlin royal opera subsumed Gluck's operas into dynastic festivals that celebrated the birthdays, namedays, and wedding anniversaries of members of Prussia's ruling Hohenzollern family.ⁱⁱⁱ I will discuss, first, the 1817 performance of *Alceste* for Prince Frederick William IV's birthday; second, how the performance history of Gluck's operas in Berlin fits into Eric Hobsbawm's concept of "invented traditions"; and third, the performances of *Alceste* during King Frederick William IV's birthday celebration and the King and Queen's Silver Wedding Anniversary festival during the 1848 Revolution in Berlin. I will demonstrate in this paper that during the 1848 Revolution, the theater administration appropriated Gluck's *Alceste* for the counter-revolutionary movement, which desired a return to law and order and asserted the divine right of the King.

Despite Vienna's central role in Gluck's career, during the 19th century, it was Berlin opera houses that provided steady performances of Gluck's operatic works in the German-speaking area. These performances were often tied to dynastic celebrations of the Hohenzollerns of Prussia. (Slide) Table 1 shows that these celebrations ranged from a festival surrounding King Frederick William III's return from exile in 1809 to the centenary celebration of the opening of the royal opera house in 1842. Additionally, most of these events provided composers and poets with the opportunity to add their own music or poetry before, during, or after the performance of Gluck's operas. In so doing, they gave Gluck's works a nationalistic and patriotic hue, which helped place him in the canon of great German composers.

When we examine the reception history of Gluck's operas in Berlin during the 18th century, it seems odd that the city's royal opera co-opted his works for these dynastic events in the 19th century. Gluck appears to have had no interactions with members of the Hohenzollern family throughout his career and never visited Berlin. Frederick the Great hated the reform operas of Gluck and, according to Kapellmeister Johann Reichardt, the King used four-letter words when discussing Gluck's operas.^{iv} In

1796 and 1804, Gluck's Viennese *Alceste* made it to the royal opera, but found little success.^v

It was not until 1817, when the royal opera staged Gluck's Paris version of *Alceste* in German translation, that the work finally found a permanent place in the operatic repertoire. The reviewer for the *Berlinische Nachrichten* exclaimed: "For the first time we enjoyed this work of art, because we heard it in German, performed by German artists and, in general, in a later, perfected form."^{vi} The German artists who performed in the 1817 production included Heinrich Stümer as Admetus, Anna Milder-Hauptmann as Alcestis, and Heinrich Blume, who doubled as Hercules and the High Priest of Apollo. The director of the production was Bernhard Anselm Weber, whom local music critics often credited with establishing Gluck's permanent place in the city's operatic canon.

This successful revival of *Alceste* was a part of the birthday celebration of Prince Frederick William IV, who would become king in 1840. To begin the birthday festivities at the royal opera, the poet Baron de la Motte Fouqué wrote a panegyric prolog that claimed:

Your breast swells, I know, fresh
and patriotic for the son of the King,
for whom today blooming celebratory wreaths are woven together
from the rocky Silberberge to the Baltic,
from the banks of the Memel to the strands of the Rhine.

...

And "Brother! Brother!" sounds from every land
of the Prussian states, because we are united
in pious joy to our King's son.
A name [that] adorns both the son and the father, yes
the future and present advisors [of Prussia]—
Hail Frederick William! Hail the Prussian Throne!^{vii}

Fouqué's poem casts the entire production as a patriotic event that brings together all members of the Prussian nation. The plot of *Alceste* fits perfectly within this theme: King Admetus is dying, and the oracle of Apollo announces that the king will die if another does not die for him. As a devoted wife, Alcestis agrees to give up her life for her husband's. In honor of her sacrifice, Apollo rewards Alcestis by restoring her to life. The entire event at the Berlin royal opera asked for a similar devotion from the Prussian people toward their present and future kings.

The score of *Alceste* used for the 1817 production, as well as for the 1848 performances, can be found in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. The largest change to Gluck's original music was the insertion of lengthy ballets in the second and third acts (Slide). This slide provides an example of one of the dances from act 2. King Frederick William III adored ballet and, according to Eva Giloi, he would often hide in his theater box to watch the dancers.^{viii} Weber typically replaced the ballets in 18th-century operas with more expansive numbers. Within *Alceste*, the second-act ballets come at a moment of great irony: With their king restored to life, the people of Thessaly celebrate the selfless hero who sacrificed his or her life for that of Admetus, not realizing it was their beloved Queen. Gluck had already played up this ironic moment with bright choruses

and ballets. With Weber's interpolated music, not only do these ballets enhance the irony of the second act, but they also lengthen the people's celebration of Admetus, which, in turn, represents the Prussian people's celebration of their king and prince.

The artist and architect Karl Schinkel provided new set designs for the entrance of the underworld in act 3, scenes 3-6 (slide) and Apollo's Temple in act 1, scenes 3-7 (slide), which were used in performances of *Alceste* until the 1850s. In his design for act 1, Schinkel recreated a Greek temple on the stage of the royal opera house, which played into the Hohenzollerns' and Berliners' image of themselves as the inheritors of antiquity. Ulrike Harten points out that the perspective and gesture of Apollo mimic the 1797 interior designs by Schinkel's teacher, Friedrich Gilly, for the planned (though never realized) neoclassical monument to Frederick the Great (slide).^{ix}

During his reign, King Frederick William III spent significant funds on dynastic ceremonies and followed the princely tradition of using spectacle to enhance the state's international standing.^x Though Prussia was not a new kingdom after the Congress of Vienna, it acquired new territories and a stronger position on the European stage. This 1817 performance of *Alceste* and other dynastic events were manufactured traditions that, according to David Blackbourn, emphasized a fondness for an imaginary, stable past.^{xi} In *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm states that "'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices... which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past."^{xii} Prussian institutions appropriated the musical and artistic practices of other major European cultural centers and promoted them as an integral part of Prussian culture and a reflection of the Prussian monarchy. Especially during the reigns of Frederick William III and IV, Berlin experienced a neoclassical transformation in which the city's buildings and public spaces remade Berlin into the Athens of the North.

Gluck was not the only composer to be included in these dynastic events: the operas of Mozart, Beethoven, and others were also used for these royal celebrations. These events educated local audiences on what operatic works they should value and instilled a sense of pride in the city's position as the guardian of classical music. With Berlin opera houses and concert halls emphasizing the works of classical composers, many of the city's intellectuals felt that Berlin had replaced Vienna as the capital of German culture. Reviewing the 1836 performance of Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the critic Ludwig Rellstab stated:

In such times, we delight in being able to show off the state of music in Berlin to visiting strangers, since no other [city] in Germany can match [Berlin] with regard to the continuing cultivation of these great, incomparable works [by Mozart, Beethoven, and Gluck]. In Vienna, for example, Mozart has become no more than a name, and his works are starting to disappear in the same manner as his grave, whose location no one knows.^{xiii}

As Hobsbawm notes, invented traditions are meant to stand in "contrast between the constant change and innovation of the modern world and the attempt to structure at least some parts of social life within it as unchanging and invariant."^{xiv} To a certain

degree, when the royal opera staged *Alceste* for the king's birthday in October and then for the wedding-anniversary celebration in November, it was a political act by the king's supporters to help erase the progress made toward democratic reform in March. In the immediate response to the rioting, Frederick William IV allowed for primary elections of representatives to the National Assembly in Berlin and the Paulskirche Assembly in Frankfurt. What ensued was a constant struggle between the King and the National Assembly about the drafting of a constitution. One of the many points of contention in the constitutional debates was the king's right to rule by divine authority. By September 1848, the king put into place the steps he would take to stage a coup—all he needed was for the parliament to give him an excuse to call in the military and declare martial law.

In this very tense situation, the king celebrated his birthday on October 16th in Potsdam. According to the account in the *Vossische Zeitung*, the celebration reinforced the image of the king as a military leader: In the morning there was a 101-canonball salute, and in the afternoon there was a great celebration by the officer corps of the local garrison. Earlier that week, on October 14th, the royal playhouse staged Heinrich von Kleist's *Prince Frederick von Homburg*, and on October 15th the royal opera house staged *Alceste*—both in connection to the King's birthday celebration. At each performance, the actor Hermann Hendrichs read a poem that recast the play and the opera into a political allegory of the current social upheavals, which would eventually end in a united Germany under the Prussian throne.

In the introductory poem to *Alceste*, the poet claimed that Alcestis' descent into the "abyss" for her husband mirrors Prussia's fall into civil unrest, which the poet likens to the "Cerberus of Anarchy." "Hercules of Freedom" rescues Alcestis by destroying the monster and closing the door to Erebus. Alcestis is now reborn, and "concord and trust comes back to us. The gift of the sovereign is justice." With the restoration of the sovereign, the people's welfare grows as fruit only ripens on the tree of justice. The poem ends with a utopian vision:

I see Germany great and free and strong/ and united throughout the
hearts of its citizens;/ I see Prussia, not grudging, unenvied,/ which
is due to [the king], carrying Germany's flag,/ glorious and bold, in
the storm of danger/ and I hear a cry of jubilation, a million voices
strong, near and far,/ from the coast of the Baltic to the beautiful
Rhein,/ climbing toward heaven,/ which on this day prophetically
welcomes:/ the free king of a free people!^{xv}

In his review for the *Vossische Zeitung*, Rellstab wrote that the poem received thunderous applause from the crowd. The King, however, did not attend the performance.

On November 9th, as Wolfram Siemann relates, the king adjourned the National Assembly until November 27th and transferred it to Brandenburg.^{xvi} The Assembly declared his action unconstitutional and continued meeting in Berlin. The civil guard refused to disband the Assembly, which gave the king justification to call in the military. On November 10th, Cavalry General von Wrangel entered Berlin with 13,000 troops, declared martial law, and staged a coup against the new constitutional government. During the occupation, the king rewrote the constitution, curtailing many of his earlier reforms. While the military occupation of Berlin dismayed the liberal members of

society, it was a relief for the conservative members of the city's bourgeoisie, and also for shopkeepers, whose properties had been severally damaged during the riots. The writer Fanny Lewald wrote in her journal on November 18th that "The ladies are beginning to go to the boutiques again with their liveried footmen to buy articles of clothing and to arm themselves for the salons, which had been closed during the days of democracy."^{xvii}

In this context, the performance of *Alceste* on the 29th of November was not only a celebration of the royal couple's silver wedding anniversary but also a celebration of the end of the Revolution in Berlin and the return to peace and order. According to a commemorative book published the following year, the wedding anniversary showed that the people's care and love for the royal family had put an end to the anarchy of the Revolution.^{xviii} The entire wedding-anniversary celebration emphasized the paternal aspect of kingship, as young girls, widows, and orphans accompanied the King to various events in Potsdam and Berlin.

In a letter to the king's confidant Emil Ernst Illaire, dated the 24th of October 1848, the General Theater Director, Karl Theodor Küstner, wrote that he chose Gluck's *Alceste* for the wedding-anniversary celebration because of its glorification of conjugal love.^{xix} A month later, Küstner wrote to Illaire that the royal opera would do its part to garner sympathy for the King:

Since my last writing on the birthday celebrations, circumstances seem to have improved, as a greater degree of rationality seems to have taken over people's minds again, and thus one may indulge in the hope of seeing peace and order return. In such a state of affairs, I truly believe I may hope for a revival of the intention for a celebration as major as the upcoming silver wedding anniversary of Their Royal Majesties, and thus I consider it my noble duty to contribute to the fostering and preservation of these sympathies. Thus it is my intention on the 29th of this month, the day of the celebration, to perform *Alceste* by Gluck with an allegorical finale with music by Gluck...^{xx}

The allegorical finale Küstner mentioned was a ballet by Kapellmeister Wilhelm Taubert, in which he arranged and reorchestrated Gluck's dance music from the (slide) second act and (slide) third act of *Alceste*. Michel-François Hoguet was the choreographer. Taubert also added a (slide) twenty-measure introduction, and (slide) a closing fanfare that brings the work to a rousing close.

According to the review by Rellstab, *Alceste* was the perfect fit for such a celebration in that the myth of Alcestis beautifully glorifies marital love, devotion, and sacrifice. At one point during the opera, the audience, mostly made up of the military, applauded the High Priest's line "In him the highest is united, which a gracious god can give to a good people: her king, her father, her friend!" from act 1, scene 4.^{xxi} The military fully supported the King during the Revolution, and their enthusiastic response to the Priest's line hints at their desire to see the King restored as the unquestionable ruler of the Prussian people through divine authority.

In Rellstab's review, we also have an eyewitness account of Hoguet's choreography for the closing ballet and the audience's reaction:

[During Taubert's music,] Virgins performed a dance with silver garlands, which in itself expressed the meaning of the day. When the clouds in the background had parted, a large-scale allegorical painting came into view, for which the final scene decorations from [Meyerbeer's] *Ein Feldlager in Schlesien* were used, which depict a triumphal arch whose architectonic fields were decorated with tableaux vivants and through whose openings Castle Sanssouci could be seen. Above the central portico, the names of the royal couple radiated in Brillantschrift. In the tympanum and sides, allegorical forms and groups were to be seen: the genii of Prussia, Germany, and Peace, and other pictorial representations...

At the end of the piece, the audience sang the folksong "Heil Dir im Siegerkranz," which prompted Rellstab to write that:

(Slide) So universal, so devoted was the expression of conviction that we may gladly welcome it as a certain and highly significant testimony to the solid, intimate, and continuous bond between our royal family and the people, which, we hope, will not be torn by the solution to the great questions of our time, but will rather gain new nourishment and strength for the good of the fatherland and the flourishing of true freedom.^{xxii}

Rellstab's comment and the audience's reaction to the performance capture the desire to interpret *Alceste* as a story of the Prussian people's reunification with their king.

Reflecting on the Revolution of 1848, the democrat Victor von Unruh commented that "We live in transitional times. The old has not yet been overcome, the new is still being born."^{xxiii} In the 19th-century German reception of Gluck, the composer was appropriated by both the old and the new during this period of transition. For many composers and music critics of the Biedermeier period, Gluck represented a new way forward in art, and his music stood in direct contrast to the growing commercialization and philistinism of their contemporary society. E. T. A. Hoffmann's famous novella, *Ritter Gluck*, remade Gluck into a proto-romantic composer, whose music derived from a metaphysical plane of existence. In a review of *Alceste* from 1820, the writer for the *Berlinische Nachrichten* praised Gluck's music as the "polar opposite of the newer Italian kling klang type of music" (Klingklangformenwesen).^{xxiv} When the royal opera staged Gluck's *Orfeo* in 1818 and 1821, critics reminded readers that it was this opera that brought forth a revolution in music.

Yet Gluck's operas were also appropriated by the more conservative institutions of European society. The performances of *Alceste* in 1848 show us how easy it is to manipulate the meaning and character of Gluck's operas in order to meet certain political or cultural agendas. The Silver Wedding Anniversary Celebration was a culmination point in the counter-revolutionary movement, as vestiges of the Revolution all but

disappeared from Berlin. Six days after the celebration, on the 5th of December, the King dissolved the parliament and imposed his constitution, which asserted, among other things, his divine authority.

To close, I would like to point out one more festival that took place in Munich on 15 October 1848. It was for the unveiling of the monument to Bavaria's native son, Gluck. Kapellmeister Joseph Hartmann Stuntz composed a festival song which stated that Gluck "strove for the highest truth," and concluded with these sentiments:

And in the kingdom of eternal beauty
he came triumphantly,
with the heroic Grecian sons,
[he] drinks the German nectar of the gods;
For art firmly weaves around the races
a holy band,
and the furthestmost gladiators for truth
offer each other a brotherly hand.^{xxv}

Sadly, as the writer for the *New Illustrated Newspaper of Bavaria* reported, due to the recent civil unrest caused by the Revolution, the unveiling was not well attended.^{xxvi} Yet in the midst of all this social upheaval, a few people in Munich paused for a brief moment—not to honor a king or queen—but to honor a composer, whose works revolutionized the operatic world.

ⁱ Hector Berlioz, *Memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, member of the French Institute, including his travels in Italy, Germany, Russia, and England, 1803-1865, trans. and ed. David Cairns (New York, A. A. Knopf, 1969), 448.

ⁱⁱ Henry Fothergill Chorley, *Music and Manners in France and Germany: A Series of Traveling Sketches of Art and Society*, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1844).

ⁱⁱⁱ Christoph Henzel, "Von der preußischen Nationaloper zum wahren Musikdrama: Zur Gluckrezeption in Berlin im achtzehnten und neunzehnten Jahrhundert," in *Wien-Berlin: Stationen einer kulturellen Beziehung*, ed. H. Grimm, M. Hansen, L. Holtmeier (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2000), 54-63.

^{iv} Johann Friedrich Reichardt, "Bruchstücke aus seiner Autobiographie," *AmZ* 15 no. 37 (15 September 1813), 612. ("Schimpfworten")

^v Christoph Henzel, "Zwischen Hofoper und Nationaltheater: Aspekte der Gluckrezeption in Berlin um 1800," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 50 (1993): 201-16.

^{vi} Review of *Alceste* by Christoph Gluck (Hofoper, Berlin) *Berlinische Nachrichten*, 18 October 1817. "Zum erstenmales genossen wir dies Kunstwerk, denn wir hörten es

deutsch, durch deutsche Künstler dargestellt und überhaupt in einer späteren, vollendeten Gestalt.”

^{vii} Baron de la Motte Fouqué, “Rede gesprochen im Opernhause am 15ten Oktober,” Vossische Zeitung 17 October 1817.

In Eurem Busen, weiß ich, quillt es frisch
Und vaterländisch für den Königssohn,
Dem heut’ sich blühende Feierkränze flechten,
Vom fels’gen Silberberge bis zur Ostsee,
Vom Memelstrande bis zum Rheingestad.
Und ‘Brüder! Brüder!’ tönt’s aus allen Landen
Des Preußenstaats, weil wir vereint uns fanden
In frommer Lust an unsres Herrschers Sohn.
Ein Name schmückt den Sohn ja und den Vater,
Der Zukunft, und Gegenwart Berater, –
Hoch Friedrich Wilhelm! Hoch der Preußenthron!

^{viii} Eva Giloi, *Monarchy, Myth, and Material Culture in German 1750-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 104.

^{ix} Ulrike Harten and Helmut Börsch-Supan, *Die Bühnenentwürfe, Karl Schinkels Lebenswerk* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlage, 2000), 247.

^x Giloi, *Monarch, Myth, and Material Culture*, 104.

^{xi} David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 97.

^{xii} Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.

^{xiii} Ludwig Rellstab, Review of *Iphigenia in Tauris* by Christoph Gluck (Hofoper Berlin), *Vossische Zeitung*, 6 June 1836. “In solchen Zeit erfreut es uns anwesenden Fremden den Zustand der Musik in Berlin vorführen zu können, weil (leider) keine andere in Deutschland ihr in der Pflege dieser großen, unvergleichlichen Werke gleich kommt. In Wien z. B. ist Mozart nur noch ein Name, und seine Werke fangen an so zu verschwinden wie sein Grab, das niemand kennt.“

^{xiv} Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” 2.

^{xv} “Rede zur Feier des Geburtsfestes Sr. Majestät des Königs im Königl. Opernhaus, gesprochen von Herrn Heindricks,” was reprinted in the *Vossische Zeitung* on 18 October 1848, reprinted in Lothar Schirmer and Paul S. Ulrich, *Das Jahr 1848: Kultur in Berlin im Spiegel der “Vossische Zeitung”* in zwei Teilbänden, vol. 2 (Berlin: Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte e. V., 2008), 427-8. Ich sehe Deutschland groß und frei und stark,/ und einig doch durch seiner Bürger Herz;/ Ich sehe Preußen, neidlos, unbeneidet,/ das ihm gebührt, / das Banner Deutschlands tragen,/ Glorreich und kühn, im Wetter der Gefahr/ und millionenstimmig, nah und fern,/ vom Strand der Ostsee bis zum schönen Rhein,/ Den Jubelruf gen Himmel hör ich steigen,/ Der heut prophetisch diesen Tag begrüßt:/ Dem freien König eines freien Volks!

^{xvi} Wolfram Siemann, *The German Revolution of 1848-49*, trans. Christiane Banerji (London: Macmillan Press, 1998), 164-170.

^{xvii} Fanny Lewald, *A Year of Revolutions: Fanny Lewald's Recollections of 1848*, trans. and ed. Hanna Ballin Lewis (Providence and Oxford: Berghahan Books, 1997), 149.

^{xviii} Königin-Elisabeth-Vereins-Stiftung, *Gedenkbuch an die silberne Jubel-Hochzeitsfeier Ihrer Königlichen Majestäten Friedrich Wilhelm IV. und Elisabeth Ludovika von Preußen zu Potsdam am 29. November 1848* (Berlin: Carl Schultze, 1849).

^{xix} Karl Theodor Küstner, Berlin, to Emil Ernst Illaire, Berlin 24 October 1848, copied in an unknown hand, signed by Küstner, in *Personal und Angelegenheiten der Königlichen Schauspiel (I. HA. Rep. 89 Nr. 21111 1848-1849)*, in *Das Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz*. "In Gluck's ‚Alceste,‘ worin die Gattenliebe verherrlicht, oder in der ‚Iphigenia in Tauris,‘ die gleichfalls als ein Muster hoher Frauentugend darstellt, dürften für den Festtag die reichsten Beziehungen zu finden sein."

^{xx} Karl Theodor Küstner, Berlin, to Emil Ernst Illaire, Berlin 24 November 1848, copied in an unknown hand, signed by Küstner, in *ibid.* „Seit meinem letzten Schreiben, die Geburtstagsfeier betreffend, haben sich scheinbar die Verhältnisse günstiger gestaltet, denn ein größeres Maaß von Besonnenheit scheint sich der Gemüther der Menschen wieder bemächtigen zu wollen, so daß man sich wohl der Hoffnung hingeben kann, Ruhe und Ordnung wieder zurückkehren zu sehen. Daß in einem solchen Zustande der Dinge auch der Sinn für ein so hohes Fest, wie das bevorstehende der silbernen Hochzeit Ihrer Majestäten, sich neu beleben wird, glaube ich zuverlässig hoffen zu können, und es erscheint daher gewissermaßen als eine theure Pflicht dazu beizutragen, diese Sympatien zu fördern und zu erhalten. Es liegt daher in meiner Absicht, am 29sten d. Mts. , als dem Tage der Feier, die Oper : ‚Alceste‘, von Gluck mit einem allegorischem Schluß mit Musik von Gluck zu geben...“

^{xxi} "In ihm ist das Höchste vereint./ Was ein huldreicher Gott kann guten Völkern geben:/ Ihr König, ihr Vater, ihr Freund!" Ludwig Rellstab, *Review of Alceste* by Christoph Gluck (Hofoper, Berlin) *Vossische Zeitung* 1 December 1848, reprinted in Schirmer and Ulrich, *Das Jahr 1848*, 486. Full review: "Ein edleres Kunstwerk, und ein in seiner dichterischen Beziehung geeigneteres, als Gluck's Alceste, konnte zur Feier des silbernen Hochzeitsfestes JJ. MM. des Königs und der Königin nicht ausgewählt werden. Ein Mythos, welcher die eheliche Liebe, Treue, und Aufopferung so schön verherrlicht, und der in Gluck's unsterblichen Tönen seine musikalische Verklärung gefunden hat, ist in dem ganzen weiten Reich der musikalisch-dramatischen Erzeugnisse, unstreitig dasjenige, was in der innigsten Verwandtschaft zu den Empfindungen steht, die der Tag wecken mußte. ...Jene, durch das Ereigniß erhöhte Theilnahme, deren wir gedachten, lebte eben so in den Hörern, wie in den Darstellern. Sie gab sich schon während der Vorstellung kund, wo die Worte des Priesters: "Ihr König und ihr Freund!" mit lautem Beifall begrüßt wurden."

^{xxii} *Ibid.* "Zur vollen Geltung aber kam diese Stimmung am Schluß der Oper, der zur Feier des Tages einen allegorischen Zusatz erhalten hatte. Den Uebergang zu demselben bildete ein aus den minder bekannten Balletstücken zur Alceste zusammengesetztes, durch Hrn. Kapellmeister Taubert eingerichtetes und instrumentirtes Ballet, in dem

Jungfrauen mit silbernen Kränzen einen Tanz ausführten, der die Bedeutung des Tages schon bezeichnete. Als sich darauf der Wolken-Hintergrund getheilt hatte, erblickte man ein großes allegorisches Gemälde, zu dem die Schlußdekoration aus dem Feldlager in Schlesien benutzt war, welche einen Triumphbogen darstellt, dessen architektonische Felder mit lebenden Bildern geschmückt sind, und durch dessen offene Räume man das Schloß Sanssouci erblickt. Ueber dem mittleren Porticus strahlten in Brillantschrift die Namenszüge des Königlichen Paares. In den Giebel- und Seitenfeldern sah man allegorische Gestalten und Gruppen, die Genien Preußens, Deutschlands, des Friedens, und andere bildliche Darstellungen, die in den wenigen Augenblicken, welche der Betrachtung, vergönnt waren, nur im schönen Gesamt-Eindruck aufgefaßt, im Einzelnen kaum zur bewußten Anschauung gebracht werden konnten. – Ein stürmischer Ausdruck, wie er nur aus der innersten Theilnahme hervorzugehen vermochte, erfüllte das Haus, und in allgemeinem Chorgesange erschallte das Volkslied “Heil Dir in Siegerkranz!” Die Gesinnung that sich so allgemein, so hingeeben kund, daß wir sie mit Freuden als ein sicheres, hochbedeutungsvolles Zeugniß begrüßen dürfen, welches ein festes inniges Band zwischen unserm Königshause und dem Volk fort und fort besteht, das, so hoffen wir, durch die Lösung der großen Zeitfragen nicht zerrissen werden, sondern zum Heile des Vaterlandes, zum Gedeihen der wahren Freiheit, neue Kräftigung und Erstarkung gewinnen soll.“

^{xxiii} Victor von Unruh, *Erfahrungen aus dem letzten drei Jahren* (Magdeburg, 1851), 95, quoted in Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century*, 137.

^{xxiv} Review of *Alceste* (Hofoper, Berlin), *Berlinische Nachrichten* 17 February 1820.

^{xxv} “Dem deutschen Tondichter Gluck. Geb. den 4. Juli 1714 in der Oberpfalz, gest. den 17. Nov. 1787 zu Wien, Festgesang bei der Enthüllungs-Feier sei[n] es Denkmals zu München den 15. Oktober 1848.” The text for Stuntz’s *Festgesang* has been made available through the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek website at <http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0005/bsb00059154/images/index.html> <accessed 9 September 2011>.

Und im Reich des ewig Schönen
Zog er triumphirend ein,
Mit den griech’schen Heldensöhnen
Trinkt der deutsche Götterwein;
Denn es webt um die Geschlechter
Fest die Kunst ein heilig Band,
Und der Wahrheit fernste Fechter
Reichen sich die Bruderhand.

^{xxvi} “Das Glucksdenkmal zu München,” *Neue-Illustrirte Zeitschrift für Bayern* 5, no.1 (1849): 5.