

Allegorical Depiction of the Return of the Quadriga to the Brandenburg Gate (1814)

Abstract

After the Battle of Jena-Auerstedt and the occupation of Berlin in 1806, French troops removed the Berlin Quadriga – a bronze sculpture of a four-horse chariot steered by the goddess of victory – from its perch atop the Brandenburg Gate and shipped it to Paris. When allied forces entered Paris in 1814, Prussian troops under General Gebhard Leberecht Blücher (1742-1819) discovered the sculpture in the Louvre, still packed in crates, and returned it to Berlin. This image is an allegorical depiction of the recovery of Prussia and the downfall of France: while Napoleon attempts, in vain, to drive his faltering team of emaciated horses away from Berlin, the goddess of victory guides the Quadriga back toward the Brandenburg Gate. An enthusiastic bystander points up to the place where the sculpture belongs. The caption reads, “Arrogance took her away – bravery returns her” [*Übermuth nahm sie – Tapferkeit bringt sie zurück*].

Source



Source: Aquatint by Daniel Berger, 1814.

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Recommended Citation: Allegorical Depiction of the Return of the Quadriga to the Brandenburg Gate (1814), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/the-holy-roman-empire-1648-1815/ghdi:image-2696>> [April 30, 2025].