

BECOMING HISTORICAL

*Cultural Reformation and Public Memory in
Early Nineteenth-Century Berlin*

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Nation, Church, and the Politics of Historical Identity: Frederick William IV's Vision of Cultural Reformation

In his inaugural lecture at the University of Berlin in 1841, Schelling had claimed that philosophical systems should be judged by “life” on the basis of their ethical and religious implications. Philosophical understanding was one dimension of a process through which social solidarity was produced as subjective identification rather than as the imposition of external conformity. It instigated an inner transformation of the self by recognizing the self’s origin and essence in the transcendent personality of absolute being, thus changing the isolated ego into an integrated person that was both culturally and cosmically “at home.” Among Schelling’s Berlin audience there were some who might have agreed that Schelling’s philosophy should indeed be judged by life, but in a critical sense, as a tendentious metaphysical justification for the particular brand of cultural politics pursued by Frederick William IV of Prussia and his most prominent advisers and ministers. As the young Karl Marx would claim in 1843, following the lead of Friedrich Engels and other Left Hegelian critics of the Prussian regime, Schelling’s philosophy could be read as “Prussian politics *sub specie philosophiae*.” From this perspective, criticism of Schelling’s philosophy was “indirectly” an “assault” on the new Prussian regime.¹ This chapter and the next will examine Marx’s claim by investigating the formulation and contexts of Prussian cultural policy as articulated by the two primary initiators of Schelling’s appointment, the king himself and his trusted personal confidant and advisor, Christian Bunsen.

Frederick William IV came to the throne with a broadly conceived vision of how he intended to use his royal authority to initiate a cultural reformation and set Prussia on a particular historical course. Bunsen had been his longtime partner in formulating this vision, so it was not surprising that he would use Bunsen as an intermediary to induce Schelling and other cultural luminaries to join his regime. The views of the king and Bunsen did not in themselves constitute the cultural policy of the regime, which was marked by unclear patterns of authority and the constant formation and dissolution of influential cliques at the court, in the administration, in the military, and in the church, but they were of primary importance in producing the

¹ Marx to Ludwig Feuerbach, October 3, 1843, in Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke* (41 vols.; Berlin: 1956-) vol. 27, pp. 420–21.

content and setting the tone of what came to look like an “official” cultural ideology in the early 1840s.²

Aside from individual programmatic statements and administrative actions emanating from the king and his personal spokespersons, the most important directives for the new course in cultural policy came from the ministry with oversight over ecclesiastical and educational affairs, the *Kultusministerium*, literally, ministry of “cults” (the public forms of religion), but perhaps more accurately translated as the Ministry of Culture.³ As the office for state administration of religion and education, very broadly defined, the *Kultusministerium* was responsible for the discipline and mobilization of the subjective loyalties of the state’s inhabitants: Its concern was not so much the imposition of behavioral conformity through physical threats or material inducements as the production of an internalized “disposition” (*Gesinnung*) of obedience and identification through manipulation of the symbolic realm.

Between 1817 and 1840, this ministry had been under the direction of two of the few remaining members of the administration that led Prussia through the era of reform and liberation between 1807 and 1815, Baron Karl von Stein zum Altenstein and his special aide for educational affairs Johannes Schulze, the latter a member, or at least sympathetic fellow traveler, of the Hegelian School. The new king and his closest advisers were convinced that under Altenstein and Schulze’s leadership the official direction of the public institutions most important in the formation of public consciousness had been misguided, favoring an educational philosophy that assumed that rational identification with the laws and constitutional structures of the secular state was the highest form of ethics and the basis of all communal solidarity. When Frederick William IV assumed power in 1840, the transformation of this policy was one of his major concerns. The new minister of culture, Johann Albert Friedrich Eichhorn – and his new chief aide, Gerd Eilers – quickly made it clear that the government’s cultural policy was not neutral but “partisan, totally partisan.”⁴ During the next five years the leadership of the *Kultusministerium* worked actively, not just to administer and regulate, but also to mobilize and produce a specific cultural *Gesinnung* within the

² The recent biography of the Frederick William IV: David E. Barclay, *Frederick William IV and the Prussian Monarchy, 1840–1861* (Oxford: 1995), provides an excellent overview of the various factions and personalities that jockeyed for power around the Prussian king in the 1840s and also devotes a separate section to Bunsen’s specific influence as the king’s “special friend” (see pp. 49–84).

³ For a history of the ministry, see Ernst Muesebeck, *Das preussische Kultusministerium vor hundert Jahren* (Stuttgart: 1918), which covers the period 1817–1840, and Rudolf Luedicke, *Die preussische Kultusminister und ihre Beamten, 1817–1917* (Stuttgart: 1918).

⁴ Eichhorn made this comment in a policy speech during the early months of the new regime at one of the strongholds of fundamentalist neo-orthodoxy, the Wittenberg seminary. Cited in Max Lenz, *Geschichte der koeniglichen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universitaet zu Berlin* (4 vols.; Halle: 1910–18), vol. 2, part 2, 39.

Evangelical State Church, the institutions of higher learning, elementary and secondary schools, and in the print culture of journals and newspapers.

The official policy of the state was not simply to maintain order and repress subversion, but to actively nurture a Christian-German cultural consciousness grounded in the “historical” principle. Primary emphasis was placed on shaping the consciousness of the educators themselves, on producing the appropriate *Gesinnung* among the trainers of future church officials, civil servants, and teachers at the universities and the secondary schools. But attempts were also made to move beyond this education of the educators and work directly on the formation of public opinion on a broader, more popular level.⁵ This study does not examine the processes by which the programmatic positions of the formulators of policy were institutionalized in educational reforms and personnel policies, censorship and propaganda initiatives, and ecclesiastical reforms, but the creation and transformation of the content of the program itself. In these first two chapters, the focus will be on three elements of this program: the emphasis on “reformation” of dispositions, rather than “revolution” of institutions and laws, as the royal road to a transformation of a fragmented and passive population into an integrated community of autonomous subjects; the definition of the intended suprapersonal identity as a combination of ethnic German identity achieved through recognition of participation in a common “immanent” fate, and religious Christian identity achieved through internalization of transcendent authority; and, finally, the claim that the appropriate foundation for cultural reformation through subjective identification was the “historical principle” that both German and Christian identifications would occur through the insertion of individual self-experience into public narratives that appropriated traces of the past as present memory. The Prussian regime that came to power in 1840 presented its goal as the generation of a Christian-German community based on recovered or discovered collective memory. The mediating material through which individuals were to accomplish their identification with each other was the inherited substance of their shared historical past.

In the period after Hegel’s death in the early 1830s, Frederick William, then the crown prince, had thrown his influence behind a concerted attempt to lure Schelling to Berlin as Hegel’s replacement. He had gathered support among various intellectual factions in Berlin and sent Bunsen to Munich to speak to Schelling. At that time, however, Schelling’s own hesitations and suspicions about how he might be received in the home of his philosophical rival were matched by those of Altenstein and Schulze, who harbored doubts about the compatibility of Schelling’s philosophy with the cultural

⁵ A beginning has been made in describing the practical realization of these policies in the actions undertaken by Eichhorn and Eilers in the Kultusministerium by Lothar Dittmer, *Beamtenkonservatismus und Modernisierung: Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Konservativen Partei in Preussen 1810–1848/49* (Stuttgart: 1992).

policies of the Prussian state.⁶ In the late 1830s both Frederick William and Bunsen had displayed a renewed interest in the development of Schelling's new "positive," "historical," and "Christian" philosophy. Frederick William informed himself about Schelling's late philosophy through discussions with his nephew, the Bavarian Crown Prince Maximilian, a devoted Schelling student. Bunsen made a personal pilgrimage to Munich to visit Schelling and pore over the widely circulated but unpublished notes to Schelling's lectures on the philosophy of mythology and revelation. Therefore the notion that Schelling might provide the philosophical centerpiece for a redirection of Prussian cultural policy had been evolving in the consciousness of the king and his advisor for some time before 1840. When Frederick William acceded to the throne in June 1840, one of his first acts was to empower Bunsen to negotiate Schelling's appointment. From the very beginning it was imagined as a government appointment with implications that extended beyond the walls of the university.

Although Bunsen wrote to Schelling that the king wanted him at his side as a personal philosophical adviser to "draw personally from your wisdom and to lean on your experience and strength of character,"⁷ there is some evidence that Frederick William was less certain about the need for philosophical grounding for his cultural, historical, and religious positions than Bunsen, and even suspicious of a tendency among philosophers to be seduced into the ubiquitous modern errors of secular humanism, rationalism, and pantheism, all of which disavowed the radical dependence of finite human beings on their transcendent creator. Such suspicions were evident in the king's response to a memorandum from Bunsen just a few months before he approved the offer to Schelling.⁸ The memorandum concerned the revision of Prussian divorce law, one of the king's pet projects, but in Bunsen's usual garrulous manner it had expanded into a long treatise with many philosophical and theological digressions that were formulated in the terminology of Schelling's late philosophy. Although Frederick William claimed that he had read the philosophical sections of the memorandum with great enjoyment, he found some of Bunsen's language objectionable. The term *divinization* (*vergoettung*), for example, seemed to him to be a misleading description of a redemptive process that was instigated in human history by the specific acts of a transcendent personal power. The historical process whereby individuals within ethnic communities were transformed into redeemed members of a spiritual community might more aptly be

⁶ This attempt to get Schelling is described in the letter of Humboldt to Bunsen in 1835, which includes the memorandum in which Altenstein expressed his reasons for opposing the appointment. See *Briefe von Alexander von Humboldt an Christian Carl Josias Freiherr von Bunsen* (Leipzig: 1869), pp. 14–23.

⁷ Bunsen to Schelling, August 1, 1840, in Schelling, *Philosophie der Offenbarung*, p. 409.

⁸ "Schreiben des Kronprinzen vom 24. Maerz, 1840," published in Leopold von Ranke, "Aus dem Briefwechsel Friedrich Wilhelms IV mit Bunsen" (1873), *Saemmtliche Werke* (54 vols., Leipzig: 1867–90), vols. 49/50, pp. 372–92.

termed christianization (*verchristung*), he suggested, to make clear that the transformation occurred through a transcendent intervention in human history. Even after the Second Coming and Last Judgment, Frederick William insisted, the faithful segment of mankind would remain in the subordinate relationship of a “pure, sinless, and immortal human body” to the lordship of the “divine head.” Along similar lines, he complained that the philosophical terminology Bunsen borrowed from Schelling seemed to imply that mankind was not the product of a free act of creation, but a necessary emanation of God’s eternal essence and thus “a part of God himself.” Such viewpoints he insisted were both illogical and heretical and could only lead to an arrogant denial of mankind’s dependence for existence and for meaning on a power outside of itself.⁹ At the same time that Frederick William expressed these caveats, however, he also insisted that he was not actually accusing Bunsen (or Schelling) of drawing such conclusions from their own ambiguous language. It was almost as if the king were protecting himself against his own interpretive tendencies.

There clearly did exist a tension between the king and Bunsen regarding the balance of immanent and transcendent dimensions in their view of cultural reformation and its historical foundations. But this tension also marked the king’s own views and was part of the reason he was drawn to Bunsen in the first place. And the same tension defined the very core of Schelling’s late philosophy. It was the source of a conflict between two rather different conceptions of history and culture or, more aptly, the source of the inner conflict that actually defined the complex views of history and culture among the major leaders and intellectual fellow travelers of the regime. Contrasting the views of the king and Bunsen will provide us with a preliminary and “official” expression of this tension and the kind of post-Romantic historicism that emerged from it.

Just as it would be wrong to identify the Schelling of 1840 with the Schelling of the early Romantic movement at the turn of the century, so it is misleading to see the policies of Frederick William and his advisers simply as Romantic. However, ever since David Friedrich Strauss satirized the Prussian king (through analogy with the Roman Emperor Julian, who tried to restore traditional pagan religion after Constantine) as a “Romantic on the throne,”¹⁰ this identification has become conventional wisdom. As in Schelling’s case, the views of history and culture held by Frederick William and Bunsen in 1840 had a Romantic starting point of a particular kind, which served as a reference point for revisions and transformations. The generation of government officials, intellectuals, and artists that set the tone and formulated the policies of the Prussian regime of 1840 had

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

¹⁰ David Friedrich Strauss, *Der Romantiker auf dem Throne der Caeseren, oder Julian der Abtruennige* (1847), reprinted in Strauss, *Gesammelte Schriften*, (12 vols.; Bonn: 1876–8), vol. 1, pp. 237–72.

received their ideological baptism under the impact of the second wave of north German Romanticism, in which the principles constructed out of the postrevolutionary vortex by thinkers and poets like Schelling, Hegel, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Friedrich and August Schlegel, Novalis, and Ludwig Tieck were attached to liberalizing domestic reforms and the mobilization of nationalist sentiments between 1807 and 1815. Frederick William and Bunsen, like the older Schelling, constructed their mature positions in a difficult process of moving beyond the Romantic historical hopes and cultural conceptions to which they had committed themselves in their youth. In this transcendence of the past, however, the past was not left behind but assimilated into a new framework. The tensions evident within the “Christian–German” or “German–Christian” conceptions of culture and history that marked the official cultural policy of the Prussian regime were themselves related to a developmental tension between two experiential moments in the formation of the regime’s leaders.

Battles over the meaning of German and Christian historical identities were also struggles to define the meaning of the movement for reform and liberation of 1807–15 as a foundational memory and orienting framework within the present. For the leaders of the new regime in Prussia, the heroes of the earlier reform and liberation movement were “founding fathers.” At times it appeared as if Frederick William hoped to recreate the Prussian leadership of the earlier period when he came to power. Baron Karl vom und zum Stein and the cadre of intellectual advisors who helped create the legislation of reform and mobilize the national awakening, men like Wilhelm von Humboldt, Barthold Georg Niebuhr, and Friedrich Schleiermacher, were imagined by the crown prince during the late 1820s and into the 1830s as a kind of leadership in exile that could be induced to return to power and also “return” inhabitants of Prussia and Germany to that moment when they had first discovered their authentic national identity as an historical identity.¹¹ The assertion of the historical principle as a foundation of state and national solidarity in 1840 was itself connected to a return to the original formulation of that principle in 1807–15.

By 1840 most of the leaders of the earlier cultural reformation were dead. Stein, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Niebuhr, and Schleiermacher, as well as the military leaders Clausewitz and Gneisenau, had all died in the early 1830s. Frederick William had to be content with secondary figures of the earlier period, the military reformer Hermann von Boyen, Stein’s chief aide for national affairs; Johann A. F. Eichhorn; the “other” brothers, August Wilhelm Schlegel and Alexander von Humboldt; the political professor and legal scholar Friedrich Karl von Savigny; patriotic publicists and literary

¹¹ Ernst Lewalter, *Friedrich Wilhelm IV: Das Schicksal eines Geistes* (Berlin: 1938), pp. 269–78. This detailed biography remains an indispensable source for the plans and personal relations of Frederick William during his long career as the Prussian crown prince before 1840.

figures like Ernst Moritz Arndt, Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, Friedrich Rueckert, Friedrich de la Motte-Fouqué, and Ludwig Tieck; and a host of veterans (mostly aristocratic officers) of the military campaigns of 1813–15. Local humorists satirized the personnel policies of the new regime as “monument preservation” (*Denkmalschutz*), with special reference to aging cultural heroes like Schelling, Tieck, Arndt, and Alexander von Humboldt.¹²

The starting points from which the spokespersons of the Prussian regime of 1840 had developed their mature cultural stances were not the same, just as their personal movements beyond these starting points took different paths. But they centered on two historical “awakenings” in which Romantic principles that had been developed around 1800 were attached to broad sociocultural movements and reshaped and transformed in the process.

The first of these awakenings was the awakening of the ethno-cultural people (*Volk*) in response to the call of their leaders to assume the responsibilities of self-determination and liberate themselves from the tutelage of the oppressor. This awakening was itself composed of two interrelated processes. It involved, first of all, the domestic mobilization of popular will through legal and institutional reforms. Equality under the law and participation in institutions of local self-government provided the framework for the individuals who composed the people to assert their responsibility and express their solidarity as a people through self-conscious and voluntary recognition of their collective identity. This inner liberation and subjective identification in turn found its appropriate expression in defiance and resistance to the imposition of a foreign identity by the Napoleonic occupation forces. Domestic emancipation led to national liberation.

The second awakening that defined the version of Romantic consciousness dominant among the leaders of the regime of 1840 emerged from disillusionment with hopes for the historical reconciliation of autonomy and solidarity that had been aroused by the reformist commitments and nationalist fervor of 1807–15. By the time of Napoleon’s return from Elba and his second defeat at Waterloo, the Congress of Vienna had displayed quite clearly that the national hopes of the Prusso-German patriots would not be realized in the foreseeable future. Emotions of inner, subjective identification were disjoined from “objective” historical reality, and either displaced into imaginary worlds and distant futures or recontextualized in universalistic theories in which national transformation was grounded in world-historical speculation about the necessary emergence of the Germanic cultural form as the culmination of human civilization. Response to the postwar disillusionment took a number of forms, but culturally dominant was the religious revival that presented itself as an “awakening” to the transcendent conditions of human liberation and community. Fulfillment of the desire for freedom

¹² Wilhelm Hansen, “Die Brueder Grimm in Berlin,” *Brueder Grimm Gedenken 1963* (Marburg: 1963), p. 270.

and community through self-sacrificing submergence in the immanent historical solidarity of the “people,” the recovery of such freedom and community (after the experience of disillusionment) as the gift of a transcendent power – broadly and schematically stated, these two experiential moments structured the perceptions and hopes of the leaders of the Prussian regime of 1840.

Born in 1795, the Prussian king was a man of the generation of 1813. Although growing up as the Hohenzollern crown prince made Frederick William a distinctive member of his generation, it would be misleading to confine his self-formation to a uniquely focused socialization into the functions and duties of Prussian kingship. Like the social companions and intellectual interlocutors with whom he surrounded himself, Frederick William was himself caught up, from very early on, in a complex process of personal and cultural identity formation. One of the reasons Frederick William appeared to others ultimately as a weak and indecisive king was his experiential immersion in the conflicting forces he was trying to reconcile, manage, and transform within the world he felt fated and called to govern.¹³

BECOMING GERMAN: ACTUALIZING THE SPIRIT OF 1813

In the official letter of invitation to Schelling, Bunsen had sketched a picture of the present as a moment “pregnant with the future.” For the first time since the end of the Napoleonic wars, a cadre of leaders had attained power in Prussia who were capable of regenerating the spirit of 1813 and mobilizing the energies and hopes of a new generation. In focusing on the way in which the current Prussian regime intended to build on recovered memories of German solidarity in the wars of liberation, and in setting the German model of cultural “reformation” against the French model of political “revolution,” Bunsen touched on two of the most obvious elements in the self-presentation of the new Prussian leadership. During the first years of the reign of Frederick William IV, it sometimes appeared as if the king, in agreement with some of his closest advisors and most important ministers, were ready to commit the Prussian regime to a cultural policy that publicly promoted the formation among its subjects of a historical consciousness centered on their ethnic identity as members of the German *Volk* and that he would define his own monarchical identity as a *Volkskoenig* (people’s king), as what Bunsen called an “organ of the nation.”¹⁴

¹³ The interaction of personality and environment, partially constructed around an Eriksonian conception of psychological identity, informs the biography of Dirk Blasius: *Friedrich Wilhelm IV, 1795–1861, Psychopathologie und Geschichte* (Goettingen: 1992).

¹⁴ Bunsen to Schelling, August 1, 1840, in Schelling, *Philosophie der Offenbarung*, p. 409; Blasius, *Friedrich Wilhelm IV*, pp. 88–94.

The constantly repeated claim that the historical lesson to be drawn from the consciousness of national solidarity evident in the wars of liberation was that the power and freedom of Germany were grounded in a union of princes and peoples, although emphatic in its insistence on the principle of consensual unity, was vague in its designation of the specific institutional implications of such unity, and could be appropriated in a number of ways. Most problematic was the meaning attached to the connection between liberation and integration. Was the subjective identification of the individual with the “people” premised on a liberation of the individuals who constituted the people from traditional forms of privilege and tutelage? Or was this identification an identification with inherited traditions (including hierarchical ranks and unequal rights), and simply a transformation of external, customary obedience into internal, voluntary obedience to existing authority? As a personal symbol of the essential identity shared by all Prussians (in the traditional sense of the political or civic nation), or even all Germans (in the postliberation sense of the ethno-cultural nation), the king would gain his legitimacy and power from the energies that flowed to him and through him from all who recognized the core of their communal being in his person. The king was not opposed to such interpretations in principle, though difficulties soon arose around opposing conceptions of how this union of princes and peoples should be institutionalized and connected historically to the patrimonial and state service traditions of the Prussian monarchy and to the diversity of territorial states within the German Confederation. If the prince were the conduit of the people’s will, how did this will express itself to the prince? If both the prince and his subjects were subordinate to a higher identity as members of a people that existed prior to them and extended across existing state borders, how was this union to be historically articulated in laws and institutions?

If Frederick William IV had in fact been willing to place his government at the vanguard of a movement for the mobilization of a collective ethno-cultural German identity that possessed its own historical narrative, from archaic origins to future fulfillments, certainly this would have marked a startling reversal of previous policy. Since the Congress of Vienna and especially since the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819, the official leadership of the German Confederation, and the governments of its two most powerful states, Austria and Prussia, had treated the movement for German national unity as threatening and subversive.¹⁵ The claim that an inherent solidarity among ethnic Germans should present itself through solidarity in deed and

¹⁵ Matthew Levinger’s *Enlightened Nationalism: The Transformation of Prussian Political Culture* (New York: 2000) analyzes the gradual rejection after 1815 of the discourse of nationality by proponents of forms of civic unity or consensual solidarity modeled on the paternalistic state or the conservative aristocratic estates. “From the 1820s onward,” Levinger argued, “most Prussians who wrote of the nation used this term to indicate a harmonious pan-German community organized according to the principle of civil equality.” (p. 159). One could say that the cultural politics of the new Prussian regime after 1840

in political institutions was dangerous to the established order after 1815 in two senses. First, it implied a form of populism in which the privileges of birth and cultural membership were equally distributed among all Germans, thus justifying democratic claims for participation of the people in their own political governance and cultural institutions. The demand for the actualization of ethno-German identity in visible, legal, and institutional forms assumed that the *Volk* would be able to express itself in a public forum and act out its autonomy in a constitutionally defined way – through some kind of representation of the people – within the government. That Frederick William III had assumed this himself when he made his call to the people to rise up and resist the French occupying forces in 1813 was suggested by his promise in May 1815, that the people’s sacrifices would be rewarded by the creation of institutions permitting participation in their own governance.¹⁶ Second, the territorial boundaries separating the recently expanded states of the German Confederation threatened to dissolve once existing states were reimagined as mere provinces within a larger German polity, whether modern nation-state or reconstituted medieval empire. From the nationalists’ perspective, the pragmatic politics of territorial states assumed the taint of national betrayal.

By 1820 the movement toward national unity and liberal reform had lost its momentum, both through external repression and inner disillusionment. It was noteworthy, therefore, when one of the first official actions of the new regime in the summer of 1840 was to cease police surveillance, and lift restrictions on public speaking, publication, travel, and residence imposed on many of those targeted as “demagogues” in 1819–24. These amnesties and rehabilitations of the early days of the regime seemed to include both the leaders of domestic liberal reform and the spokespersons of national autonomy and integration. Some of the reformist civil servants who had lost their influence in the government or were forced to resign their positions in the early 1820s now were honored and given the status of political insiders. General Herman van Boyen, the last living member of the core of military reformers that had transformed the Prussian army into a “people’s army,” and who had resigned his post to protest the repression of the nationalist movement after 1819, was appointed minister of war. Eichhorn, who had emerged as a major proponent of national unity during the campaigns of 1812–14, was given the *Kultusministerium*. Although Eichhorn had not been arrested or disciplined in the 1820s, he had been under suspicion as a friend and fellow traveler of the nationalist “demagogues.” His appointment was thus a clear sign of a reversal of policy. Even more striking was Frederick

was marked by an attempt to recuperate the discourse of nationality for the paternalistic state and the traditional social order, and thus remove its subversive and revolutionary implications.

¹⁶ Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800–1866*, trans. Daniel Nolan (Princeton, N.J.:1983), p. 241.

William's attempt to honor and memorialize the nationalist exaltation of the campaigns of 1813 by seeking out the popular propagandists and poets of national resistance for public rehabilitation. Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769–1860), who, as a virtual propaganda minister for Baron Stein in 1812–13, had appeared to many as a personal incarnation of the nationalist exaltation of the liberation campaigns; Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778–1852), the founder of the patriotic gymnastics associations (*Turnvereine*) and the author of the tract that defined the cause of liberation as a recovery and self-assertion of a Germanic ethnic identity; and Friedrich Rueckert, the author of one of the most popular collections of nationalistic war poems in 1814, were all rehabilitated as honored mentors of the regime.

The cultural rehabilitation of nationalist “demagogues” like Arndt and Jahn suggested a policy that would end censorship of voices that spoke from outside the official circles of government. However, Frederick William IV did not actually abrogate the censorship laws imposed in 1819; he simply made exceptions to them, indicating his willingness to tolerate free discussion of public issues if the discussion remained within the bounds he considered to be appropriate. The relaxation of censorship regulation for about a year (December 1841 to January 1843) was meant to nurture a specific kind of expression of public consciousness. It was matched by an increased hostility by the government toward those professors and journalists who were less than enthusiastic about the ideal of a Christian-German community based on the “historical principle.” Eichhorn's ministry attached clear criteria of “sound” opinions and dispositions to processes of hiring and promotion at the universities and within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and they not only favored those journals and journalists whose stance supported the official cultural policy of the regime but also created what amounted to a propaganda bureau in order to produce and disseminate their message to the educated estate and more broadly to the literate populace. While Arndt was returned to his academic post at Bonn, his colleague Bruno Bauer lost his teaching license, as did the Hegelian lecturer at Berlin Karl Nauwerck and the poet Hoffman von Fallersleben in Breslau. Although some intellectuals and academics received government help to publish journals supportive of the regime's policies, the reapplied censorship laws sent Karl Marx and Arnold Ruge into exile.¹⁷

When Arndt was reinstated in his position as professor of history at Bonn University, and once again allowed to publish freely as a cultural historian and political publicist, his rehabilitation quickly became a public event in its own right. In the fall of 1840 he was elected by the faculty, in an obviously symbolic gesture, as rector of the university. In January 1842, he

¹⁷ The strategies employed by *Kultusministerium* to “liberate,” nurture, and ultimately construct the right kind of people's voice or public opinion through personnel politics and the organization of an official press are recounted in Dittmer, *Beamtenkonservatismus*, pp. 159–244.