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»O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!«

First World War Beethoven Reception as Precedent for the Nazi ›Cult of Art‹

In his book on aesthetics and Nazi politics, translated into English as *The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany*, Eric Michaud, Director of Studies at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, wrote that National Socialist attention to the arts was intended »to present the broken [German] Volk with an image of its ›eternal Geist‹ and to hold up to it a mirror capable of restoring to it the strength to love itself.«<sup>1</sup> Thus did references to the History of Western Humanities – constructed according to fairly longstanding »Germanic« points of view about *Kultur* – have a formative function in the Nazi program. Through them, Michaud wrote, the party attempted to fabricate an »ideal image« of the Volk intended to constitute the »model and guide capable of propelling it toward its own salvation.«<sup>2</sup> Cultural history, then – perceived in these politicized terms as a propaganda tool – was a literal remedy for the post First World War symptoms of supposed German decline that Nazis detested.

I came upon these, among other ideas of Michaud, when preparing the conceptual framework for my recent book, *Inhumanities: Nazi Interpretations of Western Culture*.<sup>3</sup> The gist of these interpretive points will be familiar to readers of George L. Mosse, whom Michaud should have cited more vigorously. However, I find that Michaud put some of the key concepts of the History of Nazi Culture more strongly than I have read elsewhere, and also that they resonate with much of the material I presented in my latest book, as well as with my previous work about Beethoven reception in German politics.<sup>4</sup> Let me outline a few of Michaud’s more specific points about Nazi culture.

Again, his primary point was that Nazi cultural politicians strove to increase German self-confidence by constructing an idealized self-image based on the supposed German place in Western cultural traditions. Or, in his words, »to

make the genius of the race visible to that race [and thereby] restore its faith in itself by making it conscious of its historic mission.«<sup>5</sup> A second major concept Michaud posited was that of the »Führer as Artist«. Michaud identified Hitler’s public persona as a culmination of the Romantic exaltation of the artist as spiri- tual leader. In his words:

Hitler presented himself not only as a »man of the people« and a soldier with frontline experience, but also and above all as a man whose artistic experience constituted the best guarantee of his ability to mediate the Volk Spirit and turn it in to the »perfect Third Reich«. <sup>6</sup>

Clearly also, Michaud contended, the construction of the Ideal simultaneously constituted the construction of the Other, with all that this opposition implied. Again, in his words: »the appearance of Hitler always entailed, as its corollary, the progressive disappearance of all enemies who were rejected by the Volk Commu- nity.«<sup>7</sup> Returning to the supposedly positive implications of these cultural-political constructs, Michaud then contended that Nazi insistence that followers revere past creative leaders was much more about the present and future of the German- becoming- Nazi nation, than it was about the past. As Michaud wrote, »the task of each work of art« (or interpretation thereof) was not just to represent, but »to prepare for the realization of the ideal Reich«. <sup>8</sup> Finally, according to Michaud, the culmination of »Nazi culture« was – with catastrophic consequences – the Second World War itself. Michaud identified the fundamentally military implications of the Nazi mobilization of culture for party and national purposes with reference to Goebbels’ statements on the matter: Goebbels conflated »the struggle of the soldier, that of the worker, and that of ›the creator of culture‹«. Art, the arch-Nazi propagandist pontificated, »is not a distraction for times of peace; rather, it too is a spiritual and trenchant weapon for war.«<sup>9</sup>

Having set forth these ideas, Michaud’s book was generally well received, but somewhat criticized for a lack of grounding in primary source research.<sup>10</sup> While I found his examples to be fresh and well-chosen, I would like to take this opportunity to compare some of his basic points with the

detailed information my books have revealed about Nazi cultural politics, especially as manifested in the arts coverage of the main Nazi newspaper, the *Völkischer Beobachter*. For the purposes of this article, I will concentrate on examples drawn from the National Socialist invocations of Ludwig van Beethoven. This focus on Nazi *Musikpolitik* remains fully legitimate, because music reception was absolutely central to the History of Kultur as promulgated in the Nazi newspaper.<sup>11</sup> Throughout the pages of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, music was unquestionably deemed »The Most German of Arts«. Moreover, Beethoven in particular was revered in Nazi cultural

politics as among the most important of German creators. Again, I do not feel that Michaud presented these points without sufficient evidence. However, it will be a useful exercise to assess his points with reference to examples of the Nazi reception of Beethoven as representative of these concepts in general.

Yet, in doing so, one further fundamental element needs to be explored and underscored. Despite his important assessments about Nazi cultural propaganda as a whole, Michaud seems to have missed an all-important point. Almost every one of the thematic components he identifies as central to Nazi culture had antecedents in nationalistic self-representations that existed prior to the rise of Hitler and Nazism, and, most evidently, had powerful precedents within German cultural responses to the First World War.

Hitler himself was very explicit about the significance of wartime models for his methods, particularly in his discussions of »war propaganda« in the pages of *Mein Kampf*. Some of the most famous and illuminating passages in Hitler's so-called autobiography are summaries of the lessons he learned from the propaganda efforts of Germany and its First World War enemies. In his words, »It was not until the War that it became evident what immense results could be obtained by a correct application of propaganda.« Specifically, it was from primarily First World War examples that Hitler claimed to have learned the »art of propaganda«, including the premises that »all effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans« and that »its task is to serve our own right, always and unflinchingly«, among others.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, in addition to assessing Michaud's thematic assessments of Nazi culture as manifested in examples of Beethoven reception, this article will also compare National Socialist references with previous German wartime invocations of the composer in order to accentuate the importance of First World War political culture and its impact on subsequent discourses in German society, including Nazi cultural politics.

Regarding the first of these themes, and indeed Michaud's pivotal point – that Nazi cultural politics intended to increase German self-confidence via interpretations of the German place in Western cultural traditions – it is clear that this truly was the message of virtually every *Völkischer Beobachter* article devoted to the arts. All of the paper's cultural-historical commemorations contributed to this effort to bolster faith in the creative Volk community. This was indeed their main function. And this is powerfully evident in the newspaper's relentless insistence on, and never-ending celebration of, the perceived notion that all the great composers of the Western music tradition were »German« – or alternatively,

»Germanic«, »Aryan«, or »Nordic«.

Perhaps most intensively, the Nazi Party injected race issues into its Beethoven reception.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, dictates of racial anthropology nearly nullified the composer's value as a party hero. While portraits and observations of Beethoven by his

contemporaries differ tremendously, all reveal that he had few of the physical characteristics associated with Aryan stereotypes.<sup>14</sup> Noticing this, a handful of pseudoscientists concluded that Beethoven was of impure blood.<sup>15</sup> To counter notions that the composer might have been of mixed racial stock, the main Nazi newspaper vouched for his purity in articles produced to cleanse Beethoven of supposed physical flaws. The *Völkischer Beobachter* denounced racial scholars who had raised questions about Beethoven's genetic purity: »Dr. Hans Günther errs decidedly« when he »characterizes Beethoven as predominantly Eastern.«<sup>16</sup> Not only by birth, but by virtue of

his whole essence, Ludwig van Beethoven was a »pureblooded German,« the paper concluded: he was the »spiritual possession of all Aryan mankind.«<sup>17</sup> Ultimately, as Michaud articulated about Nazi cultural propaganda in general, the *Völkischer Beobachter* extolled Beethoven's works as exemplifying the greatness of Germanic art – and the German race itself. In his music the »soul of the struggle-tormented, northern German« came to expression.<sup>18</sup> According to the paper, its forceful spirit proved the »world-wide validity of the spiritual work and the soulful nobility that the greatest sons of the German nation were capable of.«<sup>19</sup>

During the First World War, the specific »eugenic« issues of Beethoven's origins did not arise, however clear precedents emphasized association of the composer with »Germanness« broadly defined as a way of bolstering a sense of German identity as the nation went to battle. Activists such as Houston Stewart Chamberlain were adamant in counting Beethoven among the »true« poets and thinkers of Germany who openly expressed their Germanness and the desire to see their nation become powerful,<sup>20</sup> and even a liberal newspaper such as the *Berliner Tageblatt* favored using Beethoven's music to inspire wartime patriotism. Published only twenty days after war was declared, a *Berliner Tageblatt* essay describing »Wie Beethoven Krieg und Sieg besang« called for use of Beethoven's music in motivational pageantry. This article opened by insisting that Beethoven had been strongly influenced by the nationalistic atmosphere of his time: as the only classical composer to witness »the glorious emergence of the German Volk«, the *Berliner Tageblatt* opined, Beethoven always felt himself as one with it.<sup>21</sup>

The *Zeitung der 10. Armee* also integrated reference to Beethoven as an icon of Germanness into its bellicose rhetoric. »As a »monstrous time broke upon Germans,« as a »terrible world storm from East and West raged on German lands,« and when »every individual was forced to fulfill enormous duties«, this military publication considered it proper to contemplate the music of Beethoven as the

»greatest expression of the time«. By convincing Germans to think of music such as the Third Symphony – referred to as the *Heldensymphonie* instead of the *Eroica*

– as evincing violence, blood, conflict, and fighting, the world war would remove the »last restrictions on a full understanding of Beethoven's originality: he lives

in our time as the strongest expression of pure Germanness.«<sup>22</sup> Letters of at least one soldier indicate that these views of Beethoven as embodying the German-ness cementing the unified war effort did take hold during the conflict. Walther Harich, writer and literature scholar who served at both the western and eastern fronts during the war, used references to the composer and the German nature they ostensibly shared when conceptualizing the nation for which so many were sacrificing themselves: When does the notion of the nation »come to life, erupt, and drive roots into our innermost soul?« It was »always alive«, he answered, in the »titanic force of Beethoven.«<sup>23</sup>

Returning to Michaud: in his words, »A declared aim to turn German art into a promise of German happiness [...] became a rallying cry for all the nationalists of both the Second and the Third Reich.« Hitler could

not fail to win their support when he wrote [in *Mein Kampf*]: »How many people are aware of the infinite number of separate memories of the greatness of our natural Fatherland in all the fields of cultural and artistic life?«<sup>24</sup>

It is clear that *Völkischer Beobachter* coverage of the Western music tradition, including Beethoven, insisted that this was indeed the greatest field of German cultural prowess. Moreover, it is also clear that a similar strategy of employing Beethoven to inspire a sense of common Germanness had been followed by First World propagandists.

Michaud's second major theme, the concept of the Führer-Artist, ultimately leads to an even more immediate association between creators and Nazi leadership. As he put it, more completely, »the fact that the Führer [...] was also called the artist of all artists [...] placed him immediately

at the heart of the Western tradition that assigned to art that most decisive of functions.«<sup>25</sup> In the case of music reception in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the correlate to Michaud's assertions about Hitler as Führer-Artist is the paper's constant insistence that great creators, including writers, artists, and composers, were simultaneously political – each, in their own way, Artist-Führer. Indeed, my research shows that Nazi propagandists rigorously promoted the view that great creators, including Beethoven, were deeply driven by political – especially patriotic and nationalistic – impulses; at least as much as by artistic drive.

Some selective political biography was necessary in the case of Beethoven on the part of Nazi cultural politicians, for the composer's inconsistent politics were problematic for the Party. Though he could, with some reservations, be counted as a member of the German race, Beethoven had exhibited some enthusiasm about the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon. Party operatives therefore countered that although Beethoven had been exposed to French revolutionary ideals,

he was, as Ludwig Schiedermaier wrote, always a Rhinelander at heart.<sup>26</sup> When it came to defending his nation against French rule, the *Völkischer Beobachter* held, Beethoven had always sided with Germany; and though he »temporarily suffered from revolutionary fever,« his »heart remained with his German Heimat.«<sup>27</sup>

Moreover, the Nazi paper also rejected any suggestion that Beethoven had been a supporter of modern democratic ideals, asserting instead that he recognized the need for autocratic leadership and would have seconded their call for the strong hand of a Führer. The *Völkischer Beobachter* stipulated that Beethoven had no absolute hatred of aristocrats, then went on to point out that the composer had been enthralled with Napoleon's charisma and domineering tactics: what made him enthusiastic about Bonaparte was that the Corsican had used strong-armed tactics to transform the »chaos of the gruesome revolution into state order«. Ultimately, the paper argued, Beethoven feared »anarchical uprising«, thus recognizing that authoritarian rule »had its attractions«. <sup>28</sup> Thus did Nazi cultural propaganda insist, as Michaud observed in general, that Beethoven could be perceived as an Artist-Führer himself, or alternatively, as politically desirous of order imposed by a strong Führer-Artist.

During the First World War, similar notions of Beethoven's politics had also been posited. Not unexpectedly, Houston Stewart Chamberlain highlighted the fact that Beethoven had expressed what could be interpreted as elitist notions of political authority. »It must certainly be noted«, wrote Chamberlain, »when such a man recognizes that »power is the morality of persons who distinguish themselves before others.« Beethoven, Chamberlain went on, wanted peace, but he knew that it could only be enforced by the supremacy of Germany.<sup>29</sup> *Der Reichsbote* tried, furthermore, to convince contemporary artists to be as nationalistic as Beethoven had supposedly been. Like him, the conservative journal enjoined, they should participate in the war through their art: the artistic greats of the present time were far less »nationally disposed« than Beethoven had been; for instance, they did not consider it a disgrace to play for French, English, or Russian guests as he did. A little more »Germanic feeling« in the art world, *Der Reichsbote* insisted, would not hurt.<sup>30</sup>

Referring to Beethoven as a »German prince in the realm of tones« who wound a »spiritual band« around all Germans, the *Tägliche Rundschau* – outlet of the Pan German League – reprinted a poem that directly associated Beethoven with German invasion of France:

In this moment, when our Germany Raises itself over all other lands,  
Should we not honor a man  
Who achieved in art that which  
Heroes of war and rulers of state Only now carry forth:  
He led his Fatherland to victory.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, further proof that a politicized interpretation of Beethoven, and his Ninth Symphony in particular, was prominent during the First World War is found in a remarkable source from

1918. Just fourteen days before hostilities ceased, the *Deutsche Militär-Musiker-Zeitung* proposed that Beethoven's Ninth Symphony be used in advertising to exhort people to contribute to the ninth »war loan« (Kriegsanleihe). An article entitled »Soll die ›Neunte‹ für die ›9.‹ werben?« presented the results of a survey of leading persons in the German music world. This survey had asked if such a use of Beethoven's music would be proper. The responses confirm that a patriotic interpretation of Beethoven was firmly entrenched in wartime German discourse. The composer Engelbert Humperdinck answered: »Why not? Why not use all nine symphonies, one after another?« The conductor Siegfried Ochs wrote: »This is more than a question of the Ninth, or of art«, it is a matter of the »existence or nonexistence of our Fatherland«. The Ninth »can and must advertise for the ninth war loan.« Hugo Bock, head of the Bote and Bock music publishing house, contributed the following verse along the same vein:

The »Ninth« with its tones of violence  
Has often raised our hearts.

The young and old, the weak and powerful,  
Have always listened, enthralled.

Now we must consider this highest pleasure

Which the most German tone-master created for us  
In terms of the Fatherland.

Let your thoughts become absorbed  
With the powerful symphony of battle

Now being waged by Hindenburg and Ludendorff.<sup>32</sup>

Music-historical material that appeared in Nazi propaganda, as most strongly evinced in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, resounded with the Führer-Artist/Artist-Führer theme that Michaud identified throughout National Socialist cultural politics: at a time »when the world came to be deserted by the certainty of salvation,«<sup>33</sup> Nazi *Kulturpolitik* would »render visible the protector god who would make it possible for the body of the German race to live eternally.«<sup>34</sup> Hitler was the primary manifestation of this creative leader, but he came, according to this view, at the head of a long line of notable predecessors – including Beethoven. But here we see that such associations between Beethoven and strong, even aggressive

and militaristic leadership had already been a common feature of First World War propaganda within Germany.

This leads to Michaud's point about the simultaneous construction of the

»opponent« in contrast to the Germanic ideal posited in Nazi culture. In his terms,

»correlatively, Nazism deployed [...] violence [...] against all those who were likely to place in doubt that the lost object could be resurrected in the race and in art.« National Socialist terror was thus employed against »all those who, in reality as well as in Nazi imaginary representations, opposed its [world view].«<sup>35</sup> Ultimately, according to Michaud, it was this cultural thrust that led to the policies of both military aggression and, ultimately, racial extermination.

In the case of Beethoven (it is a relief to report) the Nazi propaganda machine, including the *Völkischer Beobachter*, was not able to draw upon evidence of anti-Semitic feelings. However, Nazi cultural propagandists did work to present Beethoven as staunchly and aggressively anti-French, despite many indications

– at various points in his life – to the contrary. Selective substantiation of these assertions was offered in various forms. One essay in the *Völkischer Beobachter* reviewed the story of the Grätz Castle incident, when Beethoven fled the country home of Prince Lichnowsky after refusing to perform on the piano for guests, included among which were several French officers. Significantly titled »Der Patriot«, the Nazi version retold the legend without mentioning the standard explanation of Beethoven's anger on this occasion – that his artistic pride had been affronted. Instead, the paper implied that he had acted on nationalistic impulse alone.<sup>36</sup> Beethoven »stood firm at Grätz«, the *Völkischer Beobachter* declared, because »his patriotic feeling bristled violently against performing his art for the enemy of his Volk.«<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, in articles like »Wörter Beethovens«, National Socialist journalists pulled citations out of context – including Beethoven’s jest that power was his morality and his angry wish that he could meet Napoleon on the battlefield – and presented them as evidence that the composer had been a fierce enemy of the French.<sup>38</sup> Carefully selected stories, essays, and quotations suited Nazi use of Beethoven to fuel bitterness against the enemy to the West. The paper warned that all Germans had to fight along with the National Socialists to protect Beethoven from the French: »Woe if his spirit was ever stolen, since that would mean ultimate defeat – because his spirit was German spirit.«<sup>39</sup>

But, of course, none of this anti-French bile was new to Beethoven reception, or by any means an innovation of the Nazi Party. For instance, an almost verbatim version of these themes was produced in wartime Germany by *Der Reichsbote*, under the telling title »Ein musikalischer Franzosenfeind«. Published six weeks after the start of the war, this essay also conscripted Beethoven for the operation in the West. After briefly reviewing the story of Beethoven’s flight from Grätz

Castle, his refusal to perform before French officers, and his statement that he would have defeated Napoleon had he known the art of war, the patriotic tract brusquely concluded that the great works of a Beethoven are »doubly worthy of our attention in these times«, because Beethoven was »one of the fiercest haters of the French who ever lived«. <sup>40</sup>

Clearly, Michaud’s point in this case was directed mainly toward the construction of the racial »other« in cultural terms, as the first step toward eliminationist anti-Semitism. Here we see a less heinous strain of nationalistic propaganda that posited the creative tradition of Germany – embodied in Beethoven and his image – as intractably in opposition to the perennial enemy to the West, during the First World War as well as in the Nazi era. While confirming that *Völkischer Beobachter* cultural criticism formulated the image of the »other« – whether racial or national – through music-historical references, in keeping with Michaud’s assertions, these quotes return us to what was fundamentally »positive« about National Socialist *Kulturpolitik*, that is, (again Michaud) its endeavor to »lead every individual back to the natural reflex of love for his or her own racial [or national] type and direct them toward a redemptive future.« Above all, Michaud postulated that National Socialist invocations of past creative leaders were intended as symbolic indications of what the New Germany would become, not just validations of present Nazi policies and ideas with references to the past. In his words, »the awakening into the myth« was generally conceived as a »recapitulation of the past directed toward the future.« To support this, Michaud cited Baldur von Schirach’s declaration that

The perfect artists Michelangelo and Rembrandt, and Beethoven and Goethe, do not represent an appeal to return to the past, but show us the future that is ours and to which we belong.<sup>41</sup>

As Michaud implies, von Schirach’s line says it very succinctly: the *Völkischer Beobachter* cultural section was clearly designed for the same reasons, and throughout its music coverage we can find examples of direct associations of composers and their works with the Nazi party and its plans for the future – including and especially Beethoven.

While cultural and political conflicts raged in Weimar Germany, the editor-in-chief of the Nazi paper published a front-page editorial marking the one-hundredth anniversary of Ludwig van Beethoven’s death on March 26, 1927. In it, Alfred Rosenberg declared that during the present epoch of »spiritual battle«, followers of Adolf Hitler could consider Beethoven’s music a powerful source of inspiration. Whoever understood the spirit of the National Socialist movement, Rosenberg claimed, knew that impulses which Beethoven embodied »in

the highest degree« lived in all its members – namely, the desire to »storm over the ruins of a crumbling world«, »the will to »reshape the world«, and the sense of joy that comes from »overcoming passionate sorrow«. When Nazis achieved victory in Germany and across Europe, Rosenberg asserted, they would enjoy

»heart-warming consciousness« that »the German Beethoven towered over all the peoples of the

West«. They would then remember that Beethoven had passed on to National Socialists the »will of German creation«. Living in the *Eroica* of the German Volk, Rosenberg wrote, Nazis wanted to make use of this willpower.<sup>42</sup>

Rosenberg went on to remind all Germans that no memorial day could release more profound powers in German life as could one honoring the death of this composer. Among the great manifestations of the »Germanic West«, the self-styled Nazi philosopher went on, two human types stood out. The first, embodied by Leonardo, Descartes, Kant, Leibniz, and Goethe, approached the secrets of life by »surrounding them like a fortress and trying to conquer it from all sides with a universal strategy«. The other »Germanic-Western type« – personified by Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Schopenhauer, and Wagner – preferred to pursue the secrets of existence with »double the energy, but from only one side: they wanted to destroy the fortress and reveal its inner contents by frontal assault.«

Beethoven belonged to the second type, said Rosenberg, since he »grabbed fate by the throat«. Consequently his »Dämonie« was more relevant in eras of

»mythical-political struggle« like the present than in times of »contemplative-peaceful existence«. In the Weimar epoch, old values were disintegrating and new ones were being born, and this required a »one-sided, impulsive strategy« like the composer's. Naturally, he added, participants in the National Socialist movement would derive the most from this store of strength.<sup>43</sup> Thus did the *Völkischer Beobachter* and its then heralded editor-in-chief assert, just as Michaud observed about Nazi cultural politics in general, that Beethovenian spirit was not just a factor of German history, but a force of the past full of indications about the possibilities of the future.<sup>44</sup>

Yet again, this forward-looking impulse of Nazi propaganda had clear analogies in the culture of the Great War. Naturally, the »future« toward which most First World War propaganda was oriented was somewhat more restricted to the hoped-for end of the war, in victory for Germany. But, consistently throughout wartime references to Beethoven and his music, ran implications that they symbolized the certainty of a positive outcome for the nation. For instance, the *Berliner Tageblatt* implied that it was only because of his deafness that Beethoven did not himself take up a weapon and participate in battle against Napoleon. Nevertheless, knowing that soldiers in the field required music as much as they needed nourishment and sleep, Beethoven »gave brave fighters the best he had to give: his art«. The military marches Beethoven composed for this patriotic purpose, not

being his finest technical work, were usually neglected by scholars and performers. As enemies threatened Germany, however, the *Berliner Tageblatt* believed that Beethoven's martial songs had to be awakened from their »deep slumber«. It proposed mass distribution of Beethoven scores to mustering soldiers, perhaps from the air. Hundreds of thousands of copies of songs by Beethoven, the paper strategized, should be distributed to the German and Austrian armies. From beyond the grave, Beethoven would then be »with his courageous compatriots«. <sup>45</sup> Working to revive them, the paper described a number of pieces Beethoven had composed in response to the Napoleonic invasion and the Wars of Liberation, including *Wellingtons Sieg*, the *Chor auf die verbündeten Fürsten*, and *Der glorreiche Augenblick*. Most prominent among these war tunes, in this opinion, were the Third and Seventh symphonies: in the »Funeral March« of the former once could sense Horace's fateful notion, *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*; the Seventh, it argued, was prophetically written to commemorate the victory of the forces ranged against France (which did not occur until three years after the first performance of the symphony). In addition, the *Berliner Tageblatt* put much effort into reinvigorating another song of victory that Beethoven had, in the composer's words, »laid on the altar of his love for the Fatherland«. Referring to the 1813 defeat of France at Leipzig, Beethoven's incidental music for the Singspiel *Die Ehrenpforten*, WoO 97, included the triumphant line: »Es ist vollbracht, es ist vollbracht!« The paper

»hoped and prayed« that Germans would not have to wait until 1915 to be able to sing this again, that they could hold a »secular celebration« of victory before the end of 1914.<sup>46</sup> This wish – expressed within the *Berliner Tageblatt's* analysis of Beethoven's music – exemplifies the

optimistic attitudes that prevailed in the generation of 1914 that went to war expecting to get home by Christmas.

Much later in the conflict that certainly did not end so quickly, on Beethoven's one hundred thirty-seventh birthday in 1917, the *Tägliche Rundschau* pressed for celebrations to mark the occasion even during the present battle. In time of war, the paper argued, it was natural to »lovingly and appreciatively honor« Beethoven, since his compositions were so »warlike«. They had helped to defeat France in 1814 and 1870, the paper recalled, as well as bring about the process of German unification; perhaps they would have the same magic effect on the present struggle.

While highlighting the Nazi obsession with the artistic past perceived in »Germanic« terms, Michaud made it clear that this was not a retrogressive »move« in Nazi culture, but a forward looking call for future developments. Again opening with a citation from von Schirach, Michaud put it thus:

As Baldur von Schirach said, »In Germany, there is nothing more alive than our dead.« The immense effort of realization that was sweeping a whole

people toward its ideal Third Reich was certainly quite the reverse of the work of mourning. It was the work of [reminiscence] that asserted itself as faith in one's own power to reawaken the lost object<sup>47</sup>

– that is, to »produce the New Man.«<sup>48</sup>

While First World War era Beethoven reception targeted more immediate strategic goals, namely victory for German arms, it clearly conveyed this forward- looking dynamic that would ultimately drive the nation into subsequent battles. Ultimately, indeed, the momentum of Nazism relentlessly led to a second world- wide war, and Michaud helps us to remember that the stated justifications for this policy was realization of an idealized vision of Germany as *Kulturnation* formulated, in part, by the Nazi cultural politics – including its Beethoven reception. As

Michaud phrased it, for National Socialism warfare

had the same function as all its other »battles«. Like the »battle for art«,

»the battle on the birth front«, and the »battle for production«, it was part and parcel of »the battle for life« that was to lead to the realization of the essence of the German people.

For, »over and above all its tumults, the war was primarily intended to restore the calm and radiant vision of the eternal Reich that lay as a dream in the heart of the Volk spirit.«<sup>49</sup>

There is no doubt that Nazi propagandists enlisted the whole of the Western cultural tradition, as perceived in National Socialist terms, to serve in their belligerent cause. Just when German armies were invading Poland, Goebbels addressed the Reich Cultural Chamber with a speech that made the cultural dimension of the conflict clear. Nazis, he proclaimed, never reserved art for peacetime alone: »for us, the notion that when the call to arms sounds, the muses go silent, has no validity«. To the contrary, »we have always held the position that it is precisely in such a moment« that the muses »need to deploy their powers«. Under Hitler's leadership, the Nazis had placed this »spiritual weapon into the hand of our Volk« to wield as the German nation was »mustered to battle for its very existence.«<sup>50</sup>

Along with other »titans« of the Nazi-formulated tradition, Beethoven appeared throughout World War Two propaganda as a »fighter of great willpower.«<sup>51</sup> In these decisive days, said the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*, Beethoven, the »hard-tested herald of fate,« communicated his »*amor fati* to fighting men who are brave enough to look death and ruin in the eye.«<sup>52</sup> To keep morale high, music scholars such as Erich Schenk, Walther Vetter, and Ludwig Schieder mair produced wartime articles and lectures exhorting people to consider Beethoven a motivational figure in battle. According to Schenk, in the life of no other composer did the experiences of war

play as significant a role as they did in Beethoven's.<sup>53</sup> Vetter felt that the politics and war-making of his time belonged among the influences that Beethoven »forged with the heat of his genius into motivating forces.«<sup>54</sup> Schiedermaier, long-time head of the Beethovenhaus in Bonn, concluded that the »heroic Wehrmacht« could interpret Beethoven's »tragic« symphonies as »example, encouragement, admonition, and assurance of victory« over the »dark demons that are circling German life.«<sup>55</sup>

In line with these »academic« recommendations, many wartime Beethoven performances were arranged.<sup>56</sup> But perhaps the most explicit version of this policy occurred on 19 April 1942, just after Hitler personally assumed direct command of forces in the East. To mark the occasion, along with Hitler's birthday, Goebbels arranged a special celebration. Its culmination was a nationally broadcast performance of the Ninth Symphony, and in his accompanying speech Goebbels dictated what he expected listeners to draw from the event. As part of its own contribution to the effort, the *Völkischer Beobachter* reprinted his statement in full.

If ever the German nation felt itself united in one thought and one will, then it is in the thought of serving and obeying [Hitler]. The sounds of the most heroic music of titans that ever flowed from a Faustian German heart should raise this realization to a serious and devotional height. When, at the end of our celebration, the voices and instruments strike the tremendous closing chord of the Ninth Symphony, when the exhilarating chorale sounds joy and carries a feeling for the greatness of these times into each and every German cabin, when [Beethoven's] hymn resounds over all distant countries where German regiments stand guard, then we want everyone, whether man, woman, child, soldier, farmer, worker, or civil servant, to be equally aware of the seriousness of the hour and to experience the tremendous happiness of being able to witness and take part in this, the greatest historical epoch of our Volk.<sup>57</sup>

Besides this nation-wide use of new technologies to bind the Volk with Beethovenian spirit in the interest of the war effort, another common Nazi wartime propaganda technique was to publish letters by soldiers explaining the reasons why they were fighting. Under the title »Wir verteidigen Beethoven: Ein Feldpostbrief gibt Rechenschaft über den Sinn des Krieges«, *Die Musik Woche* reprinted the letter of a soldier who described defending the western coast against an air attack just after hearing a broadcast of Beethoven's Violin Concerto. At that moment, he had understood the »meaning of the war«.

You ask me what all this has to do with the music I just heard. Let me say to you that a statement of the Führer struck me at that moment. He said that

a single great German, Beethoven, had achieved more for human culture than all the British plutocrats put together. This pompous clique sends its machines over here supposedly in order to save culture and civilization. In truth, however, they attack in desperate fury against the victorious storm of a new, better world that is shaking their decayed world apart. Weren't you, as I, seized by a fanatical eagerness to fight when agitated by the sounds of the Violin Concerto? At the time I thought of innumerable testimonials to our German culture; I thought of the thousands of events in which this culture has been brought to life in the consciousness of the Volksgemeinschaft; and I saw the simple comrades of the Volk thankfully surrendering themselves to this music which German [National] Socialism made accessible to them. With the notion of this better and more beautiful world, [though,] I also linked thoughts of that spirit which rejects it and believes it can destroy [it] with blockades and bombs. We, however, are opposing this attempt with our grenades night after night. Do not laugh if it seemed to me in these minutes as if we had to defend Beethoven, who, himself unhappy, gave us the »Hymn to Joy« and taught us what it meant to fight.<sup>58</sup>

Nazi use of this letter, and others like it, certify that the process of politicizing Beethoven both before and during the war was designed signify that the conflict was ostensibly aimed not at military and territorial victory alone, but cultural achievement in the same drive of creativity symbolized by the composer and his works.<sup>59</sup> But once again, by the time of Hitler's second war, there was nothing new in any of this.

Soon after the Great War had broken out, Hermann Hesse entitled an essay with the first words of the Ninth Symphony: »O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!« Beneath this admonishment, he berated fellow artists and men of letters for contributing to the military effort. He contended that his creative colleagues – who should have remained outside the political struggle – were doing as much as politicians to heighten hostilities – inflaming German hatred for other European nations and »carrying the war into the realm of the spirit«.60 Despite his reprimand, martial tones thundered in the cultural atmosphere of wartime Europe. Above all, contemporaries observed and statistics indicate, Beethoven’s music became dominant – some thought excessively so – in German concert programs once fighting began.61 By the winter of 1915, one critic believed, Beethoven’s works could be heard as often as three times a day in Berlin. In fact, this nationwide tendency provoked a debate on whether »too much Beethoven« was performed during the war. 62 But complaints were neither numerous nor heeded. It was undoubtedly a widely held belief that Beethoven’s »heroic music« was highly if not most fitting during wartime. Given this popular attitude, the policy of

inspiring Germans to fight by programming Beethoven’s compositions was an obvious measure for cultural authorities to take. As a result, between 1914 and 1918 Beethoven’s works became increasingly associated with military values, nationalist goals, and wartime experiences.

While Beethoven served as a symbol of German superiority for those attending concerts at home during the war, his music was also perceived as a cultural weapon at the front. In May of 1915, the Berlin Philharmonic presented two all-Beethoven concerts in the Théâtre de la Monnaie of occupied Brussels. As reported in *Signale*, these performances of the song *An die ferne Geliebte*, op. 98, the Fifth Piano Concerto, and the Fifth Symphony were not intended to improve relations with the Belgians: despite reference in this report to the »conciliatory power of music«, the goal of these performances was to extend occupation of Belgium into the spiritual realm. According to the story, entitled »Kunst Strategie«, German military authorities »expected much of them« as valuable tools in the »moral conquest of Belgium«.63 Here too, the »moral« or spiritual impetus behind the war effort was supposedly manifested, even driven, by the music of the nation – particularly Beethoven’s.

Of course, few soldiers on either side of the line were capable of associating Beethoven’s music with the experience of battle in this way; even fewer had the wherewithal to analyze his piano sonatas during stand-downs, as musicologist Hugo Riemann did with fellow officers.64 It is apparent, though, that many front soldiers reared in the musical culture of the German middle class did think of Beethoven and his compositions when articulating their feelings about modern war, and that propaganda authorities – newspaper editors in particular – wanted people at home to believe that soldiers were fighting for such high-cultural ideals.65 A student from Leipzig anonymously described the significance Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony held for him as he served in the artillery near Soissons, and his letter home was popularized during the war in the *Vossische Zeitung* and the *Deutsche Militär-Musiker-Zeitung* under the title »Beethovens C-moll-Sinfonie im Schützengraben.« The following passage warrants full reproduction, in comparison with those cited above:

Recently during the night I have gone through the C-Minor in my mind: that is truly the symphony of war. The introductory measures in fortissimo are the mobilization orders. Then the measures in piano: anxiousness before the tremendous [events ahead]. Then the crescendo and again fortissimo: the overcoming of all terror and fear and the summoning of courage and unity, rising to a unified will to victory. The second theme represents our loved ones at home, their worries, their pain, and their loving favors. In the bass of this section, the first theme [is recalled]: the faraway thunder of

the battle on the border; the rise to fortissimo: the rejoicing of victory in the Fatherland. The second part of the first movement is the war itself, the great battles. The measures with the half-notes [describe] the long waiting in fortified positions, intermittently broken by the short first theme: the violent battles for the fortified positions, like those we go through here. Second

movement: the work of love in the homeland and the sadness of those left behind. Third movement: the battle, the privations, the perseverance; the trio: the gayer side of life in the field. The transition from the third to the fourth movement: the final, decisive battle. The fourth movement: victory, rejoicing, and peace!<sup>66</sup>

These words, penned and then broadly publicized almost thirty years earlier, hauntingly anticipate the cultural justifications for a war that Hitler, Goebbels, and their operatives held, as Michaud put it, to be »over and above its tumults« – promising, as a reward for »perseverance«, a new realm of Beethovenian spirituality and even peace.

Knowing of the utter devastation it wreaked, we reject the National Socialist promotion of the war as leading to a future of German cultural advancement.<sup>67</sup> Still, we must recognize that Nazi propaganda did not present the war as an end in itself, but as a means toward re-establishing Germany as *Kulturnation*. In this endeavor they failed, after twelve years of terror and six years of carnage. But Michaud's arguments, combined with evidence compiled largely from the *Völkischer Beobachter* cultural section, in particular its treatment of the Western music tradition, help us to understand better what impelled these destructive forces. The ironic realization is that, however distorted, they were originally conceived in »creative« terms – strongly, though not exclusively, modeled on those idealized in the person and music of Ludwig van Beethoven. But, it is also important to keep in mind that, for all its unprecedented destruction, the terms by which the Second World War was »constructed« for the German imagination were in great part based on precedents that had been formulated during the First World War. By comparing, via the single case study of Beethoven invocations as representative of countless others, justifications that he and his followers fabricated for their own vision of a German »future,« we can better see that Hitler's career, »culture,« and war were all rooted in – and ultimately extensions of – that first conflagration.

#### Notes

- 1 Eric Michaud. *The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany*. Stanford University Press 2004 [orig. *L'Art de l'éternité*. Paris: Gallimard, 1996], 35–36.
- 2 Ibid., 140.
3. David B. Dennis. *Inhumanities: Nazi Interpretations of Western Culture*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.
4. David B. Dennis. *Beethoven in German Politics, 1870–1989*. Yale University Press, 1996.
5. Michaud, 74.
- 6 Ibid., 29.
- 7 Ibid., 41.
- 8 Ibid., 98.
- 9 Ibid., 197.
10. For example, James van Dyke wrote in the *Journal of Modern History* that »this is an intriguing book that will undoubtedly fascinate many who are interested in theories about images and their potential power. But readers who want historical accounts of the roles of art and artists in the legitimation and implementation of National Socialist policies [...] have to look elsewhere«. James van Dyke. »Review of The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany.« *Journal of Modern History* 78 (2006), 2, 526. Similarly, Benjamin Martin wrote for *H-Soz-u-Kult* that  
  
»Michaud's contribution to this project is likely not to satisfy many historians [...]. For instance, his effort to contextualize Nazi ideas, while erudite and stimulating, remains somewhat impressionistic«. Benjamin G. Martin. »Sammelrez: Art in Nazi Germany.« *H-Soz-u-Kult* (August 2006).

10. I will let a some statistics from my findings stand as verification of the centrality of music reception in Nazi culture. First, of the 1.600 articles I gathered and studied, more than 1.000 were dedicated to the subject of music and its composers. Secondly: overall, an average of 40 articles per year were devoted to »classical« music issues, while only an average of about 14 each year dealt with the »masters« of the other arts altogether.
10. Adolf Hitler. *Mein Kampf*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971, 179–181.
11. For more on Beethoven reception, see Dennis, *Beethoven in German Politics*; and David B. Dennis. »Beethoven At Large: Reception in Literature, the Arts, Philosophy, and Politics«. Glenn Stanley (ed.). *Cambridge Companion to Beethoven*. Cambridge: University Press, 2000, 292–305.
10. See Alessandra Comini. *The Changing Image of Beethoven: A Study in Mythmaking*. New York: Rizzoli, 1987, for detailed discussion of the iconography of Beethoven reception in the visual arts.
11. Hans F. K. Günther. *Rasse und Stil*. Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1926, 30, and Ludwig Ferdinand Clauß. *Rasse und Seele*. Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1926, 60. See further discussion of these sources in Heribert Schröder.
- »Beethoven im Dritten Reich: Eine Materialsammlung«. Helmut Loos (ed.). *Beethoven und die Nachwelt: Materialien zur Wirkungsgeschichte Beethovens*. Bonn: Beethovenhaus, 1986, 205.
10. »Erscheinungsbild Beethovens«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 26 March 1927.
11. »Beethoven und die österreich. Landschaft«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 29 March 1927.
12. Ibid.
13. Hans Buchner. »Zum Beethoven-Jubiläum«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 9 December 1920.
14. Houston Stewart Chamberlain.
- »Deutschland« (21 October 1914). *Kriegsaufsätze*. Munich: F. Bruckner, 1914, 88–90.
10. Leopold Hirschberg. »Wie Beethoven Krieg und Sieg besang«. *Berliner Tageblatt*, 24 August 1914.
11. Otto Urbach. »Ludwig van Beethoven«. *Zeitung der 10. Armee* (Wilna), 1916. (Full date not included on copy in the Beethovenhaus Archive.)
12. Walther Harich. [Letter of 4 November 1914]. Philipp Witkop (ed.). *Kriegsbriefe deutscher Studenten*. Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1916, 3.
13. Michaud, *Cult of Art*, 29. 25 Ibid., 175.
26. Ludwig Schiedermaier. »Beethoven und die Politik«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 26 March 1927.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Chamberlain, »Deutschland«, 89.
30. »Ein musikalischer Franzosenfeind«. *Der Reichsbote* (Berlin), 17 September 1914.
31. Hermann Pfaender. »Beethoven-Feiern in Kriegszeiten: Erinnerungen an des Meisters hundertjährigen Geburtstag 1870«. *Tägliche Rundschau* (Berlin), 16 December 1917.
- »In diesem Augenblick, da unser Deutschland / Hoch ueber alle Laender sich erhebt, / Wie sollten wir nicht eines Manns gedenken, / Der in der Kunst dereinst getan, was jetzt / Des Krieges Helden und des Staates Lenker: / Er hat sein Vaterland zum Sieg geführt!«
26. »Soll die ›Neunte‹ für die ›9.‹ werden?« *Deutsche Militär-Musiker-Zeitung* (40), 27 September 1918.

»Die ›Neunte‹ mit ihrer Töne Gewalt / Sie hat uns das Herz oft erhoben. / Begeistert lauschte stets Jung und Alt, / Wer unten sass, oder hoch oben. / Jetzt heisst es im vaterländischen Sinn / Des hohen Genusses gedenken, / Den der deutscheste Meister der Töne uns schuf, / Drum lass die Gedan- ken versenken / In die gewaltige Schlachtsinfonie, / Die Hinden- burg, Ludendorff lenken!«

26. Michaud, *Cult of Art*, 179. 34 Ibid., 24.  
35 Ibid., 175.
36. »Der Patriot«. *Völkischer Beobach- ter*, 26 March 1927.
37. Friedrich Baser. »Beethoven spielt nicht vor Franzosen«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 31 March 1937.
38. »Wörter Beethovens«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 26 March 1927.
39. Brunnhilde Wastl. »Ludwig van Beethoven: Zu seinem hundertsten Todestag«. *Deutsche Arbeiter- presse: Nationalsozialistisches Wochenblatt* (Vienna), 26 March 1927. Emphasis in original.
40. »Ein musikalischer Franzosen- feind«. *Der Reichsbote* (Berlin), 17 September 1914.
41. Michaud, *Cult of Art*, 101, 106.
42. Alfred Rosenberg. »Beethoven«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 26 March 1927.
43. Ibid.
44. Hans Buchner. »Zum Beethoven- Jubilaeum«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 9 December 1920.
45. Hirschberg, »Wie Beethoven Krieg und Sieg besang«.
46. Ibid.
47. Michaud, *Cult of Art*, 173. 48 Ibid., 180.  
49 Ibid., 206–207.
50. Joseph Goebbels. »Das Kulturle- ben im Kriege«. Rede zur Jahres- tagung der Reichskulturkammer und der NS-Gemeinschaft »Kraft durch Freude«, November 27, 1939. Joseph Goebbels. *Die Zeit ohne Beispiel: Reden und Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1939/40/41*. Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Franz Eher Nachf., 1944, 219–223.
51. Ludwig Schiedermaier. »Beethoven und das ›Schicksal‹«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 21 October 1925.
52. E. Wurm. »Beethoven als Schick- salskundler«. *Allgemeine Musik- Zeitung* (66) 1939, 643.
53. Erich Schenk. »Beethoven zwischen den Zeiten«. Lecture given at the University of Bonn as part of a series of War Lectures. Published in *Neues Wiener Tageblatt*, 3 July 1943.
54. Walther Vetter. »Beethoven und die militärisch-politischen Ereignisse seiner Zeit«. Lecture given in the series on »Science and War« at the University at Posen during the summer semester of 1942. Posen: Kluge and Ströhm, 1943, 27.
55. Ludwig Schiedermaier. »Zu Beetho- vens Schicksalsidee«. *Von Deutscher Tonkunst: Festschrift zu Peter Raabes*  
70. *Geburtstag*. Leipzig: C. F. Peters, 1942, 77. See also Ludwig Schieder- maier. »Beethoven und die rheinische Landschaft«. Lecture given at the University of Cologne on 13 Novem- ber 1940, in *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, 15 November 1940; and Schieder- maier. »Ludwig van Beethoven und sein Werk«. Lecture given at the University of Bonn, in *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, 26 May 1941.
50. See Dennis, *Beethoven in German Politics*, 166–174.
51. »In Dankbarkeit und Treue: Ansprache von Reichsminister Dr.

Goebbels in der Feierstunde der NSDAP am Vorabend des Geburtstages Adolf Hitlers«. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 20 April 1942.

»Wenn jemals die deutsche Nation sich vereint gefühlt hat in einem Gedanken und in einem Willen, dann in dem, ihm zu dienen und seinem Gebot zu folgen. Diesmal sollen die Klänge der heroischen Titanenmusik, die je einem faustischen deutschen Herzen entströmten, dieses Bekenntnis in eine ernste und weihevollere Höhe erheben. Wenn am Ende unserer Feierstunde die Stimmen der Menschen und Instrumente zum grossen Schlussakkord der Neunten Symphonie ansetzen, wenn der rauschende Choral der Freude ertönt und ein Gefühl für die Grösse und Weite dieser Zeit bis in die letzte deutsche Hütte hineinragt, wenn seine Hymnen über alle Weiten und Länder erklingen, auf denen deutsche Regimenter auf Wache stehen, dann wollen wir uns alle, ob Mann, ob Frau, ob Kind, ob Soldat, ob Bauer, ob Arbeiter oder Beamter, zugleich des Ernstes der Stunde bewusst werden und in ihm auch das Glück empfinden, Zeuge und Mitgestalter dieser grössten geschichtlichen Epoche unseres Volkes sein zu dürfen.«

50. »Wir verteidigen Beethoven: Ein Feldpostbrief gibt Rechenschaft über den Sinn des Krieges«. *Musik Woche* 9 (1941), 281–282.

»Du fragst mich, was das alles mit der eben gehörten Musik zu tun hat. Lass dir sagen, dass mir ein Wort des Führers einfiel, der gesagt hat, dass ein einziger grosser Deutscher, Beethoven, mehr für die menschliche Kultur geleistet hat als alle britischen Plutokraten

zusammen. Und diese hochtrabende Clique schickte uns nun ihre Maschinen herüber, um angeblich Kultur und Zivilisation zu retten, in Wahrheit aber, um mit verzweifelter Wut gegen den siegreichen Sturm einer neuen, besseren Welt anzurennen, die dieses morsche Gebäude ins Wanken gebracht hat. Verstehst du, wie mich, der ich von den Klängen des Violinkonzertes noch durchbebt war, ein fanatischer Kampfeifer ergriff? Denn ich dachte zugleich an die unzähligen Zeugnisse unserer deutschen Kultur, dachte an die Tausende von Veranstaltungen, in denen diese Kultur der Volksgemeinschaft zum Bewusstsein und zum Erleben gebracht wird, und sah den einfachen Volksgenossen im Konzertsaal dankbar hingegeben dieser Musik, die ihm der deutsche Sozialismus erschloss. Mit dem Besinnen auf diese bessere und schönere Welt verband sich wiederum der Gedanke an jenen Geist, der sich gegen all das auflehnt und der geglaubt hatte, uns das mühsam erkämpfte mit Blockade und Bomben zerstören zu können. Wir aber setzen diesem Versuch Nacht für Nacht unsere Granaten entgegen. Lächle nicht, wenn es mir in diesen Minuten schien, als müssten wir Beethoven verteidigen, der uns, selbst ein Freudloser, den Hymnus »An die Freude« geschenkt hat, der uns aber auch den Kampf lehrte.«

50. See other examples listed in Schröder, »Beethoven im Dritten Reich«, 219.
51. Hermann Hesse. »O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!« *Neue Zürcher Nachrichten*, September 1914. Reproduced in Hermann Hesse. *If the War Goes On ...Reflections on War and Politics*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973, 9–14.
50. Records of concerts by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra from the 1914–1915 season through that of 1918–1919 reveal that his music had priority. In that period, out of 526 different programs; 201 included compositions by Beethoven. By comparison, the orchestra during the same interval presented 80 concerts with pieces by Wagner and 60 that included music of Mozart. Moreover, at least 66 performances at the Berlin Philharmonic in this period consisted of works by Beethoven alone! These statistics were compiled by author from listings of programs in Peter Muck. *Ein-hundert Jahre Berliner Philharmonisches Orchester*. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 3, 152–184.
51. See R. Sternfeld. »Zu viel Beethoven?« *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* 44, 20 February 1917; Wilhelm Klatte. »Zu viel Beethoven?« *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* 44, 2 March 1917; and Hans Mersmann. »Zu viel Beethoven?« *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* 44, 9 March 1917.
52. »Kunst Strategie«. *Signale* 73, May 1915. Reproduced in Muck, *Ein-hundert Jahre*, 1:436.
53. Hugo Riemann. Ludwig van Beethovens sämtliche Klaviersonaten: Aesthetische und formal-tech-

nische Analyse mit historischen Notizen. Cited in Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht. *Zur Geschichte der Beethoven-Rezeption*. Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1972, 71.

54. See George L. Mosse. *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, 17, 67–68,

for discussion of the »legend of the middle-class volunteers,« which lent cultural legitimacy to the

»Myth of the War Experience« and obscured the reality that members of the lower classes did most of the fighting.

50. »Beethovens C-moll-Sinfonie im Schützengraben«. *Deutsche Militär-Musiker-Zeitung* 37 (1915), 4.

»Neulich nachts nahm ich die C-Moll von Beethoven im Geiste durch: das ist doch die richtige Kriegssinfonie. Die ff-Einleitungs-takte sind der Mobilmachungs-befehl. Dann die Pianotakte: das Bangen vor dem Ungeheuren. Dann das Crescendo und wieder ff: das Überwinden aller Angst und Furcht und Steigerung bis zu Mut und Einigkeit, zum einheitlichen Siegeswillen. Das zweite Thema stellt unsere Lieben in der Heimat dar, ihr Bangen, ihren Schmerz und ihre Liebestätigkeit; im Bass dazu das erste Thema; der ferne Schlachtendonner an der Grenze: die Steigerung bis zum Fortissimo: der Siegesjubel im Vaterland. Der zweite Teil des ersten Satzes ist darauf der Krieg selbst, die großen Schlachten: die Takte mit den halben Noten sind das lange Aus-harren in befestigten Stellungen, unterbrochen durch das kurze erste

Thema: die heftigen Kämpfe um die befestigten Stellungen, wie wir sie zum Beispiel hier (d)urchmachen. Zweiter Satz: Das Liebeswerk in der Heimat und die Trauer der Hinterbliebenen. Dritter Satz: Der Kampf, die Entbehrungen, das Aus-dauer; das Trio: Die heiteren Seiten des Feldlebens. Der Übergang vom dritten zum vierten Satz: Der end-gültige Entscheidungskampf. Der vierte Satz: Sieg, Siegesjubel und Frieden!«

50. In Saul Friedländer's powerful words, »The important thing is the constant identification of Nazism and death; not real death in its everyday horror and tragic banality, but a ritualized, stylized, and aestheticized death, a death that wills itself the carrier of horror, decrepitude, and monstrosity, but which ultimately and definitely appears as a poisonous apotheosis.« Nazism, he continued, was a force that »ended in nothing, after having accumulated an extraordinary power, unleashed a war without parallel, committed crimes heretofore beyond imagination – a force that hacked the world to pieces in order to founder in nothingness«. Saul Friedländer. *Reflections of Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death*. New York: Harper, 1984, 43, 58.