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'It is Germany where he Truly Lives': Nazi Claims on Shakespearean Drama

That the Nazis tried to claim Shakespeare as a Germanic playwright has been well documented, but recently theatre historians have claimed that their 'success' was rather limited. Instead, commentators have asserted that plays such as *Othello*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Merchant of Venice* offended National Socialist precepts and were sidelined. This article attempts a re-evaluation and shows that the effect of the Nazi claim on Shakespeare was substantial, and the official efforts that went into putting these demands into practice were considerable. It is also argued that the Nazis established a particular reading of Shakespeare, which lasted well into the 1960s and dominated the aesthetics of West German productions of his drama. Anselm Heinrich is Lecturer and Head of Theatre Studies at the University of Glasgow. He is the author of *Entertainment, Education, Propaganda: Regional Theatres in Germany and Britain Between 1918 and 1945* (2007), and has co-edited a collection of essays on *Ruskin, the Theatre, and Victorian Visual Culture* (2009). His new monograph on theatre in Westphalia and Yorkshire for the German publishers Schoeningh is forthcoming.

Key terms: Shakespeare in Nazi Germany, reception, Joseph Goebbels, Heinz Hilpert.

THE RECEPTION of Shakespeare has a long tradition in Germany; in fact he is often seen as an integral part of the German cultural heritage and its classical canon. According to Richard Foulkes, 'so colossal was Shakespeare's achievement that it seemed to be too great for one nation alone'.¹ America increasingly laid claim to the Bard, and translations in some eastern European countries gained a status in the literary canon which rivalled the original piece of work.²

It seems, however, that no other country had a greater admiration for and voiced a louder claim on Shakespeare than Germany.³ The Nazis not only continued with these claims, they increased the demands on the Bard, 'the greatest poet of the world'⁴ or 'Genie Shakespeare!' as Goebbels exclaimed.⁵ They incorporated them in a distinct *völkisch* propaganda asserting not only Shakespeare's German 'credentials' but also the fact that his *oeuvre* was in line with Nazi racial ideology. The effect of these claims was substantial, the amount of critical writing supporting Nazi demands on the Bard was significant, and the official efforts which went into putting these

demands into practice were considerable.

The most recent research on the topic, however, has posited that with regard to Shakespeare the changes caused by the 1933 Nazi takeover were not 'as conspicuous . . . as one might expect',⁶ or has merely concentrated on the fact that the number of productions of *The Merchant of Venice* statistically declined during the Third Reich.⁷ Gerwin Strobl concludes that Nazi attempts to use Shakespeare for their purposes were ultimately unsuccessful, and he suggests that arms of theatre directors needed to be 'twisted' in order to make them produce 'Aryanized versions' of the plays. In any case some of Shakespeare's most popular plays defied any political claims put on them, Strobl adds, as *Othello*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Merchant of Venice* 'offended too obviously against National Socialist precepts' and were therefore sidelined.⁸

Wilhelm Hortmann in his seminal study of Shakespeare on German stages offers a rather limited focus on the Berlin theatres and entirely disregards the lively regional scene. Apart from that he fails to take seri-

ously the Nazi cultural discourse and posits that the claims by propagandists on Shakespeare and the theories they put forward were 'curious exertions which today appear as sad examples of self-deception and willing suspension of better knowledge' and that they had 'no effect at all on theatrical practice and hardly any on official policy'.⁹ This article aims to question some of these findings and illustrate that Nazi claims on the Bard were far from inconsequential.

The Historical Background

The serious German interest in matters Shakespearean goes back to the eighteenth century and cannot be discussed here in detail.¹⁰ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was fascinated by Shakespeare, Johann Gottfried Herder claimed that he was the 'Nordic genius Germans had been waiting for',¹¹ and Ludwig Tieck and Theodor Fontane wrote about the British theatre and Shakespeare at length during the nineteenth century.¹² The now canonical German translations by Ludwig and Dorothea Tieck and August Wilhelm Schlegel have been seen by many commentators as even surpassing the original in their poetic qualities and performativity.

Repeatedly commentators added that judging from the sheer number of performances of Shakespearean drama on German stages (which has been considerably higher than in Britain from the late nineteenth century onwards) the 'real' home of the Bard was indeed Germany. In 1909 the leading German-speaking journal on all matters Shakespearean, the *Deutsches Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, celebrated the Bard as 'Germany's great Renaissance poet'.¹³ And a year later Otto von Schleinitz claimed that 'Lessing and Goethe have laid the foundation of Shakespeare's global status as a literary figure at a time when he had been all but forgotten by his countrymen'.¹⁴

This serious interest in Shakespeare was not restricted to particular social classes. When the Freie Volksbühne society was founded in Berlin in 1890 with its socialist as well as educational agenda, one of its chief aims was to enable workers to see the German classics

and Shakespeare on stage. The goal was to reclaim the canonical drama from the German *Bildungsbürgertum* and include it in the repertoire of a true people's theatre. The focus on Shakespeare was not restricted to Berlin either. By the early twentieth century Shakespearean drama had become staple fare not only in court theatres but in municipal and even regional touring companies as well.

The potential propagandistic importance of this interest becomes apparent when compared to Shakespeare's homeland, and in particular when focusing on the reception of his plays in the provinces. Whereas Britain's regional theatres presented almost entirely entertaining fare, provincial playhouses in Germany offered not only Shakespeare and Schiller, but also modern classics like Ibsen, Hauptmann, and Shaw as a matter of course. A mid-sized municipal theatre in the 1920s produced at least two Shakespearean plays per season.¹⁵ In Bochum the artistic director Saladin Schmitt honoured the Bard in the first of a series of festivals in 1927, and Dresden organized 'Shakespeare Festspiele' in 1930.

This serious interest in (and indeed claim on) Shakespeare did not go unnoticed in Britain. Critic William Archer, for example, in 1888 compared the repertoires of the Prussian court theatres in Berlin with the theatres of London's West End. Whereas the forty London theatres staged four Shakespearean plays, the Berlin Schauspielhaus alone mounted four plays by Shakespeare, two by Lessing, five by Schiller and one drama each by Goethe, Calderón, and Kleist. And when bringing the privately run Deutsches Theater into the count, 'the intellectual disproportion between Berlin and London becomes positively ludicrous, not to say humiliating'.¹⁶

During the first serious campaign to found a National Theatre before the First World War, commentators also referred to the German example. Henry Arthur Jones remarked that Britain needed a Shakespeare memorial theatre so that people should have 'the privilege of seeing as many of his plays performed in the course of a year as if they

were living in a second-rate German town',¹⁷ and during the 1913 parliamentary debate on public subsidies to a proposed National Theatre, Sir Halford John Mackinder MP quoted performance figures of German theatres and made it clear that 'we have nothing in this land of Shakespeare to show which is comparable in the least degree to the facts indicated by these figures'.¹⁸ The handbook of the Shakespeare Memorial National Theatre Committee from 1909 even claimed that with a National Theatre 'Shakespeare, in short, would receive in his own country an assiduous homage which he now only receives in Germany'.¹⁹ The British National Theatre did not materialize for many more years, but the German veneration of Shakespeare continued. Increasingly, it seems, and again useful in propagandistic terms for German claims on Shakespeare, British commentators acknowledged the German endeavours. In 1939, for example, the famous Open Air Theatre in London's Regents Park, which traditionally staged Shakespeare during the summer, arranged a special Anglo-German night.

Evidence for Shakespeare's 'German-ness'

The German appreciation of Shakespeare, therefore, did not start with the Nazi takeover in 1933 but – as in so many other artistic spheres – the Nazis cleverly used an already existing discourse, intensified and radicalized it, and incorporated it in their cultural propaganda. This strategy also offered Nazi propagandists the possibility to recommend themselves to German *Bildungsbürger*, for whom going to the theatre and watching Shakespeare in performance was part of the established tradition of cultural education and self-improvement.

For example, from 1933 a new series of publications of canonical works aimed at the culturally aspiring mass market and entitled *German Cultural Library (Deutsche Kulturbücherei)* offered volumes not only on Goethe and Schiller, but also one dedicated to Shakespeare. The conservative German Shakespeare Society seemed equally willing to acknowledge the cultural agenda of the new govern-

ment and adopted a respectful tone. Although unfortunately Shakespeare had not been born German, Hans Hecht declared at the annual general meeting of the society in 1934 that he was clearly Germanic and, therefore, belonged to the same national community as the Germans.²⁰ Shakespeare was constantly referred to in the (ultimately unsuccessful struggle) to establish a genuine Nazi dramatic theory. Dramatists such as Erwin Guido Kolbenheyer, Hanns Johst, and Friedrich Wilhelm Hymnen were said to be aiming at a 'symbolic reality' in their plays which was supposed to stand in the tradition of Shakespeare.

Critics, cultural politicians and practitioners during the Third Reich were keen to provide evidence of Shakespeare's 'German-ness'. Geo Fritz Gropp, for example, claimed in an article on 'Shakespeare the dramatist and our rightful claim on him' that

our share in Shakespeare has been great and significant through all time. The poet became one of our own. . . . The group of translators around Schlegel/Tieck has accounted for the fact that Shakespeare has an unquestionable right to reside on German stages. Since then Shakespeare has never disappeared from our stages. . . . And so German art, and through their art the German people, has taken complete ownership of the poet over time.²¹

When producing a dossier on the repertoire of Berlin stages in 1938 Reich dramaturg Rainer Schlösser criticized foreign influence on German theatre audiences. His list of English-speaking authors whose works were produced in Berlin during that time included Wilde, Shaw, Somerset Maugham, and Laurence Housman – but not Shakespeare who was 'counted as German', naturally.²²

The radicalization of the discourse particularly related to Shakespeare's drama that supposedly supported Nazi racial theories, so that he could be interpreted as the archetypal Germanic playwright, whose 'genius was never closer to the German people than in the present time' – i.e. during the Third Reich.²³ Even his portrait was examined by 'racial experts' who conveniently proclaimed that this revealed 'solidly Nordic character-

istics'.²⁴ Leading theatre scholar Otto zur Nedden concluded in 1942 that 'racially' Shakespeare 'undoubtedly' belonged to the 'Nordic cultural sphere'.²⁵ And Ernst Leopold Stahl asserted that Shakespeare displayed a fundamental 'Nordic-Germanic disposition', which Gründgens' *Hamlet* production among others perfectly illustrated.²⁶

The Reich dramaturg Schlösser not only claimed Shakespeare for the new Germany but also asserted that no other nation had a similarly legitimate claim on him – possibly not even England.²⁷ Shakespeare's 'Nordic genes' (*völkische Erbmasse nordischen Ursprungs*) also – naturally – resulted in his ideology (*Weltanschauung*) being *völkisch*.²⁸ The infamous Hans F. K. Günther, one of the founders of Nazi racial theories and largely responsible for providing these theories with a quasi-scientific foundation, even considered 'Shakespeare's Girls and Women' from a eugenic perspective. It was vital for the survival of a people to make sure that the 'racially superior' members of the community chose similarly equipped partners in order for the race to 'improve', and Günther claimed that the behaviour of Shakespeare's characters provided the perfect template for this.²⁹

After the beginning of the Second World War the discourse also radicalized in other ways as commentators struggled to define Shakespeare's German-ness alongside his supposed anti-Englishness. Kurt Pfeiffer boldly argued that Shakespeare's *oeuvre* was a 'protest against England',³⁰ while others asserted that British audiences harboured similar sympathies.³¹

Not surprisingly, therefore, and given the performance tradition, Shakespearean drama not only remained one of the mainstays of German theatre repertoires after 1933 but also increased its share – one was witnessing a 'Shakespeare-Renaissance', the German Shakespeare Society claimed.³² In fact 'of all the non-German canonical dramatists of world literature Shakespeare was the most performed by a distance',³³ and 'was second only to Schiller in his share of the repertory'.³⁴ And he was not only performed in the capital but continued to be staged in the

provinces, too. In October 1937, for example, Bochum laid on another Shakespeare festival and produced *Romeo and Juliet*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* in the course of only one week.³⁵

The three most successful classical plays between 1933 and 1936 at the theatre in Essen, home to the world famous Krupp steel works, were Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Comedy of Errors*, (ahead of Goethe and Schiller with a combined total of 89 performances.³⁶ Even small-scale touring companies such as the Westfälisches Landestheater reflected this trend and produced a respectable number of Shakespearean plays (e.g., *The Taming of the Shrew* in 1935–36, and *The Merchant of Venice* and *Macbeth* in 1936–37).³⁷ Nazi propagandists could claim not without justification that the real home of Shakespeare was on the German stage.

In the following I will look at a sample of plays and the discourse around them, both as literary texts and including issues around translation, as well as performance texts and matters concerning reception and production. This investigation does not aim to cover all performances of the plays chosen for this article; rather, the aim is to highlight some of the typical claims put forward by the Nazis to incorporate Shakespearean drama in their own propaganda and the effect these had. To start with, however, let us take a look at the crucial question of translation.

Translating Shakespeare

With Shakespeare the question of 'correct' translations became a matter of national importance, given the symbolic role the Bard had been playing for the German cultural heritage.³⁸ After 1933 translations did not only need to have literary but also political merit. During the 1920s Hans Rothe translated Shakespeare into modern German and thus challenged the traditional Schlegel/Tieck versions. Rothe was condemned by traditionalists, and their criticism was soon taken over by Nazi commentators who accused Rothe of being *antivölkisch* and a

typical exponent of Weimar decadence.³⁹

The Rothe 'case', however, was not only a debate about translations but also illustrates some fundamental struggles within the Nazi movement.⁴⁰ When the debate came to a head in early 1936 Rothe was not prepared to give in quietly, and he put up a fight. His translations had been immensely successful on German stages during the 1920s, and they continued to be popular after 1933. He claimed that his translations had received a total of over 3,000 performances. Schlösser himself conceded that Rothe's translations worked well theatrically and that some of them were actually better than the established Schlegel/Tieck translations (e.g. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*).

Apart from acknowledging Rothe's critical and popular success, the Propaganda Ministry also distanced itself from the direct accusations printed in the journal *Bausteine zum deutschen Nationaltheater*, albeit only in internal communications. This was not surprising given the fact that this journal was published by Walter Stang, a close associate of Alfred Rosenberg's, one of Goebbels' fiercest rivals. Why Goebbels eventually banned Rothe's translations in May 1936 is not quite clear, but the alleged links between Rothe and the 'Jewish literature industry' almost certainly played a role because these would have made Goebbels vulnerable.

In the event Goebbels wrote a circular to all theatre managers demanding that they refrained from any further 'experiments' with new translations in view of the high subsidies paid to them from public funds. This hidden threat hints at the fact that even at this stage Rothe's translations still enjoyed considerable popularity in Germany.⁴¹ Interestingly, despite Goebbels' intervention, which claimed to put an end to any translation debates and represented his 'final decision' in favour of Schlegel/Tieck, the dispute resurfaced only a month later. In a note to Goebbels, Schlösser told the minister that theatre directors and publishers were unsure whether the minister's decision meant that they would only be allowed to stage Shakespeare in the Schlegel/Tieck translations – a surprising uncertainty since the

content of Goebbels' circular was clear and did not leave any room for interpretation. Astonishingly, Schlösser suggested that a 'semi-official' note be issued to let theatre directors know that the Propaganda Ministry would not 'hinder' productions using alternative translations as long as they stayed clear of Rothe and provided Schlösser officially agreed.⁴²

This incident also suggests that the Propaganda Ministry pursued no active and consistent policy concerning the question of Shakespeare translations. Although the circular discussed above seemed to represent a clear directive, this had been long awaited as a reaction to the discussion around translation issues which had already been going on for a number of months. Additionally, the circular was immediately watered down. There was no conscious policy, no working group, no office, which would have been concerned with 'Germanifying Shakespeare' as suggested, for example, by Hermann Kroepelin (see also below), who had initiated the idea of a 'German Shakespeare Board', located in the Propaganda Ministry itself, and suitably equipped with appropriate staff capable of initiating, organizing, and streamlining approaches to a 'German Shakespeare'. Instead the Ministry continued to muddle through – an impression incidentally which it wanted to avoid at all cost.⁴³ Contemporary translations were not consciously endorsed but only admitted in ad hoc decisions, and often only after complaints or letters sent directly to the Ministry. As in other spheres, the regime's approach was reactive and spontaneous rather than proactive and planned.

Yet despite the absence of clear guidelines and the apparent messiness of official cultural policy, Nazi interventions such as these had a considerable effect. Corresponding to practitioners eagerly picking up on changed emphases in cultural politics, theatres particularly in the provinces were keen to show their political allegiances when they came to 'Germanify' Shakespeare. The official ban of the Rothe translations in 1936 or, before that, the ban of Mendelssohn's famous stage music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in

1933, was quickly reflected in regional repertoires. In Münster, for example, both the 1932–33 and 1934–36 productions of *Measure for Measure* and *The Tempest* had used the controversial Rothe translations, whereas the 1936–37 production of *As You Like It* was staged in the traditional Wolf Graf Baudissin version. And during the 1939–40 season a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the same theatre opened with new music composed by Wolfgang Rössler.

The official interest in 'correct' translations also had a wider effect, with numerous translators, critics, and practitioners writing to the Propaganda Ministry with suggestions for new adaptations of Shakespearean plays. In one such example Reich dramaturg Schlösser endorsed a new version of *As You Like It* by Freiherr von Wolzogen and suggested it to the 'Reich Society of German Open-Air and Folk Theatre Festivals'.⁴⁴ This suggestion was quickly taken up by the society who duly approved von Wolzogen's version for its membership.

Rewriting Shakespeare

Translating Shakespeare during the Third Reich meant more than just converting words from one language to another. In order to make sure that plays were 'read' in a particular way commentators suggested leaving out certain parts or putting an emphasis on particular scenes or characters. In June 1936 the writer and translator Hermann Kroepelin wrote to the Propaganda Ministry with a memorandum presenting various suggestions for 'improving' the existing Schlegel/Tieck translations of Shakespeare's plays.⁴⁵

According to Kroepelin it was 'imperative' to incorporate a 'gentle reshaping' of some parts of the existing Schlegel/Tieck versions. One of the best examples in this context is *The Merchant of Venice*. Numerous suggestions for 'improvements' reached the Propaganda Ministry. Kroepelin, for example, was 'concerned' about the character of Jessica in the play, since the 1935 Race Laws made the relationship between Lorenzo and Jessica no longer 'desirable'.⁴⁶ To make it impossible in the play he suggested adding

'a mere three lines' and changing the play's ending 'ever so slightly'. Kroepelin posited that if 'the Third Reich penalizes the mixing of Aryan and Jewish blood, the stage cannot allow these things to happen just like that'. Kroepelin suggested, therefore, a solution

not through an abatement of Jessica or through the bastardization under her father's watch – in which case there would always remain the mother – but by contrast through a further logical development of Jessica's character, who after her father's collapse arrives at a new understanding of her familial links. This would ultimately make her relationship to Lorenzo impossible – as she follows her father's cry for help. Shakespeare himself provides us with the incentive for this development. In Act V, scene 1, line 90, Jessica says: 'I am never merry when I hear sweet music.' She thereby testifies to a particular intellectuality. Immediately following Lorenzo praises the same music, and just after that we include another line: Lorenzo: 'Do you cry, Jessica?' Jessica: 'Yes, I have to cry!'⁴⁷

Kroepelin claimed that Shakespeare himself showed great concern about the racial composition of the play and

gives us the right to continue to think in this direction. All changes are easily justifiable, because they correspond with what Shakespeare had in mind. And the addition at the end can hardly be criticized – not even by spiteful foreign commentators. In no way have we been manipulating the Bard's work, we have only logically thought through one bit and developed it.⁴⁸

Another adaptation by the dramaturg Heinz Sailer, which made Jessica Shylock's foster child but not his biological daughter and eliminated all positive remarks about Jews in the play, was produced in Erfurt in 1939.⁴⁹ The 'success' of this and similar productions at various provincial German theatres prompted Goebbels to initiate a production at a major Berlin theatre, as Jessica's changed relationship to Shylock meant that all 'all racial problems are now smoothed out'.⁵⁰ Eugen Klöpfer, artistic director of Berlin's Volksbühne, agreed to produce the play during the 1940–41 season.⁵¹ Although this production did not materialize, the new version was eventually staged at Berlin's Rose-Theater in 1942.⁵²

Although the Nazis claimed that the alterations in the script were relatively minor (a number of passages were cut and a few lines added in the Erfurt version) the change in meaning was significant.⁵³ But Nazi commentators were prepared to endorse even more substantial changes. In March 1943 Schlösser wrote to the permanent secretary in the Propaganda Ministry, Leopold Gutterer, concerning a possible amalgamation of two Shakespeare plays: *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Julius Caesar*.⁵⁴ This double bill was subsequently produced at the state theatre in Kassel.

Performing Shakespeare

As discussed above. Shakespeare's position as one of the pillars of the German theatre repertoire was largely unquestioned after 1933 and the leading directors and actors remained keen to produce his plays and to be seen in Shakespearean parts.⁵⁵ At the leading German stage, the Preußisches Staatstheater, Gustaf Gründgens played in a spectacular *Hamlet* (1936, which Goebbels called a 'pinnacle of German theatrical art')⁵⁶ and directed *Twelfth Night* (1937), *As You Like It* (1940), and *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1941). Jürgen Fehling, one of its resident directors, produced *Richard III* (1937), *Richard II* (1939), and *Julius Caesar* (1941); and Erich Engel, another director at the same playhouse, staged *Coriolanus* (1937) and *Othello* (1939).

At the Deutsches Theater director Heinz Hilpert produced *Richard II* (1940), *King Lear* (1940), *The Taming of the Shrew* (1941)⁵⁷ and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1943), while Lothar Müthel presented some equally grand productions at different theatres. Other influential metropolitan theatres such as the Theater des Volkes, the Volksbühne, the Schillertheater in Berlin, and the Vienna Burgtheater regularly celebrated Shakespearean plays, and leading actors such as Werner Krauß, Heinrich George, and Gustaf Gründgens, as well as Käthe Dorsch, Käthe Gold, and Marianne Hoppe, appeared in different parts all through the Third Reich.

From the beginning, however, critics tried to make sure that these productions were

read in a particular way. For example, Heinz Hilpert began his tenure at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin in September 1934 with Shakespeare's *As You Like It* – an only seemingly inconspicuous play whose premiere was attended by Goebbels.⁵⁸ The production was well received and critics noted Hilpert's romantic interpretation, the playfulness of his production, and his talented cast, and commentators after the war praised Hilpert for the simple humanism in his productions. The review in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, however, made sure that the play was appreciated for the 'right reasons', and it is a good example of how even seemingly apolitical plays were incorporated into Nazi propaganda. The paper's theatre reviewer Herbert Grube claimed that

the dramatic quality of this comedy is weak, but not therefore insignificant. The poet shows us – albeit only in a sketched and playful manner, almost painted al fresco – how the wholesome race, like superior blood, wins through against oppressive forces. Oliver, heir to baronial estates, deliberately neglects his brother Orlando, aims to vilify him as a mere servant in order to enjoy the substantial inheritance himself. . . . But he gets it wrong. Orlando's noble blood rebels, he claims and ekes out a place beside his brother, who is eventually forced to give in and to share the inheritance with him.⁵⁹

Hilpert's production of *Richard II* in November 1940 was more directly linked to current political events and developments,⁶⁰ though Richard Biedrzyński in his review missed the tragic elements and a performance driven by action and plot. He was clearly unimpressed by Hilpert's poetic and romantic approach, which Biedrzyński found insufficient in times of war.⁶¹ Carl Weichardt then established the much needed contextualization and linked the production to the 'Battle of Britain'. He claimed that

there is a lot in this tragedy . . . which appears quite topical. It is not only its setting in London and Coventry or on the Welsh coast, and it is not only the weak king. . . . At the same time we shouldn't overstretch the comparison as the Richard of the play squanders his land, lives a vain life, and is forced to abdicate, but as soon as he foregoes the crown he grows wiser and wiser

(quite an un-English quality today). He grows in stature and even appears to surpass his powerful enemies (at least internally), and he dies almost a hero.⁶²

Hilpert's 1943 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*, however, which premiered just days after the devastating surrender of the German sixth army at Stalingrad (the decisive turning point of the war), appeared to commentators as a mistaken choice at this point in time, and Werner Höfer asked, why '*Antony and Cleopatra* now'? The characterization of Mark Antony in particular should have been much more negative, as commentators claimed:

The higher developed awareness concerning matters of the state leaves the Roman eventually triumphant over the egocentric excessiveness of the exotic. Even Mark Antony, glittering in his blindness, has to fall victim to this victory. The will for order defeats the sensual orgy. The private sphere evaporates *vis-à-vis* the political. The ascetic triumphs over the *bon vivant*. This is the way history decided. This is the way Shakespeare had to decide, too.⁶³

Shakespeare and Nazi Ideology

L. E. Reindl posited that different values now mattered:

The excessive individual, who refuses to obey the laws of a higher community, . . . is not the object of glorifying admiration any longer. . . . Even in Shakespeare's portrayal Mark Antony has to be seen as a typical example of a random individualism which in its exaggeration must lead to his downfall. . . . Caesar Octavian, by contrast, resembles the principle of rational support of the state, which . . . is worthy of our unconditional admiration.

Therefore Shakespeare's drama is

a warning tragedy of excess, of the exaggeration of the individual. . . . The man who, at the height of the battle, leaves his army and fleet behind, and eventually sacrifices them because of his absconding, and only because of his passion for a woman, is not worthy of our sympathy but only our contempt. In the end he becomes enigmatic, like everything pathological. . . . It is this moment of the tragedy which we today clearly perceive as a weakness.⁶⁴

Although the number of productions of *The Merchant of Venice* declined after 1933 there were a number of high-profile and influential anti-Semitic productions. At the beginning of the war the *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch* was pleased to report that all new productions of the play now refrained from presenting Shylock in an 'apologetic' fashion.⁶⁵ The most influential of these new productions was Lothar Müthel's 1943 version in Vienna with Werner Krauß as Shylock. Theatre critic Richard Biedrzyński praised Krauß for his ability to present Shylock as 'repugnant', 'alien', 'disgusting': he 'plays the Jew in a way in which the Jew himself would never be able to due to his unimaginative character'.⁶⁶ Reviewing the same production. Karl Lahm equally celebrated Krauß's depiction of Shylock:

The affected way of shuffling along, the hopping and stamping about in a rage, the clawing hand gestures, the raucous or mumbling voice – all this makes up the pathological picture of the East European Jewish type in all his external and internal human dirtiness, emphasizing danger through humour.⁶⁷

Müthel's production was a popular success, received wide press coverage, and it entered the public imagination. It marked the end-point of intense theoretical explorations and cemented claims that Shakespeare's writing can indeed be linked to Nazi racial ideology, as in Werner Krauß's depiction of Shylock as that a mere 'pantomime villain'.⁶⁸

Some plays more than others were seen as particularly supporting Nazi ideology – and these were not necessarily the plays most often produced (heading the bill was *Twelfth Night*).⁶⁹ In claiming the Bard as an essential part of the Germanic cultural heritage Nazi propagandists particularly praised Hamlet's 'Nordic character' and the heroism of Richard III and Macbeth. Again, however, some of these claims had a pedigree, in particular in connection with *Hamlet*. 'Deutschland ist Hamlet' Ferdinand Freiligrath had proclaimed in 1844.⁷⁰ During the Third Reich, however, Hamlet was not only interpreted as a typically Germanic protagonist but also as a true hero in the *völkisch* sense,⁷¹ even as anti-English.⁷² Friedrich Theodor

Fischer thus regarded Hamlet's end as a victory of the race and as a symbol for the superiority of the nation over the interests of the individual: 'the people, the entity, the nation remains, the state is saved. And this is truly magnificent'.⁷³

Contrary to Hortmann's assertion mentioned above that claims such as these had 'no effect at all on theatrical practice', the vast majority of *Hamlet* productions seem to have taken their lead from an extensive critical discourse which denied Hamlet's romantic melancholy, his wavering and intellectuality, and instead stressed his heroic assertiveness, his vigorous youthfulness and energy. Most major theatres throughout Germany (including Leipzig, Karlsruhe, and Hamburg) staged *Hamlet* productions along those lines. The critical and scholarly discourse contextualizing these productions linked the changed interpretation of Hamlet's character inextricably to his 'Nordic' nature, his Aryan descent. Pleased with the outcome, the *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch* in 1940 reported that 'Hamlet was not portrayed as a weakling or a nervous artist any more, but as a youthful genius'.⁷⁴

Even during the war, Shakespeare was still performed all over Germany. In fact critics claimed that Shakespeare figured even more prominently now that Germany was at war with Britain – a fact which showed that Shakespeare had been 'conquered for Germany'.⁷⁵ After the outbreak of war the Propaganda Ministry made it clear that despite the fact that some regional party leaders had banned Shakespeare performances, Shakespearean drama had to remain in the repertoire.⁷⁶ The role Shakespeare was meant to play after 1939 was similar to demands made on him during the First World War. Gerhard Hauptmann, for example, had claimed in 1915 that

there is no nation – not even England – which has acquired a similar claim to Shakespeare than Germany. Shakespeare's characters are part of our world, his soul has become one with ours; and although he was born and buried in England it is Germany where he truly lives.⁷⁷

Although theatres had to apply for permission from March 1941, this was normally

granted.⁷⁸ The fact that an application had to be written, however, seems to have deterred many theatres, as productions of Shakespeare's plays generally declined in the course of the war. Still, his plays remained in the repertoire, even in the provinces. The city of Bielefeld is a perfect example of the fact that if you wanted to perform Shakespeare you could: apart from 1940–41 the theatre produced Shakespeare in every season until the end of the war. During 1942–43 *Hamlet* was performed 21 times, more than any other play during that season.⁷⁹ In 1943–44 *Othello* was played 11 times at Bielefeld.⁸⁰ As late as 1943 the *Völkischer Beobachter* asserted that Shakespeare, Kleist, and Schiller were integral parts of German repertoires.⁸¹

Exceptions Claimed to be the Rule

Despite the massive attempts to claim Shakespeare for themselves, however, the Nazis never fully managed to control theatrical output. Berlin productions directed by Gustaf Gründgens and Heinz Hilpert, for example, used Shakespearean drama to make cautious yet poignant critical remarks particularly on the totalitarian character of the regime. In Jürgen Fehling's 1937 production of *Richard III*, for example, Gloucester was presented as a reckless usurper of power who limped in a way strikingly similar to Goebbels, and the uniforms used resembled those of the SS.⁸²

Fehling's irreverence, Hilpert's humanism, and Gründgens' aestheticism did not fit well into the highly politicized atmosphere of Nazi cultural politics, although cultural politicians and commentators did their best to claim all three for the Nazi cause. At the same time, however, these were isolated instances of famous metropolitan directors who could not easily be silenced. Despite the documented arguments between them and the Nazi leadership, Goebbels and Göring were keen to show that the Third Reich was tolerant and cultured enough to provide for critical voices, too. And besides, the effect of these few critical productions has tended to be overestimated after the war and used as proof of how German theatre practitioners courageously opposed the Nazi regime.⁸³

Commentators claimed that the theatre had successfully abstained from overt political involvement and had solely concentrated on producing 'great art'. Productions of classical drama, such critics asserted, had been of exceptional quality during the Third Reich – particularly Shakespeare.⁸⁴

In the early 1960s eminent theatre critic Karl Heinz Ruppel entitled his collection of reviews of productions at the leading Berlin theatres during the Third Reich 'Grosses Berliner Theater' – a telling title which celebrates the achievements of Berlin's theatres pre-1945. The equally prominent Paul Fechter called his discussion of famous actors of the recent past 'Grosse Zeit des deutschen Theaters' ('Great Era of the German Theatre').⁸⁵ All his examples are from the Third Reich, yet he hardly discusses the political context in which they were produced and it seems as if these great performances were not linked to a particular place and time at all.

Aftermath

What Fechter implies, however, is that the recent past was a time of the highest cultural achievements, a golden period which has now, unfortunately, come to an end. This line of argument also resulted in a German theatre which post-1945 carried on almost as it had done before. The aesthetic language remained the same, and productions of Shakespearean drama by and large continued to reflect discourses of heroism and sacrifice presented in neoclassical settings. *Reichskanzleistil* (literally, the style of the Reich Chancellery, Hitler's vast presidential palace) is the term theatre émigré Berthold Viertel used to characterize the aesthetic of German theatres in the 1950s – an aesthetic language which seemed unable to recognize and reflect the radical changes outside the theatre, a style which was steeped in the past and one which aimed to reinstate classical forms and 'eternal' artistic truths.

This approach seemed to exist in a hollow bubble without making any attempts to acknowledge the new realities and the need to appraise the recent past. In essence this was a theatre which continued the claims of

'good' art as being politically neutral, existing outside critical discourses and political debates. Hortmann dismisses Viertel's judgement and denies its validity, instead turning to Ruppel's idealistic vision of a politically untainted 'great Berlin theatre', which to him seems a fitting frame in which to discuss the productions of (classical) theatre under the Nazis.⁸⁶ However, even Hortmann has to concede that the particular performance vocabulary acquired during the Nazi period experienced a restoration after 1945 (and after a year of theatres having been closed due to the 'total war' effort). I would argue that it was not until the documentary theatre of the mid-1960s that this 'restoration' was successfully challenged.

Apart from aesthetic language, other continuities after 1945 outweighed any new beginnings, as the leading theatre personnel were largely reinstated.⁸⁷ The ones who had left Germany in 1933 had no role to play in its post-war re-establishment. Brecht's plays were hardly produced in the West German theatre until the 1960s, the Shakespeare translations by Hans Rothe, which had been so successful in the 1920s and early 1930s, did not re-enter the theatrical canon in the Federal Republic, and the tone of the criticism levelled against Rothe was in parts strikingly similar to that during the Third Reich.⁸⁸

Émigrés such as Erwin Piscator, Julius Bab and Kurt Jooss found it difficult to return to a theatre system which was dominated by the same people who had been in charge before 1945 and who had forced them into emigration in the first place. In 1950 Fritz Kortner had to abandon a guest performance in Berlin after receiving threatening anonymous letters.⁸⁹ P. W. Jacob, who took over the Dortmund municipal theatre in 1950 after having returned from exile in Argentina, remained an exception in a country which had conveniently invented the myth of the 'zero hour' to suggest a clear break with the past in 1945 and the possibility of an untainted fresh start.

Critics, too, retained their position as gatekeepers of public opinion. Karl Heinz Ruppel has already been mentioned, and there are

countless other examples in the regions such as Arthur Mämpel in Dortmund, Wilhelm Vernekohl in Münster, and Karl Kühling in Osnabrück. These critics after 1945 established a particular reading of the immediate theatrical past which stressed the independence of artistic expression and achievement of the German theatre after 1933. Some, like the renowned critic and academic Ernst Ludwig Stahl, even went so far as to justify the radical changes following the Nazi takeover as a necessary step. In his influential study on *Shakespeare and the German Theatre* (1947), he uses the Bard to illustrate that the Nazi seizure of power provided a 'cleansing' the theatre world had long been waiting for.⁹⁰ What was needed after 1945, many critics held, was not a critical reassessment of the past but a continuation on the path of 'truth' and 'pure art'. Discussing Bielefeld's recent past, critic Kurt Uthoff concluded in 1954 that the city's theatre had been quite untainted by politics:

Politics back and forth, what Bielefeld's artistic manager really wanted was the realization of the word which Landgrave Hermann calls out in adjuration to the minstrels: graceful art, turned into deed!⁹¹

In this sense even the Shakespearean productions by Hilpert and Gründgens, celebrated by Hortmann and other commentators as providing courageous counterpoints to Nazi cultural politics and aesthetic claims, appear much more innocent, even tame, as previously asserted. In 1943 theatre critic Herbert Ihering characterized Hilpert as an 'advocate of simplicity', one concerned with 'moderation' and distinctly 'private humanity'.⁹² And Gründgens' in his emphasis on style, beauty, and form avoided being drawn into any theoretical debates. As a director he made no attempt to update Shakespeare's plays; 'on the contrary, he took care not to place them too precisely in a particular historical period, he avoided topical references and anything that might detract the audience from enjoying them as gems of perfect art and artistry'.⁹³ This was an approach the Nazis could accept quite happily and it was

this approach that Gründgens continued to pursue after the war.

To conclude, Nazi discourses on theatre and drama had left a lasting mark and survived well beyond 1945 – a fact which recent research on Shakespeare on German stages during the Third Reich has failed to sufficiently acknowledge and address.

Notes and References

Unless otherwise stated all translations from the German in this essay are my own.

1. Foulkes, Richard, *Performing Shakespeare in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 5. Edwina Booth, daughter of the famous American actor Edwin Booth, claimed in 1883 that Berlin audiences were positively 'Shakespearean' (p. 115).

2. See, for example, Stribrny, Zdenek, *Shakespeare and Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Klein, Holger, Peter Davidhazi, ed., *Shakespeare and Hungary: the Law and Shakespeare* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1996).

3. This may still be the case. In autumn 2010 the Shakespeare Globe in connection with the University of London and the Goethe Institute presented a string of events under the heading 'Shakespeare is German'.

4. Carl Weichardt on occasion of Hilpert's production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Berlin Volksbühne on 6 October 1933. See review in *Berliner Morgenpost*, Akademie der Künste Berlin, Heinz- Hilpert-Archiv 1.1 Regie/Sprechtheater, 1426.

5. 'How small is everyone else in comparison', Goebbels added in his diary on 14 June 1938. See *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels. Sämtliche Fragmente. Teil 1. Aufzeichnungen 1924–1941*, ed. Fröhlich, Elke (München: Saur, 1987), vol. 3, p. 454.

6. As claimed here by Andrew Bonnell in relation to the representation of Shylock in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (see Bonnell, Andrew G., *Shylock in Germany: Antisemitism and the German Theatre from the Enlightenment to the Nazis* (London: Tauris, 2008), p. 2.

7. Bonnell, Andrew G., 'Shylock and Othello under the Nazis', *German Life and Letters*, LXIII, No. 2 (2010), p. 166–78.

8. Strobl, Gerwin, *The Swastika and the Stage: German Theatre and Society, 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 116, 130.

9. Hortmann, Wilhelm. *Shakespeare on the German Stage. The Twentieth Century. With a Section on Shakespeare on Stage in the German Democratic Republic by Maik Hamburger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. p. 121.

10. For a detailed account see Williams, Simon, *Shakespeare on the German Stage, Vol. I: 1586–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). See also Marsden Price, Lawrence, 'English-German Literary Influences. Bibliography and Survey. Part II: Survey', *University of California Publications in Modern Philology*, IX, No. 2 (1920), p. 354–471.

11. Buruma, Ian, *Voltaire's Coconuts, or Anglomania in Europe* (London: Phoenix, 2000), p. 63.

12. See Fontane, Ludwig, *Shakespeare in the London*

- Theatre 1855–58*, trans. and introduced by Russell Jackson (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1999), p. 4; Tieck, Ludwig, *Kritische Schriften IV*, S. 318 (quoted in Zeydel, Edwin Hermann, *Ludwig Tieck and England: a Study in the Literary Relations of Germany and England During the Early Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1931), p. 54.
13. Theodor Vetter in his main address at the 46th annual general meeting of the Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft, 1909. See *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft*, XLVI (1910), p. vii.
 14. Von Schleinitz, Otto, 'Londoner Brief', *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde*, N.F. 2.1 (1910), p. 47.
 15. See Heinrich, Anselm, *Entertainment, Education, Propaganda: Regional Theatres in Germany and Britain between 1918 and 1945* (London: University of Hertfordshire Press/Society for Theatre Research, 2007), p. 182.
 16. Archer, William. 'A Plea for an Endowed Theatre', *Fortnightly Review*, XLV (1889), p. 613.
 17. As quoted in the *Daily Chronicle*, 16 March 1908. The paper ran a daily column with comments on the Shakespeare memorial, to which German commentators were among the contributors.
 18. Quoted in Whitworth, Geoffrey, *The Making of a National Theatre* (London: Faber, 1951), p. 101.
 19. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 84.
 20. Hecht, Hans, 'Shakespeare in unserer Gegenwart', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, LXX (1934), p. 117.
 21. Quoted here in the programme notes of the theatre in *Litzmannstadt*, the German name of the Polish city of Lodz after it had been occupied by German forces in 1939. Programme note no. 18 from April 1942, Zbiór Teatraliów Łódzkich 21/58. Programy przedstawień teatralnych teatrów łódzkich z okresu okupacji (1940–1943), p. 65.
 22. See dossier on the programmes of Berlin theatres between April and October 1938, written by Schlösser and sent to Müller in Goebbels' office, dated 9 November 1938. Bundesarchiv/German Federal Archives Berlin [BArch], R55/20258, p. 155–62.
 23. As claimed by the *Gauleiter* (the regional party head) of Southern Westphalia: see Wagner, Joseph, 'Was ist uns Shakespeare?' *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, LXXIV (1938), p. 13–14). For the history of the *Shakespeare Gesellschaft* during the Third Reich see the relevant chapter in Hausmann, Frank-Rutger, *Anglistik und Amerikanistik im 'Dritten Reich'* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2003).
 24. Strobl, Gerwin, 'Shakespeare and the Nazis', *History Today*, XLV (May 1997), p. 19.
 25. Nedden, Otto zur, *Drama und Dramaturgie im 20. Jahrhundert: Abhandlungen zum Theater und zur Theaterwissenschaft der Gegenwart*, 2nd rev. edn (Würzburg: Triltsch, 1943), p. 11.
 26. Stahl, Ernst Leopold, 'Shakespeare auf der deutschen Bühne 1935 und 1936', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, LXXII (1936), p. 239.
 27. See Schlösser, Rainer, 'Der deutsche Shakespeare', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, LXXIV (1938), p. 22–4.
 28. See Braumüller, Wolf, 'Shakespeare: der Dramatiker der politischen Totalität', *Stadttheater und Kammer-spiele*, XUV (1937–38), programme no. 15.
 29. Günther, Hans F.K., 'Shakespeares Mädchen und Frauen: ein Vortrag vor der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, LXXIII (1937), p. 85–6. This speech is discussed in detail in Strobl, Gerwin, 'The Bard of Eugenics: Shakespeare and Racial Activism in the Third Reich', *Journal of Contemporary History*, XXXIV (1999), p. 323–36.
 30. See Pfeiffer's article 'Shakespeares Werk: ein Protest gegen England', as printed in the programme notes of the *Litzmannstadt* theatre from December 1942. Zbiór Teatraliów Łódzkich 21/58. Programy przedstawień teatralnych teatrów łódzkich z okresu okupacji (1940–1943), p. 87.
 31. See von Trotta, Thilo, 'Rasse und Bühne', *Deutsche Bühnenkorrespondenz*, III, No. 31 (21 April 1934).
 32. See Stahl, *Shakespeare auf der deutschen Bühne 1935 und 1936*, p. 249.
 33. Brauneck, Manfred, *Die Welt als Bühne: Geschichte des europäischen Theaters*, vol. IV (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003), p. 509.
 34. London, John, 'Non-German Drama in the Third Reich', in *Theatre Under the Nazis*, ed. London (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 239.
 35. See Ketelsen, Uwe-Karsten, *Ein Theater und seine Stadt: die Geschichte des Bochumer Schauspielhauses* (Köln: SH-Verlag, 1999), p. 137–8.
 36. As noted in the statistics of the Essen theatre, quoted in Zeller, Bernhard, *Klassiker in finsternen Zeiten 1933–1945: eine Ausstellung des Deutschen Literaturarchivs im Schiller-Nationalmuseum Marbach am Neckar*, vol 1, 2nd rev. edn (Stuttgart: Klett, 1983), p. 396.
 37. Stadtarchiv Paderborn/City Archives Paderborn [StdAPA], A 1314 (file not paginated).
 38. The question of how to translate Shakespeare correctly is still a major concern for German theatre practitioners. See, for example, a recent issue of the leading German-language theatre journal *Theater Heute* (April 2010), entitled 'Shakespeare deutsch'.
 39. See letter by Rainer Schlösser to Goebbels in February 1936 (BArch R55/20218, p. 43). See also articles by Werner Kurz, Karl Künkler, and Wolf Braumüller in a special issue of *Bausteine zum deutschen Nationaltheater* from February 1936.
 40. For the following see BArch, R55/20218, p. 3–29.
 41. See BArch, R55/20218, p. 35. See also the detailed 1936 memo compiled by the Reich Theatre Chamber listing over 100 reviews of Shakespeare performances using the Rothe translations during 1935–36 alone. The majority of these reviews evaluate Rothe's translations positively (*ibid.*, p. 3–22). Goebbels' ban on Rothe did not manage to stop his translations entirely. The 1940 *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch* noted 'with dismay' that the Danzig state theatre had still used Rothe's translation of *Comedy of Errors* for its recent production of the play: see Papsdorf, Werner, 'Theaterschau. Shakespeare auf der deutschen Bühne 1938–40', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch*, LXXVII (1940), p. 244.
 42. See R55/20218, p. 66. For example, in early 1937 the translations by Walter Josten were sanctioned by the Propaganda Ministry (see *ibid.*, p. 119) and subsequently used at a number of theatres.
 43. See BArch, R55/20218, p. 76, 83.
 44. See BArch, R55/20172, p. 193–95.
 45. See BArch, R55/20218, p. 73, memo on p. 74–7.
 46. See letter from Kroepelin to Sigmund Graff at the Ministry from 7 October 1936 (BArch, R55/20218, dossier on p. 88–93).
 47. BArch, R55/20218, p. 89.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
 49. See BArch, R55/20194, p. 283.
 50. Letter by Schlösser to Goebbels on 16 July 1940 (*ibid.*, p. 285).
 51. *Ibid.*, p. 287–8.

52. See Bonnell, *Shylock in Germany*, p. 156–61.
53. See BArch, R55/20194, p. 291–2.
54. See BArch, R55/20218, p. 173.
55. For an overview of Shakespeare productions between 1929 and 1944 see Eicher, Thomas, 'Spielplanstrukturen 1929–1944', in Rischbieter, Henning, ed. *Theater im 'Dritten Reich': Theaterpolitik, Spielplanstruktur, NS-Dramatik* (Seelze: Kallmeyer, 2000), p. 297–316.
56. See *Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, vol. 3, entry for 14 June 1938, p. 454.
57. For a discussion of three different Berlin productions of *The Shrew* in the early 1940s see Márkus, Zoltán, 'Whose Triumph? *The Taming of the Shrew* in Berlin During World War II', in King, Ros, Paul, J.C.M. Franssen, eds. *Shakespeare and War* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2008), p. 197–212.
58. See Akademie der Künste Berlin, Heinz-Hilpert-Archiv, 1.1 Regie/Sprechtheater, 1284.
59. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 13 September 1934.
60. See Akademie der Künste Berlin, Heinz-Hilpert-Archiv, 1.1 Regie/Sprechtheater, 1477.
61. See *Völkischer Beobachter*, 2 December 1940.
62. *Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 December 1940.
63. Review entitled 'Ordnungswillen gegen Sinnenrausch', dated 12 February 1943. Akademie der Künste Berlin, Heinz-Hilpert-Archiv, 1.1 Regie/Sprechtheater, 1653.
64. Review in *Das Reich* from February 1943. Akademie der Künste Berlin, Heinz-Hilpert-Archiv, 1.1 Regie/Sprechtheater, 1653.
65. See Papsdorf, *Theaterschau: Shakespeare auf der deutschen Bühne 1938–40*, p. 247.
66. Biedrzyński, Richard, *Schauspieler – Regisseure – Intendanten* (Heidelberg: Hüthig, 1944), p. 35.
67. Lahm, Karl, 'Shylock der Ostjude.' *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 May 1943.
68. As claimed by Strobl, *Swastika and the Stage*, p. 183.
69. For an excellent discussion of Shakespeare's comedies during the Third Reich see Grange, William, *Hitler Laughing: Comedy in the Third Reich* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2006), p. 1–12.
70. For the appreciation of Hamlet in Germany see in more detail Pfister, Manfred, 'Hamlet und der deutsche Geist: die Geschichte einer politischen Interpretation', *Jahrbuch 1992 der deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft (West)*, p. 13–38.
71. See, for example, Türck, Hermann, 'Hamlet, eine eminent tatkräftige Natur!' *Stadttheater und Kammerspiele der Stadt Münster*, XIV (1937–38), programme no. 12.
72. See London, *Non-German Drama in the Third Reich*, p. 245.
73. Fischer, Friedrich Theodor, 'Shakespeares Hamlet', *Stadttheater und Kammerspiele der Stadt Münster*, XIV (1937–38), programme no. 14.
74. Papsdorf, 'Theaterschau: Shakespeare auf der deutschen Bühne 1938–40', p. 254. See also Fechter, Paul, 'Deutsche Shakespeare-Darsteller', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch LXXVII* (1941), p. 123–33 (dedicated to Gründgens' portrayal of Hamlet); Daiber, Hans. *Schaufenster der Diktatur: Theater im Machtbereich Hitlers* (Stuttgart: Neske, 1995), p. 155–6.
75. Papsdorf, 'Theaterschau: Shakespeare auf der deutschen Bühne 1938–40', p. 242. Similarly Papsdorf, 'Theaterschau: Shakespeare auf der deutschen Bühne 1940–42', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch LXXVIII–LXXXIX* (1943), p. 128–37.
76. See BArch, R55/20258, p. 41–4.
77. Hauptmann, Gerhard, 'Deutschland und Shakespeare', *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft, LI* (1915), p. xii.
78. See BArch, R55/20218, p. 177–88.
79. BArch, R55/20314, p. 50–65.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 67–81. For a critical account of performances of *Othello* during the Third Reich see Bonnell, *Shylock and Othello under the Nazis*, p. 166–78.
81. Quoted in Ruppelt, Georg, *Schiller im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland: der Versuch einer Gleichschaltung* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1979), p. 31.
82. See Rühle, Günther, 'Ich bin Fehling: Shakespeares *Richard III.*, eine Inszenierung in der Diktatur: – Jürgen Fehlings nicht geheures Theater'. *Theater Heute* October 2002, p. 34–41. See also London, *Non-German Drama in the Third Reich*, p. 247–50.
83. See, for example, Wardetzky, Jutta, *Theaterpolitik im faschistischen Deutschland: Studien und Dokumente* (Berlin: Henschel, 1983), p. 85.
84. See, for example, Stahl, Ernst Leopold, 'Theaterschau. Shakespeare im Aufführungsjahr 1943–44', *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch LXXX–LXXXI* (1946), p. 109.
85. Fechter, Paul, *Große Zeit des deutschen Theaters* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1951)
86. See Hortmann, *Shakespeare on the German Stage*, p. 123.
87. Essen is a typical case (see Waidelich, Jürgen-Dieter, *Essen spielt Theater. 1000 und einhundert Jahre. Zum 100. Geburtstag des Grillo-Theaters*. vol. 2. (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1994), p. 137, 143.
88. See, for example, 'Rothes Irrungen', *Der Spiegel* XL (1960), p. 84.
89. See *Die neue Münchner Illustrierte*, XLVII (1950), p. 11.
90. See Stahl, Ernst Ludwig, *Shakespeare und das deutsche Theater. Wanderung und Wandelung seines Werkes in dreieinhalb Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1947), p. 669, 701–5.
91. Uthoff, Kurt, 'Ein halbes Jahrhundert', in *50 Jahre Stadttheater Bielefeld* (Bielefeld: Sievert and Sieveking, 1954), p. 9.
92. Ihering, Herbert, *Regie* (Berlin: Hans von Hugo Verlag, 1943), p. 78, 80.
93. Hortmann, *Shakespeare on the German Stage*, p. 130.