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Entertainment and Education

A Comparative Study of an English and a German Provincial Theatre

The Städtische Bühnen in Münster and the Theatre Royal in York Between 1925 and 1945

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Anselm Carl Adolf Maximilian Heinrich
MA (University of Münster/Germany)
BA Hons/Erstes Staatsexamen (University of Münster/Germany)

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Introduction

In January 1933 the Theatre World's Central European correspondent published an article suggesting some reasons for the scant interest shown by the German theatre in contemporary British drama:

> Let us take an obvious example, 'The Barretts of Wimpole Street.' This certainly ranks among the finest plays of recent years. It is not because the 'Barretts' are less known in Germany than in England [...] but the play as such would not appeal to a German audience. The first demands for a play in Germany are plot, action, drama and conflict, and not one of these is sufficiently developed in this play to make it attractive to the German public. In the 'Barretts' there is just a flavour of incest and sadism without allowing it to mould into real conflict, problem or drama, as the Germans would have it. There is not a single manager in Germany who could be persuaded to stage the play.

The same correspondent then goes on to explain in some detail one of the main characteristics of the British play:

> If a certain scene is unrolled before the eyes of the spectator, it is difficult to conceive the necessity of repeating the contents of the scene and specially referring to it in another. Such repetitions are merely for the benefit of late-comers and members of the audience who stay for an act in the bar and wish to return to the play without having missed anything. [...]
> Max Reinhardt, after reading a translation of a popular English play, remarked to me: 'Here goes another Derby-play.' Asking him what he meant by this expression the explained: 'That's a typical English play. Everything is repeated so often that play-goers can safely go to the races and be an hour late for the theatre without missing anything!'[1]

These remarks already seem to sum up the fundamental differences between the German and the British theatre. Plays which proved highly successful in Britain were "more or less useless" in Germany, where large state subsidies, the seriousness with which the Germans regarded their theatre, and their "odd" taste for monumental Schiller productions and the radical avant-garde amused British commentators. Max Reinhardt's comments on the "Derby play" likewise seem equally typical of German attitudes towards the British theatre system. They expressed their astonishment at the long prevailing influence of melodrama, farce and musical comedy. They commented on the thinness of productions on the commercial West End stage and looked askance at an audience, which seemed to lack both political consciousness and any kind of critical interest in theatre aesthetics.[2]

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[1] "Flashlights from Central Europe." Theatre World January 1935: 35.

[2] In October 1933, Leopold von Hoesch, the German ambassador in London tried to explain why Werner Krauß, the eminent German actor, did not have the expected success in London with Hauptmann's play

Though it was not only remarked at the time, the claim coming from both sides of the Channel that the theatre systems of Germany and Britain are fundamentally different and incompatible has never been challenged. Scholars both then and now have systematically failed to address the possibility of similarities, and one looks in vain for detailed comparative studies of theatre repertoires. Hitherto, research has not only assumed that the theatre in Germany and Britain developed along entirely different lines, but also that any points of contact, even the mutual interest in each other's theatrical system, simply did not exist. This study represents the first attempt to draw some new conclusions through the detailed examination of repertoires. In fact, on the basis of extensive primary research in German and British archives documented here, the detailed comparison of repertoires in both countries indicates that the theatres of Germany and Britain became increasingly similar during the Second World War. This finding in turn suggests that there is renewed scope for research into all aspects of Anglo- German cultural relations during the period and, indeed, the function of entertainment in general in both countries.

In addition to a general awareness regarding the fundamental differences between the theatrical systems as a whole and the repertoire in particular, commentators and politicians in both countries had a lively interest in what was going on across the Channel. Contemporary British commentators were not only concerned with spotting differences however, they also wanted to adapt certain elements to their own advantage.[3] And from the 1950s onwards German interest in British theatre and drama has increased enormously. In light of this it is astonishing, therefore, that a comparative study between provincial theatre in Germany and Britain has not so far been undertaken.

Vor Sonnenuntergang. According to von Hoesch the main reason was the character of the drama which stood in contrast to the audience's desire for entertainment and "nice impressions" (qtd. in Wulf, Joseph. Theater und Film im Dritten Reich. Eine Dokumentation. Berlin: Ullstein, 1983. 208-9).

[3] Ashley Dukes, for example, in his article series "Journey Through Theatre" for the American journal Theatre Arts in 1940 and 1941, not only proved to be a big fan of the German theatre system but also explained the differences in countless details. Dukes told a probably astonished readership that Munich's Residenztheater in 1907 played Ibsen's complete works during one season, already considering him a modern classic – at a time when his plays were heavily criticised in Britain and Ghosts was still banned for another ten years. With similar admiration Dukes quoted the repertoire of Munich's municipal Schauspielhaus, which produced "almost the entire list of controversial plays of the period". He added that all "the works that our Stage Society had presented on experimental Sunday evenings were played here nightly as matter of course, before a regular and appreciative public" (Dukes, Ashley. "Journey Through Theatre. Chapter II: Old Germany. And Home Again via Zurich." Theatre Arts 25 (1941): 22. Similarly Dukes, Ashley. "Journey Through Theatre. Chapter IV: Germany 1919." Theatre Arts 25 (1941): 312). On his return to England Dukes summed up his experiences by claiming that "it was odd to be returning to a country where such developments had scarcely been heard of" (ibid.).

Research for this study has been carried out in the respective archives and libraries in Münster and York, as well as other local archives in the regions of Yorkshire and Westphalia.[4] On the national level the Public Record Office, the Theatre Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, Northrhine-Westphalia's State Archives, the German Federal Archives in Berlin, and the Theatre History Collection of Cologne University have been consulted. This detailed primary research resulted in a database comprising complete lists of the repertoire in Münster and in York between 1925 and 1945 (see Appendix). This database is not only essential for this project but it is also hoped that it will prove of use to other researchers. This primary material together with other archival sources, some of which have not previously been examined before, forms the basis for the present comparative study.

The construction of this database, however, has brought to light a number of issues. Whereas the authorities in Münster collected data regarding attendance figures, for example, neither City Council in York nor the Theatre Royal did so. The main concern of York City Council seems to have been with regard to the prompt payment of the rent and securing the highest income from the lease. The Theatre Royal, moreover, has been faced with the additional problem of a lack of space such that their small archive today is mainly used to store text books and past programmes. A large number of interviews with contemporary witnesses have been carried out by York's Oral History Project, and their research has brought to light many insights.[5] Methodological issues, however, such as those concerning selective memory and reliability cannot be entirely ignored.

With regard to the historical context, though there are numerous excellent studies of British twentieth century and the Second World War, not to mention considerable research on the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany, there is an absence of studies taking a comparative approach.[6] The same holds true for theatre history. There are relatively few studies on British theatre history between the wars, and although theatre during the Third Reich has received increased scholarly attention during the last twenty years, the detailed examinations of provincial theatres represents a new field of study.[7]

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[4] Whenever it seemed appropriate the particular findings for York and Münster were put into context and compared to similar theatres in the respective regions, for example in Dortmund, Bielefeld, Hagen, Bochum and Osnabrück, as well as Hull, Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and Sheffield.

[5] York Oral History Project. Through the Storm: York Memories of the Second World War 1939-1945. York: York Oral History Project, 1993; York Oral History Project. York Memories of Stage and Screen. Personal Accounts of York's Theatres and Cinemas 1900-1960. York: York Oral History Project, 1988.

[6] See, for example, A.J.P. Taylor (1976 and 1987), Calder (1999), T.O. Lloyd (1993), P. Johnson (1994), Clarke (1996), Smart (1999) on Britain, as well as Burleigh (2001), Hildebrand (2003), Thamer (1994), Bracher/Funke/Jacobsen (1993), Kolb (1998), Schulze (1994) and Peukert (1997) for Germany.

[7] There are a few notable exceptions, such as Barker and Gale's excellent study on British theatre

Not a single comparative study of theatre in Germany and Britain during the Second World War has been undertaken. An additional problem with the German research output on the topic has been that for a long time it was written in an apologetic fashion.[8] Apart from Dussel's seminal 1988 study, research into German provincial theatre under the Nazis hardly exists. It is interesting to note that the lack of research into provincial theatre has recently been addressed by scholars in Britain and has resulted in the AHRB project "An Alternative History of the Victorian Theatre" at Royal Holloway and the corresponding conference "Shifting Scenes: Theatre Histories Beyond London", which took place in Manchester in September 2003. One can only hope that these projects lead to an increasing focus on the provinces in the future.[9] Regarding the history of state funding of the arts in Britain, the only existing study needs to be singled out even though it is not solely concerned with theatre and hardly mentions the provinces. Minihan's 1977 book on the Nationalization of Culture has none the less proved invaluable.

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between 1918 and 1939 (2000), Collins' book on theatre during the First World War (1998) and, especially, Rowell and Jackson's seminal book on the repertory movement (1984). The situation regarding German theatre under the Nazis has improved with London's volume (2000), the first book in English on the topic. The most important German studies are Fischli (1976), Drewniak (1983), Wardetzky (1983), Dussel (1988), and Rischbieter (2000).

One of the problems of the research so far has been either the tendency to assume that theatrical life in Germany survived largely untouched by the Nazis, or the supposition that every single theatre was completely supportive of the regime. An example of the latter position is Peter Adam who claimed that the "cultural infiltration of every sphere of life never [...] stopped until it brainwashed almost the whole nation" (Adam, Peter. The Arts of the Third Reich. London: Thames & Hudson, 1992. 21. Similarly Ketelsen (1970), Drewniak (1983), Wardetzky (1983), Gadberry (1995) and Rischbieter (2000). See also, more recently, Rühle, Günther. "Eine deutsche Karriere. 'Schlageter' von Hanns Johst – eine Uraufführung zu Hitlers Geburtstag." Theater heute August-September 2002: 56-63).

Another problem has arisen from the respective methodological approaches. Scholars like Ketelsen concentrate on the literary quality and on special characteristics of the dramatic output much more than the question of this drama's success. Dussel, on the other hand, have left aesthetics aside and concentrate on the question of how far single theatres were drawn into the political system. As a result, questions of performance tend to be overlooked. Dussel's approach, however, seems much more appropriate to deal with one of the crucial aspects concerning cultural life in Nazi Germany in general: the discrepancy between high demands and actual artistic output. One of the central questions of this study, therefore, will be in how far the Nazis were able to transform the theatre in Münster according to their ideology.

[8] Stahl, for example, claimed in 1947 that the productions of the classics during the Third Reich were of a high standard – and anyway, the year 1933 provided a "Klärung" which the theatrical scene had long been waiting for (see Stahl, Ernst Ludwig. Shakespeare und das deutsche Theater. Wanderung und Wandelung seines Werkes in dreieinhalb Jahrhunderten. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1947. 669, 701-705).

[9] Interesting insights into contemporary theatre practice can be gathered from an perhaps unlikely source, Somerset Maugham's novel Theatre (London: Heinemann, 1937). This rather uninspiring novel about a ménage à trois among theatre people in the West End offers fascinating insights into the daily routine of managers, actors and playwrights, and at the same time highlights some of the differences to Germany.

Research into Münster's history has so far concentrated on the city's general history, particularly with Jakobi's well documented three volume Geschichte der Stadt Münster (1994). The most recent study on Münster's theatre history, however, not only dates back to 1956 (Prinz) but is at best superficial.[10] Regarding the history of theatre in York, the research situation is hardly any better. The standard reference works such as Victoria County History (1981), Tillott (1961), Feinstein (1981), and even Nuttgens' recently published The History of York (2001) tend to mention only the early history of the playhouse. Rosenfeld's The York Theatre (2001) had originally been written in 1948 and is a detailed though thoroughly outdated account, and Fitzsimmons' article (1981) contains little valuable material. Even Wolf's York Theatre Royal 1744-1994 promises more than it delivers as this booklet contains little more than a general outline. Although there has been a spate of highly popular local histories in Britain recently, these have to be handled with care due to their largely superficial quality.[11] Additional (and generally more useful) information was gathered from contemporary publications, newspaper reviews, collections, biographies and memoirs, official statements, legal documents and memoranda, as well as private correspondence. Contemporary drama journals and theatre periodicals have proved a particularly valuable source. The breadth of the topic and the vast amount of material has been the chief reason for a rather high number of footnotes.[12]

Though it is almost impossible to avoid comparison, scholars are nearly unanimous in stressing the alleged crucial importance of the differences between theatre in Germany and Britain. In his 1963 article, which is still regarded by many as seminal, Martin Esslin claimed that "organisation and goals of the English theatre system are so fundamentally different from the German theatre world that it is very difficult to offer a description of the current situation to a German readership".[13] According to Esslin it was not only the present situation which differed fundamentally from the German

[10] Apart from the fact that the history between 1933 and 1945 is only dealt with in a short paragraph, Prinz emphasized that the theatre's repertoire maintained a "remarkably high level".

[11] Problems regarding their credibility have increasingly been formulated in recent debates. With an increasing awareness of the importance of local history together with a particular pride in regional identity these studies have met with growing interest. Studies like "X at War" of "The Home Front at Y" suggest that every place had its special war history. They focus on the positive experiences of the home front, subscribing to an overall trend of nostalgia, and overemphasise the importance of people as individuals, whereas key players, such as councils, become marginalised (see Sokoloff, Sally. "The Home Front in the Second World War and Local History." The Local Historian 32 (2002): 22-40).

[12] When first mentioned literature used is quoted in full with an underlined title. If referred to more than once the source is quoted in a short version with its title in italics.

experience but the entire tradition and history of British theatre.[14] Employing terms such as commercialism, repertoire, and organisation, Esslin made it clear that, in contrast to Germany, "artistic concepts 'naturally' did not play any role in this kind of theatre".[15] British commentators, too, have concentrated on the differences when attempting a comparative perspective. They mentioned the diversified German theatre system, the extraordinary subsidies and the seriousness with which the Germans take their theatre.[16] Today, the fact that so many recent plays from Britain and America have been produced in Germany is a cause for special congratulation on the part of Anglo- American commentators.[17]

The aim of this study is, therefore, not only to present the histories of two provincial theatres in Britain and Germany but also to study them in relation to each other in order to examine their function in society. The first two chapters of this study will concentrate on historical aspects of the two playhouses, placing them in their respective national theatre landscapes. The underlying argument concerns the extent to which we can substantiate similarities in the development of these theatres, especially with regard to their war-time role. In the following two chapters we then turn our attention to the repertoire and examine how far the programmes support our findings in the preceding chapters. The focus throughout will be on the fundamental principles on which the repertoires were based and, regarding the comparative approach, whether we can find similar concepts. If we can, and this must be seen as the major research question of this dissertation, a crucial chapter of European theatre history would need to be rewritten.

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[13] Esslin, Martin. "Wohin geht das englische Theater? Eine Bilanz – gezogen im Sommer 1963." Theater Heute August 1963: 27. In April 2002 Henning Rischbieter returned to Esslin's article and praised it as the "fundamental" introduction to the topic (see Theater Heute April 2002: 76).

[14] Esslin stressed the high importance of the Puritan influence which accounted for a general anti-theatrical atmosphere in England and which remained prevalent even after the Restoration. It was out of the question for Parliament to spent public money on "frivolous" theatre (see Esslin, *Eine Bilanz*, 28, 33).

[15] Ibid., 28. One of the most common points in stressing the differences has been the claim that British theatres concentrated entirely on light entertainment (see Martin, Richard. "Hinter den Kulissen. Einige erfolgsbedingende Faktoren des englischen Theaters: Geld, Macht und Subvention." Das zeitgenössische englische Drama. Einführung, Interpretation, Dokumentation. Ed. Klaus- Dieter Fehse, Nobert Platz. Frankfurt: Athenäum Fischer, 1975. 11).

[16] See, for example, Fischer, Peter. "Doing Princely Sums – Structure and Subsidy." The German Theatre. A Symposium. Ed. Ronald Hayman. London: Oswald Wolff, 1975. 215-217; similarly Ardagh, John. Germany and the Germans. 3rd ed. London: Penguin, 1995. 314-324; Innes, C. D. Modern German Drama. A Study in Form. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979. 1-2.

[17] The British playwright Charles Marowitz even claimed "that without the generosity of German cultural interests there might be no experimental theatre in England" (qtd. in Fischer, *Structure and Subsidy*, 216). For the American perspective see Dace, Wallace. Subsidies for the Theatre. A Study of the Central European System of Financing Drama, Opera and Ballet, 1968-1970. Manhattan: AG Press, 1972.

The choice of topic, however, also needs some justification. In terms of both public interest and propaganda, cinema rather than theatre is often considered to have been the artistic medium of the day. So why look at theatre programmes? Apart from that, why concentrate on the provinces when all the important artistic events seem to have been centred in Berlin and London? One could also argue that the development of theatre in Germany and Britain had resulted in two divergent systems, one being organised as a public venture with large subsidies, the other as a commercial enterprise. And finally: how can one compare theatrical activity in two totally different political systems? Although it is undeniable that cinema had become increasingly popular during the 1920s and even threatened the very existence of live theatre in Britain, the performing arts gradually recovered from the mid-1930s. Many playhouses became repertory theatres with their own companies and a strong local identity. The closure of all places of entertainment in September 1939 met with a wave of protest and could not be sustained. Drama was hugely popular during the war and according to Basil Dean, head of the Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA), theatre was even better equipped to boost morale for the war effort than "mechanised entertainment".[18] Provincial theatres are especially interesting to look at, not only because they have not been at the centre of scholarly attention so far, but also because of their sheer number. In Germany provincial theatres made up 90% of all theatres, and in Britain the 1920s and 1930s saw the foundation of countless provincial "reps". Provincial theatres with their high dependence on attendance figures, can also provide us with information about audience taste. Even in Münster where subsidies resulted in some security, attendances had to be substantial and were closely monitored by the public and the civic authorities.[19] In this respect a differentiation between production and performance figures can reveal how far managers were successful in pursuing a certain repertoire. During the first season under Nazi rule, for example, many managers put the demands concerning the "national" theatre into practice and produced a high number of "völkisch" plays. These plays, however, clearly had a negative effect on attendances. The choice of repertoire was, therefore, crucial and the claim by Nazi critics, that "the character of the programme determines the nature of theatre" was not only true for Germany but was certainly being subscribed to in war-time Britain, too.[20]

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[18] See Dean, Basil. The Theatre at War. London: George Harrap, 1956. 51.

[19] Dukes stressed that German theatres "were quite commercial in their study of the public taste, and never gave more performances of a play than the audiences were willing to pay for" (Dukes, Ashley. "Journey Through Theatre. Chapter II: Old Germany." Theatre Arts 25 (1941): 23).

The main reason for the choice of Münster and York is the comparability of the two cities and their regions, especially concerning their historical development. Both cities have been characterised by a strong theatrical tradition, a rich theatre history and continuing support from the population.[21] The theatres were founded at about the same time, and during the first years of their existence enjoyed national importance.[22] Both presented ambitious programmes at the beginning, and although both theatres declined during the nineteenth century they took on a new lease of life after the First World War: Münster in 1922, York in 1935. In addition Münster always had strong theatrical links with England. In early modern times strolling players and touring companies visited Münster on a regular basis, and during the twentieth century translations and adaptations of plays originally written in English became increasingly popular. The Händel revival in the mid- 1920s in particular highlighted this continuing interest.[23] There are other parallels, too. Both cities enjoyed a role of major importance during the Middle Ages and were regional, even national centres of commerce, administration and scholarly research. Until today Münster and York have been home to military garrisons, have attracted travellers and tourists and have profited from a similar geographic location as urban centres in a region largely dominated by agriculture. Both cities have also retained their image as important and proud provincial centres. Their role as ecclesiastical centres especially, however, has been a characteristic feature over the centuries. Both cities are dominated by large and important Episcopal churches dating back to the eighth century.[24] The church's crucial importance for the cities only diminished with the decline in religious belief, which hit York earlier than Münster.[25]

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[20] Mettin, Hermann Christian. Situation des Theaters. Wien: Sexl, 1942. 29.

[21] During the 1930s the Theatre Royal featured the "Playgoers Club", which rapidly grew in size and supported the theatre. In Münster the influential visitors' organisations, Volksbühne and Bühnenvolksbund, were the backbone of the theatre's financial planning because of the number of season tickets they guaranteed. Also, both communities were prepared to act quickly when help was needed.

[22] York's Theatre Royal dates back to 1744 and still stands on the same site. Münster's playhouse, now the municipal theatre, was founded in 1775. The immense support theatre enjoys in Münster is also illustrated by the fact that today's modern theatre, which was built in 1956, was the first major building project after the war.

[23] As a prominent representative of the British Händel movement Edward Dent gave a talk in Münster in 1925. To the delight of his audience Dent stressed that the English theatre owed its success and its artistic highlights to the German influence. The press added that Dent delivered his talk "in the presence of journalists of 11 influential English newspapers" (qtd. in Westfälische Landeszeitung, 15 August 1933).

[24] There is an interesting direct link between Münster and York as early as 767. Then the later bishop Liudger went to York to study with the famous Alcuin. He was so fascinated by his teacher and the scholarly environment at York that he returned two years later to stay for three more years (see Freise, Eckhard. "Vom vorchristlichen Mimigernaford zum honestum monasterium Liudgers." Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz- Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 20-21).

[25] See Royle, Edward. "Religion in York, 1831-1981."York 1831-1981. 150 Years of Scientific Endeavour and Social Change. Ed. Charles Feinstein. York: Sessions, 1981. 225-229. By contrast, Münster was characterised by the powerful influence of Catholicism until the 1960s (see Teppe, Karl.

This does not mean that York's clerics did not try to affect the theatre's course. On Good Friday 1931, for example, the Bishop of Whitby and the Archbishop of York held a service in the Theatre Royal.[26]

Although there are also some differences between York and Münster, which mainly concern their size and questions of employment, the clear parallels in the development of Münster and York have not only resulted in establishing the twinning of the two cities in 1957 but they also serve as a fruitful ground for comparison.[27]

Comparison should not be taken as a synonym for similarity though. Comparative history is interested in difference as well as similitude.[28] To compare theatrical activity under the Nazi dictatorship with theatre in democratic Britain, therefore, does not mean equating the two political systems. Concerning this particular project, however, one might expect that a comparison was a one-sided affair. Considering the different political circumstances and theatrical traditions, the comparison would only stress the many differences between Germany and Britain and, perhaps, add even more to the known list. Indeed research so far suggests that, in view of their different organisation, tradition, social, educational and cultural role, similarities between theatres in Germany and Britain are unlikely to be found.

"Politisches System, gesellschaftliche Strukturen und kulturelles Leben seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg". Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz- Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 3. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 70).

[26] It is interesting to note in this context that residents were well aware of the importance of this fact. They linked the high- profile presence of the Anglican Church together with a strong Quaker influence to the restraint and conservative character of entertainments in York and stressed that "there was very little that was risque or obscene or over the top. Of course York being the headquarters of the northern church and a heavy Quaker influence, it was always a moderate kind of place in terms of entertainment" (York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen*, 30).

[27] Münster's 1940 population of 145,000 was considerably higher than York's 98,000 a year earlier. Also the growth of population marked a difference as Münster had grown rapidly in size. In 1933 the city had had only 123,000 inhabitants (see Kuropka, Joachim. "Münster in der Nationalsozialistischen Zeit." Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz-Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 2. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 317. For the York figure see York City Year Book and Business Directory. Vol. XX. Comp. and ed. A. G. Watson. York: Yorkshire Gazette, 1939. 7). Also, York was a manufacturing city whereas Münster was dominated by its role as an administrative centre. In 1939 31.3% of the jobs in Münster were in industry, farming and commerce, but 41.6% were in administration and civil service. In 1936 York, by contrast, the London North Eastern Railways (LNER) employed 7,800 men and boys, and in 1939 the other main activity of the city, the cocoa, chocolate and confectionery industry, employed 12,000 workers (see "survey of the effects of the air raid on York, 28/29 April 1942", dated 31 December 1942. PRO. Home Office. HO 192 Air Raids. HO 192/1656 Air Raid Assessment Reports York-General (1942/43). 1).

[28] Comparative historical analysis is currently widely discussed and the merits of such approaches were stressed recently by Horst Möller ("Diktatur- und Demokratieforschung im 20. Jahrhundert. Wo liegen neue Zugänge zur Zeitgeschichte?" Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte 51 (2003): 29-50). Classic studies include Haupt, Heinz- Gerhart, Kocka, Jürgen, eds. Geschichte und Vergleich: Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung. Frankfurt: Campus, 1996; and Kocka, Jürgen, ed. Arbeiter und Bürger im 19. Jahrhundert. Varianten ihres Verhältnisses im europäischen Vergleich. München: Oldenbourg, 1986.

The differences start already with terms and definitions and the basic understanding of the aims of the theatres. In Germany "Theater" tends to include not only its management, company and other staff but also a historical tradition and the dramatic repertoire. In Britain, by contrast, the term is likely to include not much more than the building itself, an object in the property market rather than a haven for the arts.[29] Equally different is the conception of the theatre's chief aim, which in Britain has predominantly been commercial. Politics are a matter for Parliament, religious questions are discussed in church, and art is exhibited in museums and galleries. The most important quality for a popular playwright, however, is usually to be funny.[30] To make things even more complicated, however, it is important to understand that the term "entertainment" itself has different connotations in both countries. Not only do the British have a broader concept of entertainment, which tends to include plays Germans are reluctant to describe as entertaining, but the whole concept of theatre in general seems different. Schiller's powerful dictum of theatre as a moral institution means that in Germany "Unterhaltung" tends to be regarded as something inferior to "proper" drama, which is morally instructive and educational. The British, by contrast, tend to have an ultimately positive attitude to any forms of entertainment.[31] Closely linked to this idea of entertaining audiences rather than uplifting them is the concept of theatre being regarded primarily as a commercial enterprise. Every theatre has to make money, and if it becomes a financial liability it is simply shut down.

Until the outbreak of the Second World War the government did not want to get involved in theatrical matters, and state subsidies for the theatre were quite unimaginable. Interestingly, many theatre managements did not want to receive subsidies either. They cherished their independence and rejected subsidies as a means of political control.[32] Being controlled by economic constraints seemed an altogether lighter burden.[33] West End theatres, for example, traditionally raised their curtains at

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[29] This study uses a more inclusive understanding of the term, based on the German concept.

[30] In Maugham's above mentioned novel the female protagonist, Julia Lambert, contemplates a future job for her son Roger. Every job seems fine but surely Roger "can't be a playwright, he hasn't a sense of humour" (Maugham, *Theatre*, 272).

[31] This study makes use of a concept of entertainment which is as broad as possible (and thereby more closely corresponds to the British idea), to include all performances put on stage.

[32] At the turn of the 20th century Charles Wyndham and Henry Irving, for example, opposed the "fostering of a State nurse" (see Minihan, Janet. The Nationalization of Culture. The Development of State Subsidies to the Arts in Great Britain. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977. 145-146).

[33] Even today cuts in subsidies are reported with a sense of satisfaction in the British media. Whereas cuts in the budget of a Berlin opera house, the Goethe- Institut or a local theatre cause storms of protest in Germany there is a general feeling in Britain that if a company or an orchestra "underperforms" it serves them right if they lose out on subsidies. A current example is English National Opera, which was reported

8pm to allow patrons to dine beforehand, and shows ended in time for a late supper. Such considerations were highly unlikely in Germany where dramatic art fulfilled a role far beyond the worldly needs of the well-heeled. There, the theatre's function was not only seen as a means of preserving the cultural heritage but also as part of an active engagement in political discourse, as food for thought and a "Temple of the Muses".[34] The aims of education and enlightenment have always been central to German theatre – as has control by the authorities. Although German theatres had been freed from feudal patronage after the First World War, the new democratic authorities stepped in and funded theatre with taxpayers' money. The different aim of theatre in Germany also meant that entertainment, popular art forms and "junk" culture have found it extremely difficult to enter the established canon in Germany. Even today, intellectuals tend to regard musicals and farces as inferior to Goethe and Beethoven and not worthy of representation in a subsidised theatre.

The theatres in Münster and York seem to have reflected these different conceptions. Whereas the Theatre Royal concentrated almost entirely on purely entertaining fare, Münster's Städtische Bühnen relied not only on Shakespeare and Schiller, but also on modern classics like Ibsen, Hauptmann and Shaw. What York patrons would have rejected as "high-brow" seems to have been the accepted canon in Münster.[35] The different perceptions of theatre also resulted in high subsidies being paid in Münster whereas the Theatre Royal was in receipt of only a little financial assistance from the city.

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to be facing a loss of a third of its chorus. The printed media, however, did not complain too much about this decision but pointed instead to ENO's repeated calls for money at the Arts Council without changing its structure (see "Bloodbath at the English National Opera. The Daily Telegraph. 18 January 2003).

[34] Bochum's famous theatre manager Saladin Schmitt in the summer of 1933 summed up the German sentiment towards theatre claiming that "das Bedürfnis des Deutschen zum Theater ist eben etwas tiefer Wurzelndes, etwas tiefer Haftendes als der Wunsch zur Ablenkung". The driving force to visit the theatre was the "Wunsch nach ethischer Bereicherung" (Bochumer Anzeiger, 26 July 1933).

[35] It is interesting to note that if foreign plays were produced in York they only tended to be successful as adaptations. Ashley Dukes, for example, worked on Alfred Neumann's Der Patriot, which had been a Berlin hit in 1926. Approached by the actor Matheson Lang, who was interested in the play as a vehicle for himself, Dukes was aware that a simple translation would not work in Britain. He was also sure that "a less banal title could be found for the English version" and came up with Such Men are Dangerous. The production was a success and proved Dukes' business instinct right (see Dukes, Ashley. "Journey Through Theatre. Chapter IX: More Europe." Theatre Arts 25 (1941): 757).
Regarding the importance of adaptations of foreign plays for English- speaking countries see Anderman, Gunilla. "Drama Translation." Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies. Ed. Mona Baker. Routledge: London, 1998. 73-74.

Apart from the differences concerning programmes and organisation, the theatres in York and Münster also seem to have differed regarding the way they were patronised and perceived. Looking at the "topography of entertainment" in both cities, the first fact which becomes obvious is the existence of the Empire with its music hall programme, which had no equivalent in Münster. This is linked to another factor, which is, however, difficult to substantiate: the audience's social composition. Although the management of the Theatre Royal gave away 600 free tickets to the unemployed each week, it was, obviously even more than the Städtische Bühnen, a theatre for the middle class.[36] In Germany the foundation of "Freie Volksbühne" society in 1890 succeeded – at least in part – in bringing the working- class into the bourgeois theatres. Although Münster was not a big manufacturing city, the cheap tickets, which the peoples' theatre movement offered, proved attractive to lower income groups.[37] Detailed contemporary information as to the social composition of the audience, however, is not available and it only rarely appears between the lines. In 1923, for example, the Theatre Royal's acting manager, Follett Pennell, on praising his acquisition of a painting of Tate Wilkinson auctioned at Christie's, stated that the "theatre was then, as now, patronised by the best classes of society, including the Church, the county families, and the military".[38] Although this statement seems questionable concerning its exclusiveness, York's working- classes definitely preferred the Empire to the Theatre Royal, and interviews carried out in the 1980s support this view.[39] Patrons made a clear distinction between the two playhouses and claimed that "a more classic person used to visit the theatre than the Empire".[40] Apart from the slightly cheaper ticket prices at the Empire the different locations of the venues played a significant role, too.[41] The Empire was close to the river Ouse with its

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[36] The idea of giving away tickets to the unemployed probably originates in Rowntree's initiative – he was an active Quaker.

[37] It may be claimed with justification, however, that the social outlook of the audiences did not change fundamentally in Germany. Dukes may not be far wrong in observing that it probably "never occurred to any workmen [in Munich – A.H.] to go to the Schauspielhaus or the Residenz" as "the legitimate stage was a middle-class institution" (Dukes, Ashley. "Journey Through Theatre. Chapter II: Old Germany. And Home Again via Zurich." Theatre Arts 25 (1941): 24).

[38] Yorkshire Herald (*YH*), 20 April 1923.

[39] See York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen.* 72). Mrs May Passmore, who had been in variety for years, stressed the big division between the people in the "straight theatre" and those in the "variety theatre" (see ibid., 35).

[40] See interview with Mr and Mrs Allan in York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen.* 60. York was no exception in this respect; other theatres in the region made an equally clear distinction regarding the scope of the different places of entertainment. In Wakefield, for example, "the Empire offered light live entertainment, the Picture House was dedicated to films and the Opera House offered live entertainment of a somewhat higher cultural tone" (Taylor, Coral. Right Royal. Wakefield Theatre 1776-1994. Wakefield: Wakefield Historical Publications, 1995. 209).

[41] In the mid- 1930s the Empire charged 1/6d. for the Dress Circle and Stalls, 1/- for the Upper Circle, 9d. for the Pit, and 5d. for the Gallery The Empire had a seating capacity of about 1,200 and a weekly attendance figure of 10,000, which corresponded to the Theatre Royal's attendance. Rowntree added,

utilitarian warehouses, whereas the upmarket Theatre Royal stood on prestigious St Leonard's Place in the shadow of the Minster. Commentators also provide lively descriptions of audience behaviour during performances. Whereas the applause at the Theatre Royal was "sometimes quite sustained" it was "rowdy" at the Empire.[42] The Empire's main appeal, however, was its music hall variety programme, which differed fundamentally from the Theatre Royal. Apart from famous acts such as Florrie Forde, Gracie Fields, Harry Lauder, Vera Lynn, Charlie Chaplin, and the "Tiller Girls", the bill was mixed and consisted of songs, acrobatics, juggling and dancing.[43] It is interesting to note that because of these different programmes residents referred to the Empire as "comic" and to the Theatre Royal as "classic".[44] These terms would probably never have been used by German commentators as the Theatre Royal's repertoire, in their eyes, was far from classic. This discrepancy in definitions also relates to other dramatic genres. Terms such as "legitimate drama" or "Pantomime" were not known in Germany. Equally confusing for German observers were the many different kinds of comedy. Whereas in Germany every humorous play aiming primarily at entertainment tended to be regarded as a comedy, British commentators distinguished, for example, between "serious" comedies and those "musically equipped".[45]

Research so far has largely ignored that despite all these differences the outbreak of the Second World War prompted a similar reaction in Germany and Britain with the realisation on the part of government that theatre could play a decisive part in the war effort. This is certainly not a new finding with regard to Nazi Germany but it may come as a surprise in a country that constantly stressed the commercial and political independence of its entertainment industry. In April 1941, for example, this entertainment industry rallied to the support in the United States with the clear aim of bringing America into the war against Nazi Germany.[46]

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however, that "this is an estimate. We have not yet succeeded in getting the accurate figure" (see Borthwick Institute. Rowntree Papers [PP/21]. Folder "Social Survey of York. Leisure-time Activities. Interim Report for the Trustees of the J.R.V.T. May 1st 1936". 32).

[42] See York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen*. 72.

[43] Mr and Mrs Allen summed the Empire's fare up as "mostly comedians and dancing and all the glitter really" (see York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen*, 72).
It is because of the fundamental differences between the Empire and the Theatre Royal and the fact that music halls were not known in Germany that this study concentrates on the Theatre Royal only.

[44] See York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen*, 60.

[45] See Yorkshire Evening Press (*YEP*), 14 September 1929.

[46] In a charity show called "Carnival for Britain" British and American theatre stars demonstrated their support of and their sympathy for the British cause. Gracie Fields "brought the house down", Helen Hayes appeared as Queen Victoria and Monty Wooley as Prince Albert, and war veterans played military

The examination in chapters I and II will show that although the approaches to the exploitation of theatre as a propaganda tool were different, the basic motivation was the same. Research so far, however, suggests that, whereas Britain's Ministry of Information relied on the independent support of people such as newspaper editors and theatre managements, Goebbels' Ministry for Propaganda exerted direct control. But does the fact that German theatre managers mainly conducted their business in a way which pleased Goebbels really mean that the regime exerted complete control? What about the concept of "vorauseilender Gehorsam"? And, relating to Britain, does the obvious absence of clear political guidelines for theatres, which makes it difficult to find proof of direct state influence, mean that theatre managers were left to decide entirely on their own what they wanted to produce? What about the foundation of ENSA, the Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) and the introduction of state subsidies? And what about possible laws of which research so far has failed to take due cognizance?

The following two chapters will show how politics encroached on the German and British provincial stage. Are we right to assume that the dramatic vehicles used to communicate propagandistic ideas were different in both countries as a consequence of their different attitudes to the concept of entertainment? Did the Theatre Royal employ only comedies, musicals and variety shows to put ideological points across? And, by contrast, did the Städtische Bühnen concentrate entirely on straight propaganda plays, heroic drama and nationalistic opera to fulfil its "völkisch" mission as some research has suggested?[47]

One of the most important aspects regarding theatre programmes is their role within a wider framework of cultural history. Every theatre repertoire claims to present a comprehensive overview of the essential dramatic works of the time to its audience –

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music. Green claimed that "here was a show of shows for the noblest cause in the world: the Battle of Britain" (Green, Mawby. "American Theatre's Gesture to Britain. Amazing Show at Radio City Music Hall." Theatre World April 1941: 79).

[47] See, for example, Gadberry, Glen, ed. Theatre in the Third Reich, the Prewar years. Essays on Theatre in Nazi Germany. Westport: Greenwood, 1995 and Eicher, Thomas. "Spielplanstrukturen 1929-1944."

from ancient Greek drama to the latest comedies. Although the intentions of managers in York and Münster clearly differed – corresponding to the particular role of theatre in society – and Greek drama might have been more of an issue in Germany than in Britain, where managers were more interested in securing the latest London farce, the basic idea was the same. Like an anthology of poetry or an art exhibition, provincial theatre managers followed the aim of presenting the "drama of the world" to their audiences. The repertoire of every single provincial theatre can, therefore, be seen as a closed entity.[48] The importance of this exclusiveness does not only lie in the fact that it is based on deliberate decisions concerning the works which make it into the repertoire but also regarding those which do not. The arrangement of a provincial repertoire, therefore, creates a certain meaning and becomes a "configurated corpora".[49] This in turn opens up the question of the purpose of a particular selection, and this dissertation will seek to establish the nature of this purpose, why a particular repertoire was chosen and how changes can be accounted for. The concentration on programmes as the main source for this study can, therefore, not only offer interesting insights into the tastes of audiences and managers, but also reflect the manner in which repertoires mirrored social, cultural and political developments.[50] In other words, to what extent is the selection of a particular repertoire governed by concepts such as censorship and canon?[51] Relating to its mission, theatre in Germany, at least in part, presented what was commonly accepted as the established dramatic canon. This canon, although subject to change, aimed to preserve a certain cultural heritage, a fact which, especially during times of war, became a focal point for those in power who wished to influence the theatre. The question within the context of this study is whether the Theatre Royal subscribed to a certain canon, too, and whether its development was subject to change. The differences mentioned above seem to suggest, however, that the concepts of canon and censorship were more relevant for German provincial stages and less so for Britain where theatre programmes seem to have been governed solely by economic constraints.

Rischbieter, Henning, ed. Theater im "Dritten Reich". Theaterpolitik, Spielplanstruktur, NS-Dramatik. Seelze: Kallmeyer, 2000. 279-486.

[48] The idea of a closed entity, however, only works for provincial theatres which were the sole provider of dramatic entertainment in a given community (the music hall with its different approach is not considered here because it concentrated on a different fare). The theory has its flaws when applied to bigger towns, which featured more than one legitimate theatre, because in this case the idea of exclusiveness is lost.

[49] The repertoire, therefore, stabilises, at least for a while, the sense among the respective audiences of what constitutes the relevant drama of the world (see Frank, Armin Paul. "Anthologies of Translation". Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies. Ed. Mona Baker. London: Routledge, 1998. 13).

[50] Other interesting information rendered by theatre programmes includes the most successful plays and the length of their runs, the average age of the plays as well as the average age of the dramatists.

[51] See Aleida and Jan Assmann. "Kanon und Zensur." Kanon und Zensur. Beiträge zur Archälologie dier literarischen Kommunikation II. Ed. Aleida and Jan Assmann. Munich: Fink, 1987. 7-15, 19-23).

In what seems to be one of the crucial differences to German repertoires, British managers presented the latest successes played by London companies, spectacular novelties and extensive use of stage machinery and scenery. It seems only logical to expect that York's repertoire would fundamentally differ from Münster's where the programme surely must have been entirely based on the theatre's mission of education and moral improvement. Business in York, education in Münster?

The comparison between the programmes of Münster and York is based on the different dramatic genres established by contemporary as well as modern theatre criticism. The first genre is classical drama. This group of plays incorporates the established dramatic masterpieces of the past, plays which theatres and audiences turned to to foster their cultural awareness. These plays traditionally played a central role in Germany where the concept of education represented a core task of theatre. It seems logical, therefore, to expect some of the major differences between York's and Münster's theatre programmes in this genre.[52]

The second group are the modern classics ranging from Naturalism to near-contemporary playwrights, who had not yet reached the status of classics but who nevertheless tackled issues and ideas of a more lasting importance.[53] Another common feature of modern classics is that they were not primarily written with the intention of entertaining and long West End runs in mind. Instead many of these plays experiment with new approaches to drama, especially in reaction to melodrama. Whereas the classics were often regarded as "dated" in Britain and, therefore, not produced as frequently as in Germany, modern classics seem to have received similar recognition in both countries.

It is within the large group of contemporary plays represented in the programmes that the differences between German and British provincial theatres become most obvious. The group of political plays, for example, seem mainly confined to the German stage. Corresponding to the highly charged situation during the Weimar Republic both

[52] This group of plays comprises of over two thousand years of playwrighting and includes the ancient Greek classics by Sophocles, Aristophanes, Euripides, etc., as well as the classics of Italian, Spanish, French and Russian drama (Calderón, Lope de Vega, Goldoni, Molière, Scribe, Gogol, etc.). The German classics (Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Kleist, Grabbe, Büchner, etc.) feature alongside the English (Marlowe, Shakespeare, Sheridan etc.). In Germany (as in Britain) the classical genre has always been subject to change. Although today it also includes Brecht, Frisch, Dürrenmatt and many others, this study will make use of a contemporary understanding of the "classical canon". Until today, however, two key preconditions to feature in this group have remained the fact that a dramatist has to be dead and the play has to concentrate on some idea or concept of (supposed) timeless importance.

contemporary left- as well as right-wing dramatists played an increasingly important role.[54] Despite some interest in Sheriff's Journey's End in Britain, it seems as if left-wing drama was mainly confined to amateur groups such as the "Workers' Theatre Movement".[55] The group of right-wing and nationalistic drama is perhaps the most problematic in this context – given the comparative approach of this study – as there would appear to be almost no common features here between Britain and Germany. The "völkisch" plays of the 1920s and 1930s have no equivalent in Britain, and the anti-German spy comedies, which became increasingly popular from 1941, have no German counterpart. At the same time, however, plays like Bull- Dog Drummond by "Sapper" with its racist, anti- Bolshevik and even anti- Semitic undertones, [56] do indeed have something in common with some of the nationalistic fare produced in Germany.
Another group of more or less serious plays are the contemporary dramas, which often deal with problems such as social injustice, domestic violence, and human conflict without being radically political.[57]
Last but by no means least come the contemporary comedies and plays of pure entertainment. This group includes comedies, farces, musical comedies, dialect plays, thrillers, and other pieces, which were primarily designed to entertain rather than to uplift the audience.[58] In a contemporary conclusion, the plays of this genre were written by "an army of clever craftsmen doing capable, efficient work. But if the truth be told, our Ackneys, Armstrongs, Cowards, Levys, Milnes and Novellos are all rather small-

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[53] Some of the most important representatives of this group are Shaw, Wilde, Pinero, Zola, Claudel, Ibsen, Strindberg, Hamsun, Björnson, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Thoma, Hofmannsthal, Werfel, Halbe, the Schönthan brothers, Schnitzler, Pirandello, Chekhov, Tolstoy, and Gorky.
[54] To the group of left-wing drama belong playwrights such as Brecht, Toller, Piscator, Sternheim, Feuchtwanger, Werfel, R. C. Sheriff, Synge, Elmer Rice, Upton Sinclair, and Sergei Tretjakov. Right-wing, nationalistic and völkisch playwrights of some importance during the 1920s and 1930s in Germany are Bacmeister, Bethge, Cremers, Eckart, Ernst, Forster, Graff, Hymnen, Johst, Kolbenheyer, Lerbs, Möller, and Reinecker. There are problems, however, concerning the classification (as in other genres, too) as some "völkisch" playwrights have had a connection with Naturalism and Expressionism before turning to nationalistic drama. Max Halbe and Hanns Johst are typical examples.
[55] See Samuel, Raphael, Ewan MacColl and Stuart Cosgrove. Theatres of the Left 1880-1935. Workers' Theatre Movements in Britain and America. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985.
[56] For a discussion of Bull- Dog Drummond by "Sapper" (Herman Cyril McNeile) see Watson, Colin. Snobbery with Violence. Crime Stories and their Audience. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1971. 63-71.
[57] In contrast to the purely entertaining plays serious contemporary drama tries to go beyond the superficiality of most of the comedies. These plays attempt to go below the obvious level presented on stage and deal with some sort of anthropological, socio-economic or political idea/problem. To this group belong the plays by Galsworthy, Bruckner, Fleißer, Wolf, and some plays by Coward, Maugham, and Priestley. Again, there are problems of classification in this genre. Perhaps here more than anywhere else we have to look at each single play to judge whether it corresponds to the concept set out above.
[58] Amongt the most successful representatives of this group in Britain are Barrie, Novello, Milne, Drinkwater, Lonsdale, Hoffe, Berkeley, B. Thomas, Ridley, Wallace, and Ervine. Most of the plays by Coward, Maugham and Priestley also belong here. In Germany the most successful authors of comedies were Bernauer, Oesterreicher, Arnold, Bach, Molnar, Götz, L. Fulda, Hinrichs, Lenz, Lippl, P. Schurek, W. Kollo, the late plays by Kaiser and some of the works by Zuckmayer.

beer. Largely their concern is with polishing the small-change of society chatter in Mayfair and Bayswater, with giving a clever twist to the obvious situation".[59]
The assumption is, of course, that the share of this category was much bigger in Britain than in Germany, where the importance of Schiller's dictum of theatre as a moral institution seems to make it unlikely that the repertoire should be dominated by purely entertaining plays. The educative aspect of the German repertoire seems to stand in clear contrast to a British programme determined by economic demands. But is it safe to conclude that the repertoires in York and Münster were fundamentally different?

In a framework of research which has largely ignored comparative aspects between theatre in Germany and Britain this study will show that the concentration on two typical provincial stages leads to remarkable results. It also proves that similar projects deserve scholarly attention, too.
Within the context of this dissertation the mutual experience of the Second World War in particular serves as a valuable model against which the similarities and differences can be articulated – always bearing in mind the most important difference after 1933: Britain being a democracy and Germany a dictatorship.

[59] Chisholm, Cecil. Repertory. An Outline of the Modern Theatre Movement. Production, Plays, Management. London: Davies, 1934. 95-96. Chisholm went on to assert that "their themes rarely rise above petty adulteries or the more tedious 'crookedness'; superficial slickness of technique alone interests them. They are commercial confectioners, one and all, occupied with the box-office formulae rather than with writing the enduring play" (ibid., 96).

History of Theatre in York

Theatre "is regarded as a commercial affair, part of the entertainment business, and playgoing, like smoking and drinking wine and spirits, is severely taxed."[70]

Successful theatre means not only good art but also good business.

Edith J.R. Isaacs[71]

Theatrical activity in York has a long tradition and, as in Münster, dates back to the Middle Ages. The history of the standing theatre can be divided into four different periods. After the first building had been erected in 1734 by Thomas Keregan it flourished under the offices of the impresario Tate Wilkinson and the successful establishment of the circuit company (1734-1803). The second period is marked by a rapid succession of managers and financial problems, although the company and the circuit still existed in theory (1804-1876). The following stage was a time of relative stability with long-serving managers (only two between 1877 and 1934). At the same time, however, it was denoted by radical changes in the dissolution of the circuit, the concentration on touring companies and the competition of the cinema. The fourth period started with the foundation of the "Citizens' Theatre" in 1934.

Although the divisions between the different periods are obvious there are also aspects of continuity. In contrast to Germany, theatre in Britain has always been regarded as a private enterprise. The principal requirement for theatre managers has never been to present a programme of high artistic and educational value but to run their theatre as a sound business. Theatre managers have always been entrepreneurs who had to make a financial profit and who depended on filling the theatre to capacity, preferably every night. A manager without financial success did not survive long, even if he was a gifted director and an outstanding actor.

York's Theatre Royal seems to be no exception. Whereas Münster's impresarios could rely at least on some financial backing from the prince- bishop, the celebrated Tate Wilkinson entirely depended on the profits his theatre business made. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries York's managers struggled to make the theatre pay, and Percy Hutchison tried out many different strategies to fight off the new competition

[70] Priestley, John Boynton. Theatre Outlook. London: Nicholson & Watson, 1947. 17.
[71] Theatre Arts 26 (1942): 3. Isaacs was editor of this leading American theatre journal.

from the "talkies" and the music hall. None of them received any substantial regular subsidies from the City Corporation. Even the Citizens' Theatre, a title which might suggest a municipal theatre of some kind, was not run by the Corporation but originated in the initiative of local businessmen who founded it as a limited company with shareholders and dividends. In addition, the lessees of the Theatre Royal had to pay a rapidly increasing annual rent, which rose from £650[72] in 1921 and £900 in 1931[73] to £1,280 in 1933[74]. This represents a doubling of the rent within a period of only twelve years.

The assumption, however, that the municipal authorities did not care about the theatre at all is not correct. From the turn of the nineteenth century the council was increasingly prepared to accept some responsibility for the theatre. Councillors in the Estates Committee, which was responsible for questions concerning the lease of or repairs to the building, started to appreciate the financial pressures, for example in connection with the challenge of the cinema. Relating to the scope of this study it will be especially interesting to look for parallels to the situation in Münster and whether there were occasions on which the Corporation agreed to become involved beyond a certain level, thereby recognising the value of the theatre as a cultural and educative institution.

A second aspect is linked to the first. Due to the commercial character of the Theatre Royal the role of the audience has always been much more important for York in financial terms than for Münster, where subsidies resulted in a greater independence. For British theatre managers in general it was crucial to win and to keep loyal patrons. Life was especially difficult for managers of provincial theatres who had to cater for the different tastes in relatively small communities. In York, the increased orientation of the gentry towards London in the early nineteenth century, the introduction of the Entertainment Tax in 1916 and the economic problems after 1929 had an immediate and crucial effect on the theatre's income. Managers had to counterbalance the negative effects. In order to keep a loyal following they presented opulent shows, variety programmes and popular entertainments in quick succession and at cheap prices. Most of the German provincial theatres, on the other hand, were taken into municipal ownership after 1918. Although they also relied on substantial attendance figures, their municipal status meant a vital guarantee and financial security. Whereas German

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[72] See *YEP*, 11 May 1933.

[73] See Estates Committee meeting of 13 July 1931 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 18).

managers tried to distinguish themselves artistically from other playhouses in the region,[75] this could only be a minor factor for York's managers. It seems that what made the Theatre Royal more attractive than the theatres in Leeds and Hull was rather the question of how fast it could secure the latest London shows or how cheap its tickets were. Although the quality of the ensemble became increasingly important after the introduction of the repertory company, it was the cheap ticket prices introduced in 1935 which seem to have brought the "Citizens' Theatre" on the road to success. This fact, however, does not mean that the character of the theatre programmes did not have any significance at all. With the introduction of repertory in the 1920s, but especially after the foundation of the permanent company, the quality of the repertoire became a key factor for theatre patrons.[76] Still the outlook of the programmes did not change fundamentally, and like other provincial playhouses the Theatre Royal continued to present a repertoire which was mainly characterised by light entertainment. Comedies, farces, musical plays, and light operas constituted the majority of the fare offered to York patrons – another aspect of continuity in York's theatre history.

Before the first theatre building on the site of the present Theatre Royal was erected in 1744 by Thomas Keregan's wife, strolling players had performed in York at different places.[77] Plays had been staged each year since 1715 during the Assizes, and in 1734 Thomas Keregan had built York's first permanent theatre. Although Royal Patents for theatrical performances had been granted to only two English theatres after the Restoration, and despite the fact that their monopoly had been affirmed by the Theatre Licensing Act of 1737, making dramatic performances illegal in York, theatrical activity did not stop.[78] As the Corporation had an interest in continuing performances, which were, after all, a valuable visitors' attraction, they seemed to have encouraged the evasion of the law. In 1744, Joseph Baker became manager, and the company started to

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[74] See Theatre Royal Sub-Committee meeting of 20 June 1933 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 132).

[75] For example by means of festivals dedicated to a single dramatist or composer. Münster, for example, gained a high reputation through its Händel revival in the mid-1920s. And after the take-over theatre managers tried to establish Münster as a theatre renowned for the revival of Grabbe plays.

[76] Letters-to-the-editor of the different newspapers in the 1930s and early 1940s clearly indicate that residents had become aware of the quality of plays and what they wanted to see.

[77] See Fitzsimmons, Linda. "The Theatre Royal, York." York History 4 (1981): 169-192. This article contains some valuable information on which the following is mainly based. For more detailed information see Rosenfeld, Sybil. The York Theatre. London: Society for Theatre Research, 2001. 1-37.

[78] Keregan's company continued to play "using the expedient of advertising the performance of a concert, with the play, interludes and afterpiece being given *gratis* during the interval" (Fitzsimmons, *Theatre Royal*, 170).

perform in the "New Theatre". They soon established themselves as a circuit company. As a small provincial town York could not provide audiences large enough to support a theatre sufficiently.[79] In 1765, however, Baker managed to open a completely refurbished and even larger theatre building on the same site, said to be more spacious and elegant than its London rivals.[80] Four years later the theatre received a royal patent, and in 1769 it was opened as the Theatre Royal. After decades of unlawful dramatic performances – announced as "concerts" – theatre in York eventually became legal.

Tate Wilkinson became impresario in 1770, and it was under his management that the Theatre Royal entered its "golden age". He enlarged the circuit so that it now included York, Leeds, Pontefract, Wakefield, Doncaster and Hull, and he enhanced the prestige of the Theatre Royal considerably. The company was praised as the best outside London. Wilkinson himself became one of the best known figures in the theatre world, and it was his management of which "every actor was talking".[81] As far as the repertoire is concerned Wilkinson managed to include most of the dramatic works by Shakespeare and Sheridan in the programme although profits were more likely to be made with spectacles involving extensive use of stage machinery. As a matter of fact Wilkinson only managed to make profits on Shakespeare when he was able to secure the services of well-known London stars such as Sarah Siddons or John Philip Kemble.[82]

After Tate Wilkinson's death, his son John took over in 1804. His management, however, was not successful. In 1813 he went bankrupt and dismissed the company. Apart from the fact that John did obviously not have his father's talents, it became increasingly difficult to run a theatre successfully in York as from the beginning of the nineteenth century the city deteriorated as a fashionable social centre.[83] Improved transport offered the opportunity for the wealthy gentry to spend the winter in London.

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[79] The 1747 circuit established by Joseph Baker included York, Newcastle, Beverley and Hull. He played in York from late December until May, in Newcastle from May until August, then he returned to York for the Summer Assizes and Race Week, went to Beverley to perform there between August and October and finally to Hull where the company stayed until December (see Fitzsimmons, *Theatre Royal*, 170).

[80] See York Courant, 8 January 1765. The seat prices were 2s.6d. for the new boxes, 2s. for the pit, 1s.6d. for the first gallery and 1s. for the upper gallery (see Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 40).

[81] Bernard, John. Retrospections of the Stage. Vol.1. London: Colburn & Bentley, 1830. 151.

[82] See Tillott, P. M., ed. A History of Yorkshire. The City of York. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961. 533-534.

[83] Tate Wilkinson had made it clear that he did not want his son to enter the theatre profession at all. He said that he had "wished him to have steered another course [...] and not have had him venture on the hazardous sea of a theatre, where once embarked, the ship cannot be stopped, but must ride out the storm or perish" (Wilkinson, Tate. The Wandering Patentee. Vol. III. York, 1795. 45).

Many events, like the Race and Assize Weeks, declined in prestige, and the theatre suffered from the loss of audience. The decline is illustrated through the high numbers of managers who followed each other in quick succession throughout the nineteenth century. Attempts to revive the old circuit of theatres failed and it gradually disintegrated. The repertoire, too, became an increasingly one-sided affair. Melodramas, Pantomimes, burlesques, extravaganzas, sensational novelties, travesties and adaptations of popular novels were produced to meet the demand for the spectacular.[84] Criticism grew within the community, and in 1853 the Corporation could only with some difficulty be prevented from closing "Satan's synagogue", as the theatre was called.[85]

Despite these problems the Theatre Royal was renovated and redecorated several times during the nineteenth century. Robert Mansel, for example, carried out extensive alterations. The interior was entirely remodelled and now appeared in semicircular shape as opposed to the old rectangular form. Additionally, two tiers of boxes, a gallery, and a commodious pit were built. To fund the renovation Mansel organised a public subscription, and he also managed to persuade the Corporation to offer financial assistance.[86] Further alterations to the theatre were carried out by John Coleman.[87] He removed the old middle gallery to make an improved dress circle and added a new upper circle with a promenade. He also extended the pit and reduced the number of boxes. On completion of the alterations in 1888, and especially with the later reconstruction of the façade, which produced the present neo-Gothic front, the Theatre Royal had changed its outlook into a typical Victorian theatre.

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[84] Programmes included a Dickens Craze succeeded by a Scott Craze, Dandy's Hobby Horse, a precursor of the bicycle, in 1819, "Ching Lau Lauro, the Paganini of all Necromancers, Ventriloquists, etc." in 1834, "Abel and his Dogs Hector and Wallace" in a series of canine dramas in 1851 and, as an example of later times, "Professor Cocker's 15 educated horses" giving children rides around the stage in 1888.

[85] See Tillott, *City of York*, 534.

[86] Ten years later the city even paid for the alteration of the theatre's façade including a pseudo-Elizabethan gable (see Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 218-221, 240).

[87] Coleman was theatre manager between 1864 and 1876.

After Coleman had gone bankrupt in 1876, the theatre was transferred to William Alfred Waddington who acted as impresario until 1901, when his son William Henry took over. The Waddingtons were responsible for substantial changes to the theatre's organisation. They made the final break with the old circuit and ran the Theatre Royal entirely as a receiving theatre. Some of the touring companies became regular visitors and, like the D'Oyly Carte or the Carl Rosa Light Opera companies, performed in York almost annually. These companies brought many notable pieces to York, for example plays by Pinero, Wilde and Shaw. Apart from these dramatic "highlights", however, the repertoire was quite mundane. In 1906, twice nightly variety was put on for the first time in a move quite obviously aimed at attracting the big audiences drawn by the newly opened Grand Opera House on Clifford Street.[88] Instead of developing a distinct and original character of its own, Waddington entered into direct competition with the new venue, steered the theatre towards variety and tried to jump on the music-hall bandwagon. The "novelties" presented included "Fred Karno's Troupe of Pantomimists", with "over ten tons of scenery" in 1908, and an international wrestling match for the middle-weight world championship in 1909.[89] The first film was shown in 1907 by the London Bioscope Company, without the management realising that it was precisely this medium which soon proved the greatest danger to the theatre's existence.

In what seems to be another direct reaction to the fresh appeal of the Grand Opera House, the Theatre Royal's interior was completely rebuilt in 1901/2; the roof was reconstructed, the width of both the pit and the stage was increased and access improved, electric lighting was installed, and the dress and upper circles were furnished with red velvet tip-up chairs. The alteration scheme was both the most expensive and the most extensive building programme for the last 130 years. In relation to the question formulated at the beginning concerning the responsibility and involvement of the Corporation concerning "their" theatre two questions arise: Who paid for the huge building programme, which in the end amounted to more than £6,680?[90] And: In how far was the building programme a direct reaction to the opening of the Opera House? Fitzsimmons claimed that "the Corporation tried to counteract the Opera House's appeal by rebuilding the interior of the Theatre Royal", and Rosenfeld argued on similar lines

[88] The Grand Opera House, which later became the Empire, was opened in 1901. Its capacity of 1,800 people was considerably higher than the Theatre Royal's 1,300. The Empire's seating capacity seems to have been reduced later as Rowntree in the 1930s mentioned a figure of 1,224 (see Borthwick Institute. *Rowntree Papers PP/21*, 32).

[89] See Fitzsimmons, *Theatre Royal*, 186-187.

[90] See Estates Committee Meeting 12 May 1902. York City Council, Estates Committee 1894-1905. 448.

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when asserting that the Corporation was "afraid that its property might suffer depreciation owing to the erection by a syndicate of the new Grand Opera House" and, therefore, "proposed to rebuild the interior of the Theatre".[91]

A close look at the sources, however, reveals that these assertions need to be clarified as the immediate reason for the rebuilding was quite mundane: the theatre was in desperate need of repair. The roof especially was "in a very dangerous state, the nature having gone quite out of the wood, where it is not so worm-eaten, as to be positively unsafe". The architect consulted proposed immediate action be taken because it was "impossible to say how long the present roof will last" as "the first heavy fall of snow might cause such damage as to necessitate its entire removal".[92] The timing had nothing to do with the opening of the Opera House either but coincided with the renewal of the Waddingtons' lease in 1900. In a move to outbid their rival Milton Bode, the Waddingtons had promised to spend £1,000 on alterations to the theatre, and it was under these circumstances that the Corporation became interested in the general condition of the building.[93] The City Engineer examined the theatre and reported that the necessary repairs "to be done by the Corporation as Landlords" were much more

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[91] Fitzsimmons, *Theatre Royal*, 187; Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 311.

[92] Quotes from architect Frank Tugwell of Scarborough whom the Corporation had asked to have a thorough look at the building especially in view of its safety; as reported at a special council meeting on 17 June 1901 (York City Council, Council Minutes 1900-1901. 445-447). Tugwell told councillors that "the Theatre is unsatisfactory both from an Actor's and a Spectator's point of view", he claimed that "the proper staging of plays and working of the scenery" was impossible and the whole place required "thoroughly overhauling". He then submitted a comprehensive building plan to enlarge the auditorium and the stage, lower the pit, remodel the sanitary arrangements, replace the roof, and added that "electric light, fire hydrants, fireproof curtain, alterations to the sprinklers" needed to be provided for, too. Regarding the costs the architect quoted that including the decoration to finish "the building in a simple and artistic fashion" (but no "gorgeous decoration") the estimated costs would amount to £5,292. Tugwell's report is remarkable not only because it illustrates the bad state the theatre was in at the turn of the century but also as it offers interesting insights into its architecture.

[93] In the process of negotiations, however, Bode promised to spend the same sum on alterations to the theatre. The Estates Committee, therefore, asked the two bidders to produce a detailed plan on how they intended to use the money. Both of them stressed the idea that they would spend the money "as the Corporation desire" and not "on tenant's fixtures". Although Waddington's application was not better his tender was accepted (see Estates Committee Meeting of 22 November 1900. York City Council, Estates Committee 1894-1905. 352-355; see also council meeting of 3 December 1900, York City Council, Council Minutes 1900-1901. 32-35.). It seems as if the Corporation successfully squeezed the offer of spending £1,000 on improvements to the theatre out of Waddington, who must have felt obliged to make a generous offer in order to be successful. Having run the theatre for 23 years before was not enough to convince the members of the Estates Committee. They tried to keep the negotiations open to get the best possible deal, although they had already agreed on accepting Waddington's offer on their meeting on 25 October 1900 (see York City Council, Estates Committee 1894-1905. 346).
Another aspect became obvious in the course of negotiations: The Committee seemed to have had a strong interest in keeping the theatre in the hands of a York resident, which Waddington was. Also they obviously disapproved of the idea that Bode wanted to incorporate the Theatre Royal in his business empire (he was already running eight theatres and different companies) and only intended to "locate at York a first-class Manager" without himself being there – just as Hutchison later did (see York City Council, Council Minutes 1900-1901. 9-10).

serious and costly than had been expected.[94] The Estates Committee approached Waddington and decided to "reinstate in an up-to-date style the whole of the interior of the Theatre and to provide improved exits, the Corporation to contribute £1,000 towards the cost and Messrs. Waddington also to pay £1,000 and to pay interest on the balance of expenditure above £2,000 at the rate of 7.5% per annum during the term of their new lease".[95] It can hardly be claimed that the Corporation "tried to counteract the Opera House's appeal by rebuilding the interior" of the theatre. Quite the contrary, the repairs were neither solely paid for by the Corporation nor was this move a direct reaction to the opening of the Opera House.

Although, therefore, practical necessity seemed to have been the source of motivation rather than a deliberate plan to protect the theatre against the music-hall's competition, it is interesting to note that the city scrapped the interest only four years later in view of the difficult financial situation of the theatre.[96] This move is quite remarkable, as the city for the first time acknowledged its responsibility for the theatre. As much as both Fitzsimmons and Rosenfeld misinterpret the city's role in the reconstruction process, the general attitude of both the council and York residents still seem to have changed considerably at the beginning of the century.

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[94] The City Engineer reported that "he found the roof very defective and that the screen between the Auditorium and the Stage was lath and plaster only". On his report the Estates Committee together with Waddington decided "that alterations should be made on a larger scale than that already agreed upon" (see Estates Committee Meeting of 7 May 1901. York City Council, Estates Committee 1894-1905. 376). In a special council meeting on the same matter it was made clear that the Corporation would have to fulfil certain duties as they were "under a liability to maintain and keep the roofs, main walls, and main timbers in good repair, to paint the outside wood and iron work, to wire the Theatre for the purpose of a supply of electric light, and to provide modern sanitary conveniences" (meeting on 20 May 1901. York City Council, Council Minutes 1900-1901. 385-386).

[95] Estates Committee Meeting of 7 May 1901. York City Council, Estates Committee 1894-1905. 376. It is interesting to note that during the negotiations concerning the building plans aesthetic consideration only played a minor role. The Estates Committee as well as Waddington were obviously only concerned with the costs, which both wanted to keep as low as possible.

[96] In August 1906 Waddington asked the Estates and Bridges Committee to transfer his interest in the lease of the Theatre Royal to Frank MacNaughton of Sadler's Wells for the remainder of the term of his lease on the condition that he continued to guarantee the rent. As a reason he stated the opposition he had met since the commencement of the lease – with which he almost certainly meant the competition from the Empire – and that he had not been able to run the theatre at a profit. The Committee declined the application but offered help on alternative lines. As they were "being desirous of maintaining and upholding the present prestige and character of the Theatre, which is the property of the Corporation, [they would A.H.] recommend the Council to forego charging Messrs. Waddington anything by way of additionally rent on the improvements which were effected some time ago in the Theatre, and which improvements were being paid for by Messrs. Waddington at the rate of 7.5 per cent. per annum on the capital outlay" (Report of the Estates and Bridge Committee on their meeting on 31 August 1906. York City Council, Council Minutes 1905-1906. 912). The council accepted the recommendation of the committee and decided to scrap the interest, which resulted in a reduction of Waddington's rent by £351 (see Council Meeting 3 September 1906. York City Council, Council Minutes 1905-1906. 965-968).

Rumours that the theatre was to be converted into a music hall in 1905 caused the protest of a group of prominent citizens who appealed to the council and urged the city to safeguard the residents' interests. They even claimed that the city had a responsibility to protect the theatre as a "potent educational force".[97] This protest may well have been a factor in the decision to scrap the interest Waddington had to pay in addition to his lease.

Although the Theatre Royal enjoyed a grand reopening in February 1902, the alterations together with the variety programme did not prevent the decline during the following years.[98] It is questionable if Waddington's surrender can be blamed solely on the competition of the music halls,[99] but their increasing popularity certainly played an important role. He eventually had to give up in 1910, after the family had run the theatre for 35 years.

Percy Hutchison, a London based theatrical entrepreneur and actor, became manager of the Theatre Royal in 1911, and he ran the theatre on similar terms as his predecessors. In contrast to Waddington, however, he only rarely stayed in York and directed the business from London, where he managed different theatres and various companies. Hutchison spent most of his time on tours but kept York audiences informed of his endeavours in Canada or South Africa through the Programme Notes. When he visited York with special productions it was always a major civic occasion, with the Lord Mayor attending the show. During his absence, an assistant manager carried out the business.

The biggest impact on Hutchison's early years, however, was constituted by the First World War, during which the Theatre Royal remained open – in contrast to the Städtische Bühnen. The theatre not only presented an increasingly nationalistic programme it also contributed to the war effort through voluntary contributions for War Loans or collections for charities like the "The Stranded Sailors and Soldiers' Fund of

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[97] The full text of the "Memorial" was read at the council meeting. The group noticed "with extreme regret the proposal to convert the Theater Royal in to a Variety House, thereby depriving a large number of the Inhabitants of the only opportunity of seeing the legitimate drama and opera in York. That this historic house, with its worthy past, should pass into a 'twice nightly' variety place is deplorable on general grounds. There is already every facility in the City for those whose tastes desire a variety entertainment, and your petitioners most strongly urge that in any re-arrangement that may be necessary at the Theatre Royal the Corporation will duly safeguard the interest of the Citizens who look to a well-conducted Theatre as a potent educational force." Unfortunately, the minutes do not tell us whether a discussion took place (see York City Council, Council Minutes 1905-1906, 965-966).

[98] See Yorkshire Gazette *(YG)*, 1 March 1902. It is interesting to note that this article contains only an indirect reference to the "Empire". On opening the Theatre Royal the Lord Mayor said that he "had some experience in regard to bazaars, and should there be any more theatres built in York he might look forward to becoming an expert in opening them also (Laughter)."

York".[100] The ticket prices were generally reduced, but private soldiers in uniform were admitted at even cheaper prices or had to pay nothing at all.[101] These measures, however, were not only the reasons for loss of revenue.[102] Audiences declined because of residents being called up, darkened streets, travelling restrictions and patrons who believed it inappropriate to visit places of amusement in war time.[103] In addition, the bar receipts, until then a considerable proportion of the theatre's revenue, were drastically reduced by the Defence of the Realm Act in 1915, which regulated the drink trade.[104] Worse still was the financial duty imposed on all theatres in the form of the Entertainment or Amusement Tax in 1916. The tax resulted in a surcharge on tickets from a halfpenny to a shilling.[105] The result was that people tended to go for the cheaper seats or went to the theatre less frequently, and many managers complained of a serious decline in business. Instead of cutting the tax, however, the government raised it even higher in 1917, which resulted in a 50% rise in seat prices in some theatres.[106] Together with the rising cost of materials, rents and rates, the duties became unbearable, and some provincial theatres had to close.[107]

After the problems of the First World War and the immediate post-war years, business at the Theatre Royal recovered by the mid 1920s. Until the early 1930s performances usually took place on six nights a week at 7.30 pm plus two matinees on Wednesdays and Saturdays, which were held at 2.30 pm. Sunday performances were prohibited, although managers on various occasions tried to obtain an exemption of this rule. The main programme was often preceded by little comedy sketches or one-act plays.

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[99] As claimed by Tillott (see Tillott, *City of York*, 534).
[100] Entertainments programme in July 1917 held at the Assembly Rooms.
[101] Mrs M. Dawes recalled that the theatre "was thrown open free of charge to wounded soldiers" (see *YEP*, 23 December 1932). Regular prices were reduced to Dress Circle 2/-, Orchestra Stalls 1/6, Upper Circle and Pit 9d., and Gallery 6d. (see Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 318).
[102] In March 1917 the theatre had to be closed for a month due to a fire, which, however, was not caused by the enemy. The theatre opened again after a few weeks because the "damage is infinitely less than what originally thought it would be" (*YEP*, 10 March 1917). In the event of an air raid warning, however, performances took place in improvised lighting and actors tried to continue to play their parts without any sign of nerves. On one occasion in 1915, when there was an air raid while a company was performing the spy drama The Man Who Stayed at Home, the coolness of the company prevented a panic. Although bombs could be heard dropping in the city, the players carried on (see *YEP*, 23 December 1932).
[103] See Collins, L. J. Theatre at War, 1914-18. London: Macmillan, 1998. 45-46.
[104] In some places this act cut theatre bar receipts by 50 per cent (see Collins, *Theatre at War*, 46).
[105] At the Theatre Royal the tax raised the 3d. to 6d. seats by 1d., the 6d. to 1s./9d. seats by 2d. and the boxes by 1s./- (see Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 318).
[106] See Collins, *Theatre at War*, 47.
[107] Collins concludes that "the end result was a loss of work for the theatrical profession; a loss of entertainment for the public, and a loss of revenue for the Government" (Collins, *Theatre at War*, 47).

Various stars came to visit York, first class touring companies like the ones of Robert Courtneidge and George Dance included the city in their itinerary, and many successful plays were transferred from London stages.

In 1922 Hutchison introduced annual "Repertory Seasons", which were performed by a London company. Repertory, however, only started to become popular in York with the "The Lena Ashwell Players" from 1925.[108] In 1930, Hutchison even founded his own repertory company, the "Percy Hutchison Players" (PHP), who performed in York during the summer months.[109] This move, too, proved successful and "PHP" returned for even longer seasons in 1931 and 1932.[110] The Theatre Royal, however, was not turned into a repertory theatre with its own resident company. Despite the relative successes in other cities such as Liverpool, Birmingham and at Manchester Rusholme Rep, Hutchison let repertory rule only during the summer months, when expectations concerning attendances were lower anyway. Although repertory was cheaper, it obviously seemed safer to rely on touring companies instead of ensembles of actors whom hardly anybody knew. York audiences, however, had already acquired a taste for repertory and readily responded to the idea of having a standing company. Instead of getting to know a new ensemble every week they obviously preferred to see the same actors each time.[111] Apart from the advantages of ensemble playing or the chance of witnessing the development of certain actors, the feeling of a personal relationship to "their" company seemed to have been an important factor for the audience's appreciation and for repertory's later success.[112] This close relationship occasionally resulted in friendships between actors and patrons, although it mainly remained a secret

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[108] The "Lena Ashwell Players" were invited again in the following years and received official honours such as a Grand Civic Night in 1926. For more information on Lena Ashwell, who had been organising tours of actors and musicians in the European war zones during the First World War, see Collins, *Theatre at War*, 147-176).

[109] In the declamatory way of a self-confident actor-manager Hutchison announced in 1930 that he proposed "to establish my own Repertory Company in York presenting the masterpieces of our greatest authors living and dead. The company has been recruited entirely from the London stage" (*YEP*, 26 April 1930). This last point, however, is not true as two local actresses also became members of the company: Muriel Thorpe and Anne Benson who had started as an amateur in the Rowntree Players (see Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 324).

[110] In 1930 the "Percy Hutchison Players" played between March and July, in 1931 between May to September, and in 1932 they even performed between February and September.

[111] During the 1920s, York residents became increasingly enthusiastic about the idea of a repertory theatre. In an article about York's theatrical history, Alderman Birch in August 1934 stressed the importance of "The Guild of York Players" for the current Citizens' Theatre. The ultimate goal of the guild, which had been formed in 1926/27 as a federation of dramatic societies in the York area, had always been the foundation of a permanent repertory theatre in York (see *YG*, 17 August 1934).

[112] Proof of the repertory's popularity is also the success of block-bookings through the "Theatre Royal Playgoers Club". Residents until today recall with appreciation their regular theatre visits. Mrs Willis, for example, remembered that they "had the same seat each week – you went and claimed your ticket during the afternoon the day before. Each week. We were upstairs. I can give you it to this day: D4 and D5, and

admiration.[113] One of the most important reasons for repertory's success, however, seems to have been the cheap ticket prices. From the beginning of Hutchison's summer drama seasons in 1922 to the performances of his "PHP" in the early 1930s repertory was offered at reduced prices.

Percy Hutchison did not have the chance to enjoy the early successes of repertory for long. At the end of 1920s economic problems became increasingly pressing. The effects of the Wall Street Crash were felt immediately in York – as in Münster. People could not afford to go the theatre any longer or, if they still could, not as often as they might have done before. Apart from that, theatre managers still had to pay Entertainment Tax.[114] Ticket prices, therefore, became a crucial factor in the struggle for audiences. Already in Summer 1923, Hutchison had introduced specially reduced tickets, which "will easily give the cheapest full night's entertainment in York".[115] In 1931 he boasted that his prices were half those of Leeds', and a few years later he entered into what seems to have been a local price war with the Empire.[116]

Even more important was the increasingly fierce competition of the cinema. From the beginning of the 1920s, cinema had developed into the ultimate attraction, with an ever growing popularity. It was synonymous with a new cultural experience and the symbol of the fashionable American way of life, which had become so desirable after the First World War. Theatre, in contrast, seemed old-fashioned, outdated and something for the older generation. At the end of the 1930s York was home to nine cinemas – in 1934 alone five new cinemas opened – and the younger generation especially went with great

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we never missed. I mean it was the end of the world if you missed." (York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen*, 13-15)

[113] The case of Nellie Woodhouse, whose theatre diaries were recently presented to York's City Archives as a permanent loan (and which have not been available for research before), is a good example of the appreciation which many actors enjoyed. Born in 1922, she was a regular theatre-goer in the 1930s and 1940s and hardly missed a performance. In 15 books she collected theatre programmes, press cuttings, hand-written cast lists and photos. Her special appreciation concerned Diana Morrison and John Ellison, whom she dedicated a whole volume of her diaries as their "friend and admirer" (see Collection Nellie Woodhouse. York City Archives, Acc 639).

[114] In 1931 the Entertainment Tax was further increased due to the economic problems. In November, the Theatre Royal's management in a press advert noted that its cheap "prices 3/6 to 6d. [are A.H.] inclusive of new Entertainment Tax" (*YEP*, 5 November 1931). It is interesting to note, that the tax was still in place after the Second World War although it had lost its original purpose.

[115] See Theatre Royal Programme Notes, June 1923.

[116] In a press advert Hutchison promised that he offered tickets at prices "Nearly 50% Less Than Leeds Theatres" (*YEP*, 5 November 1931). In March 1933 Hutchison announced that "on and after Monday, March 13th, ALL Stalls will be 2/6, Booked and Reserved". On the same day, the Empire declared that patrons were offered a "Great Reduction in Prices of Admission" (*YEP*, 6 March 1933).
Other examples of attempts to increase audience numbers include specially reduced prices for performances of the O'Mara Opera Company in January 1932 ("the cheapest prices that Grand Opera has ever been played to in York" – Theatre Royal advert in *YEP*, 18 January 1932) and reduced ticket prices for Monday performances, which were usually quiet, in February 1932.

appreciation.[117] Apart from its attractiveness, cinema tickets were considerably cheaper than an ordinary theatre visit, which was a great asset at a time of economic depression. As a consequence, many theatres around the country were forced to close, and in 1932 in Hull and Scarborough no first-class theatre existed anymore.[118]

Percy Hutchison tried to face the challenge with a double strategy. On the one hand, he claimed that he "would rather surrender my Lesseeship than be a party to turning York's historic Theatre into what would eventually mean an American Picture Theatre".[119] On the other hand he asked the Corporation in 1931 to change his contract in order "to be allowed to show Talkie films, if need be, for six months in each year, in place of the present terms of the lease which provides for [...] the showing of cinema films for 3 months in each year".[120] The public knew nothing of these plans, and theatre enthusiasts still held Hutchison in high regard. The local press even referred to him as "the man who has saved the drama for York".[121] The occasion was Hutchison's 21st year of management at the Theatre Royal in February 1932, which he – despite the fact that he was already insolvent – celebrated "in style". After all, he felt he was a well-known figure of the theatre world, both as a manager and as an actor. In 1932, Hutchison was 58 years old and had been engaged as actor-manager for more than 30 years.[122]

Soon after the celebrations, however, Hutchison was declared bankrupt in a remarkable court ruling in May 1933, in which the general public took great interest. Hutchison had to appear before the "Registrar at York Bankruptcy Court" for "his public examination".[123] It was discovered that his liabilities amounted to £11,131 12s. 11d. Under these circumstances Hutchison had to agree "that he could not have been solvent

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[117] For personal accounts of York cinema goers see York Oral History Project, *Memories of Stage and Screen*, especially pages 40-55.

[118] See Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 326.

[119] Theatre Royal Programme Notes, 14 March 1932. Already in 1930 Hutchison had appealed for public support of the theatre, which was "in danger of annihilation by the American talkies. Are you going to allow it to die, or will you back us up in our endeavour to save the theatre", he asked (*YG*, 10 May 1930).

[120] Estates Committee meeting of 13 July 1931 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 18). The occasion was a letter from Percy Hutchison in which he asked for a "further term of seven years under the Lease", which the committee approved. The lease was renewed in February 1932.

[121] The press devoted long articles to Hutchison's "Grand Anniversary Week" claiming "'Twas 'Percy's Night' at the Theatre Royal, York, yesterday. Surely on such an occasion the man who has saved the drama for York can be given the name he has earned in all the households of the city [...] during the past 21 years. If it must be a 'Mister', let us say it was 'Mr. York's Night'" (*YEP*, 9 February 1932).

[122] Prior to his South-African tour in 1927 the Programme Notes in a "Theatre Talk" claimed that Hutchison had produced 78 plays, controlled 200 companies and 17 London theatres during his life. In his rather dire autobiography Hutchison quoted his uncle Charles Wyndham who had not approved of his taking over the lease at York as it "is too little an affair for you to bother about" (Hutchison, Percy. Masquerade. London: Harrap, 1936. 160).

[123] See "Mr. Percy Hutchison's Debts" (*YEP*, 11 May 1933), on which the following is mainly based. See also *YG*, 13 April 1934, which contains interesting information on the case in hindsight.

when he renewed his seven years' lease of York Theatre Royal in February, 1932".[124] According to Hutchison, there had been five main causes of failure: bad trade and general depression, the competition of the "talkies", the debt of £4,000 "I incurred with Trans-Canada-Theatre, Limited, in the year 1921", the Entertainment Tax, the losses on productions and touring companies in general and his 1932 Canadian tour in particular. It is interesting to note that despite his huge losses Hutchison did not feel guilty of any offence, as during all his career his "financial status had varied very considerably". He claimed that there was always the probability "that one of his productions would prove a brilliant success, and he would then have been able to retrieve his position". The fact that since 1930 he had been living on debts did not seem to worry him much either. He added that "had he not been pressed by four York creditors and one at London for a small sum of £37 he would have been able to pay his creditors in full in time". Apart from the fact that this statement did not correspond to reality, as his arrears in rents and rates had amounted to £715 by January 1933,[125] it did not convince the judges who accused him of "reckless extravagance".[126] They produced a list of expenditures which must have left loyal theatre patrons speechless. According to their report Hutchison took a lease on an additional house in 1931 because he needed "fresh air", he spent £1,100 a year on his wife and himself although he was losing money, the same sum he used annually for his London house, which was furnished with expensive antiques, and another £500 in 1932 alone on "hospitality". An additional problem was that Hutchison could not produce any accounts for his personal expenditure, it was only estimated. The trustees, however, were far from satisfied with his "simple expression, 'I gave her £1,000'" – regarding the allowance he had made to his wife. In replying Hutchison did not reject the information given but denied "reckless extravagance". Not only had the public expected of him such a lavish lifestyle but it had also been just for a man in his position. In April 1934 Hutchison was eventually acquitted and granted discharge from bankruptcy.[127]

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[124] He declared, however, "that up to three years ago his tenancy of the Theatre Royal had resulted in profit" (*YEP*, 11 May 1933).

[125] See Estates Committee meeting of 24 January 1933 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 103). Although Hutchison had paid £300 towards these arrears by February 1933, he still owed the Corporation considerably more than £37. On 4 April 1933 the Town Clerk reported that Percy Hutchison had filled his petition in bankruptcy (see Estates Committee meeting of 4 April 1933. Ibid., 115).

[126] In April 1934, the Official Receiver, although agreeing with some of the reasons for Hutchison's bust, not only repeated this claim but also stated that "the amount of the bankrupt's personal expenditure has been unjustifiable under the circumstances and has been an additional cause" (*YG*, 13 April 1934).

[127] The success of Percy Hutchison's application, which meant him leaving the court as a free man, was the only way creditors could get some of their money back.

The Hutchison case was a crucial event for the Theatre Royal's future, and can be seen in direct relation with the foundation of the non-profit making venture in 1935.[128] The disappointing experiences with high-handed and self-satisfied managers left many residents thinking about alternative models for the running of "their" theatre. The fact that Hutchison, whom they had only just celebrated as "the man who has saved the drama for York", had not only lived on credit but also denied any responsibility, must have left many patrons with a feeling of having been betrayed.[129]

After Hutchison had left, the problems were by no means solved. The theatre was closed between April and September 1933 amid little public interest in its future.[130] After the problems encountered even the permanent closure of the theatre was a realistic option. When the theatre was re-let to Stanley Weetham Crawshay of Scarborough in July 1933 this lack of interest did not wane. Even immediately before the opening week under the new management the press did not cover the event. Quite obviously, Percy Hutchison's case had left many people paralysed, and only little interest in the theatre's future endeavours remained. Crawshay promised to carry out many improvements to the theatre's interior and assured councillors that he would stage drama and musical plays not only for 30 weeks but also for the rest of the year. The delicate question of screening films was, therefore, avoided, and this promise may well have been crucial for the Corporation's decision to accept his tender.[131] After he had taken possession of the theatre, Crawshay produced a long list of repairs he wanted to have carried out, and although the Corporation had initially decided not to contribute a significant amount to

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[128] The case is also interesting in a wider perspective in terms of social history: How come that Percy Hutchison, after all hardly a major figure in the national theatre landscape, felt he had to show off to that extent? In his living style he quite obviously copied the "biggies" of the business to present himself as a vital part of the establishment – and as a legitimate heir to his uncle's legacy.

[129] In his autobiography (see footnote 122), Hutchison mentioned with no word his commercial failure in York but rather concentrated on its ghost stories and other obscure anecdotes. After he had left York Hutchison remained in the business. We find his name in a 1944 British Drama League publication, of which he was one of the co-opted members from the "Touring Managers' Association" (see British Drama League. Twenty-Five Years of the British Drama League 1919-1944. Oxford: Alden, 1944).

[130] During this period of closure the newspapers kept silent. There were no articles about the current situation or any future plans, and the public did not take an interest through letters-to-the-editor either.

[131] Crawshay must have known that three months before the Council had decided that "it be a condition in any new lease that the theatre be used for theatrical performances only" (meeting on 20 March 1933 (York City Council, Council Minutes, 1932-1933. 271). The Estates Committee had proposed this addition to the old terms of lease, which had asked for 30 weeks of "theatrical plays" but had allowed for "variety entertainments and concerts of good and unobjectionable kind at other times". As this expression did not prohibit the showing of films explicitly Percy Hutchison did so (see Estates Committee meeting of 23 June 1924 (York City Council, Council Minutes, 1923-1924. 686). Before the negotiations with Crawshay started, however, the terms of lease were altered. The lease still allowed for "variety entertainments and concerts" but added: "not silent or 'talkie' cinema shows" (see Estates Committee meeting of 4 April 1933 (York City Council, Council Minutes, 1932-1933. 352). Cinema and theatre were thereby officially regarded as two different and even competing forms of entertainment for the first time.

the expenses, they eventually agreed to a much larger scheme along Crawshay's lines.[132] It is interesting to note that the Corporation was again willing to consent to a substantial commitment despite the fact that the terms of the lease only required them to pay for basic repairs.[133] As far as the programme was concerned Crawshay returned to visiting companies and did not pursue the repertory idea any further. He survived as manager only for a few months, and in April 1934 the Corporation took possession of the theatre again after he had failed to pay the rent.[134] The playhouse remained closed until August 1934, and its future seemed as uncertain as ever.

In contrast to the period of closure in 1933, however, the public became interested in the theatre's future again. The obvious reason was the formation of a local committee whose intention to preserve the theatre as a legitimate playhouse found a substantial echo in the community.[135] In March 1934 they approached the Estates Committee and discussed the possibility of granting a lease for the Theatre Royal to a company controlled by local residents.[136] The driving force behind this group was arguably Seebohm Rowntree, the proprietor of "Rowntrees", one of the leading chocolate producers and a model of the socially conscious industrialist.[137] After only a month the

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[132] The members of the Estates Committee had originally decided not to bear more than 50% of the cost of re-upholstering certain seats "not exceeding £100" (see Theatre Royal Sub-Committee meeting of 27 July 1933 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 142). Crawshay, however, also wanted new lamps, carpets and curtains, the whitewashing of walls and ceilings, a new electrical installation for the stage and a new switchboard. The estimated overall costs amounted to £730, but although this exceeded by far the sum agreed upon before, the Sub-Committee "authorised the immediate carrying out of the work". In Crawshay's defence, however, one must say that the theatre seems to have been in a poor state. The faulty heating in particular caused people to walk out in winter "refusing to come again" (Theatre Royal Sub-Committee meeting of 5 August 1933. Ibid., 142-144).

[133] Before Crawshay took over the lease the Estates Committee had already agreed to carry out several repairs in the theatre, which, according to the Conditions of the Lease, the Corporation was not obliged to pay for. They decided, however, "that the Auditorium electric fittings be modernised, the stage switch board removed and the Fire Proof curtain made good" (Theatre Royal Sub-Committee meeting of 20 June 1933 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 132-133).

[134] In view of the amount due for rent, rates and electricity the Town Clerk had been "instructed to inform the Lessee that unless the amount due for rent is paid within 7 days proceedings will be taken for the recovery thereof and steps taken to determine the lease" (Theatre Royal Sub-Committee meeting of 15 February 1934 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 182). In April the arrears amounted to £621 13s. 3d. (see meeting of 16 April 1934. Ibid., 197).

[135] Support, however, was not unanimous. After the Council's decision to accept the offer of the local company, the Yorkshire Gazette commented that although "many people would lament the use of the theatre for any other purposes than that of legitimate drama, [...] it cannot be ignored that public taste has changed and there is keen competition which has to be met from places which are providing the public with a cheaper form of entertainment" (*YG*, 11 May 1934).

[136] The deputation consisted of Messrs. Rowntree, Bloor, Birch, Farrar, Stuart, Wilkinson and Mrs. Shaw (see meeting of 27 March 1934 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 191).

[137] Rowntree's studies of poverty in York are regarded as seminal today (Poverty: A Study of Town Life appeared in 1901, a second study called Poverty and Progress was published in 1941). The latter book includes some remarks regarding the Theatre Royal and the foundation of the repertory company (see

press informed the public that the theatre was let to a limited company for two years at a rent of £800.[138] To finance the venture the committee raised a capital of £2,300 in £1 shares and founded the "York Citizens' Theatre Ltd".[139]

The importance of this move can hardly be over-estimated. Not only did York residents show that they were prepared to accept responsibility for the theatre, they also acknowledged it as a community enterprise for the first time. In a rapid and remarkable move the Theatre Royal was handed over to a group of citizens who were determined to save "their" theatre and, also, to put it on a sound financial basis. The significance of this decision was widely acknowledged.[140] In view of the comparative character of this study it seems important to point out that this whole undertaking would never have been possible in Münster, or, indeed, anywhere in Germany. First of all, theatre was regarded as a public concern undertaken and paid for by the state, regional authorities, or the local councils. Secondly there was, and still is, a deep distrust towards private entrepreneurs running a theatre, and even a "Bürgerinitiative" of local businessmen seems hardly imaginable in Germany.

The Theatre Royal re-opened in August 1934. After a first attempt to carry on as before, with touring companies and at the old prices, had failed, a weekly repertory company was established in February 1935. The "York Citizens' Theatre" called upon residents to support the venture,[141] and the new management organised an inaugural public meeting to introduce the company, which consisted mainly of London artists.[142] This event showed how broadly based the alliance for a civic theatre had already become.

Rowntree, Seebohm B. Poverty and Progress. A Second Social Survey of York. London: Longman, 1942. 413-415).

[138] The press reported that the "Estates Committee have considered the question of the letting of the Theatre Royal, York, and they recommend that it be let to a limited company to be formed by Messrs. Crombies and Wilkinsons on behalf of a local committee" (*YEP*, 30 April 1934).

[139] See Public Record Office [PRO]. BT 31/33529/290285 York Citizens Theatre Ltd. 731-733. The company was formally incorporated and registered with the Board of Trade on 17 July 1934. As one of the "objects for which the Company is established" the document stated "to promote or aid in any way that may be deemed proper the interest of drama and theatrical entertainment" (ibid., 732). The PRO file also lists the 157 "persons holding shares in York Citizen Theatre Limited" (ibid., 113).

[140] The Duke of York stated that "as a Citizen of York I am glad to hear of this communal enterprise to maintain the Theatre Royal as a York Citizens' Theatre. I am glad to know of this endeavour to preserve drama and the best type of plays for the people of York" (*YEP*, 8 August 1934).

[141] It was made clear that "henceforward we shall not be dependent on Touring Companies", but "we believe we can give you first rate entertainment, and it rests with you to give us the support which will enable us to carry on" (statement published on 4 February 1935, see *YG*, 8 February 1935).

[142] Among those in the company were Joan Ingoldby, Mavis Edwards, Betty Barton, Patricia Wilding, Robert Morley, Christopher Casson, Edward Sinclair, and Walter Pemberton.

Apart from Rowntree and the Lord Mayor, Ben Iden Payne, the director of the Shakespeare Festival Company at Stratford, the Archdeacon A. C. England and Major-General Jackson of the Northern Command took part in the inauguration meeting. The Archdeacon assured the theatre of the Church's support as good theatre "will educate, entertain and stimulate". And Rowntree urged the public "to look upon the theatre as a civic institution and not as money-making concern".[143] It is highly interesting in this context that these quotes could have been heard at a similar occasion in Münster, too.

The immediate start of repertory, however, was not successful. During the summer the theatre was closed for another three months, obviously due to its reorganisation.[144] To enhance the financial status of the theatre the company was registered as a non-profit making concern in May 1935 and was therefore exempt from Entertainment Tax. And when Redvers Leech from Coventry joined the theatre as managing director, the project finally turned into a success after the second start of repertory in September 1935.[145] The changes he introduced, however, were substantial. Leech instituted a twice nightly programme with performances at 6.30 pm and 8.50 pm, a system of block booking and radically reduced prices in a move to be competitive with the cinema.[146] The company did not include any London stars but was a basic one consisting of fourteen actors – a fact which added to the feeling of loyalty in the public. And indeed, from the beginning the company enjoyed enormous backing from York residents.[147] Attendances rose to 10,000 a week, suddenly even Monday audiences became considerable[148], and at the end of the first season patrons caused a storm of protest because they did not want to see

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[143] See *YG*, 8 February 1935. In a "Prospectus" the new directors of the company stressed "that if the best possible entertainment is to be given in a provincial theatre, it must be run, not from a profit-making point of view, but with the object of supplying the best entertainment which can be given" (see PRO. BT 31/33529/290285. York Citizens Theatre Ltd. 75).

[144] Plans to open a summer school for acting in the Theatre Royal. The Evening Press, however, announced that until the autumn season started "students will give public performances once a week" (*YEP*, 15 June 1935).

[145] See confirmation of "alteration in the memorandum of association" (change into a non-profit making concern) of 27 April 1935 (PRO. BT 31/33529/290285. York Citizens Theatre Ltd. 105).

[146] Prices new and old were as follows Dress Circle first two rows 2/6 (3/6 old), Dress Circle remainder 1/6 (3/6), Stalls 1/6 (3/6), Pit 9d (1/6), Upper Circle 7d (1/6), Gallery 4d (9d) (see Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 331). The prices stayed the same until 1943 when they were raised as twice nightly performances discontinued and profits dropped. The management stressed, however, that the cheap prices were "only available for repertory plays" (*YEP*, 7 September 1935). Tickets for other performances, especially at Christmas, were considerably dearer. Tickets for the Pantomime in 1936, for example, amounted to 12s for the Boxes, 3s for the Dress Circle, 2/5 for the Stalls, 2s for the Circle, 1s for the Pit, 9d for the Upper Circle, and 6d for the Gallery (see Theatre Royal Programme Notes, December 1936). The Theatre Royal seated 1,340 persons; 238 in the Dress Circle, 361 in the Stalls, 123 in the Pit, 268 in the Upper Circle and 350 in the Gallery.

[147] The audience gave "a fine send off for York's repertory venture – an experiment which deserves success and is likely to gain it" (*YEP*, 17 September 1935).

"their" company depart. The Evening Press wrote a glowing review of the first season, let readers select their favourite performance, and claimed that the theatre "has taken on a new lease of life [...] thanks to a progressive management and fine team spirit among a splendid company" – an enthusiasm never encountered before.[149]

Although the company and the audience soon became accustomed to "weekly rep" the repertory system of performing a play for a whole week, while rehearsing the one for the following week and learning the lines for the one after that, also proved a great strain for some of the younger actors.[150] It also regularly resulted in productions of a poor quality.[151] On the other hand, the repertory experience was an excellent training ground for many actors and many established themselves as favourites with audiences – given they were trusted with effective roles, in which they could revel. Some of them became local celebrities; they were welcomed with applause on entering the stage – even if it was an inappropriate moment in the middle of a scene –, they opened exhibitions and gave public talks. The Evening Press regularly carried out polls at the end of the season not only to vote the best plays and productions but also to choose the most popular actors.[152] When Rosamund Burne, an actress who regularly topped the popularity league table left the company after 18 months she had spent in York in May 1937,[153] she left many admirers and friends behind. In 1941 she even returned to York to play a small part in a show and was greeted as an "old favourite". For some actors

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[148] See Rowntree, *Poverty and Progress*, 414-415. The press, however, suggested that part of the success was, "the granting of permission to smoke in any part of the theatre" (*YEP*, 17 September 1935).

[149] *YEP*, 18 December 1935). The author of the article claimed that "the fact that the company's departure has aroused such a storm of protest [...] is eloquent testimony to the amount of pleasure which the company has given in its all too brief stay and to the theatre-going habit which they have raised in York and district".

[150] In October 1936, Warwick Evans, a young actor who had only just joined the company, failed to turn up at the theatre for a Saturday rehearsal. He was playing in Lady Precious Stream, and he also had the male lead in the production of the following week. The opening night had to be reshuffled within a day, three members of the company had to learn new parts and a hastily-printed slip dropped into the theatre programme announced the alterations in the cast as printed "owing to the indisposition of Warwick Evans". The epilogue to the incident was a telegram received on Tuesday, in which Mr Evans' mother stated that her son had returned home, "very tired". The press assumed "that the strain of acting in two performances nightly and at the same time learning a part in another play may have proved too much for him" (The Northern Echo, 28 October 1936).

[151] Contemporary commentators were appalled by the low quality of productions at most of the provincial theatres offering "weekly rep", which they attributed to the limited rehearsal time. In contrast to an average of 80 hours spent on a West End production managers of weekly rep could only afford 15 hours of rehearsal time for each production. As a way out of the misery St John Ervine among others proposed a regional touring system combining, for example, the theatres in York, Leeds and Bradford in some sort of Yorkshire circuit. Theatre managers, however, did not take any notice (see Marshall, Norman. The Other Theatre. London: John Lehmann, 1947. 190-193; Priestley, *Theatre Outlook*, 46).

[152] In March 1937, the most popular players were Rosamund Burne, Irene Relph, Lawrence O'Madden, Eric Howard, Margaret Inchbold, Richard Caldicot and J. Rylett-Salew (see *YEP*, 10 March 1937).

[153] Together with Eric Howard she was the only one left of the original 1935 company.

and actresses the Theatre Royal was also a springboard on their way to the West End or to the film industry. After she had left York in 1944, Phyllis Calvert established herself in the West End and became an acclaimed film star soon afterwards.[154] Other York stars included Imelda Crawford, who changed her name to Anne after she had left the company, Michael Rennie and Diana Morrison, one of the founding members of BBC's "ITMA".[155] These examples are also indications of the high level of turnover the company's personnel experienced over the years. At the beginning of the season in September 1936, for example, only five actors stayed on with nine new ones joining the company. Even during the season new actors came.[156] Against this background the high popularity of the company is remarkable.

Parallel to the obvious success of the repertory company in York and elsewhere, criticism from traditionalists made itself heard, too. These critics regarded repertory as inferior to the theatres in the West End or "proper" touring companies. In response to the criticism an equal number of commentators stressed the significance of the new repertory movement. From theatre journals of international importance down to local Programme Notes the discussion about the repertory movement was one of the central features in Britain's theatre world of the 1920s and 1930s. The shift towards a positive assessment at the end of the 1930s corresponded to the success of repertory in York, where the Theatre Royal made profits from 1936. The company was as popular as ever, the number of patrons increased and the general interest in York's theatrical endeavours, which found expression in the press coverage, was immense. The repertory company had become a part of the city,[157] and the enthusiasm also affected other spheres of life: York's Public Library, for example, experienced an increased demand for plays and for books on the theatre.[158] Public interest also found expression in the foundation of "York Playgoers' Club" in 1936. Its main aim was to foster the interest in the Theatre Royal and to "keep supporters of the repertory movement together".[159]

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[154] "Miss Phyllis Calvert, formerly a York Repertory Company favourite and now a British film star" (*YEP*, 19 December 1944). See also the obituary on her death in The Guardian on 10 October 2002.
[155] See Collection Nellie Woodhouse, Vol. XII.
[156] For the fifth production of the season, Warwick Evans joined the Company and replaced Peter Follies "who leaves them at the end of this week" (Yorkshire Herald (*YH*), 12 September 1936). The rapid change of personnel did not only apply to 1936. At the beginning of the 1937 autumn season seven new actors joined the company.
[157] "Since the present company came into being, just over a year ago, an astonishing change has taken place, and York is now one of the vital centres of repertory in the country." (Yorkshire Post (*YP*) 19 August 1936).
[158] See York Public Library Quarterly Bulletin, 10 February 1936.

The financial situation of the Theatre Royal improved especially after it had been registered as a non-profit making concern in May 1935. On renewal of the lease in summer 1936 the theatre underwent extensive structural alterations "to the tune of round about £2,000"[160], for which the Corporation paid in exchange of an increased annual rent.[161] The company had now acquired an adequate reserve fund and did not require the subscribed capital any longer. The limited company was wound up, the 400 shareholders were repaid, and the "York Citizens' Theatre Trust" company was formed with a nominal capital of £1,000. From then on profits were devoted to the interests of drama entirely and no governor received any salary from his post.[162] Other means to save money concerned stage properties like furniture, telephones, glasses and vases, and technical equipment such as radios, which were provided by local shops. At the same time this service also seems to have improved relations between the theatre and the community.[163]

During the following years the Theatre Royal flourished and major events included special productions to celebrate the birthday of the company, held annually in September. Weeks of special repertoire were also given at dates of national importance. In 1935, for example, the 25 years reign of King George V was celebrated in a "Jubilee" or "Crazy Week". The relay of the King's Speech from the stage was proudly announced, but the most important attraction was the Crazy Revue with "light entertainment comprising dancing, singing, several comedy sketches and a large number

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[159] See *YH*, 12 November 1936.

[160] *YEP*, 15 August 1936. Further improvements to the theatre included the installation of a "roller" or "scissors" stage to overcome the difficulties of scene changing in August 1937.

[161] See Estates Committee meeting of 5 May 1936 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 316-318). There were two possible plans for major alterations, but the Theatre Royal deputation favoured the larger scheme including an extended canopy outside the theatre in direction of the Red House. In total the cost of the alterations amounted to £2,000. The committee seemed to be prepared to cover the costs only if the rent was increased. So they asked the Theatre Royal "what increased rent they would be prepared to offer". The answer of the deputation was very clever as they "suggested that originally they had intended asking the Corporation for a reduction of rent. They were not now pressing this point but would ask the Corporation to accept an additional rent of 5% of the cost of the alterations" (p.317). In the end, the rent was increased to £900 and the lease renewed for another seven years.

[162] See *YP*, 14 June 1943. See also the above mentioned "alteration in the memorandum of association", which stated that the "income and property of the Company, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Company as set forth in this memorandum of association: and [...] no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus, or otherwise howsoever by way of profit, to the members of the Company" (see PRO. BT 31/33529/290285 York Citizens Theatre Ltd. 105).

[163] The Programme Notes of 9 September 1940, for example, state that for Bartlett Cormack's play The Painted Veil the antique furniture was provided by Charles Thornton, Petergate, silverware by Hardcastle, Stonegate, China and glassware by Woollons and Harwood, Fossgate, flowers by Mrs. Stork, Stonegate, the table lamp by York Corporation Electricity Department, telephones by G.P.O., baskets by the School for the Blind at the King's Manor, and so on. The Programme Notes also mentioned services such as "Wigs dressed by..." or "Ladies hairdressing by...".

of lavish scenes". The theatre also exhibited dresses worn by famous people, "including one worn by Queen Victoria".[164] A similar event in May 1937 was the "Coronation Week" to celebrate the accession of George VI.[165] The play chosen for this special occasion was the Devonshire comedy Yellow Sands by Eden and Adelaide Phillpotts. Although it was stressed that "it is very fitting that in Coronation Week York Repertory Company should present at the Theatre Royal such an essentially English work as a Devonshire comedy", the difference to Germany is interesting to note, where it would never have been acceptable to produce a light comedy on an occasion of national celebration.[166] At the end of the 1930s the Theatre Royal stood on a sound financial basis, was firmly established within the community and presented a highly popular programme. The theatre seemed to look at a bright future.

The outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, however, did not only threaten the Theatre Royal's existence, but had far reaching implications for the British stage in general. At first, though, the possible role the theatre could play in the war effort was not realised. On the contrary, after war had been declared on Nazi Germany on 3 September, all places of entertainment were closed indefinitely.[167] This decision, however, proved impossible to uphold and met with an immediate outburst of protest. A delegation of theatre managers headed by Hugh Beaumont presented themselves at Downing Street to protest against the closure, and even Bernard Shaw joined the critics.[168] As in similar situations of national crisis theatre proved immensely popular and the pressure on the government built up.[169] And, indeed, after only one week most

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[164] *YEP*, 4 May 1935.

[165] For detailed information on the "abdication crisis" see Thomson, David. England in the Twentieth Century 1914-1979. London: Penguin, 1991. 165-167) or, for a more royalist view, Wheeler-Bennett, John W. King George VI. His Life and Reign. London: Macmillan, 1959. 266-316.

[166] See *YEP*, 11 May 1937.

[167] In the York papers succinct comments appeared. The Empire published a note saying "National Crisis. Theatre Closed Until Further Notice" (*YEP*, 4 September 1939). A York cinema proprietor promised that "in reply to our many patrons the Rialto and Clifton Cinemas will re-open as soon as permission is given" (*YEP*, 5 September 1939).

[168] In a letter to The Times Shaw called the closure "a masterstroke of unimaginative stupidity" and suggested that an "agent of Chancellor Hitler" was responsible for the fact "that we should all cower in darkness and terror 'for the duration'" (qtd. *YEP*, 5 September 1939). The producer Charles Cochran claimed he was "confident that the theatre will prove itself to be as essential to the well-being of those on the home front and those on leave as it was in the last war" (Theatre World November 1939: 174).

[169] Between 1938 and 1944 the amount of money spent on entertainment rose by 120%. The BBC noted an increase in serious drama, publishers found difficulty in responding to the public's thirst for classics, and new copies of novels by Trollope and Jane Austen were eventually "quite unobtainable" (see Calder, Angus. The People's War. Britain 1939-1945. London: Pimlico, 1999. 357, 364, 511). The output of popular literature, too, soared. Evacuation and "Blitz" novels, war diaries, spy thrillers and RAF romances headed the bill. In an interesting study Tom Harrison looked into the entire literary output

theatres were allowed to open again. The official explanation for the U-turn was that theatres like the ones in Yorkshire were not considered to be in direct danger but situated in "safe areas".[170] It is remarkable how quickly the government realised that the solution was not to prohibit theatrical performances but to make use of their morale boosting quality.[171] Although theatre continued to be regarded mainly as a business affair with no direct state control, the government recognised the propagandistic potential of the arts, increasingly influenced the culture sector and even claimed that the serious arts were "part of the system for which we are supposed to be fighting".[172] For the first time in British history the government started to fund theatres, companies and other cultural institutions. The foundation of ENSA and CEMA together with the "invention" of direct state subsidies was nothing short of a revolution and has to be seen in direct relation to Britain's war effort. The aim both of ENSA and of CEMA was to boost national morale in another devastating war.[173]

ENSA was founded in 1939 and headed by the well-known theatrical producer Basil Dean.[174] The importance the government attributed to the venture can be gathered from the fact that the Association took its headquarters at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, in the heart of the West End. From the start ENSA was fully funded by the government through the Navy, Army and Air Force Institute (NAAFI). ENSA's objective was to send out concert parties and theatre companies to entertain troops and factory workers

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between 1939 and the end of 1941 in search for books related to the war. Apart from the war motif itself Harrison also detected widespread right-wing sympathies of most of the authors and even a prevalent anti-Semitic undertone (see Harrison, Tom. "War Books". Horizon IV December 1941: 416-437).

[170] See PRO. Home Office. HO 186 Air Raid Precautions. HO 186/1036 Entertainment (1943). "Entertainments Order" issued by the Home Secretary John Anderson, 8 September 1939. The term "safe", however, was applied to theatres nearly everywhere. Despite concerns regarding large congregations of people assembled under bombardment the government usually granted the night opening of theatres. In a complete reversal of official policy at the outbreak of war the government soon permitted shows even in densely populated Westminster (see Sanson, William. Westminster in War. London: Faber, n.d. [1947]. 170).

[171] See Shellard, Dominic. British Theatre Since the War. London: Yale University Press. 6. In June 1940, while the war had disastrous effects on London theatres, the government "clearly indicated that the theatres should carry on" (Fairweather, David. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World June 1940: 125). See also PRO. Ministry of Information. INF 1/260. Home Morale and Education During the Winter 1940-41.

[172] Fairweather, David. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World July 1940: 5. It is interesting to note that this change of policy in late 1939 occurred before the government had started to organise the home front. Calder quotes the year 1941 as the start of "total war" in Britain (see Calder, *People's War*, 228-229).

[173] It is interesting to see, however, that the report on ENSA issued in March 1941 is the only official document concerned with the control of theatrical entertainment to be circulated as a government paper during the war. The report made the provision of entertainment through the Association – and thereby state subsidies to the arts – an official policy (see PRO. T 161/1083. Treasury Board Papers: Interdepartmental Entertainments Service Board. First Report).

[174] For a full account of ENSA's development during the war see Dean's own *Theatre at War*. Although this book is descriptive rather than interpretative and almost entirely consists of Dean's own personal recollections, it nevertheless offers many interesting insights into the everyday life of ENSA artists.

all over Britain and later all over the world. The chief aim behind this huge programme was not to present purposeless entertainment but to raise national morale.[175] In 1943 ENSA received subsidies in the sum of £2m; by the time it was wound up in 1946 this amount had risen to £5m.[176] By that time ENSA had had thousands of members, had given hundreds of thousands of performances and entertained millions of people.[177] Dean claimed that the Association had employed more than 80% of the entertainment industry at one time or another.[178] Although stars like Gracie Fields or George Formby performed under its auspices, ENSA relied heavily on non-professional talent – and it was exactly this group of artists who relished the security of ENSA contracts most of all.[179] This fact shows that apart from its military image of the "entertainment army", ENSA also fulfilled an important social function, which should not be underestimated. The job opportunities for many unemployed theatre staff in turn had an additional effect on morale.[180]

To illustrate ENSA's propagandistic function it is worth looking at one of its most important ventures. Dean's production of his own Cathedral Steps in September 1942 was announced as an "Anthology in Praise of Britain" or even a "service in praise of Britain".[181] This massive nationalistic pageant was staged on and around the steps of St Paul's Cathedral, involved a cast of hundreds led by the cream of West End stars and centred around the presentation of Britain's great history and "glorious heritage".[182] The

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[175] Dean asserted that the aim to "work for national morale" was ENSA's "most important objective" (Dean, *Theatre at War*, 18).

[176] See ibid., 249-250.

[177] In 1943 alone ENSA provided an average of over 3,000 performances a week to the armed forces (see Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 226).

[178] See Dean, *Theatre at War*, 541. ENSA's activities were not limited to the armed forces. As soon as the German air raids on London had started ENSA sent parties into the air-raid shelters to entertain air-raid victims (see Joanna Mack and Steve Humphries. The Making of Modern London 1939-1945. London at War. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1985. 87).

[179] See Calder, *People's War*, 372.

[180] See Shellard, Dominic. Harold Hobson: Witness and Judge. Keele: Keele University Press, 1995. 47.

[181] Dean, *Theatre at War*, 298. Dean's own press release read: "An Anthology in praise of Britain: extracts from our poetry and literature, accompanied by songs and music: a combination of English morality play with the Greek formula that used the Chorus by way of comment: an offering of British music and drama to stir the hearts of the people by making them conscious of their glorious heritage" (Dean, *Theatre at War*, 294).

[182] The cathedral site was carefully chosen to establish a link to the medieval Mystery Plays. The names of the characters added to this impression as they were called "Valour", "Patience", "Men" and "Women of Peace", as well as "Any-Man", "Any-Woman", who were – and this is interesting to note with respect to the obvious claim that this performance was not socially exclusive – "just an ordinary working-class couple" (Dean, *Theatre at War*, 299). The list of artists involved reads like a war time who is who of British cultural life: The script had been prepared by Clemence Dane, the cast was headed by Leslie Howard, Sybil Thorndike, Edith Evans and the orchestra was conducted by Henry Wood. The War Office provided bands of the Brigade of Guards and the trumpets and drums of the Household Cavalry, the massed singers included members of the Royal Choral Society and the London Fire Service Choir. The event was performed under the patronage of the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs of the City of London and they, together with all the Mayors and Aldermen of all the London Boroughs, witnessed the performance

propagandistic value of this production was not only its immense size and the setting but also the aim to present Britain's history as a success story from medieval times until today.[183] In 1942, when the war was far from won, the message that this marvellous country was indeed worth fighting for, was an enormously important propaganda stunt.

Whereas ENSA was mainly aimed at the forces CEMA's mission was different and directed at the home front.[184] The two organisations also differed in their agenda. ENSA's chief aim was to offer light entertainment and make people forget about the drudgery of war service, whereas CEMA had broader aims in terms of fostering the arts through state support pointing beyond the end of military action.[185] In the course of the war CEMA's chairman Lord Keynes increasingly worked towards a continuation of the Council in peace-time, which eventually became the Arts Council in 1946.[186]
CEMA was established in January 1940 as a result of a meeting held at the Board of Education in December 1939.[187] The initial objective was to give financial assistance to cultural societies finding it difficult to maintain their activities during the war. The broader aim behind this objective was to boost morale through the provision of art. The importance of the war situation, which led to the foundation of CEMA, can, therefore, hardly be overestimated. At first CEMA was jointly financed by the Pilgrim Trust and the Treasury on the vote of the Board of Education.[188] On its foundation the Trust's grant of £25,000 was matched by a government subsidy of the same sum. Only two years later, however, the Trust withdrew and the government accepted full financial

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together with thousands (see ibid., 294-303). A week after the London production the pageant was re-staged amid the recently-bombed ruins of Coventry Cathedral. Further performances at other cathedral sites, however, did not materialise.

[183] The pageant's scenes were accompanied by words of Scott, Shakespeare, Shelley, Spenser, Milton, Kipling, Tennyson, Hardy and music of Arne, Purcell, Elgar, Stanford, Sullivan, Parry and Walton.

[184] For CEMA's development throughout the war see the "EL" files in the Archive of Art and Design (AAD) in London (stored at Blythe House). The files with the classifications EL 1/3, EL 1/6 and EL 1/7 contain the minutes of the Council meetings.

[185] The two organisations also embarked on a certain rivalry, especially with respect to the provision of musical entertainment. Dean seemed to accuse CEMA of undeservedly occupying the limelight through its association with famous stars, whereas ENSA did a much bigger job with an army of nameless artists (see Dean, *Theatre at War*, 134-135).

[186] CEMA, therefore, has to be seen in line with the Beveridge Report, plans for a National Health Service and the 1944 Education Act, although on its foundation hardly anyone had in mind that CEMA could develop into a nationwide agency offering subsidies to the arts. Regarding the radical changes in the education system caused by the war see Dent, H.C. Education in Transition. A Sociological Study of the Impact of War on English Education 1939-1943. London: Kegan Paul, 1944.

[187] See the minutes of the meeting at "Cultural Activities in War-Time. Notes of informal Conference held at the Board's Offices on Monday, 18th December, 1939, at 3.30pm" (AAD, EL 1/1).

[188] The Pilgrim Trust was an American foundation seeking to ease the grim effects of the war on Britain's population. There are different opinions as to who was instrumental in the foundation of CEMA, the American Pilgrim Trust or the British government through the President of the Board of Education (see, for example, Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 216).

responsibility for CEMA.[189] By 1945 the Treasury grant had risen to £235,000.[190] Even more impressively, the overall sum spent on CEMA and the Arts Council between 1940 and 1950 amounted to over £2m.[191] This financial backing not only meant that the state for the first time in British history had become a patron of the arts, but also that CEMA's work was approved as being of national importance.

In highly diversified programmes CEMA brought classical music, paintings and drama of the highest standards to isolated rural areas and industrial towns, catered for the entertainment of evacuees and recognised the need to counterbalance the suspension of many customary entertainment facilities, long working hours and monotonous leisure time.[192] Soon after its foundation CEMA became associated with many of the most prestigious stars and ensembles in Britain.[193] The Old Vic company was sent out to play classical drama in the provinces, the Pilgrim Players took serious plays to village halls, and Sybil Thorndike toured Shakespeare through Welsh mining villages for several consecutive seasons.[194] Ballet companies of international standing such as Sadler's

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[189] CEMA itself was a relatively small body at first with members appointed by the Minister of Education, who was also responsible to Parliament for its work (see Speaight, Robert. "Drama Since 1939." Hayward, John, Reed, Henry, Robert Speaight and Stephen Spender. Since 1939. London: Phoenix, 1949. 20). Soon, however, CEMA grew in size. In 1942 it had nine members with Lord Keynes as Chairman, an elaborated system of advisory panels of experts with executive power, committees in Scotland and Wales and ten regional offices in England. The six members of the Drama Advisory Panel were joined by the Drama Director Lewis Casson and Drama Assistant Charles Landstone. In line with rising government support the directors to CEMA for Music, Drama and Art became fully salaried in 1942 (see Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 218; Landstone, Charles. Off- Stage. A Personal Record of the First Twelve Years of State Sponsored Drama in Great Britain. London: Elek, 1953. 66; CEMA. The Arts in War Time. A Report on the Work of C.E.M.A. 1942 and 1943. London: Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts, n.d. [1944]. 4).

[190] See Eric Taylor. Showbiz Goes to War. London: Robert Hale, 1992. 118. In 1943 the Treasury grant had been £135,000, and in 1944 it rose by almost 50% to £175,000 (see CEMA. The Fifth Year. The End of the Beginning. Report on the Work of CEMA for 1944. London: Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts, 1945. 4).

[191] See Whitworth, *National Theatre*, 215.

[192] In 1944 the Council organised fourteen tours, with 129 weeks' playing time. The actual costs for these 129 weeks were £16,000 – an average of £125 per playing week. The average gross costing per week was about £275, and takings about £150 (see Landstone, *Off- Stage*, 55, 59).

[193] The relations between CEMA and theatre companies and music ensembles varied from full financial responsibility to no financial connection at all. In between there were block grants, loans and limited guarantees against loss (see CEMA, *Arts in War Time*, 14). Even if CEMA did not pay any subsidies, however, it frequently offered "moral sponsorship" to companies who agreed that any profits they made were at the disposal of CEMA; in return, since CEMA encouraged only work of a definitely "cultural" kind, these companies usually benefited by gaining exemption from Entertainments Tax (see Nicoll, Allardyce. "'In Association with CEMA'." Theatre Arts 28 (1944): 420).

[194] See Marshall, Other Theatre, 133-136. See also the interesting account of Charles Landstone who became CEMA's Drama Assistant in 1942 (see above). Regarding Thorndike's celebrated war work and especially her Welsh tours see Morley, Sheridan. Sybil Thorndike. A Life in the Theatre. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977. 111-120. On occasion of her 1940 tour of Macbeth Thorndike wrote a "plain clothes prologue" in which she made the war-time relevance of the play clear to the miners: "You needn't always think of dictators in terms of concentration camps and tanks and aeroplanes. Men don't change in a thousand years. What Macbeth wanted, what all such people want, is power. This is a play

Wells Ballet, Ballet Rambert and Ballet Jooss were sent out to tour factories, garrisons and hostels.[195] Kurt Jooss' company is especially interesting in this context because of his Münster past.[196] After having been seen as a rather un-English exercise with marginal audiences entirely concentrated in London for decades, ballet during the war took the provinces by storm and played to capacity houses.[197] Opera, too, took on a new lease of life thanks to the support of CEMA, and Sadler's Wells toured the industrial towns of the North.[198] Chamber music recitals were organised in factory canteens, symphony concerts were put on for war workers, and even the stars of the classical music scene were happy to join the "entertainment army".[199] Pablo Casals played

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about a tyrant, a dictator" (ibid., 111-112). Thorndike and Casson did 37 performances in ten weeks on their Welsh tour, and there were two more tours in 1941 and 1942.
The Theatre Arts in 1942 featured photos of the Old Vic's Welsh tour provided by the Ministry of Information. They showed the company travelling in an ordinary coach and being cramped into their dressing rooms, they depicted the scenery van and the basic halls they performed in. The intended honest down-to-earth image was further underlined by the captions: "After the show, the members of the company will sleep in the cottages of their new-made audience friends, working men and women and their children, who have paid not more to see fine theatre than they would at their local cinema" (Theatre Arts 26 (1942): 241-244).

[195] For a detailed contemporary account see Haskell, Arnold L. "Ballet Since 1939". Haskell, Arnold L., Dilys Powell, Rollo Myers and Robin Ironside. Since 1939. Ballet – Films – Music – Painting. London: Readers Union, 1948. 9-56.

[196] Jooss had headed one of the most influential dance companies in Europe when forced to leave Germany in 1933. After having worked in Münster during the mid-1920s he formed his first company in Essen and visited many countries with his prophetic work The Green Table. Highly influenced by Laban Jooss produced dance-drama ("Tanztheater") rather than ballet proper. When Hitler came to power Jooss fled Germany and took his headquarters in Britain (see Haskell, *Ballet Since 1939*, 43-44).

[197] Although the situation improved during the 1930s it was only a small minority of London audiences who supported ballet on the eve of the Second World War. From the beginning ballet in Britain was influenced by foreigners, especially by the Russian school of Serge Daghileff and Anna Pavlova. Even the re-emergence of ballet during the war was largely due to foreigners. Ninette de Valois, who founded the first successful professional ballet company in Britain with the "Vic-Wells Ballet", was Irish, Marie Rambert, the founder of the famous "Ballet Rambert", was French, and Kurt Jooss was a German émigré. The growth of some of these companies is hardly imaginable without the war. Sadler's Wells, for example, grew from a small company of eight dancers into a big organisation appearing all over Britain during the war performing for forty-eight weeks out of the fifty-two (see Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 142). Together with the emergence of important new names such as Frederick Ashton, Robert Helpman, Mona Inglesby and Margot Fonteyn contemporary commentators claimed that "the British are once more a dancing nation". It was even suggested that the "male dancers should be exempted from conscription, as their absence would jeopardise the existence of something precious for national artistic prestige in the future and useful for public morale in the present" (see Haskell, *Ballet Since 1939*, 23, 45. See also Williamson, Audrey. "English Ballet, 1944." Theatre Arts 28 (1944): 733-736).

[198] It has to be stressed, however, that Sadler's Wells presented scaled-down versions of the great opera classics on tour with an "orchestra" of four and a company of twenty-six. The décor for Marriage of Figaro, for example, once consisted of only two chairs and a sofa (see Myers, Rollo. "Music Since 1939". Haskell, Arnold L., Dilys Powell, Rollo Myers and Robin Ironside. Since 1939. Ballet – Films – Music – Painting. London: Readers Union, 1948. 118). Tours of factory workers' hostels were high up on CEMA's list of priorities. Between July 1942 and December 1943 alone seven companies were sent on tour, and by 1945 69 hostels were regularly visited by parties associated with CEMA. Most of the hostels had well equipped theatres with seating capacities of 400 (see Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 229; CEMA, *Arts in War Time*, 16-17; Landstone, *Off- Stage*, 50-51).

[199] In 1942-43 CEMA provided over 4,500 factory concerts, sometimes to audiences as large as 7,000 (see Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 220). The number of concerts given under CEMA auspices rose to 6,140 in 1944. It is interesting to note that an increasing support was offered by municipalities to local concert series of all kinds (see CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 8).

Elgar's Cello Concerto in Chester for the standard fee of three guineas, Yehudi Menuhin gave a series of recitals for factory workers and Myra Hess regularly performed in the National Gallery, which had been emptied of pictures.[200] In what appeared to contemporary commentators as a revolution in the arts, serious plays and classical music were brought to the remotest places and successfully found new audiences.[201] The demand grew so strongly that CEMA could never entirely satisfy it. The immense success of its work led CEMA to embark on two projects of unprecedented scale: The opening of the Theatre Royal, Bristol, as the first state theatre in British history and the establishment of the Old Vic as a true, i.e. continental, repertory company with a programme of classics.[202]

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[200] For Casals and Hess see Calder, *People's War*, 373; for Menuhin see CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 7. Commentators were quick to stress the importance for the war effort of the work carried out by musicians. Rollo Myers also established the connection with post-war Britain as "musically, Britain has won her spurs and can now face the future with confidence. Gone are the days when it was possible for foreign nations to refer to her as 'the land without music'. It was never true, and never less so than today" (Myers, *Music Since 1939*, 139).

[201] Among the biggest theatrical successes in the hostels for factory workers, for example, were Twelfth Night and Hedda Gabler (see Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 229). Regarding the new audiences found, Thomas Russell of the London Philharmonic Orchestra noted after the war that "some hundred centres are now enjoying regular concerts where, only ten years ago, nothing of the kind had ever been heard" (Russell, Thomas. Philharmonic. London: Penguin, 1953. 123). In fact the public demand for "high" culture far exceeded any pre-war expectations (see Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 218-220, 225).

[202] CEMA saved the Theatre Royal in Bristol from demolition, restored it, placed it in working order and ran the theatre on a lease under its direct management (see CEMA, *Arts in War Time*, 10). It is interesting to note that all this happened in September 1942, one of the most difficult months during the war with the fall of Tobruk, the German advance towards Stalingrad, and Japanese supremacy in the Far East.
The inauguration in August 1944 of the Old Vic as a permanent repertory company devoted entirely to the production of classics in the heart of London's West End was not only a bold idea but also another indication of the important role theatre was expected to play during the war. CEMA was aware that it "would need bold and generous expenditure" to reach this goal. Lord Keynes "spoke of good round sums, well into five figures", and agreed to pay "an advance cheque of £5,000" immediately (see Landstone, *Off- Stage*, 148, 151). Perhaps the boldest plan of Tyrone Guthrie's proposed scheme was to secure the services of a star-studded company headed by two of Britain's most celebrated stars, Laurence Olivier and Ralph Richardson – although they were both on active service in the Air Force. So Lord Lytton, the chairman of the governors of the Old Vic, wrote to the First Lord of the Admiralty asking for their release. First Lytton explained that "the Old Vic has the opportunity, with the aid of the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) greatly to increase its scope. CEMA, I need hardly add, expresses the cultural policy of the Board of Education, and is financed by the Treasury." He then stated three main reasons for the importance of the venture: "I. CEMA is prepared to offer the prestige of its co-operation, and a substantial financial guarantee. II. The importance need hardly be stressed of having such a company in existence while the war is in progress, ready for expansion when demobilisation makes the absorbtion [sic!] of man-power desirable. III. The many thousands of Overseas visitors in London make it highly desirable that British drama, and particularly the Classics, should be presented in the best possible manner." (letter dated 15 March 1944. Theatre Museum. Charles Landstone Archive THM/201. Box 4). The fact that these two actors were released from active service to become joint directors of the Old Vic indicates how much the political landscape in Britain had changed within a few years. The production of a classical repertoire had come to be seen as part of Britain's war effort. And the propaganda worked well not only because audiences packed the performances and commentators claimed that these Old Vic seasons were the best in British theatre for decades but also because this company quickly became an "emblem of national consciousness second only to Shakespeare" (Shellard, *British Theatre Since the War*, 4. For contemporary comments see Hobson, Harold. Theatre in Britain. A Personal View. Oxford: Phaidon, 1984. 134-139; Landstone, *Off- Stage*, 151; Stephens, Frances. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World October 1944: 5).

The massive support to the arts offered by the British government, however, neither stopped at the end of the war nor was it restricted to organisations like CEMA and ENSA. The governmental favour of the arts also found its expression in many other measures. The Entertainment Tax on theatre seats, for example, increased far less than that on cinema stalls during the war.[203] Additionally the Ministry of Labour agreed to offer artists deferment when they offered to work for ENSA.[204] A special War Artists Advisory Committee, headed by Kenneth Clark, was established with £10,000 of government money to establish closer links between the state and its artists.[205]

The new approach to the arts paid off and many commentators have since claimed that it was the provision with entertainment rather than the military successes that not only upheld the morale of newly recruited audiences for the arts but also made them rediscover a sense of Elizabethan magnificence.[206] Organisations such as the British Drama League were eager to establish this link from the early days of the war.[207] The

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It seems that through these performances many theatre patrons regained their faith in the strength of their country. A nation which could mount Peer Gynt and Richard III concurrently with its forces' return to Europe, and mark Victory in Japan day by the two parts of Henry IV gave real cause for hope. The "years of genuine greatness in acting and production of the classics" were matched with the Britain's greatness on the world's battlefields (see Rowell, George. The Old Vic Theatre. A History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. 138). Similar comments of praise came from Ivor Brown who noted that Henry IV, Part One gave "one high pride in the English theatre, which, amid all the difficulties of our time, is offering, in several quarters, presentations of the classics worthy of a National Theatre" (Brown, Ivor. "Henry IV Part One". The Observer 30 September 1945, and ibid., 7 October 1945. Similarly Dukes, Ashley. "The Gielgud Macbeth." Theatre Arts 26 (1942): 617; and, later in the war, Dukes, Ashley. "Repertory at Last! The Scene in Europe." Theatre Arts 29 (1945): 22-31). The new status which the Old Vic had acquired as the first National Theatre found expression in its European tour immediately after the war. The British Council sent the company abroad as cultural ambassadors and they performed in Hamburg and Paris. Equally important is the fact that the commercial theatre, too, suddenly started to offer classical repertory. Hugh Beaumont, the most successful West End theatre manager, established a non-profit making company in 1942 and inaugurated a repertory company headed by John Gielgud.

[203] See Calder, *People's War*, 509-510.

[204] At a conference at the Ministry of Labour with ENSA and the entertainments industry in March 1942, Bevin assured the delegates that the maintenance of civil entertainment was an important part of government policy. Bevin decided "that artistes who offer to give six weeks' work each year to national-service entertainment shall have that taken into consideration when their applications for deferment are considered" (Dean, *Theatre at War*, 238).

[205] The Committee was established in early 1940 and around a hundred artists were asked to do specific works, some of which the Committee bought. Thirty artists were employed full-time on a salary, twenty-one of those became "officers" and were attached to the services (see Calder, *People's War*, 510).

[206] See Dean, *Theatre at War*, 212-213. Dent even claims that "if ever a body of men and women helped to revive and sustain the moral of the English people, during a time when this was most needed, those CEMA artists did" (see Dent, *Education in Transition*, 149).

[207] In August 1940, for example, the League mounted a conference to discuss the "uses, opportunities, and responsibilities" of drama in war time (see "British Drama League Conference." Theatre World August 1940: 46). The new role theatre was meant to play within society was illustrated by the fact that representatives of many different national institutions attended. Apart from CEMA and ENSA, the "Army Welfare Committees", the "National Council of Social Service", and even the "Federation of Women's Institutes" came, too. More importantly, the conference took place at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford. Quite obviously the League wanted to stress the crucial link between Elizabethan England and the current conflict, established through the works of Shakespeare.

attempts to concentrate on English classical theatre and British composers, the stress laid on the development of a typically British style of ballet dancing, painting and writing, only supported the feeling of national greatness.[208] In turn many leading artists were anxious to be seen supporting the war effort. Vaughan Williams, for example, composed music for the propaganda film Coastal Command, and William Walton wrote a piece called Spitfire Prelude and Fugue.[209] Dramatists such as Clemence Dane produced countless scripts about the national heroes to foster Britain's cause, J. B. Priestley was eager to prove that he had not taken flight with his radio talks, and stars like Noel Coward were more than prepared to offer their service to the nation.[210] Classical drama, and especially Shakespeare, became to be seen as chief means for the country's leading actors to show their contribution to the war effort. Donald Wolfit's lunchtime Shakespeare performances in the Strand, which started as soon as December 1939, were celebrated because "in a city of darkened playhouses it was due to his courage that the lovely language of our greatest poet should be the first to break the silence".[211] John Gielgud did "his bit" through appearances not only in classical repertory and on ENSA tours but also in a series of Shakespearean lectures on "Shakespeare in War and Peace", which earned £1500 for war relief.[212]

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[208] At first most of the concerts began with well-known pieces to catch the audience's attention. Soon, however, the fact that most of these works were by German composers did not seem appropriate anymore and contemporary British composers received commissions. Arnold Bax (Work in Progress), E. J. Moeran (Overture to a Masque) and Alan Rawsthorne (Street Corner), among others, wrote overtures especially for these occasions (see Dean, *Theatre at War*, 221).

[209] See Calder, *People's War*, 510.

[210] After having been rather unsuccessfully posted in Paris and the US, Coward returned to Britain in 1941. He wrote nationalistic songs, the successful play Blithe Spirit and the patriotic film In Which We Serve, which was one of the most successful films during the war and was shot with the official blessing of the Royal Family, who visited the set (see Lesley, Cole. The Life of Noel Coward. London: Jonathan Cape, 1976. Photo series between pages 172 and 173). In 1942 Coward's play This Happy Breed toured Britain for 26 weeks, and after that he went on concert-tours to Australia, New Zealand and South Africa (see Shellard, *Harold Hobson*, 50).
For Dane's and Priestley's war effort see Lesley, *Noel Coward*, 226 and Shellard, *Harold Hobson*, 50.

[211] "Donald Wolfit's great Achievement for the Theatre in War-time." Theatre World January 1941: 10-11). Wolfit and his company (including Irene and Violet Vanbrugh) played extracts from different Shakespearean plays (see "Lunch Time Shakespeare." Theatre World December 1940: 128; similarly Theatre World January 1941: 8). Wolfit enjoyed the backing of CEMA for his enterprise (see CEMA meeting on 15 October 1940. AAD, EL 1/6).

[212] See Theatre Arts 24 (1940): 225. Interestingly, Gielgud's talks were recorded on shellacs and issued commercially early in the war (see Sheridan Morley. John G. The Authorised Biography of John Gielgud. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2001. 167). See also Peter Noble who seems anxious to stress Gielgud's war effort, perhaps in an attempt to defend him against accusations that in comparison to Olivier and Richardson he did very little (see Noble, *British Theatre*, 23).

The importance these contributions were attributed with by the government can be gathered by the way they were honoured during and immediately after the war. In 1946 two of the most prestigious figures of war time theatre, Ralph Richardson and Laurence Olivier, received knighthoods clearly to honour their war effort.[213] Even the idea of a National Theatre, after decades of opposition, countless unsuccessful attempts and fruitless campaigning, from 1942 suddenly received official support.[214] In a generous gesture Parliament in 1949 agreed to pay £1m to build a National Theatre on the South Bank. Only ten years earlier such a decision would have been virtually unthinkable.[215]

From the beginning of the war one of the central aims within the framework of government support for the arts was a deliberate concentration on the provinces – and York immediately profited from this policy.[216] At the heart of this policy was not only the idea to boost morale in places not necessarily catered for by organised entertainment but also a strong educational mission. The concept behind performances of the Old Vic or the London Symphony Orchestra was to offer audiences not just any kind of entertainment but "better" entertainment.[217] This mission found expression mainly in

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[213] It might not be a coincidence that it was Olivier, praised for his morale-boosting portrait of Henry V in the 1944 film, who was to open the National Theatre as its director in 1963. The reasons for their 1946 knighthoods certainly also included their war record as directors of the Old Vic and their appearances as player-kings on stage (see Morley, *John G*, 192).

[214] For a detailed overview of the developments in the run-up of the foundation of the National Theatre see the study by one of its most ardent supporters, Geoffrey Whitworth (*National Theatre*).

[215] See Whitworth, *National Theatre*, 15, who also reprinted the crucial debates in the House of Commons and the House of Lords on the topic in his book. In a typical pre-war statement the Theatre World made its rejection of the National Theatre idea more than plain. The main argument was that if the nation really wanted a National Theatre it would have subscribed the needed £1m already. The fact that only half of that sum had been found was a clear indicator that the people did not want such a theatre. It is interesting to note that the idea of a state subsidy as a possible solution to the funding problem does not even occur to the commentator (see Fairweather, David. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World January 1936: 3).

[216] In a monthly bulletin CEMA published a list of all the events it supported. The May 1944 bulletin, for example, lists 30 different events in Yorkshire alone. From the London Symphony Orchestra's visit to Hull's Queen's Hall, over a YMCA concert tour in the East Riding, chamber music in different Leeds factories, a production of The Shoemaker's Holiday by the Walter Hudd Company in Huddersfield, a five-week tour of northern towns by Ballets Jooss, to art exhibitions all over Yorkshire, CEMA did its best to keep spirits in the provinces high (see CEMA Bulletin May 1944: 4-5, 10-11, 14 and 17). See also the Regional Directors' Reports at the AAD, catalogued under EL 3.

[217] Marshall stated that the Old Vic, for example, "saw itself in the role of a kind of universal provider of The Better Drama to the provinces". In 1941-42 alone Old Vic companies conducted fifteen tours all over Britain, and in 1942 one of the two touring companies concentrated entirely on Shakespearean plays (see Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 134-135). Dent was not the only one to believe that CEMA was "the harbinger of a new form of adult education" (see Dent, *Education in Transition*, 58). CEMA also became engaged in organising exhibitions all over Britain. Here, too, the educational mission was obvious. Although the majority of the exhibitions were concerned with visual art, interesting other examples included shows like "Living in Cities", "Rebuilding Britain" and "War Artists" (see CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 38-39). For an account regarding its educational concept see CEMA's own Lord Keynes in a talk given at the re-opening of Bristol's Theatre Royal ("The Arts in War-Time. Widening Scope of CEMA. Re-opening of Bristol Theatre To-night." 11 May 1943. Theatre Museum. Charles Landstone Archive THM/201. Box 4). Other institutions, too, embarked on their educational missions. Perhaps most important of all – because of its ability to reach millions of people at the same time – the BBC offered programmes intended to

the production of classic musical and dramatic works with high quality performances for audiences who had possibly never seen a professional symphony orchestra or listened to Shakespearean verse before. Even more interesting in this respect is the fact that the Council put particular emphasis on performances of avant-garde ballet pieces and works by contemporary British composers.[218] Although many of these modern works must have been challenging for audiences they corresponded to CEMA's educational and national objectives. And the policy worked: What would have been rejected as high-brow and criticised for being patronising a few years earlier suddenly attracted large audiences and received enthusiastic reviews.[219]

CEMA's other main objective in the provinces concerned the establishment of successful independent repertory theatres, to raise production standards and the quality of their programmes.[220] A first step in that direction was the move of the Old Vic to Burnley, Lancashire, after the war had started. Not only did the Old Vic send out a series of companies to tour the provinces, it also played extensive seasons of ballet, opera and classical drama at Burnley's local theatre.[221] CEMA, however, did not want to rely entirely on ensembles of national standing but sought to foster provincial companies themselves. In line with these objectives CEMA increasingly acted as an agency, drew up funding schemes and actively supported the decision of a number of

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educate its listeners without being too patronising (a common point of criticism during the 1930s). The Corporation's war-time successes included the highly popular Promenade Concerts or the provision of entertainment for factory workers through its programme of "Music While You Work" (see Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 227).

[218] In its report on the work during 1944 CEMA puts special emphasis on "new and unusual works performed" by the associated orchestras (see CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 29-30).

[219] For a typical glowing article on CEMA's work see Nicoll, *Association with CEMA*, 417-421. An indication for the popularity of classical music are the sheer number of concerts and the number of listeners. In 1944 alone the Hallé Orchestra, the Liverpool and London Philharmonics "provided between them no less than 722 concerts to audiences totalling over a million; while the approximate amounts paid by Chamber Music Clubs associated with CEMA in fees to professional artists rose from £800 in 1941 to £7,500 in 1944" (Myers, *Music Since 1939*, 107).

[220] Many contemporary commentators complained about the poor standards at provincial repertory theatres. To improve this situation Landstone presented a scheme by which CEMA offered grants to repertory companies who decided to present a special play for a fortnight instead of only one week as usual (see Landstone, *Off- Stage*, 105). As this meant that the previous play would have to run for two weeks, too, and the takings in the second week were bound to be bad, CEMA paid the deficiency up to the average takings of the previous thirteen weeks. This "Landstone Plan" ran successfully for four years. The scheme was part of an overall plan to make two-or, preferably, three-weekly repertoire attractive to provincial theatres. The envisaged effect was not only to raise standards but also to provide an incentive to produce the classics. Especially after the war these plans bore some fruit with the establishment of regional touring circuits and subsidiary playhouses. Shortly after the war York's Theatre Royal, for example, took a lease at Scarborough and thus obtained an outlet for two weeks' rehearsals.

[221] CEMA supported the Old Vic's move to the north financially (see Landstone's detailed accounts in Landstone, *Off- Stage*, 21-24, 28). The decision to take to the provinces, however, was much criticised by contemporary commentators who claimed that the Old Vic was "essentially a Londoners' theatre" (Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 133).

non-profit making provincial companies to form the "Council of Repertory Theatres" in autumn 1944.[222] The educational agenda behind these activities was no secret. The Council openly stated that it hoped to create "permanent, educated audiences all over the country".[223] For associated companies the Council was further prepared to act as sponsor with government departments and public bodies, "testifying to the value of the work done in the interests of national service".[224] Furthermore, CEMA offered active support for companies to obtain exemption from Entertainment Tax for plays with educational value.[225]

Parallel to CEMA's activities the British Drama League embarked on its "Civic Theatres Scheme", which was submitted to Churchill in 1942.[226] This radical scheme proposed that cities should be able to open their own municipal theatres jointly financed by local and state subsidies.[227] Corresponding to CEMA's educational aims the League wanted civic theatre programmes to consist of classical drama, new and original plays,

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[222] The first conference of the "Council of Repertory Theatres" was held in Birmingham, the second meeting took place in York at the end of 1944. By then the membership had already risen from the initial seven to ten theatres. In York the conference was hosted by York's Citizens' Theatre Trust with Seebohm Rowntree present as one of the Trust's Governors. For further details see Landstone, *Off- Stage*, 104-105.

[223] CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 32. In a highly interesting "Memorandum on Old Vic Policy", written by Tyrone Guthrie on 23 September 1943 and sent to CEMA's Lewis Casson, Guthrie states under the heading "Education v. Entertainment: It will be seen the whole trend of this document is to advocate a policy related as closely as possible to the educational life of the country, and distinguishing as much as possible from other theatrical enterprise; i.d. a declared policy of 'Education' as opposed to 'Entertainment'. Suggest: a) If the productions are good and lively enough this does not matter. b) If the productions are dreary they still won't well as entertainment. c) By and large the audiences for whom we cater will be intelligent enough not to be frightened by the label 'Education'; and the audience in search of a 'spree' will not go to Shakespeare etc. anyway. BUT we must be on our guard against the attitude that a classic is only uplifting if it is dowdy; and the devotees who always cluster round a movement of uplift. In other words, our social service must be oblique – it must not reek of social service, but show itself in artistic vitality." (Theatre Museum. Charles Landstone Archive THM/201. Box 4).

[224] CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 32.

[225] See CEMA, *Arts in War Time*, 15-16. Speaight claims that this possible exemption from a great burden in fact "conferred a much larger financial benefit than anything CEMA could afford to give" (Speaight, *Drama Since 1939*, 22). As CEMA could not itself grant the tax exemption but had to apply at the Board of Customs, there were ongoing and increasing attempts to acquire control over this question especially during the later stages of the war. Ultimately, CEMA wanted to be in the position to cast the crucial verdict whether or not a play was "educational" itself, instead of leaving it to the Board of Customs. Although this change in legislation never materialised it shows how self-confident CEMA had become by the later stages of the war (for more information see AAD. EL 1/7 Minutes Meetings 21-37).

[226] See The Civic Theatre Scheme. As Submitted by the British Drama League to The Prime Minister, The President of The Board of Education and The Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts. November 12th, 1942 (Theatre Museum. File "British Drama League"). Although the scheme was not adopted "there and then" (which nobody had expected anyway) it influenced the 1948 Local Government Act. Section 132 of the Act empowered local authorities to provide and maintain civic theatres – as recommended in the scheme. They were given the mandate to spend the sum of sixpence in the pound on entertainments, which made a possible total of eight million pounds available to subsidise the arts (see Whitworth, *National Theatre*, 234). For an overview over the British Drama League's activities, aimed specifically at keeping up morale on the Home Front, see British Drama League, *Twenty-Five Years*.

[227] At the annual meeting of the British Drama League Lord Esher vigorously made the case for a civic theatre in Britain after the war and demanded state subsidies (see Theatre World January 1943: 31-32).

contemporary pieces and translations.[228] Governmental willingness to support provincial theatres came forward at the inaugural meeting of the "Provincial Theatre Council" when Ernest Bevin expressed his hopes that the future theatre would become "one of our great national institutions to convey to the peoples of the world the real character of the ordinary British people".[229]

It has been seen that provincial theatres played a decisive role in the plans of official bodies such as CEMA. At the heart of these plans was not only the belief of the important role provincial theatres could play for the war effort in terms of entertainment as well as education but also a concept of municipal theatre provision which pointed at the long-term future. A concept which was in fact not too different from the German system of municipal theatres. Although nobody would have admitted a certain model character and the amount of funding envisaged was certainly on a much smaller scale the basic idea of local responsibility for the arts was strikingly similar to Germany.

The development of the Theatre Royal during the war shows that the possible function of theatre during war time was quickly realised. The new mission was not only to entertain people, lift their morale and let them forget about the hardship of the war, but also to educate them.[230] This the Theatre Royal increasingly did, and the papers regularly stressed that the theatre succeeded in its policy.
In contrast to German cities the reality of war was present in York from the early days of the conflict. Residents joined the Home Guard, the blackout resulted in dark streets, and production of peace time goods was gradually changed to suit war time needs.[231] The high number of air fields around York resulted in the presence of soldiers from many different countries in the city.[232] Especially after the "phoney war" had ended and

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[228] See Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 205-206.
[229] Qtd. in Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 206.
[230] The press stressed that "in situations like the present experience has shown that the public want entertainment, and the management of the Theatre Royal is planning some interesting productions for the future in order to meet the demands" (*YEP*, 13 September 1939).
[231] Manchester- based company Hills produced aircraft at York's chocolate manufacturer Terry's (as Winnie Motherdale recalled in Wilson, Van, comp. York Voices. Stroud: Tempus, 1999. 94). Richard Harwood remembered that the Clifton Aerodrome was "taken over by Linton-on-Ouse and became a satellite of Linton. It was mainly used in the early part for Army co-operation using Lysander aircraft. Later, Linton used it as an emergency landing ground and eventually it became a servicing aerodrome for Halifax four-engined bombers. The two large hangars [...] were [...] used for the repair of damaged Halifax aircraft" (Wilson, *York Voices*, 97-98).
[232] Contemporary witnesses such as Winnie Mothersdale remembered that "York was full of air force of every nationality. The Free French were at Elvington and there was Dutch and Poles who were very

the German invasion of France left Britain in immediate danger of invasion, preparations on the "home front" were speeded up. When the Luftwaffe started the air campaign against Britain in summer 1940, many theatres were hit, some destroyed.[233]

The government seemed anxious that the "war spirit", which had developed in the raided cities in the south and especially in London, might be confined to the areas hardest hit. In an obvious move to counteract this fear the Ministry of Information sent out people like Margaret Bondfield, who gave a talk in the Theatre Royal in September 1940. There, she addressed a "mass meeting" and made it clear that "you are being asked to pool your brains, to use your power of thought, the power of the spirit you possess and put it all into this effort, not merely of winning the war but of winning the peace".[234] In an open and quite aggressive speech she left no doubt that the factory workers were "in the front line of battle just as much as our soldiers, sailors and airmen". This, she claimed, would include them being prepared to risk their lives "in order that production might be maintained". It is interesting to note that the representatives of the City Corporation were eager to appear suitably impressed despite Bondfield's far reaching demands. Aldermen Terry, for example, assured her that they all had "derived a great amount of courage" from her address. He was certain that "the enemy would find Yorkshire people could stand up to the test, if called on". It is interesting to note that the Ministry of Information chose the theatre as the venue for this propaganda event. Although Bondfield did not directly refer to the demands on theatre in war-time, the choice of location stressed the role which the Theatre Royal was expected to play.

One of the effects of air raids and destroyed theatres in southern England was that an increasing number of London companies and stars visited York while the London theatres remained closed.[235] In a reversal of the usual direction West End stars now toured the same provinces they had been so happy to leave behind for a career in the capital.[236] In what became to be regarded as part of their war effort Vic Oliver, John

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gentlemanly, clicked their heels and made you feel you was somebody". She sums the situation up by saying that York was "choc-a-bloc with forces" (Wilson, *York Voices*, 94-95).

[233] Others were taken over for war service, for example "The Strand", which provided a canteen and information service for Australian soldiers (see Shellard, *Harold Hobson*, 47).

[234] See for this quote and the following *YEP*, 23 September 1940).

[235] The Theatre World substituted its chapter "New plays in town" for "Plays on tour" in October 1940 when only one London theatre remained open.

[236] One example is Mary Williams who joined the repertory company during the war after she had been a successful actress in London "appearing in 'Dear Octopus', staged at the Queen's in 1938, with Dame

Gielgud, Emlyn Williams, Jack Hulbert, Michael Redgrave, Cicely Courtneidge, Marie Tempest and many others visited York on their provincial tours. York's audiences immediately benefited from the introduction of state subsidies and experienced performances of companies of international standing such as Old Vic, D'Oyly Carte and Sadler's Wells, which were organised by CEMA. These ensembles started to visit York on a regular basis at least once a year from 1940. The Theatre Royal also profited from CEMA's interest to establish non-profit making companies all over the country, a lack of which had often been lamented before the war.[237] A certain pattern was established at the Theatre Royal: the year opened with performances by a visiting company of national standing, often a ballet or opera company, and a production by the York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society. The repertory company then performed for the rest of the year, with another brief season of visiting companies in summer. Many commentators have claimed that during these war years the Theatre Royal experienced its most successful times – they certainly were the most popular ones.[238]

More disturbing effects of the war came to be felt in the course of the conflict. The Theatre Royal was forced to return to once-nightly shows, which had a negative effect on the theatre's revenues, in order to allow patrons to return home before the blackout.[239] The number of days with only one performance was soon extended, and eventually the twice-nightly programme ceased altogether.[240] The theatre also suffered

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Marie Tempest and John Gielgud" (*YEP*, 22 June 1945). After the end of the summer season of 1945 at the Theatre Royal she returned to the London stage.

[237] There were also numerous provincial theatres which now became associated with CEMA, including Dundee Repertory Company, Glasgow Citizens' Theatre and, perhaps most important, the Theatre Royal in Bristol (see footnote 202). It is interesting to see that CEMA did not support these theatres and companies unconditionally. To be eligible for association with CEMA they had to become non-profit organizations and had to agree to certain obligations as the Council reserved the right to review their finances, plans, and policies annually. In return they received support that ranged from full financial responsibility to limited guarantees against loss (see Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 221-223). Apart from the gain in financial security the theatres and companies were also assured that the support they received was a recognition of their work done in the interests of national service (see CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 32-33).

[238] J. B. Priestley acknowledges that York's Theatre Royal was a good example of a repertory company which battles "for a decent standard against heavy odds, and often doing astonishingly solid jobs" (Priestley, *Theatre Outlook*, 46).

[239] Also, performances were brought forward one hour, which, however, did not affect attendances as they "have shown little deterioration" (see "The Repertory Theatres". Theatre World December 1939: 213). See also PRO. Home Office. HO 186 Air Raid Precautions. HO 186/742 Entertainment (1942). 3.

[240] From January 1940, Mondays and Tuesdays only offered one show at 7.15pm with a matinee on Tuesday at 2.30pm. Twice nightly performances were still held on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 6.20 pm and 8.40pm. From October 1940 Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays only had once nightly shows at 7.15 pm with a matinee on Wednesday at 2.30pm. From October 1942 the twice nightly programme stopped altogether and performances were at 7pm. Only a month later, performances started to begin at 6.30pm in order to make it possible for audiences to catch the last bus. From the beginning of new season in August 1943, the theatre again started some sort of twice nightly programme with Saturday performances at 4.45pm and 7.30pm.

from the paper shortage, which reduced the size of the Programme Notes.[241] Even more distressing was the fact that more and more actors were being called up to the Theatre of War. This caused serious problems as replacements were difficult to find.[242] Solutions included the producer joining the players or the choice of plays with small casts.[243] Some of the former actors who had been called up, however, also returned for short visits as guest stars during their leave from the army, for example the comedian Hal Osmond, who became something of a regular visitor.[244]

Also, from September 1939, one page announcements concerning "Air Raid Precautions" appeared in the Programme Notes. Patrons were requested to bring their gas masks but were reminded that in the event of an air raid they could feel safe in the theatre as the auditorium's walls "are built of stone slabs of a thickness [...] that should prove extremely good cover".[245] From May 1940 audiences were informed where the nearest air raid shelters were situated although they were not advised to leave the theatre in the case of an air raid. On the contrary, the notice almost encouraged them to stay on as it promised that "immediately the exodus is complete the exit doors will be closed and the performance resumed".[246] That a theatre building was not the best of shelters in an air raid, however, became apparent when, during the German attack on Coventry in November 1940, the theatre was destroyed.

Once nightly performances meant the loss of box office receipts. New repertory prices were, therefore, introduced in August 1943. The prices were as follows: Dress Circle 3/6, Circle 2/6, Orchestra Stalls 2/6, Pit 1/3, Upper Circle 1s and Gallery 6d. The management claimed the rise was due to the "heavy increases in rent and taxes and other extra charges due to wartime conditions" (*YH*, 10 July 1943).

[241] Until October 1940 the Programme Notes consisted of 12 pages, after that their size was reduced radically to four pages – a fact which people recollect until today. Marjorie Leng was a regular theatre goer in the 1930s and 1940s and remembers "the wartime programmes, some of them were single sheets, because of the paper drive" (see Wilson, *York Voices*, 117). Instead, the Notes from July 1941 featured a new more war-like outlook with a knight on the front cover.

[242] There are many articles in the papers about actors being called up, and also about the first casualties (see *YEP* 10 April 1940, 16 April 1940, 17 April 1940, 8 May 1940, etc.). One example is Michael Rennie, one of the favourites with York patrons. When he joined the RAF in November 1940 the press devoted long articles to his departure (see *YG*, 15 November 1940; *YEP*, 6 November 1940).

[243] From 1940 the number of plays with small casts increased rapidly. Quite frequently the theatre produced plays with seven or eight actors, often not more than four. Additionally, if a production featured the full cast or a cast of unusually many actors the press specially noted this "occasion".

[244] One of many examples is his participation in the comedy Rookery Nook staged in April 1943.

[245] See, for example, Theatre Royal Programme Notes, 18 September 1939. At the beginning of the war the danger from a gas attack was rated even higher than a conventional air raid. The A.R.P. notice warned patrons that it "may at any time be necessary to refuse admission to those not having one [a gas mask – A.H.] in their possession. These masks must be taken to the seats, and not left in the cloakrooms."

[246] Similar announcements appeared in theatres all over the country. The following account of an incident at a theatre not further specified seems quite typical: "A few days ago, an air-raid warning sounded. The performance was stopped and the spectators were informed they might leave for a shelter. Only two persons rose – two old ladies in a box, who asked if they could get seats in the 'pit' (the rear of the orchestra), since they thought they would be safer there" (see Bulletins from Britain. No. 1. 3 September 1940. 1.) The Bulletin was an information service for British officials serving in various posts throughout the world. It was intended to inform them about the activities of the British forces as well as the impact of

Not only did the theatre become affected by the war, however, it also played an increasingly active role in the war effort.[247] The company gave special "command performances" for the forces and even went on its own ENSA tours in 1945.[248] The theatre collected donations for the "Comforts Fund of the Troops", "National Air Raid Distress Fund" or "RAF Benevolent Fund" and admitted service personnel in uniform at reduced prices.[249] Theatre patrons were equally keen to contribute. One example is the Lord Mayor's "Spitfire" fund, for which theatre patrons collected £85 13s. 10d. in September 1940 alone.[250] In February 1942 York celebrated "Warship Week" with a special show in the Theatre Royal including sketches, music, and talks by members of the armed forces.[251] After the German attack on the Soviet Union a huge wave of support ran through Britain – and again the theatre was at the forefront of events. In 1943 the Royal Albert Hall housed a big celebration of Stalin's Red Army after the battle of Stalingrad had been won, and theatre stars such as Gielgud, Richardson and Olivier were happy to lend their support.[252] In the previous year, a public meeting in York had already explained "Why Russia Will Win". The organisers screened Soviet films and collected money for the "Help Russia Fund".[253] That the frontline had reached York, as Margaret Bondfield had predicted in 1940, became apparent when, on 29 April 1942, the city experienced her worst air raid.[254]

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the war upon the home front. It was in fact a propagandistic newspaper which presented a certain picture of Britain which British officials were asked to disseminate.

[247] The problems faced by the repertory theatres were acknowledged by the Theatre World, which already in January 1940 stated that most of the theatres were affected by the war in one way or another with different show times, special programmes in aid of the army or "Troops Abroad", black- outs and lack of petrol ("Round the Repertory Theatres." Theatre World January 1940: 20-21).

[248] The company went on its first ENSA tour in January and did another one half a year later. In summer 1945 their tour was "scheduled for troops and war- workers in Scotland" (*YEP*, 22 June 1945).

[249] Which was a common feature around the country (see Shellard, *Harold Hobson*, 47).

[250] See Theatre Royal Programme Notes, 9 September 1940. York was no exception. In autumn 1940 London theatres, too, donated proceeds of productions to a fund for the purchase of Spitfires (see Shellard, *Harold Hobson*, 48).

[251] See Theatre Royal Programme Notes, 17 February 1942.

[252] See Calder, *People's War*, 347. See also Nicholson, Steve. "Theatrical Pageants in the Second World War." Theatre Research International 18 (1993): 186-196. For a sketch of the proposed stage design and decorations see PRO. Ministry of Information. INF 3/316.

[253] The meeting was held at the "Regal" cinema on 8 March 1942 and also included a "panel". Admission was free on giving money to the fund (see *YEP*, 6 March 1942).

[254] During the so-called "Baedecker raid" 92 persons were killed and around 200 injured. Although the railway stations and works appear to have been the Luftwaffe's main target residential areas were hit as well. The roof of the medieval guildhall was completely destroyed, but most of the historic buildings including the Minster and the Theatre Royal were unscathed. The "Baedecker" raid was the most serious attack on York, but there have been ten more raids on the city during the Second World War. For detailed information on the raid see confidential "Report on the air raid on the city during the early hours of Wednesday, 29th April, 1942", although this document only mentions 71 dead. Also interesting is the information regarding "Rest Centres", in which 2,000 homeless were fed and accommodated, and concerning "Billeting" as around 1,600 persons were billeted in consequence of the raid. The Council also received around 7,600 complaints of property damaged in varying degree (see York City Council, Council Minutes 1941-1942. no page numbers).

The biggest home front entertainment event in York, however, was the "Holidays-at-Home" scheme designed to persuade people to stay at home during the summer months in order to make public transport available for the armed forces. With these objectives in mind, local authorities made plans to coordinate the provision of entertaining programmes to provide relaxation from the strain of war and long working hours, and to keep everyone fit for the war tasks still to be undertaken.[255] It was clear from the beginning that to most people this was a great limitation as holidays without a journey did not seem to be an appealing option. The cities were, therefore, required to present an attractive programme and to mix "the gay with the grim".

From the start, theatre and drama played vital roles in the scheme. In 1941, the first "Holidays-at-Home" events were organised in Birmingham, Huddersfield and London, where open-air Shakespeare performances were held. For the following year, the Ministry of Labour requested all local authorities to provide as much entertainment as possible, especially outside.[256] Following this request, plans for 1942 were on a much larger scale and included a nine-weeks' season of open-air theatre in Birmingham, a similar enterprise in Manchester, and a Festival of Arts in Durham; all with extensive state support.[257] The central role, which the theatrical arts played in these festivals, becomes apparent in York, too.

See also the Special Edition of the "Evening Press" on 29 April 2002, which commemorates the air raid on 32 pages under the heading "York's Darkest Hour".
For more information on air raids on York see PRO. Home Office/Ministry of Home Security. HO 199 Intelligence Branch. HO 199/40 Air Raids on York (1940/41) concerning reports on three raids in October, November 1940 and January 1941, which were all minor attacks. Regarding the April 1942 raid see PRO. Home Office/Ministry of Home Security. HO 199 Intelligence Branch. HO 199/46 Air Raid on York (April 1942) and PRO. Home Office. HO 192 Air Raids. HO 192/1676 Air Raid Assessment Report. Public Utilities York (1941/42) with interesting tables, charts, lists etc. concerning water, gas, and electricity supply as well as sewage, transport etc. The file also contains a detailed account of the April 1942 air raid with regard to damage, costs of repair etc. For a detailed 15 page report of the Ministry of Home Security ("Research and Experiments Department") on the York raid, dated 31 December 1942, see PRO. Home Office. HO 192 Air Raids. HO 192/1656 Air Raid Assessment Reports York – General (1942/43).

[255] York's Council took a keen interest in planning and organising the event. Matters concerning the "Holidays-at-Home" programme were extensively discussed in the Council's Entertainment Committee (see York City Archives. BC 81. Corporation of York. Entertainments Committee-Minutes. 1944-1946). For more information see also York City Archives. Acc 278. York "Holidays at Home" Scheme. This file contains interesting accounts, press cuttings, photos, programmes, and leaflets from 1942 and 1944.

[256] See newspaper article "A Policy for Pleasure." The Observer, 21 June 1942.

[257] In 1942 CEMA entered into a co-operation with the Ministry of Labour in its "Holidays-at-Home" campaign. CEMA provided support especially in connection with the open-air theatres, which, as the Council hoped, "may well become permanent and indeed suggest a promising future for civic enterprise" (see CEMA, *Arts in War Time*, 9).
Regarding CEMA's support to Birmingham open-air theatre see Kemp, Thomas C. Birmingham Repertory Theatre. The Playhouse and the Man. 2nd rev. ed. Birmingham: Cornish, 1948. 108-110. Substantial support, too, came from the British Drama League who was working towards higher theatrical standards in the provinces (see Noble, Peter. British Theatre. London: Knapp & Drewett, 1946. 168-169).

Like many other cities, York mounted the first "Holidays-at-Home" festival in 1942. In a move to convince people to stay in York rather than to force them to, the LNER kept their services running. Officials stressed, however, that travelling to Scarborough made no sense because although the city was "no longer a prohibited area it is a town of the dead".[258] It is uncertain, however, if such bleak outlooks convinced anyone not to travel, although official statements stressed the success of the appeal.[259]

York appointed a special honorary secretary and mounted an extraordinary programme.[260] It included performances by the "York Settlement Players" who presented Without the Prince and the "New Earswick Dramatic and Operatic Society" who staged Priestley's farce When We Are Married. The dramatic highlight of the season was certainly a performance of scenes from Shakespeare by members of the Theatre Royal company in the Tempest Anderson Hall in July 1942. The actors played parts from different plays before a packed audience and proved to everyone that they "did their bit", too.[261] Although the organisers seem to have been anxious not to provide a programme too overtly propagandistic, the Lord Mayor made it clear that the whole venture was regarded as "a contribution to the national effort".[262] And Reverend Neilson, president of the Free Church Council, in an open-air service added that residents should rest assured that "this period of their holidays at home was quite in harmony with the will of God".[263]

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[258] "The shops are half empty, there are no special attractions, and you can't get near the beach." ("Holiday-at-Home Snag. Transport Limit to Parks." *YP*, 3 July 1942).

[259] It was claimed, for example, that "only five per cent of Halifax people disregarded the advice to spend their Wakes holiday at home" resulting in "one eighth of the peace-time exodus" (*YP*, 10 August 1942).

[260] The programme included donkey rides, ventriloquists, military dance bands, in which "members of the Forces, including the women's services, will also take part in displays", children's sports, football and cricket games, open-air services, display of flags and bunting, a fanfare of trumpets to mark the beginning of the programme and to "herald a month of austerity holidaymaking" (*YEP*, 17 July 1942), variety entertainments, a swimming gala, a model railway, choir concerts, a military parade and a "drumhead service" with 1,500 personnel and several thousand visitors, "Youth on Parade", an "Aquatic Gala" and a "Punch and Judy" show.

[261] The press reported that the actors were "enthusiastically hailed by an audience of nearly 600" (see *YEP* as quoted in Collection Nellie Woodhouse. York City Archives. Acc 639. Vol. VI 1941/42). The actors gave the performance in their free time as the Theatre Royal did not take part in any official activities and remained closed for half of the time. This caused criticism and one patron asked if it did "not seem odd that for one half of this organised holiday the Theatre Royal, which is the citizens' theatre, should be closed? I know that the Repertory Company are deserving of a holiday, but could not that have been achieved by running a special 'little season' with visiting players, as was done at Christmas?" (Letter-to-the-Editor. *YG*, 24 July 1942).

[262] Mrs Crichton, then Lord Mayor, on the occasion of the civic send-off of the programme on 18 July 1942 (*YEP*, 18 July 1942).

[263] *YEP*, 20 July 1942. The Lord Mayor stressed "that however much we might grumble about the fact that the railways were needed to do more important things than take people away for holidays we must all be quite willing to do it so long as those in power got on with the war and got done with the war".
In the same article Councillor Watson made one of the real purposes behind the scheme clear when remarking that "it was the hope of the organisers that as a result of the Holidays at Home Month the citizens would be recreated in mind and body and that they would return to their work refreshed and with

The connection between entertainment and propaganda was a common feature of the holiday programmes in other Yorkshire cities, too. In Leeds, residents voted for "Miss Leeds, 1942". The beauty competition, however, was not in the "lavish style" of pre-war days. Instead the girls "wore simple, war-time evening gowns and the keynote was simplicity [as] 'Miss Leeds, 1942' was to symbolise the hard-working, stay-at-home-holiday girl".[264] In a similar event in Harrogate, the "Holiday Queen" introduced her retinue of young women, "Miss Saving", "Miss Agriculture", and "Miss Fuel Saving".[265] It was even claimed that whether people had been spending their holidays at home or elsewhere "they all realised that the purpose of their holiday was not only enjoyment but that they might be made more fit bodily, mentally and spiritually for the work that lay ahead".[266] The 1942 "Holiday-at-Home" scheme in York was felt to have been such a success that in the following years programmes on similar lines were organised and even a peace-time continuation was considered.[267]

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renewed confidence in the future, so that they might feel that all would end well in the world conflict between the forces of good and evil" ("'Holidays At Home Are Part Of Our War Effort'. Something For Everybody At York. Programme In Full Swing. Fine Sense Of Co-operation." *YG*, 24 July 1942).

[264] See *YP*, 25 July 1942.

[265] The city also organised a "savings centre" (see *YEP*, 3 August 1942).
The city's motto for the holiday season was "Relax without relaxing the war effort", with most of the programme arranged around that slogan (see *YP*, 31 July 1942). For further details regarding the 1942 programmes in Leeds, Huddersfield, Skipton, Halifax, Harrogate, Thirsk, Sutton, Bradford, Horsforth, Shipley, Wakefield, Keighley, Blackpool, Bingley, Norton, Malton, Castleford, Batley, Dewsbury, Mirfield, Otley, Luton, Blackburn, etc. see York City Archives, file York 'Holidays at Home' Scheme. Accounts and Press Cuttings 1942 & 1944. Photos, Programmes, Leaflets. Acc 278.
Selby organised a "Warship Week" in 1942 to support the "Tanks for Attack" campaign and the "Submarine Sturgeon Comforts Fund" (*YP*, 29 July 1942).

[266] See *YEP*, 14 August 1944. The BBC, too, stressed that even a little leisure after a twelve-hour shift was part of the war effort. A handbook read that "rest from work had become a precious thing – and, because the quality of work depends so largely upon it, one of great value" (see Gardner, Juliet. The People's War. Pictures from the Past. Devizes: Select Editions, 1995. 88).
It is interesting to note that the scheme aroused the interest of the Nazis, too. One of the regular internal propaganda reports on the situation in England from summer 1943 claims the failure of the scheme and refers to an article in The Times. The report claims that the appeal to the people's reason, as in the holiday-at-home scheme, did not prove to have the expected success: "Auch die englische Regierung versucht mit allen Mitteln den privaten Eisenbahnverkehr auf ein Minimum herabzudrücken. Die Vorschläge zur zwangsweisen Rationierung der Eisenbahnfahrten seien jedoch als undurchführbar zurückgestellt worden. Und das Appellieren an die Einsicht des Volkes, wie auch der Feldzug ‚Feriengestaltung zu Haus' („Times" vom 10.4.), zeitige nicht den gewünschten Erfolg" (BArch [Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde], R55/607, Bl.70).

[267] The 1944 programme, for example, was as spectacular as the 1942 festival. It included numerous concerts and dance events with music mainly played by military bands such as the "R.C.A.F. Overseas Bomber Group Dance Orchestra" or the "Band of the King's Royal Rifle Corps". Special events included a "Demonstrations by Haxby Bivial Defence Mobile First Aid and Cleansing Units" or a "A Superb Display of Canine Intelligence featuring Highly Trained Alsatians" (*YEP*, 4 August 1944). For peacetime continuation plans see *YEP*, 14 August 1944).

Put into a national perspective, however, we have to note that the appeal of Holidays-at-Home was rather limited. The Home Intelligence Reports regularly featured public criticism on various aspects of the scheme.[268] Another problem was that the efforts to conceal war-time problems with entertainment events on a grand scale were only partly successful.[269] The economic situation for both the Theatre Royal and its patrons became increasingly difficult towards the end of the war. As mentioned above ticket prices were raised in 1943, and they were even more expensive for performances of visiting companies during repertory holidays.[270]

In this situation the sudden interest of the government to play its role in the leisure and entertainment sector after the outbreak of the war not only came as a welcome relief but also as a surprise. After centuries of regarding these spheres as subjects of private enterprise the state, through ENSA, CEMA and the promotion of "Holidays-at-Home" festivals among other ventures, suddenly started to subsidise the arts with a clear view regarding their propagandistic potential. It is interesting to see that local councils all over Britain quickly seized the obvious chance and started to plan for post-war municipal arts provision in general and civic theatres in particular.[271] In York, Seebohm Rowntree called for such an initiative as early as 1943.[272] The general atmosphere towards the arts had changed tremendously within a few years.

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[268] See PRO. INF 1/292 (Part 2). Home Intelligence Reports. August 1941-July 1942. 3-7, 342-345. Similarly PRO. INF 1/292 (Part 3). Home Intelligence Reports. July 1942-August 1943. 1-5, 7-18, 27-32, 41-52, 430-436, 443-448, 460-471; PRO. INF 1/292 (Part 4). Home Intelligence Reports. From September 1943. 159-162, 299-303.

[269] Many York residents tried to escape war-time reality by making use of the entertainment programme on offer. They queued up for the Empire and the cinema, went to ENSA concerts and dancing events (see York Oral History Project, *Through the Storm*, 35-38).

[270] Ticket prices for special performances were as follows: Box 8/3, Dress Circle 9s or 8/3, Orchestra Stalls 8/3 or 6/9, Pit and Upper Circle 4s or 1/6. Patrons were reminded, however, that the theatre accepted "cash only"; it seems as if people had repeatedly tried to pay in kind.

[271] York was no exception. In 1942 the Council started to plan in earnest for York's post-war cultural development in a way not too different from a German "Kulturamt". The newly found enthusiasm is illustrated in the fact that the new committee met as often as ten times in the first year of its existence between July 1942 and July 1943 (see York City Archives. BC 71/1. Corporation of York. Civic (Cultural Development) Sub- Committee – Minutes 1942-1944).
As an example for post-war planning regarding municipal theatre provision see Hayes, Nick. "Municipal Subsidy and Tory Minimalism: Building the Nottingham Playhouse, 1942-1963." Midland History 19 (1994): 128-146. He pointed out that the general atmosphere after the war was favourable to publicly funded local theatres. The 1948 Local Government Act, which ended legislative prohibition of the municipal sponsorship of theatre, seemed a logical development against this background, although generally the results had been poor. As a reason for this lack of support Hayes mentioned not only the more pressing reconstruction objectives but also a resistance which was bound to "puritanical objections to sponsoring entertainment, particularly the theatre, or more commonly by the lingering suspicion that expenditure on cultural provision was 'frivolous'" (ibid., 129).

[272] See Rowntree, Seebohm. "The Municipal Theatre *Can* Be a Success." Local Government Service October 1943: 452. John Morrell even dreamt of an open-air theatre in a park between Leeman Road and the Ouse (see Morrell, John B. The City of Our Dreams. London: Fountain Press, 1940. 54).

As far as this study is concerned it is interesting to note that the history of theatre in York starts to become increasingly fascinating from around the turn of the last century when the City Council, although still regarding the theatre as a private commercial enterprise, started to accept some responsibility for the playhouse on lines not too different from Münster. A "civic spirit" began to influence both municipal authorities and residents, and this eventually led to the foundation of the "Citizens' Theatre" in 1934. From the beginning of the twentieth century this spirit materialised in decisions made by the Corporation with regard to its role as landlord of the theatre. The city owned the building together with the land it was built on and rented it to lessees of their choice for a fixed period of time, normally seven years. The city had, therefore, a number of responsibilities especially concerning essential repairs.[273] The huge re-construction scheme of 1901/02 illustrated the scale of its possible involvement. From then on, however, the Corporation's contribution started to go beyond the bare essentials as the city was prepared to assist with other costs, too.[274]

This is also illustrated by an advice of the Estates Committee to the Council from 1924. The Committee proposed that, when advertising for tenders, "the whole circumstances shall be taken into consideration" and the "the lease not necessarily being given to the highest tenderer".[275] The idea behind this advice clearly was to find the "right" person for the job, the one best suitable to be the manager of York's Theatre Royal; even if – and this is an extremely interesting "if" – the revenue for the city was lower.

Especially during the crucial years between 1931 and 1935 when the theatre's future was highly uncertain, councillors took over responsibility. In 1934, for example, they agreed to reduce the annual rent considerably in view of the difficult economic situation. They actively tried to preserve the Theatre Royal as a legitimate playhouse at a time when it would have been easy to find tenders for the conversion of the theatre into a cinema. It is interesting to note in this context, that during the negotiations with Percy Hutchison concerning the alterations to the contract in 1931 (see above), the Corporation did not support Hutchison's idea to extent the period of time during which

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[273] "The Corporation are under a liability to maintain and keep the roofs, main walls, and main timbers in good repair, to paint the outside wood and iron work, to wire the Theatre for the purpose of a supply of electric light, and to provide modern sanitary conveniences" (as reported on a special council meeting on 20 May 1901. York City Council, Council Minutes 1900-1901. 385).

[274] In summer 1933, for example, the Corporation agreed to pay for upholstering the seats when Crawshay asked for it (see Theatre Royal Estates Sub-Committee meeting of 5 August 1933. York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 142-144). The lease, however, made it clear that this would have been Crawshay's responsibility: One of the "Lessee's Covenants" was to "re-decorate and re-upholster where necessary" (see Estates Committee meeting of 23 June 1924, York City Council, Council Minutes 1923-1924. 685).

[275] Estates Committee meeting of 23 June 1924, York City Council, Council Minutes 1923-1924. 687.

films were allowed to be shown in the theatre. Had Hutchison pressed this point, however, they almost certainly would have approved it in view of the difficult circumstances.[276] In order to preserve the Theatre Royal as a theatre at least by name, the Corporation was now willing to make considerable concessions.[277]

The Second World War only strengthened the "civic spirit". It seems as if the Theatre Royal experienced its "golden years" during the first years of the war. The big London stars came on provincial tours, the company was as popular as ever with many talented actors who later moved on to London or Hollywood, the theatre stood on a sound financial basis and had a loyal following, which raised audience figures to 10,000 a week, as Seebohm Rowntree proudly remarked. Apart from that, the special war-time demands on the theatre were quickly accepted and the propagandistic value of entertainment to boost morale was soon realised. The "Holidays-at-Home" programme together with state-subsidised theatrical entertainments organised by ENSA and CEMA clearly outlined the role the theatre was expected to play. The Theatre Royal successfully played this new role with performances of escapist variety shows, farces, spy comedies and war plays, but especially with established classical theatre, opera, ballet and productions of the "great national poet".

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[276] Considering Hutchison's application the Estates Committee recommended approval but expressed their "hope [that] it will be possible to continue the production of legitimate plays". They would, however, "consider all the circumstances again", if need be (Estates Committee meeting of 13 July 1931. York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 18). The possible danger of having the theatre turned into a cinema, however, did not materialise as Percy Hutchison had filled his petition in bankruptcy in March 1933.

[277] The 1925 Public Health Act restricted the powers of local authorities regarding the support of the arts. Sponsoring of theatre through public funds, for example, was prohibited. It was again the war situation which changed circumstances. The 1944 Education Act legalised some activities and enabled local education authorities to provide public entertainment. Even two years earlier the Ministry of Labour had already broken up the strict 1925 act by encouraging local authorities to organise public entertainments as part of their "Holidays-at-Home" programmes. After the war it was the Local Government Act which in section 132 clarified that local authorities were entitled to spend the sum of sixpence in the pound annually on an extensive array of entertainment services – for example on a municipal theatre (see Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 241).

History of Theatre in Münster

Münster's theatre history can be divided into three different periods. The first period started with the construction of the first purpose built playhouse in 1775 against the backdrop of the Enlightenment and ended with the demolition of the so-called "Comödienhaus" in 1894. It was on the one hand characterised by financial difficulties, changing companies and an unsteady repertoire, which contained Shakespeare and Lessing as well as variety shows and farces. On the other hand this phase was marked by a steady development of the playhouse into a municipal theatre against the background of social change and rising bourgeois influence.

The second period starts with the opening of the new theatre in 1895 and is mainly characterised by the increased importance of the theatre within the community of a proud regional centre.

The final period begins with the changes brought about by the revolution of 1918/19 and ends with the closure of all theatres in Germany by propaganda minister Goebbels in 1944. This division into periods needs some explanation as it seems to link the Weimar Republic with the Nazi dictatorship. We will see, however, that with respect to the theatrical development not only in Münster but in Germany in general, the Nazi seizure of power in 1933 did not result in radical changes. After some short term experiments with alternative forms, such as the open-air "Thing" plays, the Nazis returned to the established format. This means that the development of Münster's theatre as a municipal institution was not affected by the "National Revolution" to the same extent as one might expect – and as the Nazis had hoped for.[278]

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[278] This was no phenomenon typical of Münster alone but a general development on German stages. The Nazis failed to transform the theatre into a specifically "völkisch" art form but made use of the existing system eventually (see, for example, Dussel, Konrad. Ein neues, ein heroisches Theater? Nationalsozialistische Theaterpolitik und ihre Auswirkungen in der Provinz. Bonn: Bouvier, 1988; London, John, ed. Theatre under the Nazis. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000; Ketelsen, Uwe-Karsten. Literatur und Drittes Reich. 2nd rev. ed. Schernfeld: SH-Verlag, 1994).
Although research now seems to agree on the Nazis' failure to transform the theatre according to "völkisch" concepts some scholars still claim that the take-over resulted in a complete shake-up (see, for example, Rischbieter, Henning, ed. Theater im "Dritten Reich". Theaterpolitik, Spielplanstruktur, NS-Dramatik. Seelze: Kallmeyer, 2000. Similar misinterpretations can be found in Gadberry, *Theatre in the Third Reich*).

Theatrical performances in Münster did not begin with the building of the "Comödienhaus" but can be traced back to the middle ages when mystery plays dramatised Biblical stories. In 1485 boys of the cathedral school performed Codrus, a comedy.[279] Especially before Easter, young novices and children of art-loving "Bürger" staged plays with religious content. Münster, a diocesan town since 805, had always been an important ecclesiastical centre. In the Renaissance and with the Reformation, however, the catholic church lost much of its influence over theatrical performances. Patronage passed to the new nobility and wealthy gentry. Since the middle of the sixteenth century touring companies visited Münster and performed in the town hall. These companies travelled from Holland and Italy, but most of them came from England. During the peace conference after the Thirty Years War in 1648 the companies visited Münster on such a regular basis that Joseph Prinz claimed they represented Münster's first standing theatre.[280] After the peace treaty the performances of the visiting companies were transferred to the "Krameramtshaus", the centre of the merchants' guild, which housed theatre performances for the next 130 years.[281] Corresponding with Münster's general decline after 1648, however, touring companies increasingly became a rare experience.

A substantial change took place at the end of the eighteenth century under Maximilian Friedrich, Elector of Cologne and prince-bishop of Münster (1762-1784) – at a time when many "enlightened" German princes became increasingly interested in the theatrical arts. Many of them became patrons of theatre companies and entered into competition with other princes who did the same.[282] Apart from Maximilian's being culturally open-minded it was mainly due to his first minister, Fürstenberg, that Münster got its first purpose-built theatre, the "Comödien- und Redoutenhauß".[283] It was opened

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[279] See Prinz, Joseph. "Die Geschichte des münsterschen Theaters bis 1945." Das neue Theater in Münster. Festschrift zur Eröffnung des Hauses. Ed. Wolfgang Vernekohl. Münster: Werbe- und Verkehrsamt, 1956. 25.

[280] Prinz, *Geschichte des münsterschen Theaters*, 28. The French legation even performed plays themselves. On 26 February 1645 they staged a "ballet de paix" (ibid).

[281] See Müller, Eugen. "Das Theater in Münster 1534-1927." Almanach 1927. Theater der Stadt Münster. Ed. Intendanz des Theaters. Münster: Städtische Bühnen, 1927. 28.

[282] After the peace treaty of 1648 the Holy Roman Empire was split up into many different independent states. Nearly three hundred princes reigned in Germany with some territories not bigger than a few square miles. Many of these princes could not afford to finance their own army and looked for alternative means of representation. This was one of the reasons for their turning to theatre and opera. Today's system of municipal, Land and state theatres can be traced back to this political diversity.

[283] For more information on the building itself see Geisberg, Max, comp. Die Stadt Münster. Vierter Teil. Die Profanen Bauwerke seit dem Jahre 1701. Münster: Aschendorff, 1935. 305-319.

in 1775, at a time when initiatives for a national theatre were imminent.[284] In effect, this early opening is remarkable for a small town, and all the more so since Münster had lost the significance which it had gained as the venue of the peace conference in the 1640s.

The first period in the history of Münster's standing theatre shows many similarities with York, but also points at some fundamental differences in the development of the two playhouses. Like the Theatre Royal, the first theatre in Münster was owned by the city. The council leased the building to impresarios who took over complete responsibility and were bound to make a financial profit. Like Tate Wilkinson they resembled business managers rather than the artistic directors they would later become. Relating to the early years, however, the biggest difference between Münster and York is the immediate founding period of the respective theatres. Whereas the erecting of York's first theatre by Thomas Keregan was an enterprise undertaken by a businessman, the "Comödienhaus" was built by the prince-bishop against the will of both the city council and a big section of the population. They felt that there was no need for a new playhouse as performances had been successfully established in the "Krameramtshaus". Apart from that the prince-bishop did not intend to erect a new playhouse but to use an existing building instead. He had his eyes on the "Scharne" which belonged to the local butchers' guild. They, however, did not see any reason to leave the place only to see those "voluptuairen, eitelen, die Jugend verderbenden Spielereyen and Comoedien" performed there.[285] Councillors denied a need for a new playhouse and added that residents would not go anyway. More importantly, they saw the theatre as a place where the accepted moral code was violated.[286] The prince-bishop, however, went ahead with his plan after a few years, despite the resistance of the council. It is interesting to note, therefore, that the standing theatre came to Münster as an idea from outside in the first place; in fact, it was forced upon the town. In the course of the nineteenth century, however, Münster's residents developed into enthusiastic theatre-goers.

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[284] The end of the eighteenth century was a time of new departures. The idea of a unified German nation – and with it the idea of a national theatre – increasingly gained ground. Lessing wrote his "Hamburger Dramaturgie", and Goethe and Schiller had their first successes. In 1766, the "Nationaltheater" in Hamburg was founded and represented the first attempt of a standing theatre. The idea of a national theatre was also pursued in Mannheim. Neither of these experiments, however, did last for long – and in the end, the German theatre remained as it was before: "decentralized".

[285] "voluptuous, vain plays and comedies which corrupt our youth" (qtd. in Sauer, Wilhelm. "Das Theater zu Münster zur Zeit der letzten Fürstbischöfe." Zeitschrift für die Kulturgeschichte NF [1873]: 553-570.).

[286] See Jeismann, Michael. "'Bürgerliche Kultur' und Kultur des Bürgertums – Theater und Museen im 19. Jahrhundert." Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz-Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 2. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 492.

During the first years of the "Comödienhaus'" existence, the programmes were of high standard, and the theatre even had its own company. They produced Lessing's complete dramatic works, Shakespeare's Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet, as well as plays by Wieland and Goethe.[287] Apart from plays, operas and operettas of mainly French and Italian origin made up nearly half of the programmes. Münster's stage had a high reputation at the time, which, however, did not last for long. As early as 1781, the standing company was dissolved due to financial problems. It became all too obvious that an ambitious programme could only be afforded as long as audiences flocked in. During the following decades the theatre programmes became less ambitious, visiting companies returned again and staged comedies, farces and light operas as the impresarios hoped this would attract better audiences.

A theatre season at that time lasted from January to March and from August to December. The times of performance changed from early afternoon (until 1875) to 5pm and 7.30pm alternatively thereafter. Since the seventeenth century, performances were only allowed to take place on normal working days. This restriction came from Münster's clergy who did not want to see the Sunday "desecrated" – an indication of the importance that the catholic church still had despite having lost patronage over the performing arts.

The theatre could sit an audience of approximately 500, 250 of which were in seats for the bourgeois visitors in the pit. In the dress circle a special box was incorporated for the prince-bishop and his entourage. On both sides of the box were seats for the aristocracy and the army. It is interesting to note that the shape of the theatre reflected Fürstenberg's vision of a "Volkstheater", a theatre for the people, which was based on Lessing's ideal of a national theatre. The "Comödienhaus" was not only placed in the heart of town – far away from the prince-bishop's residence and thereby avoiding his immediate influence – the architect Wilhelm Ferdinand Lipper also slightly altered the common theatre architecture of the time. Although he could not neglect the representational desire of the aristocracy, he did not divide the pit from the dress circle and the boxes entirely. The "Comödienhaus" was, therefore, a symbol of the rising influence of the bourgeois classes in Münster. It has to be noted, however, that this concept did still not include all classes of society. The group of people entitled to attend theatre performances was only enlarged by representatives of a new aristocracy – the

[287] We are in the lucky position, that the theatre programmes between 1777 and 1779 were collected by Freiherr Conrad Anton von Graes zum Diepenbrock, who obviously was an enthusiastic theatre-goer.

monied aristocracy. It was, therefore, not a theatre in the true sense of a peoples' theatre. This concept only materialised around 1900 with the intention to enable the lower social classes to visit the theatre by offering tickets a cheap prices.[288]

One of the biggest problems of the "Comödienhaus" was the way it was organized.[289] The supervision and control lay with the prince-bishop who also issued the companies with their licences. The city exerted a considerable influence, too, as it not only owned the building and had the right to pre-censor plays, but councillors could also order an alternative use of the theatre for balls, concerts, exhibitions, or even auctions – irrespective of the current programme. The theatre directors paid the lease and took full responsibility of all their undertakings: theatre programmes, stage design, workshops and properties, payment of actors, advertisements, etc. The overall costs were immense, even box office successes could not guarantee the theatre would break even.[290]

The reasons for the survival of the theatre despite these difficult circumstances are interesting to look at as they show similarities to York as well as one of the fundamental differences. After the resistance against the "Comödienhaus" had been substantial in the 1770s, it is interesting to note how quickly the rising bourgeois population acquired a taste for the new theatre. After only 20 years of the theatre's existence they even formed a society to subsidise the theatre from private funds. In a quite remarkable move, aristocrats and bourgeois citizens formed the "Theaterkommission", the theatre committee. To back up the theatre's finances, all committee members bought season tickets and agreed to guarantee a certain income from the subscriptions to cover the expenses. Even more important is the fact that they deliberately constituted themselves as representatives of the general public who wanted to exert an influence on the theatre's development. Although the "theatre committee" was soon dissolved, it was a first hint at the fact that the theatre would soon become an integral part of Münster's cultural life. This act of showing responsibility for "their" theatre also proved that the population was not entirely prepared to accept the suspicious control of the council regarding the programmes and the financial pressure exerted on the impresarios. They also declined to accept the influence of the prince-bishop as, in contrast to York,

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[288] One of the most important examples is the "Freie Volksbühne" society, which was founded in Berlin in 1890. Apart from the social aspect there was also an educational idea behind the programme. The peoples' theatre movement not only wanted workers to enable to see the German classics and Shakespeare, but also intended to expose middle-class "Bürger" in the audience to the new Naturalistic plays by Ibsen and Hauptmann to make them understand the problems of the lower social classes.

[289] The organization of the theatre was laid down in an edict by the Elector issued in 1774.

German provincial theatres were likely to be controlled by their local or regional princes.[291] Münster's theatre was subject to Maximilian Friedrich's supervision, and he seemed to have regarded the theatre as his personal place of entertainment. At the same time, however, and in contrast to York, it was the large sums he paid to finance the theatre which largely accounted for its survival during the crucial years around 1800.

Apart from the problems mentioned above theatre managers faced difficulties concerning their programmes. In a relatively small town like Münster with some 15,000 inhabitants in 1815 the number of potential visitors was limited. To keep the audience – and most of all the precious subscribers – the repertoire had to change quickly as patrons did not want to see the same play twice. The result was that actors did not have enough time to prepare their parts properly and, therefore, often improvised on stage.[292] Apart from this, concentration and discipline were poor (but obviously this held true for the audience, too), and, generally, performances must have been of low quality – according to our standards today anyway.[293]

Throughout the nineteenth century the "Comödienhaus" experienced these difficulties, and – as in York – theatre managers followed each other in rapid succession. There were times when impresarios successfully raised the level of performances – both technically and aesthetically – and other times when the theatre rather looked like a circus. Although the French troops, who occupied Münster in the course of the Napoleonic wars (1806-1813), awarded the theatre the title of "Nationaltheater des ersten Gouvernements" this did not quite correspond with the quality of the playhouse.[294]

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[290] See Jeismann, *Bürgerliche Kultur*, 494.

[291] The foundation of a public committee formed by influential citizens as an interest or pressure group rather seems a British idea and reminds us of a similar committee in York some 250 years later.

[292] This is not a special characteristic of the Münster stage but was also common in 18th century London.

[293] The actors had to sign a contract which contained special rules of conduct: "Ein jeder muß bei den Proben zur angesetzten Stunde erscheinen. Um 9 Uhr Probe heißt: um 9 Uhr auf dem Theater sein, nicht: um 9 Uhr vom Hause zur Probe gehen. [...] Niemand darf in seiner Rolle willkürlich Veränderungen, Abkürzungen oder Zusätze machen. [...] Keine Mägde werden in den Kulissen geduldet. [...] Kleine schreiende Kinder bleiben zu Hause. [...] Während der Lese- und Theaterproben, vorzüglich aber während der wirklichen Vorstellung, muß sich jeder aller Zänkereien enthalten" (qtd. in Brockpähler, Renate. "Opernaufführungen im münsterischen Komödienhaus (1775- 1890)." Westfalen 44 [1966]: 357-358.) The fact that these rules were necessary shows that these things took place, and one can imagine how theatre practice looked like at the time. See also Goethe's rules for actors, on which the Münster rules might well have been modelled (for a quick reference see Müller-Harang, Ulrike. Das Weimarer Theater zur Zeit Goethes. Weimar: Verlag der Klassikerstätten, 1991. 45-73).

[294] Adolf von Vagedes was the only exception. He revived some of the classics which had been performed in Münster thirty years earlier. In 1809, Vagedes left and became a friend of Karl Immermann, the manager of the then famous Düsseldorf playhouse. This connection was later stressed by the Nazis who wanted to establish a line from the "greats" of Münster's theatre history to their own "achievements".

Two personalities, however, stood out during the first half of the nineteenth century: August Pichler and Albert Lortzing. The former was a "Prinzipal" (impresario) of the "Comödienhaus" from 1819 to 1842, the latter a notable composer of mainly operatic works. Pichler was able to find the right mix between ambitious dramatic works and lighter entertainment.[295] Moreover, he enjoyed the support of the "Oberpräsident" Freiherr von Vincke (president of the now Prussian province of Westphalia). The main reason for Pichler's success, however, was the fact that he was backed financially by a potent member of the aristocracy – another example for a difference between Münster and York. Art-loving prince Paul Alexander zur Lippe appointed Pichler to the well-paid position of the director of the "Hofschauspielergesellschaft" in Detmold. Although ruling over a relatively small territory Paul Alexander treated himself to a standing theatre company, which only stayed in Detmold for a few months each year and otherwise toured cities in the region, among them Münster.[296] The theatre in Münster profited enormously from this connection both financially, as the company was paid for by Paul Alexander, and artistically, because of the company's high production standards. Concerning his own programme, Pichler was successful with productions of both high and low opera; on these occasions, Münster's residents regularly packed the theatre.[297] It was at that time when Albert Lortzing resided in Münster, too. He was not only famous for his opera compositions, but also a renowned singer and actor. He spent seven years in Münster – a fact that the people of Münster are very proud of until today, although Lortzing composed his most famous operas only after his move to Detmold. Nevertheless, operas like Zar und Zimmermann (1837), Der Wildschütz (1842) or Undine (1845) have become extremely popular with Münster's audiences ever since.[298]

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[295] However, when a company featuring a performance by dogs and monkeys came to Münster in 1851, Pichler had difficulty in maintaining his audiences as they all went to see the animal show (see Jeismann, *Bürgerliche Kultur*, 497). This event shows how easily sections of the audience could be lured away from "their" theatre. They forgot about Schiller and Goethe very quickly when new sensations were at hand.

[296] In 1847, Prince Paul Alexander even changed the court theatre into a completely subsidised playhouse. With respect to financial security and artistic possibilities it thus became far superior to theatres like Münster (see Jeismann, *Bürgerliche Kultur*, 498).

[297] Münster's residents preferred opera to drama. When in the season of 1875/76 opera was not produced at all attendance figures fell sharply. The immediate reaction was to produce music theatre again in the following season (see Brockhoff, Maria Elisabeth. "Musik und musikalisches Leben". Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz-Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 3. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 599).

[298] Censorship was not only confined to drama. From 1785, musical performances could also be censored. Lortzing's opera Der Pole und sein Kind (The Pole and his Child), for example, could only be performed in 1833 after the title was changed into Der Feldwebel vom IV. Regiment und sein Kind (The Sergeant of the Fourth Regiment and his Child). The production had been prohibited on political grounds (see Brockhoff, *Musikalisches Leben*, 599).

During the following decades, however, the financial problems largely remained the same. The theatre was not able to survive without regular financial support from the city, which the council was reluctant to provide. Furthermore, the audience's expectations had risen so much that a provincial stage like Münster could not satisfy them anymore. It is interesting to note that the public support, which the theatre had enjoyed around 1800, seemed to have faded away shortly after that. The bourgeois theatre did not enjoy the backing of the bourgeois classes anymore. Lessing's idea of the "Volkstheater", which emancipates itself from the influence of the ruler and becomes a "Bildungsanstalt" – an institution with an educational mission –, did not seem to be able to maintain its appeal. On the contrary, bourgeois visitors seemed to despise the mixed character of late nineteenth century audiences, despite their ambition to show off their social distinction through representation. At the same time, however, they criticised the theatre for not offering productions of the highest standard. August Pichler complained about bad business as hardly anybody sat in the dress circle.[299] It seems as if Münster's "Bürger" joined charity clubs or academic circles rather than sharing the theatre visit with the increasing number of working-class visitors.[300]

Perhaps surprisingly, the decades from 1870 are not without parallel to the situation in York. Münster's council was still far away from accepting responsibility for the theatre. To commit themselves to a municipal theatre was out of the question. As in York, however, the city became increasingly prepared to offer limited financial help if yet another season ended in financial loss. This change of attitude did not mean that the council came to pursue an active cultural policy; it rather meant that the city agreed to waive the cost of the lease in one-off decisions if the financial pressure had become unbearable. That the city was not interested in long term commitments is illustrated by the neglect of the theatre building, which resulted in a pathetic end of Münster's first standing theatre. In March 1890, the last play was produced on its stage and in 1894, the "Comödienhaus" was demolished. It is interesting to note that the demolition of the playhouse did not cause any protest. This seems to be in agreement with the findings stated above. Public support for a standing theatre obviously had diminished.

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[299] Pichler qtd. in Müller, *Theater in Münster*, 38.

[300] The distinction between bourgeois culture and the culture of the Bourgeoisie is the underlying idea of Jeismann's article (see above). He points out that the bourgeois attitude towards the theatre changed notably over the course of time from enthusiastic support, to indifference, to general acknowledgement of its importance.

At the same time, however, there is proof of a growing popularity of drama and an increased interest in theatrical matters elsewhere. From the mid- 1850s onwards, a summer theatre entertained theatre-minded Münsteraner during the summer break of the "Comödienhaus" company. The attractive wooden building could seat about 200 people and stood on the river Aa. The success of this summer theatre proves that theatrical performances were still popular – so popular in fact that residents were not prepared to do without a playhouse over the summer.[301] Concerning the audience's composition it is interesting to note that it was the young generation who went with great affection rather than the bourgeois or aristocratic classes whom theatre managers at the "Comödien-haus" relied on so heavily. Workers, students, and soldiers went instead. Another proof of the growing interest in theatre and drama is the fact that after the "Comödienhaus" had closed, theatre director Heinrich Steffen successfully ran a theatre which mainly staged operas. Other successful ventures were the dialect plays organised by the "Abendgesellschaft" (evening society), the performances at "Bodenburg's" garden, in the "Münsterischen Festhalle" (a restaurant rather than a festival hall) or in the small concert hall at "Weppelmann's".[302]

In a nutshell, public interest in the theatre re-emerged at the end of nineteenth century and much resembled the support the theatre had enjoyed a hundred years earlier. The most interesting difference, however, concerns the audience composition, which represented a greater social variety now and increasingly mirrored the different classes living in Münster. Although theatre managers complained about the upper classes failing to patronise the theatre, they also supported the opening up of the playhouse by a wide range of ticket prices. This enabled people with a low income to enjoy a night out at the theatre and gradually changed the character of the theatre from an elitist institution to a place for (nearly) everyone.[303]

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[301] Research into Münster's cultural history stresses a substantial "Theaterfreudigkeit" in Münster around 1900 (see Jeismann, *Bürgerliche Kultur*, 500).

[302] For more information on the different venues see Müller, *Theater in Münster*, 45-49.

[303] During the 1887/88 season ticket prices ranged from 2.50 marks for the best seat to 50 pfennigs for the cheapest. Further reductions were available for the "Volksaufführungen", which presented a classical repertoire at reduced prices for people with a lower income (see Jeismann, *Bürgerliche Kultur*, 499).

A new era began in 1895, when the new theatre, the so-called "Lortzing-Theater", opened in the "Romberger Hof" on Neubrückenstraße, just a few hundred yards away from the demolished "Comödienhaus".[304] The new playhouse had a considerably larger capacity concerning audience numbers and could seat well over 800 people. Also, its outward appearance was much grander. In contrast to the rather ordinary looking "Comödienhaus", the representative "Romberger Hof" had a distinguished flair about it. The theatre's name is also interesting as it did not entirely correspond to its function alone but was derived from Münster's theatrical past. Whereas the fortunes of the "Comödienhaus" had been controlled largely by the prince-bishop, who only rarely stayed in Münster, the new playhouse's name indicated that it had become a theatre of the city – though not a municipal theatre as yet.

The city council, however, revised its policy concerning the theatre and changed the way it was funded shortly after the re-opening, thereby accepting a long term commitment to the theatre for the first time. From 1899 the city paid an annual subsidy of 12,000 marks as a contribution to the running costs, and over the following years this subsidy rose substantially to more than 88,000 marks in 1911.[305] One of the most important steps on the theatre's way to become a municipal theatre occurred in 1906 when the city bought the building for 580,000 marks and renamed it "Städtisches Lortzing-Theater" (civic theatre). The city took over the basic equipment, which was put at the lessee's disposal, and paid for heating and lighting. The change of name did not only mean that the city accepted responsibility for the building, it also indicates the city's obvious desire to demonstrate that the playhouse was no longer a private enterprise but had become a public venture, that it was transferred from the world of commerce into the sphere of education and social welfare. This claim, however, did not entirely correspond with reality as the business of running the theatre and the way it was organised did not change fundamentally. The theatre directors still had to take a lease and could not afford to run their own company. After the ensemble of Essen's municipal theatre had performed in Münster until 1900, the theatre established a union with Bremen and later with Osnabrück.[306] Although the new name was, therefore, misleading it is nevertheless interesting that the council publicly expressed the desire to

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[304] The "Romberger Hof" was built in 1780 by an aristocratic family who dominated Münster's musical life at the time (see Brockhoff, *Musikalisches Leben*, 595-600). For detailed architectural information on the building see Geisberg, *Profane Bauwerke*, 332-350.

[305] In 1911 the city paid 88,126 marks to the theatre. After that, however, contributions fell again to 67,700 marks in 1912 and 40,000 marks in 1913 (see Prahl, Anton. Die eigenwirtschaftliche Tätigkeit der Stadt Münster in Westfalen. Diss. U Münster 1936. 34).

[306] See Prinz, *Geschichte des münsterschen Theaters*, 59. Other co-operations existed with the theatres in Krefeld and Elberfeld.

establish a close connection between theatre and city. This desire does not only contrast with the councillors of a hundred years earlier but also with the situation in York around the turn of the century. Although York's city council became increasingly prepared to accept some responsibility for the Theatre Royal, they certainly never desired to take over the playhouse entirely to run it as a municipal theatre.

After 1909 and until the outbreak of the First World War the "Städtisches Lortzing-Theater" was under the management of Leopold Sachse, who was responsible for a remarkable upswing in its fortunes, and attendance figures rose.[307] In 1913 he produced Richard Wagner's complete "Ring des Nibelungen" – an admirable undertaking for an ordinary provincial theatre. The company undertook successful tours to the Netherlands, Sachse institutionalised the incorporation of opera in the repertoire and also founded the theatre's own orchestra. Until then, army musicians from the garrison had constituted the orchestra, and this "Musikkorps" had been very popular.[308] Before the First World War the "Lortzing-Theater" had achieved such a high reputation that the city council seriously considered erecting a new theatre building on Servatii Square, for which it had already acquired the land.[309] Although the outbreak of the First World War stopped the plans abruptly, the city's involvement in theatrical matters had reached a remarkable degree within only a few years time. One has to keep in mind that the "Lortzing-Theater" had only opened some 15 years earlier, and it was just a few years before that the "Romberger Hof" was bought by the city.

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[307] During the 1913/14 season figures rose to 79,819, which was regarded as unusually high (see Prinz, *Geschichte des münsterschen Theaters*, 60).

[308] The fact that the Prussian "Musikkorps" was so popular is interesting as the presence of the protestant Prussian army in Münster was not appreciated by its catholic residents. After hundreds of years, in which Münster had been governed by a catholic prince-bishop, it was incorporated into protestant Prussia in 1802 in the course of the secularisation. After 1871 tensions between the mainly protestant German-Prussian state and the catholic church with its political arm, the "Zentrum" (Centre party), ran high again during the "Kulturkampf" (see Gründer, Horst. "'Krieg bis auf's Messer' – Kirche, Kirchenvolk und Kulturkampf (1872-1887)". Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz- Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 2. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 131-165).

[309] Until 1929 plans regarding a new theatre building remained an object of public discussion (see, for example, "Um den Theaterplatz!", Münsterischer Anzeiger (MA), 27 April 1929, and several other articles in the same paper on 5 May 1929).
After 1933 plans for the erection of a new theatre were again discussed. A planning committee was established and the Berlin professor Hemmerling produced a first project plan (see Stadtarchiv Münster [StdAMS]. Verwaltungsbericht der Stadt Münster 1926-1945 [written by Verwaltungsrat a.D. Wangler, 1964]. 223).

During the First World War and unlike the Theatre Royal, the "Lortzing-Theater" was mainly closed. At first, soldiers were quartered there, later it was used as a depot for the distribution of butter.[310] Only from 1917 did the theatre again become a venue for performances of touring companies.[311]

With the military defeat in sight a socialist revolution broke out in 1918, and after the victory of the Allied forces Germany became a republic. Although the revolution was not successful, it had lasting effects in some areas – one of which was the theatre. The former court theatres were transformed into state or municipal theatres. Apart from that, an increasing number of private theatres were taken over by towns and cities. Although conservative Münster was only marginally affected by the revolution, the city followed the national trend and, in 1922, took over full responsibility of the "Lortzing-Theater". The city paid an annual subsidy, which entirely funded the playhouse, and appointed an "Intendant" as theatre manager.[312] The new name was "Städtische Bühnen Münster". A remarkable development, which had started with the first public subsidies in 1899, had come to its final position. This does not mean, however, that the financial problems were solved once and for all. Public debates about the subsidies as well as struggles of the theatre managers to keep afloat became regular features during the 1920s.

After business had begun again with the 1918/19 season, these financial problems sometimes accounted for the shortening of seasons.[313] Other problems included the cancelling of performances when the electric lighting was not working properly. The situation improved, however, and by the mid 1920s, Münster had gained a reputation as an acclaimed centre for the production of Händel operas under Hanns Niedecken-

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[310] See Müller, *Theater in Münster*, 52.

[311] At the outbreak of the First World War, Münster's population enthusiastically welcomed the beginning of hostilities – in line with other cities all over Germany and Europe. In contrast to other Westphalian towns such as Dortmund or Bochum, however, where enthusiasm quickly died off in view of the difficult economic situation, Münster stayed loyal and nationalistic. This can partly be explained by the fact that the city was an administrative centre with only a comparatively small working-class population. The conservative catholic majority in Münster favoured the political status quo and feared any democratic changes, which might have endangered their economic and political influence (see Kaiser, Jochen-Christoph. "Vom Ende des Kulturkampfes bis zum Zusammenbruch 1918 – Aspekte der politischen Entwicklung". Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz-Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 2. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 167-217, especially 213-216).

[312] In German speaking countries the "Intendant" is the manager of a publicly funded theatre. The term was first used in connection with the court theatres and soon gained in importance. For a long time the post was reserved for the court aristocracy though. From the 1920s every theatre manager was called Intendant.

[313] A season now normally lasted from September to May or June the following year.

Gebhardt.[314] This success again corresponded with the general love of music that prevailed in Münster (see above) and which was quite a remarkable characteristic feature of the city.[315]

Concerning the improved financial situation we have to note, however, that although higher subsidies were paid in the course of the 1920s – parallel to a general political and economic recovery – audience expectations, production and personnel costs rose accordingly. The "Städtische Bühnen" had become a full "Drei-Sparten-Theater" with its own theatre, opera and dance companies by 1924. As a result the annual subsidies had risen to 699,000 marks by 1926.[316] The council felt that this amount was far too high. To reduce costs, therefore, they decided not to appoint another Intendant after Niedecken-Gebhardt had left.[317] As the savings failed to materialise the city even returned to the pre-war lease system.[318] Alfred Bernau, who joined the theatre in 1929, received reduced subsidies amounting to 560,000 marks.[319] His successor Fritz Berend entered into a new theatre union with the municipal theatre in Osnabrück to save

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[314] See, for example, Blätter des Theaters der Stadt Münster. Ed. Hanns Niedecken-Gebhardt. 2 (1925/26): programme nos. 14 and 15. Under the chief musical director Rudolf Schulz-Dornburg, Hans Niedecken-Gebhardt and dance director Kurt Jooss initiated a notable revival of Händel operas and oratorios in 1924. Together with the avant-garde dance performances of Jooss' company and set designs by Heinrich Heckroth, Münster's theatre became nationally acknowledged. Both Heckroth and Jooss embarked on international careers and emigrated to Britain after 1933.
Niedecken-Gebhardt, however, continued his career in Nazi Germany. In June 1939 he seems to have been appointed professor at the National Academy of Music in Berlin (see StdAMS, Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 102). In December 1939 his name appears twice in Goebbels' diaries who made him director of a Dancing Academy. Goebbels praised him as the "right man" who did not try to produce pretentious ideological dance pieces (see Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels. Sämtliche Fragmente. Teil 1. Aufzeichnungen 1924-1941. Herausgegeben von Elke Fröhlich im Auftrag des Instituts für Zeitgeschichte in Verbindung mit dem Bundesarchiv. München: Saur, 1987. Vol. 3. Entries 14 and 19 December 1939, 665, 669.).

[315] See also the series of articles regarding Münster's theatre history after 1918, which appeared in the Westfälische Landeszeitung [*WL*] in August 1933 (Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 103).

[316] See StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 133.

[317] It has to be noted, however, that Münster's subsidies were not extraordinarily high. Some cities of similar size and importance (in 1933 Münster had 106,418 inhabitants) paid even more for their theatre. In 1930/31, Karlsruhe (156,000 inhabitants) contributed almost 1.3m marks to its theatre, Aachen (155,000) paid 781,000 marks and Krefeld (152,000) 544,000 marks. Only Bielefeld's (121,000) subsidies of 92,000 marks were considerably lower (see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 160).
Within Westphalia, however, Münster's expenses for "Kulturpflege" (cultural matters) scored top marks: With an expenditure of 7.56 marks per capita Münster topped the Westphalian "league table". The share of "cultural matters" in the general budget stood at 7.2% (see Staatsarchiv Münster [StAMS], Oberpräsidium Nr.5501. Theaterplanwirtschaft. 102) – a substantial figure even by today's standards. In 1950, the share of "cultural matters" in the budget stood at 4.6% and in 1990 it was 6.1% (see Teppe, *Politisches System*, 63).

[318] The subsidies of 1927 amounted to 639,000 marks and to 706,000 marks in 1928 and, therefore, stayed on similar levels as before (see StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 133).
The last resort would have been to close a branch of the theatre and to give up opera performances, for example. This, however, would have caused widespread criticism and was never seriously considered an option. Contemporary commentators stressed that apart from the lacking financial savings the experiment to do without a theatre manager was a failure in artistic terms too (see *MA*, 30 December 1928).

[319] See StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 133.

money.[320] In view of this economic climate it is remarkable that Bernau managed to open another venue for theatre performances, the "Kammerspiele" (Studio), in 1930. The Studio had a seating capacity of 200, it was not an integral part of the main theatre building, although still within walking distance, and closer to the city centre. This intimate space soon became very popular with Münster's patrons.[321] Bernau, however, too had to quit eventually because of the financial problems and left in 1932. To many residents it seemed as if chaos reigned in Münster's cultural life.[322] The "Westphalian Theatre Company" declared that the province was in a "state of cultural emergency".[323]

All in all, these measures illustrate the extent of the theatre's struggle all through the Weimar years. The situation worsened considerably in the course of the Wall Street Crash in October 1929. Münster was hit by severe economic problems, although other towns, especially in the heavily industrialised Ruhr area, had to suffer much more. Still the Städtische Bühnen had to cope with declining attendance figures and cuts in the budget. The average season had to be shortened to six months and theatre staff were forced to look for alternative employment for the rest of the year.[324] Many of them became easy targets for Nazi propaganda, which promised new labour politics, social reforms and chances for everyone.[325]

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[320] As a result, the subsidies could be reduced by another substantial sum, and stood at 371,000 marks in 1932 (see StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 133). Both theatres were under Berend's management but kept their respective theatre, operetta and dance companies and their choirs. Osnabrück's opera company, however, played both theatres, and they even shared costumes and properties (see StAMS Oberpräsidium Nr.5501. Theaterplanwirtschaft. 326).

[321] Soon after his appointment Bernau had become very popular in Münster, not only because of the Studio but also because he was a gifted and successful theatre manager and actor (see *MA*, 6 April 1930).

[322] Because of the financial problems Bernau could not finish the season as scheduled. He had planned to perform until 15 May 1932 but was forced to close the theatre's doors at short notice on 30 April. In fact, it was such a short notice that unsuspecting patrons, who had already turned up on 1 May to see that evening's performance, were sent home again (see *MA*, 2 May 1932). Bernau had been unsuccessful in his negotiations with the city administration to renew his lease. On his abrupt leave he left the city to pay the overdue fees (see Grevelhörster, Ludger. "Die Zeit der Weimarer Republik (1918-1933)." Geschichte original – am Beispiel der Stadt Münster. Vol. 19. Münster: n.p., 1995. Table 24. Chapter "Städtische Theaterwirtschaft in der Zeit der großen Krise").
Bernau, however, continued his career after 1933. In 1942 he was manager of the "Renaissance-Theater" in Berlin (see BArch, R 55/20434, Bl.237).

[323] The "Westfälische Landesbühne" was a subsidised travelling theatre company which performed all over Westphalia in towns without a standing theatre (see Tätigkeitsbericht für die Jahre 1930 und 1931. StAMS Oberpräsidium Nr.5501. Theaterplanwirtschaft. Bl.264-265).

[324] An article in the Programme Notes illustrates the problem. The author states that of 17,000 theatre staff in Germany 7,000 were unemployed. Even those with a job, however, experienced difficulties as most of the theatres only offered short time contracts – like Münster (see Theater der Stadt Münster 9 (1932/33). Ed. Fritz Berend: Programme no 20. The author is almost certainly Wolrad Rube, one of the theatre's producers).

[325] How difficult the situation for many actors was in Münster can be gathered from a note issued by the city administration. It offered unemployed actors a "small payment from the city's Social Services" after the early end of the 1931/32 season (see *MA*, 2 May 1932). In these circumstances the possibility of work for the Nazi "Stage of the Militant League" must have been appealing for many actors even if they did not

Apart from the economic problems the political radicalisation of society soon became a far more serious problem. After 1929, the Weimar Republic increasingly suffered from attacks from radical left-wing as well as right-wing organisations, mainly associated with the communists (KPD) and the National Socialists (NSDAP). In conservative Münster a decisive move to the Right in society became apparent although the Centre party, which had been one of the decisive pillars of the Weimar Republic until 1928, remained the most important party in town until 1933.[326] Now, however, even the Centre was affected by the change in political atmosphere, and the number of party members who backed the Weimar Republic declined.[327]

The move to the Right was also reflected in Münster's theatre programmes as nationalist and "völkisch" drama entered the repertoire during the 1931/32 season. Additionally, an alternative visitors' organisation was founded in August 1932 by the local group of Alfred Rosenberg's radical "Militant League for German Culture": the "Kampfbundbühne" ("Stage of the Militant League"). The group tried to influence the theatre's programme through block bookings of special performances once or twice a month for reduced ticket prices.[328] They did not only support "völkisch" drama, however, but also farces like Hasenklein kann nichts dafür.[329] At the same time, Eduard Wiegand founded the "Touring Company of the Militant League". He offered jobs to unemployed actors and toured Germany with Hans Kyser's anti-Polish drama Es brennt an der Grenze.[330] All in all, the cultural atmosphere had noticeably changed in Münster.

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support Hitler actively. For more general information on the social situation of actors and the alternatives which the Nazis seem to offer see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 50.

[326] When referring to the Centre's role in Münster historians often use the term "Zentrumsturm" (the "Centre Tower", here meaning fortress) to indicate the party's dominant role in the city. Even in the general elections of 5 March 1933 – five weeks after the Nazis' seizure of power and despite their aggressive election campaign – the "Centre" won most of the votes in Münster: 41.6% in comparison to the Nazi vote of 36.1% (see Kuropka, Joachim. "Münster in der Nationalsozialistischen Zeit." Geschichte der Stadt Münster. Ed. Franz-Josef Jakobi. 3rd ed. Vol. 2. Münster: Aschendorff, 1994. 287).

[327] By May 1933, nine out of 19 Centre councillors had left the party, four of whom joined the NSDAP. On 5 July the Centre dissolved itself (see Kuropka, *Münster in der Nationalsozialistischen Zeit*, 291-292).

[328] The fact that the "Militant League" wanted to exert direct influence on the theatre's programme was by no means hidden from the public. Quite the reverse! The president of the group, Hubert Naendrup, professor at the University of Münster, knew that he was speaking on behalf of Münster's conservative bourgeoisie when he promised that an increased influence on the programmes was desirable and indeed possible (see Aufruf zur Gründung der "Kampfbund-Bühne", Ortsgruppe Münster i.W. im "Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur e.V., München". StdAMS Stadtregistratur Zentralbüro Nr.135, Bd. IV, Bl. 157). It is interesting to note that the addressee of this flyer was the bourgeoisie and not the masses which "KdF" ("Kraft durch Freude") wanted to reach.

[329] The English translation would read something like Lily-Liver Can't Help It.

[330] Fire on the Border was set on the German- Polish border, portrayed the alleged suppression of German peasants and endorsed the return of the former German territory now belonging to Poland. The "Touring Company of the Militant League" soon had 683 members (see 15 Jahre NSDAP Münster 1922-1937. Kreistreffen 15.-17. Oktober 1937. Münster: n.p. 37, 38; also Kuropka, Joachim. "Auf dem Weg in die Diktatur. Zu Politik und Gesellschaft in der Provinzialhauptstadt Münster 1929-1934." Westfälische Zeitschrift 134 (1984): 197.) For press reviews and the company's tour plan see BArch, R56 I/46, Bl.122.

On 30 January 1933, president Hindenburg appointed a cabinet under Adolf Hitler as chancellor – the so-called "Machtergreifung" (seizure of power). Many theatre practitioners – directors, actors technical and administrative staff alike – supported Hitler in a hope for social and political change. Those, however, who expected clear concepts and immediate decisions concerning the theatre's future after the take-over were soon disappointed. Not only were these concepts missing, it became clear that the situation in the new cultural administration was inconsistent and mostly incomprehensible. Until the end of 1933 national theatre politics were carried out by at least four different authorities: Alfred Rosenberg, Joseph Goebbels, Robert Ley, and Hermann Göring. Rosenberg was the party hard-liner fighting for "pure" German art; Goebbels, his direct opponent, who rejected Rosenberg's plan of offensive politicisation of the theatre programmes. Ley was the leader of the organisation "Strength Through Joy" ("KdF") and wanted to exert his influence on the leisure sector; and even Göring wanted to play an important role through his position as Prussian Home Secretary.[331] In the end, however, Goebbels was able to secure the decisive powers. In September 1933 he founded the "Reichskulturkammer" ("Reich Culture Chamber") in an attempt to gain complete control over Germany's cultural life. This organisation comprised seven different divisions, and the "Theatre Chamber" was one of them. Part of the Propaganda Ministry and, therefore, under direct control of Goebbels was the "Reichsdramaturgie". Officially, the National Dramaturg's office had to overlook the programmes of all the German theatres and care for the "right" choice of plays. Although total control of the programmes proved impossible, as the office was poorly equipped, the system proved efficient.[332] Many theatre managers were anxious to avoid problems with the authorities

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[331] As Prussian Home Secretary Göring claimed the control over all Prussian theatres. This would have made him a major player in the culture sector as Prussia comprised of about two-thirds of the German territory. In a telegram to the heads of all Prussian districts in April 1933 Göring made it clear that "all affairs of the municipal theatres are with immediate effect subject to my control entirely" (qtd. in Wulf, *Theater im Dritten Reich*, 17. See also StAMS Oberpräsidium Nr.5501. Theaterplanwirtschaft. 327). Göring repeatedly renewed this claim. In July 1933 he stated that every senior official in a Prussian theatre was subject to his confirmation, and as late as September he stressed that he was responsible for every theatre in Prussia (see Wulf, *Theater im Dritten Reich*, 63 and 83). Göring's statements were widely publicised and reprinted, for example, in Münster's Programme Notes (see Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programme no. 12).
It is interesting to note, however, that Göring's September statement already falls into a time when Goebbels had successfully established his influence on the theatre sector. Despite that, Göring continued to play an important role regarding the Prussian state theatres in Kassel and Berlin, where Gustav Gründgens was his famous protégé.

[332] See Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 89-100. Research, however, has not come to an agreement regarding the actual importance of the National Dramaturg yet. Eicher, for example, states that Schlösser's influence had been "extraordinary" (see Eicher, *Spielplanstrukturen*, 484). The different conclusions are partly to be explained by the different approaches. Eicher looks at the official politics rather than what happened at each individual theatre, which Dussel does. For contemporary statements regarding the duties of the National Dramaturg see Laubinger, Otto. "Die Aufgaben der Reichsdramaturgen." Der Autor

and presented a programme they considered "safe". The last step on Goebbels' way to complete control was the "National Theatre Law" in May 1934, which, in theory, put each single theatre under the control of the Ministry of Propaganda.[333] This does not mean, however, that the diversification in the cultural administration ended completely.[334] One reason for this was that, traditionally, only the small number of German state theatres were under direct supervision of the national authorities.[335] The vast majority of theatres were municipal theatres where state intervention could rarely be exerted.[336] This does neither mean that the local level was free of Nazi influence nor that it was free of disruptions and irritations. In Münster, for example, the course of the theatre was not only supervised by the city authorities and the Intendant alone.[337] Gauleiter Meyer was in the position to exert decisive influence, the new visitors' organisation "German Stage" was eager to affect the repertoire and even minor local

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September 1933: 4-6. Laubinger was the first president of the Reich Theatre Chamber. Rainer Schlösser was National Dramaturg between 1933 and 1945.
For detailed information on the Reich Culture Chamber see Steinweis, Alan E. Art, Ideology und Economics in Nazi Germany. The Third Reich Chambers of Music, Theater and the Visual Arts. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

[333] Even at the end of the war, however, the control of the Propaganda Ministry over the theatres was far from total. In a letter to 35 theatres in April 1944 the ministry asked to produce the play Paracelsus by the Finnish dramatist Mika Waltari. The reasons for the push were clearly of a political nature with Finland being an important war-time ally. Despite this urgency only five theatres answered the appeal and out of these five only two minor theatres thought about producing the piece (see BArch, R55/20235, Bl. 282).

[334] See, for example, an internal report on the chaos within the Reich Theatre Chamber written by its deputy head Helmuth Steinhaus in May 1936 (see BArch, R56 I/91, Bl.150-158). Another report less than half a year later illustrates the continuous chaotic financial situation (see BArch, R56 I/128, Bl.46-50).

[335] The only possible means of direct intervention was one involving the police force when performances were "disrupting public order". The police, however, during the Weimar Republic were not controlled by the state but by the provincial authorities. With the Nazi take-over and especially with Göring's role as Prussian home secretary, which gave him power over the police force, the system changed and state intervention became possible. Additionally, the boundaries between SA and police became blurred, which opened up another possibility of interference. Outright control, however, would have resembled measures of a dictatorial police state – an image the Nazis tried to avoid by all means after the take-over. Goebbels especially was looking for other – subtler – means of influencing. For the role of police for the theatre during Weimar see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 32-33.

[336] Goebbels was of course eager to increase the party influence on decisions relating to provincial theatre. Before Willi Hanke, for example, was formally announced theatre manager, not only the mayor but also the Gauleiter of Westfalen- Nord, the president of the province Westphalia and the Gau head of cultural affairs had to give their consent (see Westfälischer Kurier [*WK*], 10 April 1934).
Another means of exerting influence was via subsidies paid directly to the theatres by the Propaganda Ministry. These "Reichszuschüsse" were, for example, enjoyed by the municipal theatre in Dortmund regularly until 1939, because the city could not afford to pay the full subsidy itself. The extra funding was paid annually and reached 80,000 RM (see BArch R55/20349, Bl.171, 188, 189, 213, 280, 290, 332, 359). The municipal theatre in Bielefeld, too, received a "Reichszuschuß" in the sum of 22,000 RM in April 1935 (see BArch R55/20314, Bl.18). This, however, was a singular event in Bielefeld.

[337] It is interesting to note that this "supervision" by the city authorities could result in outright censorship during the Weimar years, too. When Alfred Bernau was appointed the new manager in 1929 he had to agree to submit his proposals for the programme to the municipal "Theatre and Music Council" to have them checked. Only if they agreed with the repertoire was Bernau allowed to go ahead with his plans (see *MA*, 28 April 1929). In that sense the claim by the regime to exert influence over the arts was not felt to be an anomaly but something the theatre had always been used to to a certain degree.

party officials wanted to have their say.[338] In a nutshell, the situation was quite inscrutable and a clever theatre manager could have taken advantage of it.

Although positive theatre politics seemed non-existent, the Nazis' negative policy had direct and manifold consequences. The Jewish participation in German cultural life was brought to an abrupt end. According to the euphemistically entitled "Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums" ("Law for the Restoration of the Career Civil Service") from April 1933 all "non- Aryan" theatre staff were made redundant. This measure affected Münster's manager Fritz Berend, who was Jewish and who had been in office for only one year. He was replaced by an "Aryan" theatre manager who followed the party line: Otto Liebscher.[339] Berend was allowed, however, to stay at the theatre for another three years as "Erster Kapellmeister" (director of music) before he was forced to leave Münster altogether. This event shows that exceptions from the rule were possible during the first years of Nazi rule if they suited the regime; in this case the city was dependant on Berend's musical competence.[340]

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[338] In spring 1933 the "German Stage" ("Deutsche Bühne") came into being through the forced merger of the two most important German visiting organisations, the Association of People's Theatres ("Verband der Volksbühnenvereine") and the conservative "Bühnenvolksbund" with the "German Stage". The two associations lost their names and their independence to the "German Stage", which was part of Rosenberg's "Militant League for German Culture". This move suddenly made the "German Stage" a mass organisation as the 500,000 members of the "Volksbühnenverein" and the 300,000 members of the "Bühnenvolksbund" were simply taken over (figures as at 1932, taken from Rischbieter, Henning. "NS-Theaterpolitik. NS-Theaterpolitik als Prozeß, Theatermetropole Berlin, Die deutsche Theaterlandschaft 1933-44." Rischbieter, Henning, ed. Theater im "Dritten Reich". Theaterpolitik, Spielplanstruktur, NS-Dramatik. Seelze: Kallmeyer, 2000. 30).

[339] We do not know how many other theatre staff were made redundant according to the "Berufsbeamtentumgesetz" as only a few files of Münster's municipal authorities survived the Second World War. The fact that a lot of new names appeared at the beginning of the 1933/34 season is no indication that a similarly high number of actors were dismissed due to their being Jewish or in any way critical of the regime. A new Intendant traditionally brought a number of actors from his former theatre with him. Apart from that a normal fluctuation resulted in actors moving on to other theatres pursuing their career – as in Britain.

[340] The "Berend case" is indeed interesting as it not only illustrates the devastating consequences of Nazi persecution for a gifted musician and conductor, but also shows the inconsistency of official policy. In accordance with the April laws Berend, who jointly managed the theatres in Osnabrück and Münster, was made redundant by Osnabrück's city council – but only as manager of the theatre there. After the press had wrongly announced that Berend was to leave both posts (see Dortmunder Generalanzeiger [*DG*], 8 April 1933), the same newspaper hurried to correct its mistake a few days later. The union was cancelled but Berend of course still manager of Münster's theatre. The paper even added that Berend now wanted to concentrate on "great opera" (see *DG*, 18 April 1933). The question remains why Berend was dismissed in Osnabrück but remained manager in Münster. Berend himself tried to fight the city council's decision to dismiss him and on 12 April 1933 wrote a letter to Osnabrück's mayor Gaertner asking him to put the matter before the district authorities. Berend claimed that as a highly decorated soldier of the First World War he was exempt from all measures according to the "Berufsbeamtentum" law – and he was right. President Hindenburg made his consent to the law dependent on this exemption and signed only after the Nazis had granted it. Gaertner, however, replied that he would not pursue the matter any further as it would lead to nothing. We do not know Berend's reaction to this letter, but judging from what followed it seems probable that he did apply for exemption at the district authorities. On 26 April Gaertner asked Berend to request his dismissal himself. The reason given was a typical example of Nazi perfidy. A Dortmund newspaper had announced which plays Berend wanted to produce for the celebrations on 1

For the theatre programmes the radical turn against anything Jewish meant that works by Jewish dramatists and composers were not allowed to be staged anymore. This move affected a substantial number especially of comedies and contemporary operettas.[341] Left-wing drama, too, was immediately forbidden, and works by avant-garde dramatists were burnt at the "Bücherverbrennung" on 10 May 1933.[342] In this respect, the year 1933 was indeed a clear break.

May 1933 without him knowing about or agreeing to it. The accusation was that someone had given the press release to the paper without Berend's knowledge, which must not happen because he was the manager. At this point Berend must have realised that the letter of the law did not count anything anymore under the new regime. A few days later he asked for his resignation and was "granted leave for the time being" (for the whole dossier see BArch, R56 I/54, Bl. 89-91).
In Münster, however, the picture was completely different. Here, Berend continued to be the theatre's manager. The city authorities believed they acted according to the law when they continued to employ the highly decorated World War One officer. The city council even wanted to renew Berend's contract for the 1933/34 season (see BArch, R56 I/54, Bl. 86-88) when – suddenly – Berlin interfered. The Prussian Theatre Council made it clear that "under no circumstances must a German theatre be led by an Intendant who is not of Aryan decent" even if he participated in the World War (BArch, R56 I/54, Bl. 82). This decision was clearly not expected by Münster's officials and stands as another example for the unpredictability of the Nazi regime. The city council hat to act quickly in view of the start of the next season. Councillor Aschhoff, therefore, immediately headed for Berlin to look at the applications of possible candidates. Only a few days later, Otto Liebscher was announced as the new theatre manager (see *MA*, 25 July 1933).
Berend eventually left Münster in 1936 and worked at the theatre of the Jewish cultural association ("Jüdischer Kulturbund") in Berlin until 1937. Then he emigrated via Florence to Britain where, after years of uncertainty, he eventually managed to secure a position as a musical director at the Welsh National Opera in Cardiff (see Westfälische Nachrichten [*WN*], 6 January 1956). It was not until 1953 though that Berend returned to Münster for a short visit. He was welcomed by Karl Zuhorn, who had been Münster's mayor when Berend was its theatre manager. Although the press article assured the public that Berend was going to be invited by the Städtische Bühnen to conduct an opera in Münster in the near future this pledge never materialised (see Münsterische Zeitung [*MZ*], 8 July 1953). Berend died in London in 1956.

[341] Successful dramatists of the Weimar years like Wilhelm Meyer- Förster, Gustav Kadelburg, Ferenc Molnar, Bruno Frank, Franz Arnold, Stefan Zweig, Max Bertuch, Ludwig Berger, Rudolf Bernauer, Rudolf Österreicher, Ludwig Hirschfeld, Vicki Baum and Siegfried Geyer were banned from the stages as were famous operetta composers such as Emmerich Kalman, Oscar Straus, Paul Abraham and Heinrich Berté (see Schmid, Adolf, ed. Judentum und Musik. Liste der jüdischen Komponisten als Unterlage für die Säuberungsaktionen auf dem Gebiete der Musik. Straßburg: Abt. Volksaufklärung und Propaganda beim Chef der Zivilverwatlung im Elsaß, 1941).
At the same time, however, agreement on who was "Jewish" was not always reached. The radical "German Stage", for example, in December 1933 wrote a letter to the Prussian Theatre Council enquiring about Paul Vulpius, the author of the comedy Hau-ruck, who they assumed was Jewish. The Theatre Council, however, replied that Vulpius' solicitor had declared that the author was "of Aryan decent". The "German Stage" sent another letter in April 1934 though, in which they declared their "final" decision on Vulpius. They had consulted the expert on "Race Research" in the Home Office, who had found out that Vulpius was a "non-Aryan" (see BArch, R56 I/64, Bl.55-56, 14). In any case Vulpius' comedy Hau-ruck was produced successfully in Münster and received 23 performances during 1933/34 – more than any other play during that season.
Another example of the regime's ambiguity is a letter by Schlösser to Hinkel from April 1937, in which he enquired about a play by a playwright called Presber whose widow wanted to see his comedy Die selige Exzellenz (The Blessed Excellency) performed in Berlin because she was in desperate need of the royalties. The problem was, however, that the co-author of the play was "the Jew Stein" and that according to official policy a performance was impossible. Still Schlösser's bottom line was that although he did not want to see the play produced in Berlin a production in the provinces was certainly something he would be willing to contemplate (see BArch, R56 I/11, Bl.51).

[342] Authors whose works were burnt and immediately forbidden include such important names as Bertolt Brecht, Carl Zuckmayer, Arthur Schnitzler, Erich Kästner, Franz Werfel, Fritz von Unruh, and Heinrich and Thomas Mann.

For Münster's patrons, however, artistic questions regarding the national theatre programme and even political decisions concerning theatre personnel seemed secondary in 1933. They feared for the bare existence of their theatre. Until July the continuation of the "era" Berend seemed certain, but when his dismissal became public and no other information concerning future plans for the theatre had been heard Münster's citizens feared for the worst.[343] The fear was not helped by the new Nazi magistrate who made it clear that they were not prepared to offer substantial funds – at first. After the public appeal to save the theatre had proven successful, however, the Nazis quickly seized this opportunity to take-over the campaign and present themselves as the saviours of theatre for Münster. The union with Osnabrück was cancelled and the "Städtische Bühnen" came under Münster's sole municipal control again. Although this decision resulted in rising costs it proved popular and was, therefore, a clever tactical move by the new authorities. As mentioned before, the chief purpose of the union had been to save money by suspending Münster's opera ensemble and letting Osnabrück's company play both theatres. Opposition in Münster, however, where opera had traditionally played an important role in the city's cultural life, had been considerable.[344] The return of a standing opera company was, therefore, not only welcomed by patrons but also attributed to the new city administration. The new Nazi mayor Hillebrand together with the city's executive for cultural matters Aschhoff and Gauleiter Meyer, however, did not stop there. Over the summer they not only organised several shows in the city hall as part of an advertising campaign, the theatre was also expensively refurbished and renovated. In line with Nazi ideology they stressed the fact that the huge building programme was made possible by the wave of public support it received – the "Volksgemeinschaft" working together for their "Volkstheater".[345] The interior of the theatre and the foyer were redecorated and even a new curtain was made.[346] The

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[343] At the end of July 1933, they only knew that Berend's contract would not be renewed but any plans for a future manager or plans for the next season had not been published. Yet they hoped for a continuation and saw the engagement of new members of the company, the building work carried out at the theatre and the rising number of season ticket holders as promising signs. But nothing seemed certain and the start of the new season was only weeks away – chaos reigned (see *MA*, 23 July 1933).

[344] See Apfelstaedt, Max. "Theater-Tradition in Münster." Theater-Tageblatt 7 (1935): Nr.1607. See also article series about Münster's recent theatre history in the Westfälische Landeszeitung in August 1933 (Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 103).

[345] As an example of countless other articles and speeches see Ohle's Theater und Bürgerschaft which appeared at the beginning of the season (see *MA*, 24 September 1933). It is also interesting to note that the Nazis successfully seized the term "Volkstheater", which had been associated first with Lessing and then with the "Freie Volksbühne" a hundred years later. It had now acquired another, profoundly "völkisch" meaning.

[346] It is interesting to note that reviewers stressed the relationship between the design of the curtain, which depicted motives from Westphalian peasant life, and the ideas of the new regime. They claimed that its symbolism was clearly borrowed from Nazi ideology and linked this "exemplary" work to the "Blood and Soil" propaganda of peasant life and healthy "Volkstum" (see Kaiser, Friedhelm. "Joos Jaspert über

building programme received national press coverage and recognition.[347] The weeks before the beginning of the 1933/34 season were also accompanied by massive propaganda such as rallies of "Hitler Youth" and SA-storm troopers, a special issue of the local arts magazine Beautiful Münster, the establishment of the local branch of the "German Stage", publicity and fund-raising campaigns, and even home visits to prospective season ticket holders. The campaign was immensely successful and the number of season tickets reached 5,377, which meant a rise of 407% in comparison to the previous year.[348] At the end of the campaign a massive "victory party" was organised with a pageant through the city with actors in historical costumes and a sold-out concert in the city hall for 8,000 people.[349] In view of these impressive figures the new Intendant, Otto Liebscher, opened the season as the beginning of a "new era".[350]

The apparent successes with the renovation programme and the public support expressed in donations and soaring ticket sales made it also easy to condemn Münster's theatre politics of the Weimar years. The new civic leaders and party officials as well as the new theatre management were anxious to stress the break with the "decadent" past. The head of the municipal theatre department Ernst Ohle claimed that during the Weimar "years of decay" the theatre had suffered from a catastrophic financial administration.[351] He asserted that the theatre had regularly received additional payments on top of the "fabulous sums", which had been reserved for it in the municipal budget anyway. Furthermore he declared that the theatre's repertoire had been characterised by "cheap sensational hits" continually moving away from audience demands. As a result attendances had "consistently declined".[352] Although Ohle's

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seinen Blaudruck-Vorhang." Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programme no. 11).

[347] See, for example, Düsseldorfer Nachrichten, 29 August 1933, in which Münster was praised as a positive example for other cities.

[348] In 1932/33 there had been 1,322 season ticket holders, in 1931/32 915 and in 1930/31 1,473. The success of the campaign was, therefore, remarkable (see StdAMS. Statistischer Bericht der Provinzialhauptstadt Münster/Westfalen 1933. 91). See Table 1.

[349] See Westfälisches Volksblatt. 12 October 1933.

[350] In view of their success with the theatre, however, the city administration got carried away on occasions. At one point they wanted to build a 2,000 seat open-air theatre in the park of the former prince-bishop's palace to turn Münster into the "Salzburg of northern Germany" (*WK*, 16 August 1933).

[351] See Ohle, Ernst. "Neues Theater im neuen Staat". Das schöne Münster 5 (1933). 256-261.

[352] Ohle's claims did not correspond with the real situation at the theatre during the Weimar years:
1. "Fabulous sums" had never been paid to the theatre during the 1920s (see above page 76). Especially the subsidies paid after 1929 were easily topped by the large sums awarded during the Second World War – sums of which Alfred Bernau and Fritz Berend could only have dreamt of. The municipal subsidy rose from 371,000 RM in 1932 to 1,261,000 RM in 1940 (see StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 141).
2. The "cheap sensational hits" of the 1920s remained in the programmes after 1933.
3. The audience figures had not "constantly declined" during the Weimar years. If we compare the figures of 1929/30 – before the Studio opened – with the years of the late 1930s we cannot substantiate any

claims could easily be proven wrong countless similar statements appeared at the beginning of the 1933/34 season and they almost certainly left their mark.[353]

If we take the claim of the beginning of a "new era" and apply it to the situation in York at the beginning of the 1930s interesting parallels appear, despite the increasingly incompatible political circumstances. The pressure on both theatres mounted up with the beginning of the new decade. The common problem was the economic crisis, which resulted not only in declining audiences (more of a problem to the Theatre Royal) but also in lower subsidies (only a problem for Münster). As a result the closure of the playhouse was a real danger in both cities, it was even the same year in which the crisis seemed deepest: 1933. Another interesting parallel is the solution found: a rescue programme initiated and paid for by the citizens. In Münster – putting the propaganda purpose of the allegation aside for a moment – the new authorities' claim that without the huge public support the whole building programme would not have been possible was a correct statement, which corresponded to the increasingly desolate financial situation of the city after 1929. It was a group of actors who took the initiative in autumn 1932 with the idea of the theatre's renovation. Before the take-over they had already approached the city council with a concrete plan, and mayor Zuhorn had agreed on principle. The new Nazi- dominated council, however, made it clear that they would not offer any assistance but that the venture had to be financed through public donations.[354] And, as in York, the public followed the appeal. Citizens bought shares and imaginary "building blocks", donated money into a special bank account, companies made the free printing of flyers and programmes possible, and supported the venture with money, building materials, fabrics, tools and even a grand piano.[355] Although the main difference between Münster and York was that the Münster initiative was soon organised and controlled by the city's executive for cultural matters whereas in York it was run by local businessmen, the fact that in both cities similar schemes were inaugurated, is quite remarkable. The Theatre Royal in York definitely would have ceased to exist if the Citizens' Theatre Trust had failed. Although in Münster the closure

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quantitative changes. During the 1929/30 season 184,378 people visited the theatre, during 1938/39 it was 182,199. Only the Hanke years showed an attendance of more than 200,000 people.

[353] Hans Brockmann, the theatre's publicity officer, claimed that the new theatre had to replace the "chaotic theatre of recent years" (*MA*, 12 July 1933). And Alfred Meyer, the "Gauleiter" of the "Gau" (district) Westfalen- Nord (of which Münster was the capital) asserted the "National Socialist revolution had found the German theatre in a state of ultimate disintegration" (Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programme no. 1).

[354] See *MA*, 24 September 1933.

[355] See *MA*, 4 June 1933.

of the Städtische Bühnen might not have been certain had the campaign faltered, drastic cuts almost certainly would have been the result. A return to the lease system, even the selling of the theatre seemed possible options.

The main difference between the two cities, of course, becomes obvious when we put the initiatives in perspective. As mentioned earlier the Nazis quickly seized the opportunity to present themselves as the saviours of theatre for Münster, and given the overwhelming results of their propaganda campaign the citizens were indeed suitably impressed. The Nazis successfully incorporated Münster's municipal theatre into their political agenda and aimed to use it as a propaganda tool for their ideology. This political dimension was certainly missing in York – at least for the time being.

The start into the first "National Season" 1933/34 could not have been better for the Nazis in Münster, and for Otto Liebscher in particular.[356] To make the new alliance between Nazi government and theatre clear to everyone the inauguration of the renovated theatre consisted of the "consecration" of the flag of the "National Socialist Work Cells Organisation" (NSBO) – the trade union substitute for theatre staff – and a performance of a "Patriotic Music for Orchestra", which was "dedicated to the Third Reich".[357] It became also clear that the promises of this remarkable start had to be fulfilled during the course of the season. Liebscher himself made it clear that attention now had to turn to the stage as the "National Revolution" was going to find its expression only there.[358] In accordance with this claim he presented a repertoire clearly characterised by Nazi ideology. Nationalist and "völkisch" plays made up 20% of all the productions. To be successful as a theatre manager, however, Liebscher needed the support of his patrons. Without it the claim of a new "Volkstheater" would have seemed ridiculous – and it did indeed.

Attendance of the ideological plays especially was poor, and the 20% they made up in the production figures did not contrast favourably with the 11% they reached in the attendance figures.[359] This striking discrepancy illustrates that the audience did not want to follow Liebscher's course. They stayed away from the theatre or went to see other

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[356] Intendant Leutheiser from the Prussian Theatre Council, who came to Münster on one of his "control" visits in early January 1934, only found praise for the Städtische Bühnen. In his report he especially mentioned the production of "Arabella" conducted by Berend (see BArch, R56 I/54, Bl. 79-80).

[357] The "consecration" ceremony ended with a vow to "Hitler's government" (see *WK*, 4 October 1933).

[358] See introductory article by Otto Liebscher (Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programme no. 1).

[359] See Diagram V.

plays instead.[360] The two most successful plays of the season were light comedies.[361] It is not only this discrepancy, however, which is striking: The overall attendance figures only reached 134,000, which was 20% more than during the last season, but still well below the figures of the years before when 170,000 or more patrons visited the theatre.[362] Taking the high numbers of season tickets into account and the enormous effort made to reach this number, and thinking of a newly renovated theatre, which was supposed to attract packed houses, these results were disappointing. It was obvious that Liebscher had failed. In a bitter review of the season, he realized that he had not come up to the high expectations.[363]

At this point, however, the Nazi magistrate had already decided that Liebscher had to be sacrificed. The reasons for his dismissal were not made public and the official statement remained as vague as possible not to offer any insights.[364] Quite obviously, Münster's officials wanted to play down an incident which was a blow to their cultural ambitions.[365] Behind the nonchalant facade, however, the Nazis must have been furious about this failure. Despite their excellent starting position they were unable to capitalise on it. Even worse, the theatrical venture, which should have been a showcase of successful National Socialist cultural politics, was in danger of developing into a propaganda flop. Against this background it not only becomes clear that Liebscher's dismissal was an entirely political decision, it is also obvious that he was dismissed for one chief reason: he had failed to present a programme which was both "völkisch" *and* popular. Although his repertoire corresponded to Nazi ideology, it failed to pull the crowds and, therefore, developed into a propaganda nightmare. The Liebscher case clearly shows that the "right" choice of programme was not enough, the statistics were crucial.[366]

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[360] The reason for this, however, does not necessarily have to be the fact that Münster's residents were anti-Nazi and deliberately stayed away as a form of resistance. More likely is the assumption that it was the appalling quality of most of the "völkisch" repertoire which led to the decision not to attend the production of any of these "heroic" plays.

[361] Hermann Bahr's Das Prinzip and August Hinrichs' Wenn der Hahn kräht with 20 and 22 performances respectively were the most successful productions of the season.

[362] See Table 1.

[363] See Liebscher, Otto. "Gefordertes – Erreichtes – Erstrebtes". Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programme no. 13.

[364] The official statement only mentions a "proposed restructuring of the theatre in Münster" and speaks of a "mutual agreement" concerning Liebscher's dismissal between himself, the city authorities and the Prussian Theatre Council. The statement seems to imply that Liebscher handed in the notice himself, but leaves us with some scope for interpretation (see Theater-Tageblatt 6 (1934): No. 1409/10).

[365] Quite obviously Liebscher was not offered another post as a theatre manager after he had failed in Münster but took an administrative post. In 1936 his name appeared on a newsletter of the "Bühnennachweis" (the national employment agency for people working in the theatrical arts) as the director of the Berlin office (see BArch, R56 I/49, Bl. 97).

[366] Münster was no exceptional case in this respect. Other theatres in the region experienced similar difficulties with their "völkisch" repertoire and their reaction, too, was comparable (although most of

It is interesting to note in this respect that the chaos the Nazis constantly attributed the Weimar years with really only started after the take-over. At first nothing seemed to have changed in Münster apart from an early end to the 1932/33 season. Then, suddenly, a "Nachspielzeit" was quickly organised and news broke that Berend was dismissed as theatre manager for Osnabrück and Münster. A few days later the information proved to be a false alarm and Berend's position in Münster seemed secure – for the time being. The building and renovation work at the theatre started and the advertising campaign for season ticket holders soared. Then, again unexpected, Berlin asked Münster to dismiss Berend on racial grounds at the end of July and with the start of the new season only a few weeks away. The nervous magistrate quickly appointed Otto Liebscher – probably the only person they could get at this stage of the year with preparations for the following season generally well advanced.[367] The chaos, however, did not end with Liebscher's appointment, who was presented to Münster's public only three weeks before the start of the season.[368] Then the season eventually started but as early as September 1933 criticism regarding the poor quality of performances emerged in the press.[369] A few months later newspaper articles suggested a renewed crisis in the musical and theatrical life in Münster.[370] Liebscher's casting policy was questioned, the quality of the ensemble was criticised and the choice of programme denounced.[371] Especially the young chief musical director Eugen Jochum, who enjoyed the support of the Nazi magistrate, proved to be failure.[372] Liebscher's position, however, did not seem

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them did not sack their theatre manager). The theatres in Osnabrück, Dortmund, Bochum, Hagen and Bielefeld all tried unsuccessfully to place this kind of drama in their programmes – to different degrees, but all especially in the first season after the take-over (see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, who looked at the theatres in Karlsruhe, Ingoldstadt, Coburg, Dortmund and Bielefeld. For a complete overview of the programmes at all German theatres see Eicher, *Spielplanstrukturen*, 279-486. Eicher's database offers invaluable insights).

[367] Liebscher was available because he had left his post as manager of the theatre in Lübeck in March 1933, well before the end of the season. We do not know whether he was dismissed or not, but almost certainly there was no connection to the offer from Münster, which came much later (see Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 150).

[368] On occasion of the presentation to the public of the theatre's ensemble (see *MA*, 10 September 1933).

[369] The commentator criticised that season ticket holders were regularly presented with second rate repetitions of the first production. If they were unlucky to see the sixth performance of a piece they might witness something which had nothing to do with the first performance he claimed. In a performance of the operetta Die Försterchristel the commentator counted several times when the orchestra and the soloists were not together (see *MZ*, 20 September 1933). This open and harsh criticism is remarkable especially for its timing. The season had only just started, enthusiasm must still have been high and criticism from the press was certainly not welcome. It is these circumstances which make the article credible.

[370] See *NZ*, 21 February 1934.

[371] Regarding a production of Wagner's opera Tristan and Isolde the press asserted that the decision to produce this work was courageous in view of the poor quality of the present company (see *WL*, 18 April 1934). Generally, commentators claimed that Liebscher had not produced a sufficient number of operettas and hoped that Hanke would improve on this performance (see *MA*, 12 April 1934).

[372] On Jochum's departure from Münster the "German Stage" organised a big farewell concert in his honour – a striking contrast to Liebscher's exit, who must have felt to be "kicked out of the back door".

in danger at this point and in January 1934 the city authorities agreed on a generous renewal of his contract for another three years.[373] Then, suddenly, they changed their minds and decided to dismiss Liebscher sometime in March 1934. The embarrassment for the city was complete when the Prussian Theatre Council in a confidential letter reminded Münster's authorities of a clause in their contract with Liebscher, which stated that for a dismissal to take effect with the start of the following season it had to be expressed by 1 February. The Prussian Theatre Council, therefore, made it clear that they expected Liebscher to stay for another year.[374] The city authorities, however, did not take any notice and a few weeks later – long before the season had ended – Münster's astonished press were introduced to Willi Hanke, the new theatre manager.[375] This was to be the start of "new era" – for the second time within only one year. In the course of a few months the Nazi authorities had produced more confusion and disorder than all the previous administrations since the theatre had come under municipal management in 1922 taken together.[376]

But not only within the theatre itself things did not develop according to plan. A complete let-down were the activities of the "German Stage" because there hardly were any. After it had been announced by Liebscher at the start of the 1933/34 season that the newly founded Münster branch of "German Stage" would offer people with low income

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Nazi officials were anxious to stress the quality of Jochum's work and his impressive talent (see *MA*, 6 May 1934). The reality looked somewhat different. The national press criticised Jochum for lacking leadership qualities and his mediocre musical interpretations (see Düsseldorfer Nachrichten, 11 May 1934; Allgemeine Musikzeitung, 4 June 1937).

[373] In his report to the Prussian's Theatre Council Leutheiser also mentioned that the authorities had already agreed on Liebscher's salary and an increased municipal subsidy to enable him to enter into negotiations with singers and actors for the coming season (see BArch, R56 I/54, Bl. 79).

[374] See BArch, R56 I/54, Bl. 73. Liebscher himself took the initiative and went to the "Bühnenverein" (the stage union) to complain about his dismissal.

[375] The first press release regarding Liebscher's departure appeared on 5 April 1934 in the *MZ* (see also *MA*, 6 April 1934 and *MA*, 12 April 1934).
The fact that Münster's authorities felt they were in the position to overrule a decision by the Prussian Theatre Council is worth taking note of. This may have had several reasons. Firstly it indicates the diminishing power of the Theatre Council, which had lost most of its influence to Goebbels by the end of 1933. Secondly Münster's decision proves that it was indeed possible to push a resolution through against the will of the national authorities – especially during the first years of Nazi rule.

[376] Again, the chaos in Münster was no exceptional case; the situation in many other municipalities in the region was not much different. In Dortmund, for example, theatre manager Bergmann was made redundant in 1934 after only one year in service. He had been a typical case of a career Nazi promoted to a managing position without any previous experience (he had been an opera singer before). The Prussian Theatre Council, however, soon became aware of his lack of ability. In a report for the Theatre Council Leutheiser made it clear that although Bergmann was a "prachtvoller Mensch" it was no longer acceptable that he "kaum oder wochenlang keine Regiesitzungen abhält, selbst die Stücke nicht prüft u.a." – which was quite a devastating criticism and could hardly have been worse (see BArch, R56 I/56, Bl.36; see also Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 176).

the possibility of a theatre visit at reduced prices nothing seemed to have happened.[377] In January 1934 the Prussian Theatre Council in a report complacently mentioned that the local branch of the "German Stage" only comprised of 160 members, which, in comparison to other towns of the same size, must have been disappointing.[378] At the end of the season Liebscher admitted that the activities of the "German Stage" had not achieved "the desired results".[379] Although this failure does not seem to have affected the theatre greatly, indirectly it was a blow to the Nazis' claim that the organised theatre visit was to rest entirely with the "German Stage" from summer 1933. Luckily for the Nazis though, the Städtische Bühnen could rely on its own established system of season tickets and was not dependent on any "German Stage" initiatives.

After the mess of the first season the Nazi administration was in urgent need of theatrical success stories. Willi Hanke, the new theatre manager, was prepared to deliver. He not only had the advantage of being young and a born "Münsteraner", he was also able to lead the theatre to the longed-for record attendances, which mounted up to over 210,000 in 1936/37 – although Nazi propaganda claimed that they even reached 300,000.[380] The Städtische Bühnen had the highest number of theatre visits per head in western Germany: 165%, which means that every "Münsteraner" visited the theatre one and a half times each year.[381] Equally important in terms of propaganda was the fact that Hanke was able to improve social security for the actors, for example by introducing contracts for a full calendar year and the employment of new staff.

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[377] See Liebscher, Otto. "Die neue Spielzeit des Theaters der Stadt Münster". Das schöne Münster 5 (1933). 256.

[378] See above mentioned report by Intendant Leutheiser (BArch, R56/I 54, Bl. 79-80).
In other towns, which did not have a working visitors' organisation before 1933, theatres depended on a certain number of sold tickets which the "German Stage" promised to guarantee. In same cases this system seems to have worked. In many others the "German Stage" not only failed to recruit the much needed patrons but also tried to exert massive influence on the theatres. The Prussian Theatre Council, in fear of losing its grip on the theatres, sent a questionnaire to all Prussian theatres in early 1934 to learn more about the activities of local branches of the "German Stage". Numerous theatre managers seemed only too happy to tell Hans Hinkel of the problems they faced with the "German Stage" (see BArch, R56 I/58, Bl.72-79 for Göttingen, R56 /50 Bl.81 for Rheine, R56 I/53 Bl.96 for Koblenz and Bl.102-103 for Cologne).

[379] Liebscher, Otto. "Gefordertes – Erreichtes – Erstrebtes." Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programme no. 13.

[380] For the official attendance figures see Statistischer Bericht 1937, 58 (StdAMS Statistische Jahrbücher der Provinzialhauptstadt Münster 1935-1938). Although the figures in the statistical reports were published and open to everyone the Nazis tried to exaggerate immensely – and got away with it (for the Nazi figures see Stampfer, Oskar, ed. Münster 165%. Münster n.p., n.d. The booklet was published at the beginning of the 1938/39 season.). It is interesting to note that the figures of the Nazi propaganda safely survived the war. Joseph Prinz, for example, copied them and claimed that attendances rose to over 300,000 (Prinz, *Geschichte des münsterschen Theaters*, 65).

[381] The figure was produced in a book by the Council of German Cities ("Deutscher Gemeindetag") (see Stampfer, *Münster 165%*). In 1936 Münster had about 130,000 inhabitants.

After their failure during the previous season the "German Stage", too, intended to improve on their performance. They tried to seize the unique opportunity to establish themselves as the only visitors' organisation and to exert their influence on the programme.[382] They even claimed that they had taken over the entire advertising campaign on behalf of the theatre.[383] The claim to be the sole visitors' organisation, however, could not be realised, and by 1936 there were already four different groups again who tried to appeal to prospective season ticket holders.[384] At any rate, the fight for subscribers proved successful. Although the number of season tickets declined it remained at an average of 3,600 until 1939.[385] These figures meant more than double the number of subscribers during the Weimar period. It is interesting to note, however, that the Nazis prohibited all other advertising campaigns for cultural events before the start of each season in order to secure their subscription campaign the best possible success.[386]

Hanke remained in Münster for several years. He was a successful and popular theatre manager who knew what the authorities wanted: record attendances.[387] We have to ask ourselves, however, why Hanke was able to achieve something which Liebscher had

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[382] In a leaflet they published in summer 1934 the "German Stage" – full of hope for 1934/35 – claimed that a complete shake-up of Münster's theatre life had taken place (see Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 102). The "German Stage" also published big adverts in Münster's press to recruit patrons for their season tickets (see, for example, *MA*, 16 April 1934).

[383] See StdAMS Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr.135, Bd. IV, Fach 13, Nr.70, Bl. 261a.

[384] Shortly before the start of the 1936/37 season the press informed Münster's public about the different kinds of organised theatre visits. Apart from the theatre's own season ticket there was a season ticket at a reduced price for low income groups and people in need from "Strength Through Joy", and the season ticket of the "National Socialist Culture Association" NSKG (see *MA*, 7 September 1936). It is interesting to note that the "German Stage" did not have any season ticket of their own, they did not even organise the sale of the other tickets, which the respective groups did themselves. Another example for the dwindling influence of the "German Stage" is the foundation of an advisory committee for theatrical matters in February 1935. The committee consisted of representatives of the university, the NSDAP, the teachers, the church, the press and NSKG but no member of the "German Stage" (see *MA*, 28 February 1935).

[385] See StdAMS Statistische Jahrbücher der Provinzialhauptstadt Münster 1935-1938 and StdAMS. Statistische Berichte der Provinzialhauptstadt Münster/Westfalen 1938-1948. See also Table 1.

[386] See StdAMS Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr.135, Bd. IV, Fach 13, Nr.70, Bl. 259. Before the start of the season 1934/35 the Nazi district leaders developed a thorough advertising campaign for the theatre, which found expression, for example, in circulars to civil servants (Bl. 258). Gauleiter Meyer demanded from every head of department within the city administration to recruit at least two season ticket holders (Bl. 259). The success of this campaign, however, was pathetic. After three weeks only three civil servants had bought season tickets (Bl. 268).

[387] Hanke's reputation even reached Berlin – for a small provincial theatre like Münster about as difficult to achieve as for York's Theatre Royal to get noticed in London. The influential theatre journal Theater-Tageblatt praised "Germany's youngest theatre manager" as a gifted manager who had turned "Münster into a really young theatre" ("Kritik!" Theater-Tageblatt (11 October 1934), qtd. in Blätter des Stadttheaters. Ed. Willi Hanke. 11 (1934/35): programme no. 3).
In 1935 the same journal devoted a whole issue to Münster and was full of praise. The "overall impression [...] is excellent, indeed so good as at hardly any other stage of similar size" (Theater-Tageblatt 7 (1935): Nr.1607).

failed to do.[388] The chief reason seems to lie in the choice of programme, which avoided too much open propaganda and offensive politicisation.[389] To put this assumption to the test we do not have to rely on the repertoire entirely, we can also check the Programme Notes. Whereas Liebscher accompanied his "national" choice of repertoire with corresponding political and programmatic articles in the Notes, Hanke concentrated on information and entertainment instead.[390] Liebscher regularly included quotes by Hitler, Goebbels, Gauleiter Meyer and other party officials, sometimes he reprinted whole speeches.[391] Many of the new "völkisch" playwrights were given a forum for their – mainly rather boring – programmatic articles. Furthermore, the layout of the Notes was quite tedious with pages and pages full of text without any illustrations. Hanke on his part included press reviews, photos of actors and rehearsals, as well as anecdotes about the great dramatists of the past.[392] In 1935/36 he even extended the volume of the Notes considerably.[393] We can also notice a change in their outward appearance as they began to resemble the outlook of the 1920s' Programme Notes again. Although certainly not intended the Notes suggest some kind of continuity with a past Liebscher wanted to leave behind at all cost. The revolutionary character of radical break with the immediate past had given way to an approach which avoided open propaganda, tried to stress continuation and attempted to influence subtly.

The period of Hanke's management of the Städtische Bühnen coincided with a general development in Germany. After Hindenburg had died in August 1934 Hitler also became head of state and established an absolute dictatorship. The socialist wing of the Nazi party was silenced, SA calls for a second revolution and a "night of the long knives" were brutally suppressed. Hitler's obvious aim was to present the NSDAP not as a radical party advocating revolutionary change any longer but to recommend it to

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[388] Naturally, there was not only praise. Vernekohl in a note, which was obviously only intended for private use, compared Hanke's repertoire of the first four months with Liebscher's regarding the production of works not previously produced in Münster. Vernekohl concluded that both regarding quantity as well as quality Liebscher had performed better. Another critical statement came from Gerhard Kaschner, a journalist with the *MZ*, who claimed that Münster's opera company suffered from a lack of singers with a substantial repertoire (see StdAMS Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 102).

[389] See chapter IV and Appendix.

[390] Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34); Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 11 (1934/35).

[391] The issues one to five even feature Hitler quotes on the front cover.

[392] Some issues were devoted to special topics or single dramatists or composers. During the season 1934/35 number 13 concentrated on Beethoven, number 14 on Kleist, and number 16 focused on Verdi.

[393] See Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 11 (1934/35): programme no. 2.

the bourgeois classes as an established people's movement. Hitler himself played the new role of a statesman caring for his people and working towards peace.[394]
For the theatre this development had its implications, too. As mentioned before, Goebbels had successfully concentrated the decisive powers in his ministry by May 1934 with the passing of the National Theatre Law. Artistically, too, by the mid- 1930s all experiments with alternative forms of theatre spaces and dramatic ideas had ended. The revolutionary "Thing" movement, which had started with high hopes aiming to develop into a genuine National Socialist art form, was virtually stopped by Goebbels at the end of 1935.[395] The end of the "Thing" experiment made way for a restoration of the bourgeois theatre and its established theatrical forms.[396]

In summer 1938 Willi Hanke suddenly left the Städtische Bühnen and handed over to Erich Pabst. It is interesting to note that Münster had been an important step in Hanke's career. He left Münster first for Graz and shortly after that for Nürnberg, which, as the "Capital of the Movement" and home of the "Reichsparteitage", was a city of high prestige.[397] Erich Pabst came from Berlin where he had been manager of the privately

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[394] See, for example, his infamous "Peace Speech" of 17 May 1933, in which Hitler denied any aggressive goals but stressed peaceful rehabilitation as his ultimate objective. Inside Germany, however, the aggressive expansionism of later years was elaborately promoted with growing intensity. The "Saar question" of 1935 was one example, the rearmament of the Rhineland 1936 another. In Münster the "Großes Kolonialfest", organised on 7 and 8 November 1936 by the Reich Colonial Society under the headline "'D. Windhuk' im Hafen Lüderitzbucht", indicated yet another field of political activism: the campaign for regaining the colonies lost after the First World War.

[395] The "Thing" movement aimed at producing a genuine National Socialist form of cultic theatre. "Thing" plays were massive shows produced in open-air arenas on an enormous scale. From the beginning, however, the plays suffered from their deficient theatricality. After a short period of public enthusiasm the static displays of hundreds of extras, slow movements, declamatory speeches and lengthy plots, the presentation of ideas rather than characters and the predictable outcome of the plays increasingly bored audiences and seem to have been a major reason for their final failure.
Another problem was that political spectacles, parades, marching ups and rallies equally fulfilled the demands made on cultic theatre – which, interestingly, was already recognised by contemporary commentators. Robert Stumpfl described the march to the Munich "Feldherrnhalle" as a theatrical action which was characterised by the "religiöse Ergriffenheit einer Gemeinschaft, der eine überpersönliche Idee wieder als Wirklichkeit erlebbar wurde" (Stumpfl, Robert. "Vom neuen deutschen Drama." Das Innere Reich 4 (1937/38): 956).
For the most recent research on the subject see Niven, William. "The birth of Nazi drama?: Thing plays." London, John, ed. Theatre under the Nazis. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000. 54-95.

[396] The debate about the "Thing" plays also reached Münster. Plans for an open-air theatre just outside the old city walls were endorsed by Hanke and a first draft was submitted by Erich Kempgens in 1934. It is interesting to note that Hanke also mentioned the social dimension of such a theatre as it would have allowed for a continuing season with the open-air theatre staging plays during the summer months when the municipal theatre was closed. The project, however, never materialised (see Das Schöne Münster 6 (1934): 126).

[397] Proof for the development of Hanke's career is, for example, the fact that Goebbels mentioned him a few times in his diaries. Goebbels saw the production of Hans Sachs in 1940, which had been "well produced, with outstanding décor and costumes and excellently acted". Hanke had made "a great impression" on him (see Goebbels, *Tagebücher*, vol. 4, entry 19 November 1940, 303-304).
Hanke, however, did not want to leave the advancement of his career entirely to others. Over several years he tried to obtain the prestigious title of "Generalintendant" (general manager) with remarkable

run "Theater an der Friedrichstraße". He remains a somewhat obscure figure and his political allegiances are difficult to pin down. On the one hand he seems to have been a loyal democrat during the Weimar Republic, on the other he appeared an almost devoted admirer of Hitler in the latter half of the 1930s.[398] In any case, Pabst was prepared to manage the Städtische Bühnen according to the "spirit" of the time.[399]

Although the differences between York and Münster are more than apparent at the end of the 1930s especially regarding the influence of local government and party politics on the course of the theatre, there is one interesting similarity concerning attendance

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persistence. In 1938 Gauleiter Meyer applied on Hanke's behalf for the promotion chiefly because of the record attendances Hanke achieved. The Propaganda Ministry, however, declined two months later as Hanke had not yet achieved the highest artistic level, which the "Führer" expected before promotion. But Hanke did not give up. In 1940 Nürnberg's mayor Liebel applied on Hanke's behalf, but Goebbels himself declined a few days later. Hitler had ordered to stop any promotions during the war for the time being and, therefore, he could not endorse Liebel's application. Hanke, however, was not impressed by this decree. It was again Nürnberg's mayor Liebel who wrote directly to Goebbels in 1941. Goebbels' "Director of Programmes" Hadamovsky approached the Reich Chancery but received a negative reply from Hitler's personal adjutant Schaub, who claimed that "the cases of Vienna and Cologne have been extraordinary exceptions" and who stressed the fact that, for him, the case was settled now (obviously Liebel had argued that if exceptions from the rule had been possible in Vienna and Cologne this should apply to Nürnberg just as well). Hadamovsky, therefore, asked Liebel to shelve any future applications "until after the war". Again, Hanke did not show any signs of resignation. In December 1941, he started another initiative this time via the Gau propaganda office Franken, which joined forces with yet another application by Liebel in April 1942. Liebel literally insisted on Hanke's promotion in view of similar war time promotions. And indeed, according to a confidential remark by the Propaganda Ministry's Reimer, Hanke's promotion was expected soon. But again nothing happened. Liebel on his part continued to press the case and started to get on the Propaganda Ministry's nerves. Reimer claimed that an oral presentation before Hitler was the last chance as Hitler was getting increasingly strict on exceptions from the rule. Eventually, Hanke received the longed-for official document in September 1943 (see BArch, R55/72, Bl. 198-212, 231, 234, 256).

[398] In many respects Pabst was, therefore, a typical example of a German artist in the first half of the twentieth century, willing to change sides according to the dominant political atmosphere. The majority of these artists claimed after the war that they had regarded themselves as unpolitical and that had only wanted to serve art. After he had been a successful manager at the open- air "Harzer Bergtheater" from 1926, Pabst became theatre manager in Augsburg after the take-over. There he met with fierce criticism. He was accused of being an opportunist who was at one time a Social Democrat, then a Communist, and finally claimed to be a Nazi. The complaints piled up in the Reich Chancery, the case aroused considerable interest, and eventually Pabst was asked to come to Berlin for an interview. In the end, nothing happened and Pabst continued his career. Although the accusations were probably true, we also have to see, that it was commonplace in Nazi Germany to denounce people – sometimes only to gain a profit for oneself. In this case the most aggressive critic was an unsuccessful semi-talented actor who failed to achieve the career he had wished for (see BArch, R43 II/887b, Bl. 1 to 100). If we follow Pabst's career to Berlin from 1936, however, it becomes obvious that the allegations formulated in Augsburg quickly turned into reality. In January 1938 Pabst wrote a letter to the Reich chancery and applied for a subsidy of RM 20,000 for his struggling private theatre. After he had managed to secure a RM 10,000 subsidy from the propaganda ministry, Pabst wanted to thank Hitler personally and tried to get an audience as it would be "a special honour to him". To "convince" the senior civil servant in the Reich chancery of the urgency of his wish he enclosed two complimentary theatre tickets for the first night of the comedy Tip auf Amalia at his own theatre. "Kabinettsrat" von Stutterheim, the civil servant in question, went to see the play but denied the possibility to see Hitler "in the foreseeable future" (BArch, R43 II/895, Bl. 101 and 102).

[399] At the beginning of the 1939/40 season, for example, Pabst claimed that it was thanks to Hitler that the actors and artists were now a representative part of "Greater Germany". He ended his article "in dem glückhaften Gefühl, Auserwählte in einer Berufung zu sein, der unser Führer ehrenvollsten Rang gegeben hat" (Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 16 (1939/40): programme no. 1).

figures. An official statement issued by Münster's city administration asserted that in January 1937 the theatre put on a total of 74 performances with an overall attendance of nearly 27,000.[400] At about the same time, Seebohm Rowntree in his seminal study about social life in York claimed that the Theatre Royal attracted up to 10,000 people to its shows in good weeks.[401] On average, however, this figure will have been slightly lower and similar to Münster's attendance. In an interesting parallel theatre seemed to have been similarly popular in Münster and York at the eve of the Second World War.

It was about this time at the end of the 1930s that Münster's theatre reached its peak as a cultural institution with regard to several aspects. The municipal subsidies were as high as ever, and Münster even received extra funding from Berlin.[402] Although the programmes certainly did not correspond to claims of a propaganda stage with a repertoire strikingly similar to the 1920s, the Nazis made use of Münster's theatre as a propaganda tool. One convenient opportunity were the successful productions of the "Low German Stage" at the theatre. Their plays, mainly comedies in low German dialect, could easily be incorporated in the Nazis' "Blood and Soil" ideology as they stressed the connection with the Westphalian "Heimat".[403] Another opportunity to make a propagandistic use of the theatre was to offer productions as closed performances to the army, party organisations or large companies. Here, too, the theatre's policy proved increasingly successful.[404] By the mid- 1930s theatre performances were regularly booked by the "German Work Front" DAF, "Strength Through Joy", the "NS Kulturgemeinde" or entire "Hitler Youth" (HJ) units. In 1937, for example, the

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[400] See Monatsstatistik 19 February 1938. StdAMS, Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr. 135, Bd. V.
[401] See Rowntree, *Poverty and Progress*, 414-415.
[402] See Hanke's own account about the first three years of his management in 1937 (StdAMS, Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 106). The reason for this extra money may have been that Münster was regarded as a "Grenzlandtheater" (border region theatre) because of its vicinity to the Low Countries.
[403] See review of the "Low German Stage's" repertoire during the 1940/41 season (*MA*, 15 June 1941). During the same season the "Low German Stage" embarked on a tour of the Low Countries and Belgium, which was used for propaganda purposes. The "Reports from the Reich" praised their performances as they contributed to "strengthen the Germanic feeling of solidarity among the Flemish" (qtd. in Kuropka, Joachim, comp. Meldungen aus Münster 1924-1944. Geheime und vertrauliche Berichte von Polizei, Gestapo, NSDAP und ihren Gliederungen, staatlicher Verwaltung, Gerichtsbarkeit und Wehrmacht über die politische und gesellschaftliche Situation in Münster. Münster: Regensberg, 1992. 210).
[404] The "Leisure Time Society" ("Feierabendgemeinschaft"), for example, offered an organised theatre visit in different programmes for 1938/39. Programmes A to D were open to everyone and consisted of nine shows, programmes E and F only offered performances in the Studio, programme G included only talks, and programme H was reserved for the "Wehrmacht" with ten dramatic and operatic performances (see Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 108).
The possible extent and importance of these closed performances for a provincial theatre is illustrated by a list drawn up by Bielefeld's theatre manager Alfred Kruchen for the Propaganda Ministry in June 1943. Kruchen stated that during the 1942/43 season 81 out of a total 393 performances had been given as closed performances. More than half of that figure was taken up by "Strength Through Joy" (see BArch, R55/20314, Bl.52-64).

nationalist play Katte by Hermann Burte only made it to a successful run of nine performances because of the support of the HJ.[405]

Last but not least, both Hanke and Pabst managed to place the Städtische Bühnen in a long theatrical tradition. The Programme Notes recurred constantly to the "great" past and, thereby, not only glorified Münster's theatrical history but also firmly established the present theatre as part of this development.[406] The ultimate function of this contextualisation was to present Münster's current theatre as the fulfilment of the great promises of the past. By contrast and against the background of this century-old success story the "decadent" Weimar years seemed an anomaly.[407] Goebbels' ban on press criticism and reviews in 1935 and their substitution by "artistic contemplations" secured the theatre not only continuing acclaim of its productions, but also the best possible effect of such propaganda.

In contrast to York the immediate beginning of the Second World War did not affect Münster's theatre greatly. On the contrary, Hitler was at pains not to let everyday life be affected by the war.[408] It was understood that morale could only be sustained if everyday life continued to run smoothly.[409] Whereas the British government decided to

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[405] This fact has to be borne in mind when judging the success of certain plays with respect to their attendance figures. It is also worth noting that the different organisations, which booked closed performances, not only tried to exert a certain influence on the theatre management, they also had their own agendas. Whereas Rosenberg's "National Socialist Culture Community" worked towards a "völkisch" repertoire, Ley's "Strength Through Joy" (KdF) was rather concerned with its massive presence in the bourgeois municipal theatre (see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 132-140).

[406] Typical topics concerned the foundation of the theatre and the nineteenth century principal Adolf Vagedes and his connections with the famous Düsseldorf manager Immermann (see, for example, Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 16 (1939/40): programmes no. 3, 10, 20. See also Kordt, Walter. "165 Jahre Münstersches Theater". Pabst, Erich, ed. Jahrbuch 1940-41 der Städtischen Bühnen Münster (Westf.). Münster: n.p., 1940. 7-22).
This phenomenon continued in the later war years. Almost every issue of the Programme Notes featured articles about Münster's great theatrical past, ancient Greek allegories and poems from classical authors such as Goethe, Wieland, Tieck and Hebbel, as well as Westphalian writers such as Droste-Hülshoff, Anton Sprickmann and Johann Schlüter (see Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 17 (1940/41) – 20 (1943/44)).

[407] This strategy was not confined to the theatre but appeared in all aspects of cultural life in Nazi Germany from the mid- 1930s. In Music the Nazis drew back on Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, Nazi art was clearly modelled on the Romantics, and the officially supported architecture could not deny its Greek, Roman and Renaissance roots. Put in perspective, this development links in with the general change in political atmosphere mentioned above. To quieten criticism and gain the essential support for example from the industry and the army, the revolutionary image of the NSDAP was abandoned and an ultra- conservative and evolutionary conception was adopted instead.

[408] See Göring's November 1939 circular to all theatre managers, in which he made it clear that all places of entertainment would remain open during the war (see BArch, R55/20111, Bl.128-131).

[409] Enthusiasm to fight another war was low in September 1939 – in clear contrast to 1914. Although public opinion changed after the "Blitzkrieg" victories of the German army (called "Wehrmacht" from 1935), the "extermination war" against the Soviet Union never became popular and turned into horror after the defeat at Stalingrad.

close all places of entertainment for the duration in September 1939 it was Goebbels' expressive wish that all German theatres should remain open and carried on as usual. Münster's Städtische Bühnen was no exception – on the contrary. The first war season began with yet another sharp rise in public subsidies, which were up RM 300,000 compared with two years earlier and now reached RM 1m – and they were going to be raised even further.[410] Additionally, a lavish "year book" was published in 1940. With it the theatre and the city not only praised themselves, the book was also used for massive propaganda. It was published after the victory over France and dedicated to the "Führer".[411]

This incident also illustrates that, contrary to official claims, the theatre *did* become affected by the war. Not only was the size of the Programme Notes reduced radically, the theatre also increasingly played a political role.[412] It took part in the annual "Gaukulturwoche" and sent productions to the Detmold "Grabbe Festival".[413] As part of its war effort the theatre also presented an increasing number of special, mainly entertaining shows to the "Wehrmacht". Variety shows, dance performances, and comedy events – often with artists from outside Münster – were jointly organised with

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[410] In 1933 the public subsidies paid the City Council stood at RM 398,000, in 1935 they were raised to RM 525,000 and in 1937 the theatre received RM 724,000 (see StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 141). This means that already by 1937 the most "expensive" seasons during the Weimar years had been outstripped. In 1926/27 Intendant Niedecken-Gebhardt had received RM 699,000, and in 1928/29, when the theatre was run without a manager, the city had paid RM 706,000 (see StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 133). The "fabulous sums", which according to Nazi officials had been paid to the theatre during the Weimar years, really only materialised at the end of the 1930s.

[411] The first paragraph praises the German soldiers who "fought the greatest battles of history and who pinned victories over victories to the their flags". The last paragraph is dedicated to the "man who created our army, who led our battles, who fought our enemies, who watched over and protected our homeland, who gave our lives reason and strength, our art aim and glory, our Führer Adolf Hitler" (Pabst, *Jahrbuch 1940-41*, 5).

[412] Already at the beginning of the 1939/40 season were the Programme Notes reduced from 20 to 12 pages. They were further reduced in 1940/41 to ten and eight only to be cut down to four pages from programme no. 16 in 1941.

[413] The "Gaukulturwoche" was held annually from 1936, and for the first two years it only featured cities from the "Gau Westfalen- Nord". In 1939, however, a big festival with over 1,000 events combined with the "Days of Low German Culture" was organised in Münster (see Viehoff, Helmuth, ed. Gaukultur-woche 1939 Westfalen-Nord. Münster: Buschmann, 1939). As the festival aimed to stress the "close relations of the Wehrmacht to the home front" the participation of as many soldiers as possible was one of the chief aims (see Amtliche Mitteilungen Nr. 16/1940. StdAMS, Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr. 285, Bd. I). In 1942 the "Gaukulturwoche" opened with a "Konzert mit Werken feldgrauer Komponisten" (see StdAMS, Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 111).
The Detmold "Grabbe Festival" turned into a major event and a showcase of artistic quality and propagandistic ability of the theatres taking part. The festival was chiefly organised to commemorate the Westphalian dramatist Christian Dietrich Grabbe, who received a revival as a heroic nationalist playwright, and enjoyed Goebbels' patronage from 1936. For more detailed information especially about how serious the festival was taken by the Propaganda Ministry see BArch, R55/20451, R55/20451a, R55/20452 and R55/20452a. In 1941 and in 1942, for example, did Goebbels agree to pay a special subsidy in the sum of RM 30,000 (in 1942 even RM 35,000) to the festival (see BArch, R55/20452, Bl.65; R55/20452a, Bl.316).

"Strength Through Joy" and the "German Work Front".[414] On occasions later during the war actors and soloists were asked to raise money for the "Winterhilfswerk".[415] In December 1940 a visit by Rainer Schlösser, the National Dramaturg, might well have indicated that Berlin was satisfied with Münster's war effort.

Suddenly, however, Münster became drawn into the war to a much greater extent. The devastating British air-raid on the city in early July 1941 not only destroyed most of the theatre building, the basic equipment, the workshop, stage properties and sets were lost, too.[416] Although plans were hastily drawn up, the city proved unable to rebuilt the theatre during the war.[417] From then on, the city hall was used as a provisional theatre building. There, however, the technical equipment was poor, stage lighting barely existed, the changing of sets was impossible, and the venue had to be shared with many other users. Apart from that, the city hall could not be used at all for four weeks in spring 1942 because there was no coal to heat the building.[418] To make things worse the theatre also increasingly suffered from the loss of its male personnel. By Summer 1942, 57 staff had been called up, five were already dead. To find replacements proved increasingly difficult. At the same time, however, the theatre was able to secure the services of replacement musicians as late as summer 1944. It is also interesting to note that the municipal orchestra in the same year still had 49 members – only six less than 1939 – and had even been raised to a higher income group. The theatre struggled but mainly succeeded to lend credibility to the claim of a culturally minded city even at this

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[414] The press featured countless articles about these shows. A typical example is an evening with entertaining music for soldiers and workers of the armaments industry (see *MA*, 20 September 1942). See also "Was wir für die Truppen spielen!". Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 16 (1939/40): programme no. 7.
Directly after the outbreak of the war the Städtische Bühnen indicated that it was an honour for them to organise entertaining programmes for the forces and that they had already rehearsed two shows they could send on tour immediately (see BArch, R55/20261, Bl.147).

[415] The theatre organised 30 variety performances for soldiers and four shows for workers – so- called "Werkpausenveranstaltungen" – during 1941-42 (see Pabst, Erich. Bericht über die Spielzeit 1941/42. StdAMS, Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr.232 Bd. II, Fach 13, Nr.556a).

[416] In comparison to other Westphalian cities Münster's theatre was destroyed early in the war. Dortmund's municipal theatre suffered from total destruction in May 1943 (see BArch, R55/20349, Bl.2), and Bielefeld's playhouse was not hit until October 1944 (see BArch, R55/20314, Bl.149, 150).

[417] There were several plans about how to resume theatrical activity after the raid, but all projects were stopped by the authorities in Berlin because of their high costs. In a report to the city administration written in summer 1942, Erich Pabst described the catastrophic circumstances under which the theatre functioned after the raid. There were only a few typewriters or telephones and no heating, which had been a problem because of the leaks in the roof (see Pabst, *Spielzeit 1941/42*).
To improve the situation, however, the stage of the Studio was enlarged in summer/autumn 1942 (see BArch, R55/20700, Bl.90-91).

[418] The problems Münster had to face after the air raid were reported in detail to the Propaganda Ministry. In November 1942 the Gau propaganda office Münster informed the ministry about the critical situation due to the fact that the main house had been destroyed. The small number of opera and operetta performances were not sufficient and sold out quickly (see BArch, R55/20700, Bl.90-91).

stage of the war with unconditional surrender only a few months away.[419] From summer 1943 air-raids hit the city more frequently. The schools closed and pupils were sent to areas less affected by raids. Although York, too, suffered from a heavy raid in April 1942, the attacks on Münster were far more numerous and left over 61% of the city destroyed.[420] After a particularly heavy raid on 10 October 1943 the theatre stopped its evening performances and turned to matinees instead.[421] Only weeks before the final closure, however, the company still went on a trip 20 miles south to Hamm to give a guest performance.[422] On 31 August 1944 the final curtain went down when, according to Goebbels' declaration of "total war", all places of entertainment were closed for good.[423] In an ironic twist of history the Nazis finally had to tear down their cultural facade and close all theatres – a move the Britain had already dared to take in 1939.

In conclusion, we have seen that – possibly in contrast to expectation – Münster's city council took a long time to accept responsibility for the theatre. Until regular subsidies came into effect as late as 1899 the theatre's organisation, administration and financial problems was quite similar to York's. Indeed, the similarities outweigh the contrarieties by far, despite the differences in patronage, social function and educational mission of theatre in Germany and Britain. Only from the late 1900s onwards does Münster's

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[419] In February 1944 the municipal orchestra's first solo flautist was called up. As the assistant principal flautist had already joined the forces in 1942 and his French replacement was reported missing after an heavy air-raid in 1943 and the remaining flautist was 66 years old and unfit for solo parts, the chief musical director Heinz Dressel approached the authorities in Berlin to ask for a replacement. The orchestra officer of the Reich Music Chamber in his negative reply proposed to employ musicians on a temporary basis. Dressel, however, became increasingly unnerving and even threatened to stop performing if the musician was not sent. As an "aside" it is interesting to note that the tone of his letters was far from polite. On the contrary, Dressel was quite demanding and insisting. And in the end he succeeded: After a few months of waiting the vacancy could be filled with a flautist from Linz (see BArch, R56 II/4, Bl. 306-320).

[420] Münster suffered from a total of 1,128 air raid alarms which lasted for 1,532 hours. The Allies dropped 32,000 high-explosive bombs, 640,000 incendiary bombs and 8,100 phosphorus bombs. 1,314 people died during the raids and most of the historic buildings were destroyed (see Kuropka, *Münster in der Nationalsozialistischen Zeit*, 324-326).

[421] For several days the theatre was closed and adverts announcing performances only appeared again on 6 November 1943. From then on performances generally seemed to have started at 3pm to avoid disruption.

[422] See *MA*, 1 July 1944.

[423] It was after that that the city hall and the Studio were destroyed, too (on 30 September 1944 and 25 March 1945 respectively). After the war Münster was at pains to rebuild the theatre, but in contrast to its reconstruction policy on the Prinzipalmarkt, where the grand houses were restored in their original outlook, the theatre received an altogether different architectural treatment in 1954. Apart from the facade of the "Romberger Hof", which was the only part of the old "Lortzing-Theater" left standing after the war and which was integrated into the new building, the new architectural design was modern. It was also Münster's first major building project after the war – proof of the public affection and support for "their" theatre (see Jakobi, Franz-Josef, ed. "Theater tut not". Zum kulturellen Neubeginn in Münster 1945-1956. Münster: Münstersche Zeitung, 1996).

theatre slowly begin to develop in another direction. Although it started to receive annual subsidies and was eventually taken over by the city, however, financial problems still troubled the Städtische Bühnen and other Westphalian playhouses. As in York the financial difficulties culminated in the early 1930s and resulted in radical proposals. Whereas York's Theatre Royal was on the brink of being turned into a cinema Münster's councillors discussed possible mergers with other theatres in the region. Some politicians wanted the theatres of Bochum, Dortmund, Essen and Duisburg to join forces, others favoured a working together of Münster, Hagen, Dortmund and/or Bochum.[424] Other experiments included a return to the lease system or the total abandonment of a theatre manager. Neither attempt, however, led to the desired result, the cutting down of costs. At the same time these constant experiments and discussions conveyed the impression on many residents that money was the only matter the council cared about. Cultural politics, therefore, became an easy target for Nazi propaganda in the early 1930s. Promises to save the theatre in connection with calls for a nationalistic, traditional and "clean" programme went down well with many bourgeois residents not normally close to Hitler. In turn their support made the Nazis acceptable to many other critics. They applauded the renovation programme, they supported the propaganda campaigns for the "new" theatre and approved of rising subsidies, rising audiences, prolonged seasons and improved social conditions for the actors. To most of them it seemed as if the Nazis had indeed delivered and kept their promises to lead the Städtische Bühnen to "golden times". And the Nazi propaganda worked: Until well after the end of the war, many residents have not seen 1933 as the beginning of the end but the destruction of the theatre in the 1941 raid.

During the war, it is quite remarkable that the theatre managed to continue its work despite of the critical situation caused by the shortage of raw materials and disruption by air-raids. After the heavy raid in 1941, for example, the Reich Culture Chamber awarded the theatre RM 500,000 to buy new costumes.[425] Other theatres in the region profited from similar amounts directly paid to them by the Propaganda Ministry in compensation for destruction caused by air raids.[426] In contrast to the Theatre Royal

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[424] See StAMS Oberpräsidium Nr.5501. Bl. 64-261.
[425] See StdAMS, Theatergeschichtliche Sammlung Edith Lippold, folder 2.
[426] The "Gau Weser- Ems", of which the theatre in Osnabrück was a part, profited from a emergency programme for the arts inaugurated by the Propaganda Ministry in August 1942. From these funds, which totalled RM 800,000, Osnabrück received RM 50,000 (see BArch, R55/20263, Bl.65-69). In 1944 the emergency plan was extended to all German regions and funds in the sum of RM 500,000 were distributed among them. The Gaus Westfalen- Nord and Westfalen- Süd each received RM 20,000, Weser- Ems RM 30,000 and Essen even RM 50,000 (see BArch, R55/20249, Bl.115-117, 122).

drastic measures, such as the introduction of matinees, the cancellation of evening performances and, eventually, the closure of the playhouse, were avoided as long as possible and only introduced when the city already lay in ruins. One could argue, therefore, that the theatre's dramatic zeal was not limited to its stage but that the Städtische Bühnen took part in a national performance of make believe, of pretending that everything was fine. This "business as usual"- mentality corresponded with Hitler's demand not to let the home front be too much affected by the war. Even after the theatre's destruction, therefore, every effort was made to stage lavish opera productions and revive the great classics. Erich Pabst was praised by the civic authorities for his being prepared to keep going and was even nominated for a war medal.[427] This event also illustrates how much the theatre had become part of the war effort by the early 1940s. It had developed into an institution deemed vital for propaganda, diversion and moral edification – until the "final victory".

[427] See StdAMS, Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr.232 Bd. II, Fach 13, Nr.556a.

Table 1: Attendance Figures Städtische Bühnen Münster 1928 – 1941

Season	Main House: Attendance	Performances	Average Attendance per Performance	Studio: Attendance	Performances	Average Attendance per Performance	Regular Seats:
1927/28	**~ 130,000 Total**	~ 280	~ 465				1,030
1928/29	**140,731 Total**	299	471				1,133
1929/30	177,314	325	546	7,062	68	104	1,240
				184.378 Total			
1930/31[1]	148,492	294	505	19,170	182	105	1,473
				167.662 Total			
1931/32	~ 145,000	~ 295	~ 490	~ 20,000	~ 200	~ 100	915
				~ 165.000 Total			
1932/33	99,648	212	470	11,207	94	119	1,322
				110.855 Total			

[1] The season only lasted until March 1931. Normally seasons ran until May or June. As a result, attendances are lower. They might have reached the same level as in 1929/30 otherwise. Only from 1934 were seasons extended again until June.

1933/34	125,459	210	597	8,811	84	105	5,377
				134,270 Total			
1934/35	162,057	314	516	19,766	170	116	3,576
				181,823 Total			
1935/36	171,531	330	520	33,365	263	127	3,619
				204,896 Total			
1936/37	175,790	339	519	36,251	273	133	3,606
				212,041 Total			
1937/38	180,734	324	557	30,449	255	119	3,682
				211,183 Total			
1938/39				**182,199 Total**	**551**		
1939/40				**171,624 Total**	**522**		
1940/41				**155797**	**529**		

The Programmes of the Theatre Royal

All good theatres must function commercially.
Harcourt Williams[428]

The study of the Theatre Royal's repertoire seems to reflect the supposition formulated above as the differences between Münster and York seem to outweigh by far the similarities. From the beginning of its existence the Theatre Royal was regarded as a commercial enterprise, both by its patrons and management and by the city authorities. Artistic considerations did not play a significant role in the day-to-day running of the theatre. As we have seen with Tate Wilkinson, Shakespearean drama was only viable when produced with an array of stars and opulent settings.[429] Theatre managers had no qualms about presenting revues, variety and even circus shows as long as they paid the bill.

Even if they had wanted to present a different repertoire, however, the manner in which provincial theatre was organised until the 1930s would have made it nearly impossible. Many theatres were part of a network owned by a businessman, who not only controlled personnel and finances but also the repertoire.[430] British provincial theatres were subject to a much stronger influence from the capital than German theatres. There was a constant flow of new productions, which went on provincial tours after their West End runs.[431] This inter-dependence between the West End and the provinces makes the examination of York's programme all the more interesting as it reflects national trends concerning dramatic tastes and literary developments. York's repertoire is, therefore, in many ways typical of English provincial theatres in general. Only from the mid- 1930s did the situation change as the repertory movement established many successful "reps" in the provinces, which were no longer entirely dependent on London productions.

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[428] Harcourt Williams on Gielgud's departure from the Old Vic in 1930 (qtd. Morley, *John G*, 79).

[429] This development even intensified in the late nineteenth century when the technical advances allowed for even more spectacular effects (see Rowell, George, Anthony Jackson. The Repertory Movement. A History of Regional Theatre in Britain. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. 10-11).
It remains important today especially with opera productions to stress the spectacular effects they may feature. Recent announcements of the "Ukrainian National Opera Odessa", for example, promised an "exquisite Japanese water garden, waterfalls and stunning aquariums filled with golden fish" in Puccini's Madam Butterfly, and the appearance of "hunting dogs, hawks and lavish sets" in Verdi's Rigoletto (see adverts in "The Guide North", 23-29 August 2003. The Guardian 23 August 2003. 2).

[430] Although Percy Hutchison rarely stayed in York, he controlled his (still rather modest in comparison to others) enterprise from London via his Acting Manager.

[431] By contrast, the Berlin influence on German provincial theatres was not only weaker it was also less desirable as it stood for decadence and artistic experiments, none of which one wanted to be exposed to. For German actors, however, Berlin was as desirable as London was for their British counterparts, although a job in Munich, Hamburg or Frankfurt was certainly more attractive than a position in Manchester, Birmingham or Glasgow in Britain.

It seems as if the decade between 1920 and 1930 especially highlights the fundamental differences between Münster and York. Whereas Münster became a fully subsidised theatre in 1922 with its own drama, opera and dance ensembles and (relative) financial security, Percy Hutchison struggled against the music hall and cinema competition. Whereas the Städtische Bühnen played in so-called "continental repertory" with a different piece every night, Hutchison booked companies which visited the Theatre Royal for a whole week and normally only played one piece.[432] And managements had to ensure a regular change of programme in order to keep a loyal following.[433] Apart from that the novelty of a play was crucial and added considerably to its attractiveness. A recent success was regarded as one of the essential qualities which made for a profitable production.[434] Even more important, however, was the attribute "London".[435] These "London Successes" held the pre-eminent place in audience appreciation and were always especially announced.[436] They were even more popular when performed by the original London company, although casts were regularly changed after the West End run, which meant that the company sent on tour was often only second rate.
The greatest honour a production could receive was the accompanying note "as performed before Her/His Majesty Queen Mary/the King". Irrespective of the actual quality of the play this note had an immediate effect on its success and box office receipts. During the 1930s a visit of Queen Mary was "regarded as the augury of a long run for a play".[437]

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[432] See Rowell/Jackson, *Repertory Movement*, 1-2.
[433] The high number of productions corresponds to these demands. Until the mid- 1920s Percy Hutchison presented a total of 65 productions annually on average. This figure was considerably lower in Münster where it sank below 40 during the late 1920s (see Diagram III).
[434] Local commentators criticised the Theatre Royal when they felt the fare was not new enough. "Curtain- Raiser" complained in November 1936 that "during the first season, the average age of 14 plays presented was 6 ¾ years [...] For the second season of 23 plays, the average vintage was 6 ¾ years. Only six plays older than two years were performed in the first season, while during the Summer season 14 plays of greater than two years' existence were presented. The season so far has seen 15 plays presented, of which only five are two years or younger, while five are 10 years old or more" (*YEP*, 25 November 1936).
[435] It is important to note, however, that "recent" and "London" could not be separated to have the desired magic spell over audiences. A play which only reached the York stage a few years after it had been successful in London seemed likely to be criticised as "dated". And a recent success from Birmingham was certainly far less attractive that its London counterpart.
[436] With exceptionally successful plays the management even informed patrons about the overall number of performances. One play was advertised with the information that it had just completed its "762nd Performance on Monday, November 25th". Lonsdale's musical "The Maid of the Mountains" came to York for the third time in September 1920 after having had "1,352 Performances at Daly's Theatre" (see Appendix).
[437] Hutchison, *Masquerade*, 123. By comparison a visit by Reich president Ebert to a certain play might have even had a counter- effect for the production, as regards the right-wing press and its clientele at least.

Provincial theatre managers like Percy Hutchison felt compelled to follow the London lead. He tended to rely on mediocre but successful plays rather than on unknown pieces. Rarely did he try novelties out himself. Even after the Repertory Company had been founded, plays which had recently scored a hit in London stood a much better chance of being performed in York.[438]

On German provincial stages a "Berlin success" certainly aroused interest, but a hit from Munich or Hamburg could do just as well. Although Berlin was the undisputed theatre capital, plays which had been successful there were often regarded as "socialist", "modern", or "anti- traditional". The effect, therefore, was often counter- productive in conservative provincial towns. Political plays especially seemed highly suspect. Regarding the novelty of a play, too, German provincial theatres seemed to differ from Britain. The programmes in Münster always consisted of a large proportion of classical pieces. Goethe, Schiller and Shakespeare were regarded as essential parts of the theatre programmes, perhaps even the pillars of a successful repertoire. In this respect their age was not regarded as a hindrance but as an asset. What became important were questions of interpretation and translation.[439] In York, by contrast, the production of Shakespearean drama was not only far less frequent it was also regarded as a somehow exotic experience. A production did not have to prove that the play was still relevant – an important quality at German theatres – it was explicitly consumed as a "dated" piece. The fact that audiences did not expect to read the productions as offering some sort of universal truth or worthwhile idea for their present existence is also illustrated by the fact that they clearly despised modern interpretations and cherished period productions in magnificent costumes instead.[440] In fact, the attitude in Britain towards its great theatrical past was not only critical of modern interpretations, it bordered on outright rejection. During the 1920s and early 1930s Shakespeare was "considered a guarantee of empty houses".[441] It seems, therefore, that apart from some obviously rather rare encounters with "high culture" York's audiences were presented only with what German audiences would have branded "cheap entertainment".

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[438] See Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 162. Marshall states that even the provincial revival of classics often coincided with West End revivals of the same plays.

[439] During the Weimar years supporters of different schools of Shakespeare interpretation engaged in heated debates. Productions, which either seemed too radical or too conservative or too ordinary, could cause storms of protest (see Hortmann, Wilhelm. Shakespeare und das deutsche Theater im 20. Jahrhundert. Berlin: Henschel, 2001. 66-70). The question of translation, too, was regarded as vital (see chapter IV, page 164).

[440] It was not until 1925 that Barry Jackson produced a modern-dress Hamlet at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre (for more information on Shakespearean productions at Birmingham see Cochrane, Claire. Shakespeare and the Birmingham Repertory Theatre 1913-1929. London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1993. 120-147).

A first look at the programme seems to support such an interpretation. After Percy Hutchison had presented a varied programme with classics, opera and contemporary drama alongside a large number of comedies, thrillers and farces, he changed his policy from the mid- 1920s. Until then different nationally recognised touring companies had visited York on a regular basis with Shakespearean drama and opera classics.[442] We have to note, however, that these companies rarely changed their repertoire and more or less presented the same pieces every year.[443] It seems fair to assume, therefore, that they did not try out new interpretations either. Apart from that we have to bear in mind that during these weeks of classical repertoire, plays were only performed once or twice and not for a whole week.[444] But even this – in relation to Münster at least – basic provision ended abruptly. After 1927 and until 1942 – with the exception of Henry Baynton's week of Shakespeare repertoire in 1930 – York's audiences were not treated to a single week of classical drama. The same holds true for the opera companies, who stopped their visits in 1927.[445] The chief reason for this development was certainly Hutchison's aim to keep costs down. Contemporary letters-to-the-editor prove that plays which were considered "high brow" failed to attract large audiences.[446] Instead Hutchison increasingly relied on companies which played for several weeks in repertory. These "Summer Seasons" were very popular – and cheap.[447]

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[441] See Hobson, *Theatre in Britain*, 9.

[442] Regular guests included the Charles Doran and Frank Benson companies in Shakespeare repertoire, as well as the Royal Carl Rosa, D'Oyly Carte and O'Mara opera companies. J. A. E. Malone offered continental operetta and during the early 1920s produced two Lehár classics each year (see Appendix). York's programme of the early 1920s was quite typical and other theatres in the region staged a similar fare. For the repertoire offered at Wakefield's Opera House see Taylor, *Wakefield Theatre*, 213.

[443] The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company, for example, always visited York early in the year and presented six or seven operas during one week. The repertoire consisted of a small array of established opera classics. Between 1920 and 1925 the company visited York five times and nearly always featured Offenbach's Tales of Hoffmann, Bizet's Carmen, and Puccini's Madam Butterfly. Four operas, which were presented in 1921, had already appeared a year before, and only the 1922 visit brought a number of different pieces. In general York's audiences had no chance to become familiar with contemporary opera. The regular appearance of D'Oyly Carte's staple Gilbert and Sullivan bill serves as a perfect example of the lack of variety York's many music lovers enjoyed.

[444] This has to be borne in mind when looking at Diagram II, as the relatively high percentage, which classics and opera score until the mid- 1920s, is based on these one- off performances. Until the early 1940s no Shakespeare play was performed for a whole week – with the single exception of an open- air performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream in York's Museum Gardens in 1935. This performance for the "Archbishop's Benevolent Fund" featured 200 participants and was an exception in itself.

[445] There was only a short-term revival of visiting opera companies between 1932 and 1934.

[446] In April 1923, for example, one reader ("Playgoer") complained that the "neglect of York theatre-goers to patronise plays that are really worth seeing is becoming more and more of a tragedy week by week, and if in future Mr Percy Hutchison gives them a surfeit of spineless musical comedy, they have only themselves to thank" (*YH*, 7 April 1923). David Copperfield, a contemporary drama by W. Evelyn based on Dickens' novel, for example, had a "poor support given" as Hutchison's reply to the paper admitted. He assured residents, however, that "rather than be compelled to present a surfeit of 'spineless musical comedies' I would resign my management of the Theatre" (*YH*, 13 April 1923).

[447] Other theatres in the region found a similar liking for repertory. The Opera House in Wakefield, for example, featured for many years at least one repertory season (see Taylor, *Wakefield Theatre*, 213).

To illustrate some of the above mentioned points it will prove helpful to look at a typical season in more detail. The 1931 season at the Theatre Royal seems a good example as it highlighted Hutchison's revised policy. There were no visits by Shakespearean or opera companies any longer but instead a four month season of repertory presented by the "Percy Hutchison Players". The only opera produced was Gilbert and Sullivan's The Mikado, although the production by the "York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society" seems to have been rather mediocre.[448] Other musical "treats" included a dance performance by the Russian dancer Lydia Kyasht and a recital by Jan Kubelik, the famous Czech violinist. As "special attractions" Hutchison presented several plays "prior to production in London" and appeared in his signature comedy Brewster's Millions by Winchell Smith and Byron Ongley. Apart from four contemporary dramas, which dealt with more or less serious topics such as education, prostitution or medical problems, the bill was dominated by contemporary comedies which reached a share in the programme of over 86%.[449] The theatre presented comedies and melodramas by A. A. Milne, Charles Chochran, Noel Coward, and Frederick Lonsdale, mystery plays and thrillers by Arnold Ridley, Dion Titheradge and Owen Davies, farces by Avery Hopwood and Fred Duprez, musical comedies such as Nippy, Mr Cinders and Lilac Time, and, of course, a Pantomime at Christmas.[450]

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[448] Although it was called a "most charming production" (*YEP*, 24 March 1931) it seems fair to assume that it did not live to up to the high expectations formulated in the press announcement, i.e. that the Amateurs produced Gilbert and Sullivan "in view of the fact that a D'Oyly Carte company is not visiting York this season" (*YEP*, 21 March 1931). During previous years the Amateurs had regularly attracted biting comments in the press regarding the poor quality of their productions. Their 1927 production of The Mountebanks by Cellier and Gilbert, for example, was criticised for "both action and musical tempi will bear quickening" and "entries and exits were too obvious" (*YEP*, 8 March 1927). The 1933 production of Ambient and Thompson's The Arcadians must have been equally unfortunate as vocally "some thinness was evident" (*YEP*, 7 March 1933).

[449] The Theatre Royal featured four contemporary dramas during the 1931 season. Cynara by H. M. Harwood and Gore Brown was branded a "provocative play" because of its "moral: have a good time with the shop- girls, gents, and then get back to your wife in time for supper" (*YEP*, 30 June 1931). Robert McLaughlin's The Eternal Magdalene dealt with the life of a prostitute, Dorothy Brandon The Outsider was a medical drama and John van Druten's After All "unfolds the eternal conflict of thought between parents and children" (*YEP*, 5 December 1931).

[450] In early 1931 Hutchison even staged a second Pantomime. Like today the annual Pantomime was hugely popular and the biggest single financial asset of the theatre. In 1924, for example, Robinson Crusoe was seen by nearly 8,000 people in its first four days (see Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 322). And for the 1936 Panto the press reported "packed houses" only days after its run had started. The Pantomimes were also the only productions which ran for more than a week. The 1930/31 Panto ran for 10 days, the one in 1931/32 for nearly two weeks. Other theatres had even longer seasons. Wakefield's Opera House, for example, presented its 1922 Panto for seven weeks (see Taylor, *Wakefield Theatre*, 213).
Their financial importance is illustrated by an example from Huddersfield's Theatre Royal where normal gross takings of a decent week in 1930 amounted to about £200. The same year's Panto Cinderella, however, took more than £600 in gross takings in the week ending 27 December (see West Yorkshire Archives Huddersfield. Theatre Royal Records 1901-1936. B/HTR/as/11. 38, 42).
Other interesting features of the 1931 season in York include A. A. Milne being the most popular playwright of the season with three different plays in the repertoire. Apart from the many new plays the

The 1931 programme also tells us about interesting developments regarding foreign plays. Many commentators have claimed that not only has the British theatre proved immune against any avant-garde influences from the continent it is also largely uninterested in foreign plays.[451] Whereas interest in playwriting from abroad has always been considerable in German- speaking countries, for example, British theatres have obviously kept their "splendid isolation".[452] A close look at the repertoire, however, not only reveals that foreign plays did indeed find their way on to provincial stages it also shows that the programmes underwent remarkable changes.

The 1931 season featured one French play (The Marriage of Kitty by Cosmo Gordon Lennox) and another which was set in France (Mason's The House of Arrow), and mirrored an increasing interest in American plays with the production of Avery Hopwood's Fair and Warmer. Only years before the situation had looked completely different, when French plays or adaptations of French plays and novels enjoyed high popularity in York.[453] Especially in connection with the First World War the interest in French drama reached a final remarkable peak.[454] By the mid- 1920s, however, the emphasis changed and American plays and musical comedies became increasingly popular.[455] The first US play performed in York was the above mentioned Fair and Warmer as early as May 1919, but the new trend really took off with performances of Sun-Up by Lula Vollmer in 1926,[456] The Best People by Avery Hopwood in 1927,

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programme also featured some classic comedies which had been see in York before. Charles Marlowe's When Knights Were Bold, for example, was an all-time favourite and appeared for the third time.

[451] See, for example, Nicholson, Steve. "Unnecessary Plays: European Drama and the British Censor in the 1920s." Theatre Research International 20.1 (1995): 30-36. The 1937 autumn season in the West End, for example, featured 40 new productions of mostly familiar plays but only five plays of foreign origin (see Theatre Royal Programme Notes, 23 July 1937).

[452] It is sometimes even claimed that if you want to see the latest Ravenhill, Bond or Kane play you will probably have to turn to Bochum, Hamburg or Berlin. In 2002 alone Theater heute reviewed the productions of eight plays by contemporary British playwrights at theatres in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. It has to be stressed, however, that Theater heute only reviewed important productions (like first productions) at the most influential theatres, there were many more "Brits" on provincial stages. Another interesting feature of the magazine are regular reports of productions and theatre life in London.

[453] For the decisive influence of French literature on the British provincial stages see Bargna, Katya, John Whittaker. "Translation and the British Stage; Or, How to Deform Esmeralda." Unpublished research article of the Performance and Translation Centre. University of Hull, 2001.

[454] In 1918-19 alone examples of French plays include Sleeping Partners in an English adaptation by S. Hicks, Bayard Veiller's drama The 13th Chair, the musical comedy High Jinks adapted by F. Lonsdale from the French play by Paul Bilhaud, the "romantic play" Henry of Navarre by W. Devereux, the "great naval play" In the Night Watch adapted by M. Morton, and the "fantastic revue" As You Were by A. Wimperis, H. Darenzki and E. Mathe in an adaptation from Rip's Plus ça Change.

[455] One of the last French plays to appear in York is an interesting case. Jacques Duval's romantic comedy Tovarish was produced in a translation by Robert Sherwood in 1937 and again in 1945. It represents one of the few examples of direct contact between York and Münster regarding a play from a country foreign to both. In Münster Duval's play was performed in 1936/37 as Towarisch in an adaptation by Curt Goetz.

[456] The play had been first produced in 1923. The reference in the press to the actress Lucille La Verne, who played the protagonist, as "a second Bernhardt", however, shows that the French influence was still

pieces entitled Broadway Jones (1926), Broadway (1928) or A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur (1930)[457] and especially the huge musical successes of Oscar Hammerstein and Otto Harbach (with three productions in 1928 alone). But also pieces by British dramatists started to be set in the States, especially in New York, and dealt with "modern topics" such as the "Flapper". The growing influence of American playwrighting – and, indeed, American culture – became a reason for concern not only in York.[458] The local press regularly claimed that the American plays were inferior in quality, superficial and vulgar.[459] Yet this American influence became even stronger during the Second World War, which saw many American and Canadian soldiers stationed on different air bases around York.[460]

For obvious reasons, interest in German drama was limited after the First World War, all the more so since anti- German propaganda had played a decisive role on the Theatre Royal's stage, especially during the last two years of the war. Examples include plays like General Post by Harold Terry and Lechmere Worrall, the "powerful French military play" Under two Flags, The Better 'Ole (A Gas Attack) by Bairnsfather and Eliot – with acts entitled "Explosion 1" and "Explosion 2"[461] –, the "greatest of all spy plays" Inside the Lines by Earl Derr Biggers, the "latest and most intense military play" A Spy in the Ranks by Mrs Kimberley, the "new spy play with naval interest" The Luck of the Navy by Clifford Mills, and the "successful royalty spy play" The Man Who Stayed at Home by Worrall and Terry, in which an obscure "Fraulein Schroeder" [sic] spied for the

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present. The American cultural influence had become so strong during the 1920s and 1930s that "mid-Atlantic accents had become almost obligatory for popular singers, encroaching more and more on the raucous Cockney and fruity Lancashire of the old music hall" (see Calder, *People's War*, 311).

[457] This musical comedy was an adaptation by Herbert Fields of Mark Twain's book with music and lyrics by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart.

[458] There are a substantial number of letters-to-the-editor of the Yorkshire Herald in Spring 1923 of residents who expressed their fear that England might be overrun by thousands of American tourists arriving on hundreds of ocean-liners in the summer. A central point of concern was that American youths might bring with them a degenerate language and informal manners which would endanger the decency of English girls. Even "the problem of the theatre latecomer" was attributed to US influence (see letter-to-the-editor by Pauline Lord of the Strand Theatre in London, *YH*, 19 May 1923).

[459] The American musical comedy Irene by Leslie Henson was commended as it contained "music that at times, when it forgets the American idiom, is very attractive" (*YEP*, 26 November 1929). The British musical comedy Lady Mary was praised as it "comes as a relaxation and a restful relief from the pronounced jazz type of musical play so common nowadays", and it was added by the critic that "the fact that it is a British production is not the only recommendation of the play" (*YEP*, 19 February 1929). Correspondingly, John Drinkwater's "popular Gloucestershire comedy" Bird in Hand was admired as it was "typically English, and probably that is why the play is so popular, quite a change from these American plays which one sees nowadays" (*YEP*, 31 August 1929).

[460] The American influence on the stage was also blamed for the rise of "indecent" striptease shows on theatre stages, as the Birmingham Mail claimed as early as April 1940 (qtd. Hylton, Stuart. Their Darkest Hour. The Hidden History of the Home Front 1939-1945. Stroud: Sutton, 2001. 128).

[461] The Better 'Ole was revived several times until 1920 and received a total of four productions, which is considerable in comparison to the majority of the plays, which came to York only once.

German army on the east coast.[462] The overall share of such war plays in the repertoire was 18% in 1917 and 15% in 1918.[463] Some of these plays were performed several times, obviously due to public demand. Anti-German propaganda, however, was not only limited to the theatre as other venues were used, too. In July 1917 the Assembly Rooms hosted a "Grand Entertainment in Aid of 'The Stranded Sailors and Soldiers' Fund of York", in which songs like I Want to Meet the Kaiser vividly reminded audiences of the common enemy.

The assumption that German plays did not find any representation on York's stage even in the following years seems, therefore, more than justified. And indeed, apart from Strauß' waltzes or musical plays like Lilac Time interest in the rich German dramatic heritage seems to have been virtually non-existent. The search for Goethe and Schiller, Kaiser and Sternheim, Hauptmann and Brecht is to no avail.[464] A more detailed look at York's programmes, however, reveals that the German contribution was far from insignificant. It also shows that the focus needs to be "adjusted". We are mistaken if we expect to find typical examples of Germany's established theatrical canon on York's stage. Parallel to a general trend away from the classics from the mid- 1920s and the increasing dominance of contemporary comedies, thrillers and musical plays, interest in German tragedies, serious drama and political plays was low. Schiller and Brecht were, therefore, not matters of vital interest.[465] This phenomenon corresponds to the general perception of theatre and its purpose, which seems to have been totally different in Germany and Britain. As mentioned earlier Schiller's concept of theatre as a moral

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[462] On producing Austin Page's war play By Pigeon Post, which was set in a French village near the German frontier during the war, a notice in the Programme Notes made it clear that "Homing and Carrier Pigeons have saved many lives in the War. The public are earnestly requested not to shoot these birds. The penalty for doing so under the Defence of the Realm Act is a fine of £100, or Six Months Imprisonment".

[463] In 1917 the Theatre Royal produced a total of 44 plays, of which eight were war plays with some degree of propagandistic and/or anti-German content. In 1918 the theatre presented 52 plays, eight of which were anti-German.

[464] The fact that by 1934 no decent translation of Hauptmann's dramatic works existed indicates the low level of interest (see Chisholm, *Repertory*, 116).

[465] It is interesting to note that Ernst Toller enjoyed some kind of cult status with the British workers' theatre movements, especially with his play Masses and Men. Outside this clientele, however, his plays were hardly known (see Samuel, Raphael, Ewan MacColl and Stuart Cosgrove. Theatres of the Left 1880-1935. Workers' Theatre Movements in Britain and America. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985. 22).
When the Birmingham Repertory Company produced Georg Kaiser's Gas "Birmingham's population of 919,000 rolled up to the extent of 47 to 90 persons per night" (Chisholm, *Repertory*, 193).
We also have to keep in mind that many of the German left-wing or avant-garde plays would have been banned by the Lord Chamberlain anyway. According to the Examiner in 1925, the Lord Chamberlain prohibited plays "the performance of which would have been a real scandal". On the corresponding list of banned plays are Schnitzler's Der Reigen, Leonhard Frank's Karl und Anna, Toller's Hinkemann and Hoppla, We Live, Bruckner's The Criminals and Malady of Youth, Wedekind's Earth Spirit and Spring Awakening and Emil Ludwig's Versailles (see Richard Findlater. Banned! A Review of Theatrical Censorship in Britain. London: Panther, 1968. 155).

institution was widely accepted in Germany and the notion of the educational value of dramatic performances never really questioned. In Britain, by contrast, entertainment never had such a negative image as in Germany where it was regarded as inferior to serious drama. On the contrary, as we have seen above, many patrons explicitly wanted to avoid "high- brow" plays. For the German repertoire this means that York's audiences were not interested in examples of "high culture" but in German comedies. And these they increasingly received.

Starting in the mid- 1920s plays, topics and music from German speaking countries became increasingly popular. In 1924 alone the theatre presented Hermann Sudermann's play Magda, operettas by Franz Lehár (The Merry Widow), Leo Fall (Madame Pompadour) and Rudolph Schanzer (The Lady of the Rose) as well as musical comedies by Rudolf Friml (Katinka) and Hugo Hirsch (Toni).[466] Notable examples from the following years include the musical comedies by Jean Gilbert (Katja, the Dancer in 1926 and 1927), Oscar Straus (The Last Waltz and My Son John in 1926 and 1928), Sigmund Romberg's The Desert Song, Wilhelm Meyer- Förster's all- time favourite The Student Prince (both in 1928 and 1930), and Siegfried Geyer's play By Candle Light in 1929.[467] Plays were set in German speaking countries, musical comedies made use of music by German composers, and the musical programme performed in the intervals featured Mendelssohn, Wagner and Schubert. It was not only German drama and music, however, which met with increasing interest, the country's theatre system as

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[466] In 1924 the Theatre Royal featured 12.5% plays with some kind of German connection – written or composed by a German, using a German setting or even the German language. This trend was reflected on the London stage, too. One of the first adaptations was the play The Lady of the Rose by Rudolph Schanzer and Ernest Welisch with music by Jean Gilbert; the British version was by Frederick Lonsdale and Harry Graham. It was produced at "Daly's Theatre" as early as 1922 (for more examples see Mander, Raymond, Joe Mitchenson. Musical Comedy. A Story in Pictures. London: Peter Davies, 1969).
It is interesting to note, however, that after the war musical works from German speaking countries generally returned earlier to British theatres than dramatic pieces. As early as 1920 the Theatre Royal produced Lehár's The Merry Widow, and in 1921 the same piece was produced alongside Lehár's Gypsy Love in a double bill. Later that year the Theatre Royal produced Emmerich Kalman's The Gipsy Princess in an adaptation by A. Miller. Wagner's Lohengrin had already appeared in 1918, and Tannhäuser returned in 1919. It was especially these two pieces which proved the most popular Wagner operas during the following years. The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company alone presented two more Tannhäuser and one more Lohengrin productions between 1920 and 1925. The fact that all the above mentioned pieces had been produced in Britain long before the war, had obviously contributed to a general feeling of not regarding them as German but as part of the international musical heritage/ repertoire. Popular favourites were especially the waltzes from Vienna or Budapest. Pieces like Lehar's The Count of Luxembourg and Gipsy Love, Jacobi's The Marriage Market and Fall's The Dollar Princess had literally "created a vogue" before 1914 (see Disher, Willson M. "Jubilee Years in the Theatre." Theatre World May 1935: 202).
It is interesting to note that Viennese operetta enjoyed a short revival during the early 1930s, for example with White Horse Inn, which corresponded to the arrival of German theatre refugees. Lea Seidl, for example excelled in this operetta's nostalgic picture of Austrian life in a mountain village in the days of emperor Franz Joseph (see Hobson, *Theatre in Britain*, 85).

[467] The "German share" in the programmes was 4.3% in 1925, 6.9% in 1926, 3.5% in 1927, 7.7% in 1928, 3.5% in 1929, and 7.9% in 1930.

a whole became subject of admiration.[468] It is interesting to note that this trend was mirrored in the cinema, too. The film All Quiet on the Western Front, which was based on Erich Maria Remarque's anti-war novel, was shown twice in 1931[469], and in March 1933 the Rialto screened Leontine Sagan's Mädchen in Uniform entirely in German with only "brief English captions".[470] As a typical season of the later years of Hutchison's "reign" the above mentioned 1931 season featured three works with some kind of German background and, therefore, fitted into a trend which had started a few years before.[471]

It might seem surprising that despite the Nazi terror in Germany and an increasing number of refugees in Britain, many of them artists, York's Theatre Royal did not change its repertoire policy after 1933. On the contrary, the trend towards an increased interest in the dramatic and musical output from German speaking countries continued. Between 1933 and 1939, the Theatre Royal produced works by Siegfried Geyer, Paul Vulpius, Rudolf Bernauer and Leopold Jacobson and the duo Franz Arnold/Ernst Bach – some of them even appeared several times.[472] Plays were set in Heidelberg and Berlin, Innsbruck and Vienna, in Bavaria and in the Alps. Even in areas such as genre and stage design Germany functioned as a role model. The press praised Don Marquis' The Dark Hours in 1935, for example, as a superb "Passion Play reminiscent of the Oberammergau Passion Play", all the more so since it used "a Germanic form of

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[468] In February 1930 the Theatre Royal produced Sheriff's anti-war drama Journey's End. It is interesting to note that apart from the usual form of attracting patrons by praising the play as "the success of the past year", it was also stated that it had been "accepted for production in no less than 48 theatres in different parts of Germany, a record which no other play has ever achieved" (*YEP*, 1 February 1930).

[469] Another proof for the popularity of Remarque's novel is a variety show entitled All Right on the Western Front, a "burlesque" depicting "the lighter side of life in war time", which the Empire staged in November 1930.

[470] *YEP*, 7 March 1933. The film, which had been produced in 1931, was described as a "psychological study of adolescence" and starred an all-female German cast with the leading roles taken by Hedwig Schlichter, Dorothea Wieck, Hertha Thiele, and Ellen Schwannecke. The film centred on the story of a girl's struggles within the rigid discipline of a boarding school for daughters of Prussian military officers, who were ruled with rigid discipline under the proto-Nazi dictum "through discipline and hunger, hunger and discipline, we shall rise again". Mädchen in Uniform is today admired as anti- authoritarian and one of the earliest examples of a film dealing with lesbian love (see http://www.rottentomatoes.com/ click/m/ MaedcheninUniform-1013022/preview.php. 21 August 2003).

[471] The Theatre Royal presented Lilac Time, the musical play about Schubert's life, Oscar Straus' musical comedy The Chocolate Soldier (based on Shaw's Arms and the Man, written by the Germans Leopold Jacobson and Rudolf Bernauer, and presented in an English version by Stanislaus Strange) and Austin Melford's adaptation of Franz Arnold and Ernst Bach's comedy It's a Boy called Oh! Daddy.
The share of works with some kind of German background reached 5.8% in 1931. During the following seasons it rose to 9.6% in 1932, 8.1% in 1933, and remained on this level until 1937.

[472] Lilac Time, the musical play about Schubert's life by A. M. Willner and Heinz Reichert and adapted for the English stage by Adrian Ross, for example, was presented six times at York between 1924 and 1933. The play was a general success on the British stages. Hughes Macklin played the leading role in over 2,000 performances.

stagecraft [...] with a special platform projecting into the auditorium, so that the action of the production rises from the auditorium into infinity".[473] And Dodie Smith's Autumn Crocus even made use of German as a stage language with some of the characters speaking German throughout the play. Audiences liked it and the press praised the "pleasant change from stage French, even if one does not understand it".[474] The musical contribution was similarly significant. Audiences saw musical plays with music composed by Oscar Straus, Robert Stolz, Johann Strauß and Franz Schubert, and opera repertories regularly included pieces by Mozart (The Marriage of Figaro was one of the favourites over many years – see below) and Wagner's Tannhäuser. As late as 1940 8.2% of all the productions were German pieces, German adaptations, or plays set in Germany.[475] We can conclude, therefore, that until after the outbreak of the Second World War German dramatists and composers, German topics and settings, even the "exotic" use of German as a stage language had been successful and popular with York audiences.

There is, however, one interesting feature. A relatively high number of the German pieces presented at the Theatre Royal were written by composers and dramatists who were Jewish and, therefore, had been barred from German theatre repertoires. The comedies of Franz Arnold and Ernst Bach, for example, which had been hugely successful in Weimar Germany, ceased to be produced on German stages in 1935 due to Arnold's being Jewish. Rudolf Bernauer's works were prohibited in 1933 on the same grounds[476], the plays by Siegfried Geyer and Paul Vulpius[477] disappeared almost immediately after the take-over, as did the music by Oscar Straus[478] and Robert Stolz.[479] The disproportionally high number of works by Jewish dramatists and composers seems to suggest that the Theatre Royal deliberately chose these works not only to offer the possibility of production outside Germany but also to make a stand against the Nazis.

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[473] *YEP*, 13 April 1935.
[474] *YEP*, 12 January 1932.
[475] Between 1937 and 1939 the "German share" in the programmes had fallen to 2%, but in 1940 it rose again considerably. Oscar Straus' The Chocolate Soldier was even one of the most successful productions of that season as "crowded audiences at the Theatre Royal continue to give an enthusiastic reception to 'The Chocolate Soldier'" (*YEP*, 31 December 1940).
[476] Bernauer in 1935 managed to escape to England.
[477] For more information about Vulpius see BArch, R56 I/64, Bl.14.
[478] Born in Vienna, Straus' most famous piece was Der tapfere Soldat (The Chocolate Soldier). Straus left Germany for France and became a French citizen in 1939.
[479] Stolz was a famous composer of operettas in all German speaking countries. He went into exile after the Nazi take-over.

This would correspond with the screening of the above-mentioned German film Mädchen in Uniform with its strong anti-authoritarian and anti-Nazi stance. As there were no official statements from the theatre management concerning this matter the supposition opens up the question of public opinion in York and whether there are any hints as to the political beliefs of theatre patrons. And indeed, there are.

In a series of interviews the Yorkshire Evening Press introduced the members of the newly founded repertory company to the public. These interviews aroused considerable interest as the actors had already become something like local celebrities. In September 1936 the 19-year-old actress Elizabeth Scott was interviewed about her previous experiences. Although not specifically asked to comment on Nazi Germany she gave ample evidence of her admiration of Hitler, the Third Reich and theatre under the Nazis in general.[480] The paper wrote that it was especially the "sense of a unified nation and the obvious hero-worship of Hitler, particularly on the part of young people of about her own age, that made Miss Scott so strongly pro-Nazi. Everyone seems very happy, [...] because they can flaunt themselves in uniform, and she considers that much is going on in Germany which other nations might well copy". Elizabeth Scott's statements caused a great deal of correspondence and the newspapers received many letters-to-the-editor. It is interesting to note, however, that the reaction of the majority of the readers was not a criticism of Scott's remarks but a general appreciation of the "achievements" of the Third Reich.[481] This positive attitude towards Nazi Germany, however, was not

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[480] "Miss Elizabeth Scott Visited Germany. And Returned a Confessed Admirer of the Nazis" (*YEP*, 9 September 1936). The following quotes are taken from this article.

[481] R. M. Walker claimed that prior to the Nazi take-over "the provincial shows and, to a large extent, the Berlin ones also, were of the lowest and most suggestive type. Whatever views one may hold with regard to Nazi politics, it is generally acknowledged that Hitler, since he rose to power, has 'cleaned up' many demoralising and immoral institutions which formerly existed in Germany." (*YEP*, 16 September 1936). E. G. Brown added that Elizabeth Scott was "doubtless [...] aware that in the years succeeding the war, the moral tone of the German theatre was distinctly bad. Not only was pornography and obscenity the order of the day on the stage, but literature was debased and the standards of the gutter were set. From my own observations this was true, particularly in the larger towns. [...] I have the greatest admiration for Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime. I am not ashamed to proclaim it." (*YEP*, 16 September 1936). Further evidence of this admiration is an article quoting Rev. James Duncan, who had worked at the English church in Bad Nauheim between 1932 and 1935. In his book What I Saw in Germany Duncan wrote that "the progress made by Germany since Hitler gained power has amazed me. In three years a stricken and dejected country has risen to a new power and hopefulness. There has been a social and political resurrection. [...] The future is bright with promise. Unemployment is decreasing, industry is developing, unity of purpose has been achieved, and all classes are welded in service and sacrifice for the Fatherland". Duncan assured readers that Hitler's "desire for peace rings true" (*YEP*, 11 September 1936). The "social experiment", the quick reduction of unemployment, the creation of a political euphoria and people's solidarity, the compulsory work service and the building of the motorways received positive assessments from many British tourists visiting Nazi Germany. Contemporary statements show that the visitors generally grossly under- estimated the dangers of Nazi Germany's policies (see Schwarz, Angela. Die Reise ins Dritte Reich. Britische Augenzeugenberichte im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland (1933-1939). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993. 189-261). Home Intelligence reports show that anti-Semitism, too, was wide-spread and even increased during the war (see PRO. Ministry of Information. INF 1/292 (part 3). Home Intelligence Daily Reports. 6 May 1943).

exceptional or something peculiar to York. In an article for the Theatre World Eric Johns praised the working conditions at German theatres.[482] Leading politicians expressed a similar admiration for the "new" Germany. After a visit to the country ex-Prime Minister Lloyd George admitted that "Hitler is one of the greatest of the many great men I have ever met".[483] The British ambassador in Berlin, Neville Henderson, demanded that the British public "paid more attention to the great social experiment which was being tried out in Germany" as there were "many things in the Nazi organisation and social institutions [...], which we might study and adapt to our own use with great profit".[484] The Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax liked Goebbels and enjoyed Göring's "picturesque and arresting figure",[485] and even the Labour MP Stafford Cripps declared "that although defeat by Germany would be 'a disaster' for capitalists it would be no 'bad thing for the British working classes'".[486]
Regarding anti- Nazi plays the Foreign Office tried to enforce a strict ban, which the Lord Chamberlain was happy to apply as it supposedly corresponded to one of the central ideas of British theatrical censorship: the protection of foreign heads of state. Although neither the Foreign Secretary nor the Lord Chamberlain could be accused of being pro- Nazi, Goebbels was certainly pleased with the way British censorship worked.

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[482] Johns, Eric. "The Actor in Germany." Theatre World November 1936: 227. Eric Johns claimed that "the English actor would be only too pleased to change places with his German fellow- artist, who has a much easier and happier existence". He praised a system in which "the actor, instead of being beaten down to the lowest possible salary by an independent manager, becomes almost a Civil Servant, an employee of the State at a fixed salary. [...] The actor is engaged in the Autumn for one year with six weeks' holiday for which he is paid." Johns was equally impressed by the German pension system as "all stage artists [...] contribute towards a State fund which pays out regular pensions on retirement". The fact that actors "receive an annual salary, and are not faced with possible unemployment five or six times a year, means that they can concentrate on their work with a settled mind".

[483] After having met Hitler on his visit to Germany Lloyd George claimed that "I have never seen a happier people than the Germans" and claimed that "Germany does not want war. Hitler does not want war" (*YEP*, 21 September 1936).

[484] Henderson, Neville. Failure of a Mission. Berlin 1937-1939. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1940. 23-24. As an example of the regime's "achievements" Henderson quoted the labour camps, which "serve none but useful purposes. In them not only are there no class distinctions, but there is, on the contrary, an opportunity for better understanding between the classes". Henderson was equally impressed by the beneficial nature of "Strength through Joy", which was "socialist" rather than "nationalist", and admired the restored German self-respect and the "recreated orderliness". Although Henderson recognised the loss of personal liberty he concluded that "some sort of an operation had been necessary" and acknowledged the "amazing power of organisation, thoroughness, and discipline of the German nation" – thanks "to Hitler's own personal inspiration" (ibid. 39/40).

[485] Lord Birkenhead as quoted in Brendon, Piers. The Dark Valley. A Panorama of the 1930s. London: Cape, 2000. 525.

[486] The Times, 15 November 1936.

When Bernard Shaw, for example, asked to apply some changes to his satire Geneva, notably to rename "Battler" into "Hitler" and let him appear in Nazi uniform, the censor declined.[487] German officials applauded the decision because it meant that Battler would not be played "in der Maske des Führers".[488] It was noted with satisfaction that the Lord Chamberlain always insisted on not offending German sentiments in any way – even after the war had started.

The censor, however, went even further. The Lord Chamberlain not only regularly consulted the German embassy in London before awarding a licence but also acted according to their wishes regarding censoring or even banning a play.[489] Although the Germans even complained about little comic turns in obscure revues and certainly started to get on their nerves, the Foreign Office complied with German requests whenever they could.[490]

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[487] As quoted in the Stockholm newspaper Aftonbladet on 28 September 1939 (for the German translation see BArch, R55/20217, Bl.8). At about the same time Shaw also intended to change the Italian part of Geneva. In a letter to the Foreign Office on 2 October 1939 Major Gordon of the Lord Chamberlain's Office enquired whether the changes proposed by Shaw would meet with the Foreign Office's approval. In his reply two days later Andrew Noble made it clear that "we do not at all like the direct reference to Italy's betrayal of the Axis. It is not yet absolutely certain that Signor Mussolini will definitely betray his ally [...]. It seems to us that the passage would lose little of its force if Mr. Shaw cut out from 'Bardo: are you going to betray me?' down to 'I cannot be ungrateful to either of them' and re-wrote the next phrase to read 'Well, I can do without you'." These changes were approved by the censor who required the producer "to make the necessary alterations", as Gordon was "glad to be able to tell" Noble on 10 October 1939 (see PRO. Foreign Office. FO 371/23829 Political-Southern-Italy 1939. 285-288).

[488] Letter written by Herr von Selzam of the German embassy in The Hague on 11 November 1939. With a similar excitement Selzam quoted the Daily Telegraph who had reported that Elmar Rice's Judgement Day, which dramatised the Reichstag trial, had been prohibited as well (BArch, R55/20217, Bl.24).

[489] See Selzam letter quoted above (ibid.).

[490] A typical example of a complaint was a letter by Fritz Randolph of the German embassy from January 1938 about a satirical scene in a variety programme at Shepherd's Bush Variety Theatre, in which Henry Hall's "Fun Racqueteers" ridiculed the Hitler salute by comparing it a dog lifting his leg (see PRO. Foreign Office. FO 371/21701 Political-Central-Germany 1938. Anti- Nazi Plays. 1-3).
A few months later the German Embassy complained at the Foreign Office about a nativity play staged in a church at Denton near Manchester, in which Herod would be dressed as Hitler (see ibid., 89-92).
In May 1938 the Foreign Office made it clear that they did not want to see the play Lorelei, which bore on the Nazi regime, produced "as the Germans are very touchy about any criticism of Herr Hitler, because he is head of the state. Herr Goebbels was insistent on this in his conversation with Lord Halifax" (ibid. 18-24, quote by Roberts on page 19).
At the turn of the year 1938/39, however, the discussion about a possible lifting of the ban on anti- Nazi plays intensified. Norman Gwatkin from the Lord Chamberlain's office stated that "writers could not understand why their plays, many of which dealt with problems such as that of the anti- Jewish pogroms, should be held up". Gwatkin felt that since the German attitude towards Britain had changed after Munich and particularly because of the pogroms, censorship policy should be altered. In January 1939, however, the Foreign Office made it clear that they did not want to see the ban on anti- Nazi plays lifted (see ibid., 84-88). Only from early 1940 did the theatres seem to have more freedom to produce plays such as the Pantomime Who's Taking Liberty, which was staged in January at the Whitehall Theatre. It was a variation of the Cinderella theme, brought into line with the European situation, and featured as the Ugly Governesses Gretchen Hitler and Katinka Stalin (see Fairweather, David. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World January 1940: 7).

We can conclude, therefore, that the high number of works by Jewish playwrights and composers on the York stage was not part of a political programme directed at Nazi Germany. On the contrary, until the late 1930s we find many examples of sympathy for Nazi Germany in Britain.[491] A definite answer to our question, however, is difficult to offer. One possible explanation might be that agents were forced to turn to other countries after the works of their Jewish clients had been barred from production in Germany. It might have been in this context that they increasingly offered their plays to British stages.

These are, however, not the only parallels between the programmes in York and Münster during the late 1930s. Plays set in the region, which frequently made use of dialect, were successful in both cities. Priestley, for example, enjoyed an increasing popularity and his Yorkshire comedies were as successful as the Westphalian dialect plays in Münster, which were performed by the Low German Stage.[492] York was no exception in this respect as many of the new repertory theatres reflected a newly found regional or local identity in their programmes.[493]

Apart from these points of contact, however, the general outlook of the Theatre Royal's repertoire had become clearly different from the Städtische Bühnen from the early 1930s. Contemporary comedies reigned supreme with an average share in the programmes of around 80%. Classical drama and modern classics had almost disappeared from the bill and touring opera companies were not invited any more after 1934.[494] Additionally the Theatre Royal's financial situation became increasingly

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[491] Some historians have claimed that public opinion concerning Nazi Germany did not change until autumn 1940. Ian McLaine assumed that after the Italian declaration of war in June 1940 it was Italy rather than Germany which earned the anger of the British. He argued that "not until September 1940 were there any reports of bitterness against the Germans, and even then they were said to have been aroused not by Nazi ideology or German victories in Europe but by direct air attacks on Britain" (Mc Laine, Ian. Ministry of Morale. Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II. London: Allen & Unwin, 1979. 143. See also Reid, Gannon Franklin. The British Press and Germany 1936-1939. Oxford: Clarendon, 1971).

[492] Especially When We Are Married, which was also performed as part of the "Holidays-at-Home"-programme in 1942.

[493] Local plays such as Without the Prince by the Harrogate author Philip King in 1939 regularly became favourites with audiences. Other local successes included Murder at the Ministry by the Harrogate authors Faulkland Carey and A. Thompson in 1943, and Burning Gold by the same playwrights in 1944.

[494] See Diagram II. Hutchison himself admitted a few years later that Shakespeare's "commercial possibilities" were low. He seemed to speak of himself, too, when he claimed that "few managers seem to have the courage [...] to present Shakespeare on the stage" (Hutchison, *Masquerade,* 141).
York was, of course, no exception regarding the choice of repertoire. Other provincial theatres presented a similar fare (see, for example, Wyndham Goldie, Grace. The Liverpool Repertory Theatre 1911-1934. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1935. 135-189, 270-271; Seed, T. Alec. The Sheffield Repertory Theatre. A History. Sheffield: Sheffield Repertory Company, 1959. 73-95; Dyas, Aubrey. Adventure in

difficult and eventually Percy Hutchison had to quit. As mentioned before, it was especially the competition from the highly popular cinema which proved fatal.[495] An indication of the problems is the overall number of productions at the theatre which sank from over 70 in the mid- 1920s to below 40 in 1933.[496]

It is interesting to note, and probably runs counter to expectations, that the differences between the Städtische Bühnen and the Theatre Royal even increased after the "Citizens' Theatre" had been founded in 1935. Although the idea of a civic theatre run on non-profit lines corresponded to the way German provincial theatres were perceived and organised, the repertoire became increasingly different. The fact that touring companies did not come to York any more resulted in the loss of classical and operatic productions. During the 1937 season, for example, 47 out of 48 productions were contemporary comedies including musical comedies, thrillers, and farces. And in 1938, apart from two exceptions, none of the works produced in York were ever staged in Münster.[497] At the end of the 1930s contemporary comedies reached a share of over 90% in the repertoire with the comedy- thriller the "most popular category of all".[498]

Repertory. Northampton Repertory Theatre 1927-48. Northampton: Northampton Repertory Players, 1948. 192-216; Gillett, Edward, Kenneth A. Mac Mahon. A History of Hull. 2nd ext. ed. Hull: Hull University Press, 1990. 436).
In 1934 Chisholm stated that "the British playgoer likes an hilarious farce which will make him laugh all night; he loves a good thriller; and she is always prepared to accept a sentimental comedy if the sentiment be treacly enough" (see Chisholm, *Repertory*, 119).

[495] In 1936 York had an average weekly cinema attendance of 45,000 with a maximum weekly attendance of about 160,000. The usual practice was four performances each day. With the new cinemas the "Odeon" on Blossom Street and the "Regal Cinema" on Piccadilly with 1,448 and 1,833 seats respectively, the possible weekly attendance figure rose to 230,000. The prices charged in York ranged from 6d. to 1/6d. with about 2,100 seats at 6d., 2,400 at 9d., 1,200 at 1/- and 1,200 at 1/6d. (see Borthwick Institute, *Rowntree Papers PP/21*, 31). This price structure means that a visit to the Theatre Royal could be cheaper than a cinema visit as a seat in the gallery cost only 4d. from 1935.

[496] See Diagram I. Other theatres in the region experienced similar difficulties in the early 1930s. The payments and receipts of Huddersfield's Theatre Royal, for example, clearly show that the financial situation became increasingly difficult towards the end of the 1920s when in some seasons only about 40% of the productions showed any profit at all. In 1931/32, for example, the overall profit for the whole year amounted to only £262 (see West Yorkshire Archives Huddersfield. Theatre Royal Records 1901-1936. B/HTR/af/1-17). The town's other major theatre, the Hippodrome, was turned into a cinema in 1930 (see Chadwick, Stanley. Jubilee Presentation. Hippodrome Stage – 1905-1955 – Tudor Screen. Huddersfield: Huddersfield Gazette, 1955. 40).

[497] The exceptions are Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest, which was produced in Münster during the 1925/26 season and Shaw's Mrs Warren's Profession, which, although not presented in Münster, could have been performed there theoretically given the high interest of German audiences in Shaw's oeuvre.

[498] See Programme Notes, 18 September 1939.
One of the events which obviously sums up the differences between German and British provincial theatres in an exemplary way is the biggest event of the 1937 season: the "Coronation Week" in May. The play chosen for this special occasion was the comedy Yellow Sands. The fact that a well-known comedy was chosen to mark an event of national importance and not some nationalistic play or Shakespearean drama would have met with disbelief in Germany. To mark the accession of the throne of Wilhelm II, for example, with a comedy and not a drama by Schiller or Goethe would have been unimaginable. In York the decision was even praised in the local press as it was "very fitting that in Coronation Week York

It was not only the programme of the Citizens' Theatre, however, which increasingly differed from Münster's repertoire, a brief look at the every day running of the company illustrates some major differences, too. It has already been mentioned that the Theatre Royal – much more than the Städtische Bühnen – was forced to position itself in the "entertainment market" and define itself against the competition from the cinema and the music-hall. One way to establish this niche and project a certain image to the public were the Programme Notes, which, therefore, had a quality that went far beyond their function in Münster.[499] Both theatres from around 1920 realised the positive effect a well presented booklet could have on patrons and started to produce Notes in an improved printing quality and layout, on better paper and with a new typeface. The Theatre Royal introduced a new bigger format in April 1920 and extended the number of pages from four to eight. Also, the number of advertisements increased, although the essential information remained in the centre of the page with adverts around it. Hutchison not only used the "programmes for publicity and kept in touch with his audience by reports of his activities and successes in other parts of the globe",[500] they also became increasingly upmarket in order to correspond to a new exclusive claim to distinguish the theatre from other venues. From 1922 the cover of the Notes featured three high- quality photos of characteristic views of York. In 1925 the layout was changed and now showed one photo of the theatre building and another one of Percy Hutchison in his smart naval uniform. To distinguish themselves even more the theatre introduced a Jugendstil- like presentation in 1928 and for a short time even featured drawings on the front cover. In line with the new outlook the size of the Programme Notes improved, too. In 1936 they appeared weekly on 12 pages, featured articles on York's theatre history, pages informing about the "Theatre Talk of To-day" and "What other Repertory Companies are doing", and special features introducing new plays and actors from York's company. At the end of the 1930s the Programme Notes contained much more information than in the 1920s, they were more objective and balanced, without being concentrated on London attractions but also showing an interest in the developments at other repertory theatres in Britain, on the continent, in America and

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Repertory Company should present at the Theatre Royal such an essentially English work as a Devonshire comedy from the pens of Eden and Adelaide Phillpotts" (*YEP*, 11 May 1937).

[499] The main function of Münster's Programme Notes remained information. The Städtische Bühnen did not have to distinguish themselves too much from the cinemas as theatre and cinema were generally regarded as two different art forms with different artistic aims. The public discourse in Münster in the 1920s and 1930s, therefore, never featured discussions about the danger of the "talkies" on a similar scale to that in York.

[500] Rosenfeld, *York Stage*, 320.

even the Soviet Union – an interest which was probably not shared by any other comparable publication in York.

Apart from the Notes, York's whole repertory system differed from Münster's "continental" repertory as each production was only given for one week. This resulted in a strict routine. Each production received 12 performances (twice nightly performances from Monday to Saturday), each performance lasted on average two hours, and "there are approximately four hours daily for four days a week spent in rehearsal of the next week's production, while the dress rehearsal on a Monday takes nearly all day".[501] That was also the reason why Monday audiences were usually smaller than on the other days especially towards the end of the week as this first performance of a new play regularly lacked in quality.[502] This would not have been a problem had the ensemble been bigger than the 15 actors it normally consisted of. Although there were sometimes extra artists engaged on a temporary basis, the small number of regular actors meant that they had to appear on stage almost constantly and time for rehearsals was short. Although the salary in "rep" was not bad,[503] holidays were rare, which meant an additional strain given the fact that a year normally featured 48 weeks of productions.[504]

This system also had an effect on attendances as they could never reach beyond a certain figure per production.[505] Attendances of up to 10,000 people a week were

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[501] See *YEP*, 18 December 1935.

[502] The press regularly featured small hints at how much a certain performance had to make use of the prompter. In December 1944, for example, the Yorkshire Gazette praised the company for their performance of Close Quarters, especially because "on the opening night there was not a single prompt" (*YG*, 1 December 1944). This praise indicates that in fact the prompter on first nights was not normally that quiet. During the course of the week, however, the actors could improve on their performance.

[503] We have no reliable information about salary at the Theatre Royal but, again, Maugham's novel gives us interesting hints. After she had earned £12 a week in a touring company Julia Lambert's weekly salary dropped to £8 as a member of Langton's repertory company at Middlepool. On her renewal of the contract, however, Julia managed to get £15 a week (see Maugham, *Theatre*, 21-23, 48). This pay compared favourably to the average weekly wages in the 1930s, which reached £2.95 in 1938. The majority of British households had an average weekly income of less than £5 (see Bowden, Sue. "The New Consumerism." 20th Century Britain. Economic, Social and Cultural Change. Ed. Paul Johnson. London: Longman, 1994. 255-256).

[504] In contrast to Münster, where a season began in autumn and ended in spring/summer of the following year, a season in York lasted for half a year. In 1939, for example, the repertory company returned from their Christmas holidays on 16 January and performed until 16 July. After a three weeks' holiday they resumed playing on 7 August and were on stage until 31 December.

[505] There is, unfortunately, no statistical information about theatre visits in York. The only two sources regarding numbers are reports in the press and Seebohm Rowntree. From the start of repertory in September 1935 the press reported audience records. At first it was noted that "it seemed a long time ago since so many people were assembled at the Theatre Royal on a Monday night" (*YEP*, 17 September 1935). In November 1937 the press praised the production of Jane Eyre as it "broke all records since the present management took control" (*YEP*, 17 November 1937). And only a few weeks later When Knights

considered a great success.[506] Taking into account the normal run of 12 performances this means that an average of 833 people visited the theatre in a good week, which is a utilisation of 62%.[507] It is difficult, however, to project these figures on the whole season as not all the weeks showed a similar attendance. The figure of 1.5 million patrons, which had allegedly visited the theatre between September 1935 and the end of December 1938, seems exaggerated and simply arose out of a multiplication of the above figure of 10,000 visits per week.[508] Even if we accept these high figures, however, it still seems exaggerated when contemporary commentators claimed "the more popular productions are so well attended that it looks as if they could run for longer than a week".[509] This, in fact, would have been a huge relief not only for the stressed actors but also in financial terms. A fortnightly repertory, however, was only feasible in larger towns. In a nutshell, most of the actors at the Theatre Royal would certainly have loved to change with their Münster counterparts in the late 1930s, who enjoyed a daily change of bill, secure contracts and a relatively high social standing.

It seems as if the musical repertoire in particular highlighted the fundamental differences between the theatres in Münster and York. Both concerning the use of music in the theatre and the sheer scale of resources – in other words regarding quality as well as quantity – the two playhouses seem to have played in two different leagues, and increasingly so with the foundation of Münster's municipal orchestra in 1918. Corresponding to a different attitude towards the arts in general and the expectation that they should be mainly for entertainment in particular, the Theatre Royal mostly

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Were Bold, staged as the last production in 1937, broke "all attendance records for the Theatre Royal since the introduction of the present regime" (*YEP* as quoted in Collection Nellie Woodhouse, Vol. II 1937/38, 149-150).
York's high attendances even aroused the interest of the Theatre World, which stated in 1937 that 12% of the overall population (90,000 at that time) went to see Sweet Aloes. Fearon claimed that this was no exception as "they have increased their audiences week by week" (Fearon, George. "It's a Way They Have in Repertory!" Theatre World September 1937: 108).
The figure of 10,000 appeared for the first time in a newspaper article during the 1938/39 season (article in *YEP* as quoted in Collection Nellie Woodhouse, Vol. III 1938/39, 143-144). After that this "magical" figure repeatedly appeared in Rowntree's publications. He not only stated that after 1936 attendances "grew to an average of 10,000 a week" but also claimed that during the following years up to 1942 there "have been no setbacks, and although the number of cinemas has been increased to ten, with a seating capacity of between 10,000 and 11,000, the weeks in which the theatre has shown a loss have been few" (see Rowntree, Seebohm. "The Municipal Theatre *Can* Be a Success." Local Government Service 22 (1943): 452. See also Rowntree, *Poverty and Progress*, 414-415; Borthwick Institute, *Rowntree Papers PP/21*, 32).

[506] This figure was an improvement in comparison to earlier times. In 1925, for example, the proof for Katinka being an attractive and successful musical comedy was the fact that the production was seen by 8,613 persons during the week.

[507] The theatre seated 1,340 people.

[508] As claimed by the Yorkshire Evening Press in late December 1938 (*YEP* as quoted in Collection Nellie Woodhouse, Vol. III 1938/39, 143-144).

presented a light musical programme. In contrast to Münster, music was an integral part of every performance and both before the show started as well as during the interval, the theatre's own "orchestra" entertained patrons. In what would have appeared to German theatre patrons as degrading, York audiences enjoyed chamber music pieces by Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn while chatting with fellow visitors during the interval.

Apart from that we have to note that the Theatre Royal's limited financial resources meant that the management could only employ a band of about six musicians. By comparison, Münster's municipal orchestra featured 48 full-time musicians and played its own concert programme alongside opera and operetta in the theatre. Although York's band was sometimes "augmented" (and especially announced as such) for musicals, its modest size did certainly not justify the title of "Theatre Royal Orchestra", as it was referred to from early 1926 onwards. We also have to note that the performances seem to have lacked the quality of those by the professionally trained musicians in Münster. To make matters worse, the economic problems of the early 1930s resulted in the unpopular move to scrap the orchestra altogether in favour of a gramophone. The management of the new repertory company, however, later reinstated the band, because live music was so popular, and from 1936 the "Repertory Trio" entertained the audience with three or four different tunes a night.[510] This trio was extended to the "Repertory Quartette" in 1938 until it was further enlarged to become the "New Repertory Sextette" in 1939.[511] These rather unfortunate conditions and the fact that financial pressures were high throughout the 1930s also meant that patrons missed out on opera productions. With the introduction of the repertory company in 1935 the opera repertoire merely consisted of the annual production of the "York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society" – surely not comparable to the performances of the O'Mara, D'Oyly Carte and Carl Rosa opera companies, who had presented their operatic repertoire in one-week visits regularly during the 1920s. For York to have its own opera company, however, was beyond anyone's wildest dreams. But even if the visiting opera companies had continued to come to York they would not in any way have been able to compete with Niedecken-Gebhardt's lavish productions. The fact that Wagner's complete "Ring" cycle was produced in Münster as early as in 1913 would certainly have raised more than one eye-brow in York – had they known about it.

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[509] See Yorkshire Post. 14 June 1943.
[510] See Rosenfeld, *York Theatre*, 330-332.
[511] Despite the enlargement of the band musical comedies remained difficult to stage, a fact patrons complained about publicly in various press articles in November 1937.

The outbreak of the war, however, changed the situation completely, and York profited immediately from the introduction of government subsidies to the arts. After having been absent from York's stage for seven years, opera returned to the Theatre Royal in 1942 with performances by companies backed by CEMA. D'Oyly Carte performed their Gilbert and Sullivan bill again and Sadler's Wells gave their debut in York with a programme of the great opera classics.[512] The return of these national institutions was part of a general revival of an art form which underwent substantial changes during the war. It was not only the introduction of state subsidies but also the steady influx of high-profile émigré composers and musicians from which British musical life profited considerably.[513]

Before the war opera had only featured as a rare and rather expensive entertainment for select audiences without being regarded as a theatrical medium worthy of any serious attention.[514] On top of that, the operas given at Covent Garden were sung in their original language, with foreign singers engaged for the occasion from opera houses all over the world. Opera had no permanent home, no state subsidies, no continuity of tradition.[515] Training for opera singers was virtually non-existent and, therefore, their acting was of a poor standard – or, frankly, just "distressingly bad".[516] The British perception of opera remained essentially rooted in the pre- Wagnerian concept that the drama existed primarily as a vehicle for the singer.[517] It was regarded as a rather un-

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[512] Even Huddersfield – claimed by many to be an un-theatrical town – was visited by D'Oyly Carte again in 1941 after "a lapse of fifteen years". Sadler's Wells came, too, as did the Anglo- Polish Ballet (see Chadwick, Stanley. Theatre Royal. The Romance of the Huddersfield Stage (with a complete record of the famous Wareing International Repertory Seasons). With a foreword by Ernest Woodhead. Huddersfield: Advertiser Press, 1941. 37).

[513] One of the outstanding examples is the contribution of refugee music publishers who transformed London into the acknowledged publishing centre of the world (see Levi, Erik. "The German-Jewish Contribution to Musical Life in Britain". Second Chance. Two Centuries of German-speaking Jews in the United Kingdom. Ed. Werner Mosse et. al. Tübingen: Mohr, 1991. 295).
The foundation of the Glyndebourne Festival Theatre by two eminent exponents of German music theatre, Fritz Busch and Carl Ebert, was another important contribution, not only because Glyndebourne's management lay firmly in German hands with collaborators such as Rudolf Bing, Hans Oppenheim, and Berthold Goldschmidt (see Berghaus, Günter. "The Émigrés from Nazi Germany and their Contribution to the British Theatrical Scene". Second Chance. Two Centuries of German- Speaking Jews in the United Kingdom. Ed. Werner Mosse et. al. Tübingen: Mohr, 1991. 311-312). From the start in 1934 Glyndebourne's opera productions were immensely successful and influential. In contrast to British opera productions Glyndebourne allowed for thorough rehearsals, concentrated on ensemble spirit and a new acting style and aimed at the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Even the inauguration of the Edinburgh Festival in 1949 was linked to the influence of German émigrés (see Berghaus, *Émigrés*, 313).

[514] One of the reasons for this phenomenon might have been that since the times of Purcell and Händel hardly any British opera of international significance had been written and the fare offered was almost exclusively Italian and German.

[515] See Berghaus, *Émigrés*, 297-314.

[516] See Marshall, Norman. The Other Theatre. London: John Lehmann, 1947. 208. As a result opera singers mostly looked like "oratorio singers in fancy dress".

[517] See Levi, Erik. "Carl Ebert, Glyndebourne and the Regeneration of British Opera." Berghaus, Günther, ed. Theatre and Film in Exile. German Artists in Britain, 1933-1945. Oxford: Berg, 1989. 180.

British musical exercise for a well-to-do minority primarily seen as pure entertainment. The idea that opera might be concerned with matters of political, social and ethical significance simply did not exist. It is certainly no coincidence, therefore, that before the war Sadler's Wells failed to achieve a standard anywhere near the one maintained in the opera houses of other great capitals, or even in the smaller municipal venues on the continent.[518] Against this background is even more astonishing how quickly the situation changed. Within five years the Sadler's Wells opera company had established itself as the country's leading ensemble, opera was as popular as ever and played to packed houses and most of the standard operas had been translated and were now available in "good, lively English which is both actable and singable".[519] Most of the members of the Sadler's Wells opera company, too, were British now and formed a permanent troupe.[520] Suddenly there were even plans by CEMA to reclaim the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as the national centre for opera and ballet.[521]

York audiences took part in this development and celebrated the return of opera to the Theatre Royal enthusiastically.[522] It is interesting to note in this context that audiences especially welcomed the English translations.[523] The 1943 visit of Sadler's Wells, for example, featured The Marriage of Figaro with a new libretto by E. J. Dent. The performance was accompanied by a special note informing theatre patrons that the opera would be sung entirely in English. The case of Mozart is especially interesting because as much as the Nazis tried to present Mozart as a German composer, British and American commentators laid stress on the fact that he should not be seen as such.[524] Mozart was not the only composer of operas, however, whose works were used in the propaganda war. When D'Oyly Carte presented Gilbert and Sullivan's "Japanese" opera The Mikado at the Theatre Royal, the press was quick to praise English audiences for their ability to appreciate a comic opera set in an enemy country.[525] The same could be

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[518] See Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 209.
[519] See ibid.
[520] See Myers, *Music Since 1939*, 117-118.
[521] See CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 5-6, 9.
[522] In 1942 the Yorkshire Gazette praised Sadler's Wells for "a memorable operatic week, with the theatre deservedly crowded at all performances" (*YG*, 23 January 1942). A year later D'Oyly Carte were "received by crowded houses" (*YG*, 5 February 1943).
[523] The press praised the "policy of the Wells to present opera in English in first- class translations" (*YG*, 22 January 1943).
[524] In an article on The Marriage of Figaro the Theatre Arts commentator urged audiences not to see it as a German piece, as "this German opera by the Austrian Mozart was composed to a libretto by a Venetian Jew [...] Lorenzo da Ponte. Da Ponte's source for the libretto was the most French of comedies – Beaumarchais' *Barbier de Seville*, and the locale was Spain" (Theatre Arts 24 (1940): 228).
[525] "An amazing race, the English. While Hitler and his gang feed 'offending literature' to the flames, we are rational enough to sit back comfortably in our theatres and see depicted on the screen and stage

claimed for the continuing popularity of the music of German and Austrian composers in general, which remained at the heart of the musical repertoire. The most popular pieces of the lunchtime concerts in London's National Gallery, for example, had been composed by Beethoven, Bach and Mozart.[526] And in York works by German speaking composers continued to be performed not only in the Theatre Royal but at other venues, too. In July 1944 the German born musician Paul Steinitz conducted Beethoven's fifth symphony and Brahms' German Requiem in front of a large audience.[527] This concert also illustrates that provincial audiences profited from the presence of German émigré artists in Britain as well. The most striking example of this fact is probably the above mentioned performance of Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro, which was presented in a new production by Kurt Jooss.

Probably the biggest difference between pre-war and post-war repertoires at British provincial theatres is linked to the person of Kurt Jooss, too: dance and ballet. Whereas York audiences had been treated to the odd week of dance during the 1920s – entirely presented by the Russian dancer Lydia Kyasht – provincial audiences now experienced

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dramas and comic operas of the very enemy we are fighting in this war. But we enjoyed Gilbert and Sullivan's 'The Mikado' long before the war, and although it has to do with 'those nasty little men', we can still reel in its jollity as was evidenced at the Theatre Royal" (*YEP*, 2 February 1943).

[526] See Myers, *Music Since 1939*, 116. It is interesting to note that the government quickly realised the propagandistic value of Myra Hess' concerts in the National Gallery. In a letter from May 1941 the Gallery asked the Treasury whether they were prepared to pay £160 to make the place safer and thereby enable the concerts to continue. After Myra Hess had held her first concerts under the dome and used to get about a thousand people on good days, daytime air raids forced her to go down to a room in the basement, which only held 400 and meant that she incurred losses. The only possible chance to move the concerts upstairs again was to make the place safer for the audience in case glass fell down. The Gallery stressed that they had the support of George Gater, the Minister of Home Security, to remove the inner of the two layers of glass and put wire netting underneath to prevent the danger of falling glass. The Gallery wanted this work not only carried out for the possible venue but also for six further galleries, which amounted to costs of £160. Their best argument, however, featured at the end of the letter as "Miss Hess makes a great point of the propaganda value of the concerts, and Sir Kenneth Clark, who was instrumental in getting them started in the Gallery, writes from the Ministry of Information to support their going upstairs. One argument is that they are the main instance of cultural activities continuing unbroken in war-time London and another, that this fact being known in America produces considerable effect over there" (PRO. Home Office. HO 186 Air Raid Precautions. HO 186/466 Entertainment (1941). Letter by D. L. M. (National Gallery) to H. B. Usher (Treasury Chambers). 2 May 1941).
The money was not only granted a few days later and work started immediately, it was also filmed for a Ministry of Information propaganda film (see ibid. Letter by M. W. Bennitt of H.M. Office of Works to P. Hayman in the Ministry of Home Security. 15 May 1941).

[527] See *YEP*, 6 July 1944. Although the article does not say so we can assume that the German Requiem was sung in English bearing in mind the translation of Mozart operas. Paul Steinitz also played an organ recital in the Minster. He later asked the City Council "for assistance in connection with his railway fare, he having had to travel from Worcester to York for the recital. It was agreed he should be paid his railway fare of £1.10.4" (York City Archives. BC 81. Corporation of York. Entertainments Committee-Minutes. 1944-1946. Meeting of 14th September, 1944. 38). It seems fair to assume that such an application would have received a negative answer before the war.

serious ballet.[528] For the first time in York's history, classical ballet was performed regularly at the Theatre Royal. The prestigious Sadler's Wells Ballet Company, which was soon regarded as Britain's national ballet company, performed its London programme with its London company (including their stars Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann) and took York by storm.[529] Already on their first visit to York in December 1942 Sadler's Wells Ballet played to "very large" audiences.[530] And after Christmas 1944 ballet even appeared in repertoire for two weeks. This prestigious "slot" especially makes clear how much had changed at the Theatre Royal. It is hardly imaginable that "arty" and "elitist" ballet would have found an audience before the war – now it played to capacity houses for two weeks. This change of attitude of both the audience and the management illustrates how the image of the theatre changed from a place of entertainment into a cultural institution.[531] This attitude and the fact that until the end of the war York patrons enjoyed an average of eight operas and seven ballet pieces each season is an interesting parallel to the situation in Münster.

The revival of established art forms, of examples of "high culture", was by no means limited to opera and ballet. Classical drama and modern classics received a similar revival after they had been virtually neglected during the preceding decades. Between the wars the only production of serious continental drama in the West End was Ibsen's A Doll's House at the Playhouse.[532] One of the greatest stars of his time, Gerald du Maurier, answered the question on why he would not play Richard III with the remark that "my audience would find my appearance in such a play embarrassing".[533] The "gentlemen actors" of the 1920s were not expected to "inflict" anything intellectual on their loyal followers.[534] Although the situation changed slightly from the mid- 1930s

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[528] In contrast to the ballet performances presented during the war Kyasht's dance shows of the late 1920s entitled Gala Nights or Piccadilly Cabaret had been characterised by a note of light entertainment. In total Kyasht visited the Theatre Royal five times between 1927 and 1933 (see Appendix).

[529] See Williamson, Audrey. "Vic- Wells: The English National Ballet?" Theatre World December 1942: 30, 33. In February 1945 ballet attendances were so high that they even set up a record (*YH*, 24 February 1945).

[530] In 1944 the press praised performances as "outstanding" and "high artistry" (*YEP*, 3 January 1945). The Herald added that "there is no doubt from the tremendous ovation at each performance, that local audiences have appreciated immensely the work of the company" (*YH*, 6 January 1945).

[531] A change which, according to the government, was a typical phenomenon of the war. Government representatives claimed that present audiences "from the theatre at its best [...] seek something of deeper significance" (Bulletin from Britain. No. 26. 26 February 1941. 1).

[532] See Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 12.

[533] Quoted in Morley, *John G*, 49.

[534] Interesting insights into common attitudes regarding Shakespeare can also be gathered from Maugham's Theatre novel. Although the protagonist, Julia Lambert, is a famous and experienced actress she has only once played a Shakespearean part herself, without much success though. Her husband, Michael Gosselyn, toured in Benson's Shakespearean company but came to the conclusion "that

and especially Shakespeare received increasing attention, this trend was largely limited to Lilian Baylis' Old Vic and theatres at the fringe.[535] We also have to note that despite this renewed interest, the theatre organisation did not change fundamentally. The productions still had to make a profit and rehearsal time was exceedingly short.[536] When John Gielgud wanted to establish his own company with a classical repertoire on Shaftesbury Avenue, this was seen as revolutionary and unrealistic. The general feeling in the 1930s was that "this kind of highbrow thing was best left to occasional London visits by the Comédie Française".[537] Even the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre struggled. After it had burned to the ground it took six years to rebuild it, and even when the new "improved" theatre opened in 1932 there was a constant lack of rehearsal time as a repertoire of eight plays was given eight weeks' rehearsal; only six days of rehearsal for each play.[538]

York's Theatre Royal reflected this trend perfectly. Until the end of the First World War Shakespeare had only "made but infrequent appearances on the York stage".[539] And although Percy Hutchison tried to improve on that and gave at least some space to the classics during the 1920s – in 1926 audiences were even presented with one week of Shakespeare and another of Shaw repertory – they disappeared again soon.[540]

The general attitude towards the classics changed radically after the outbreak of the Second World War. Suddenly it was felt that they could mark a return to the roots of Britain's great theatrical past, make people aware of their national heritage and, therefore, play an important role in the war effort. In contrast to the First World War, which, as many commentators claimed, had been characterised by cheap entertainment and pointless farces, critics and officials were anxious to see dramatic standards at the

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Shakespeare would get him nowhere [...] if he wanted to become a leading actor" (see Maugham, *Theatre*, 14-15). The ignorance towards Shakespeare also becomes obvious in Julia's future plans. Despite her lack of experience she contemplated playing Hamlet as "Siddons and Sarah Bernhardt played him. I've got better legs than any of the men I've seen in the part". The only problem was, of course, "that bloody blank verse" (ibid., 263).

[535] One of the new developments was Shakespeare in open-air (see, for example, Disher, Willson. "Back to Bankside. An Appreciation of Robert Atkins." Theatre World September 1937: 134, 147).

[536] When Gielgud, for example, produced his hugely successful 1934 Hamlet he was offered the "generous" rehearsal period of four weeks (see Morley, *John G*, 111). It is interesting to note that this production was a rare occasion of making a profit with a classical play. Profits rose to £30,000 and the production ran for a record-breaking 155 performances. Shortly afterwards Romeo and Juliet with both Olivier and Gielgud in the cast ran for 189 performances (see Morley, *John G*, 117, 124).

[537] Morley, *John G*, 151.

[538] See Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 181. After having incurred losses during the 1930s the theatre made profits again from 1941 as attendances rose. The surplus even reached record figures with £22,945 in 1944. In 1945 the theatre's investments totalled £206,860 (see ibid., 182-183).

[539] Rosenfeld, *York Stage*, 312.

highest possible level now.[541] In 1940 London Donald Wolfit presented a series of highly popular lunch-time performances of Shakespeare, and the Old Vic company played King Lear and The Tempest to capacity.[542] Suddenly, even rarely performed Restoration plays received glittering revivals. The 1943 "Festival of English Comedy" proved to be one of the highlights of the season, and William Congreve's Love for Love was even one of the biggest overall successes of wartime theatre.[543] Plays which had been regarded as "dated" and out of step with contemporary taste returned to the stages in numbers now.

One could argue that a change of character in the theatre programmes is nothing extraordinary and that the representation of war or a stronger link between politics and theatre becomes apparent in every military conflict. And indeed, a close look at the Theatre Royal's repertoire shows that this link has had a long tradition. During the Napoleonic Wars, for example, York's programmes featured patriotic songs and addresses, "military hornpipes", special events such as the recitation of The Soldier's Grave, to the Memory of Lieutenant General Sir John Moore, who had led the British force at Corunna in January 1809, or the Pantomime Harlequin's Invasion with a "Representation of A Sea Fight between the French and the English" in April 1809.[544] During the Boer War we find a similar picture. In 1900 alone the Theatre Royal produced such propagandistic military plays as Death or Glory Boys, The Victoria Cross, Bootle's Baby-A Story of the Scarlet Lancers, and Soldiers of the Queen, which

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[540] In 1934 Cecil Chisholm summed up the situation at provincial theatres in stating that "Shakespeare is always a difficulty" (Chisholm, *Repertory*, 126, 129).

[541] Robert Speaight claimed that the war marked a "popular return to the classics, in which Sir Laurence Olivier's film version of Henry V perhaps took pride of place". Speaight proudly added that the mistakes of the First World War were not being repeated in the Second, because "commercial standards never forced the level down to that of 1914-1918" (see Speaight, *Drama Since 1939*, 29).

[542] Although the dressing-rooms were bombed and the costumes in them destroyed, Wolfit's company continued to play one hour excerpts from Shakespeare for more than a hundred performances to an average audience of four hundred people a day (see Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 133).
The Old Vic productions featured many stars including John Gielgud who were "appearing for next to nothing at the Old Vic because they realize that the battle of the Old Vic is one we cannot afford to lose" (Farjeon, Herbert. The Shakespearean Stage. Dramatic Criticisms. London: Hutchinson, 1948. 161-162). It is interesting to note that this battle had become more than just a struggle for the continuing flourishing of the playhouse. From the early days of the war the Old Vic had increasingly developed into a substitute for the non- existent National Theatre. The battle, which was "fought" with Shakespeare, was also about defending Britain's cultural heritage in total war. The Theatre World praised this "fight" of the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells as during "what must have been the theatres' two most difficult years these great artists have served the cause of culture in this country with unremitting energy and self-sacrifice. It is an amazing story, and one that will live in the annals of the English theatre for all time" ("War-time Story of the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells Companies." Theatre World November 1941: 41).

[543] The acclaimed "Festival of English Comedy" also coincided with the Arts Theatre's most successful year, which saw its membership rise to 10,000 (see Trewin, Wendy and J. C. The Arts Theatre, London. 1927-1981. London: Society for Theatre Research, 1986. 16-17).

[544] See Fitzsimmons, *Theatre Royal*, 180.

mirrored and fostered nationalist sentiments. The immediate impact of the First World War on the programmes has already been mentioned above in connection with the foreign influence and anti- German propaganda. More than ever before the theatre was affected by a conflict and was eager to contribute to the national cause. In autumn 1916, for example, the Theatre Royal presented a French Entente Cordiale revue, it produced countless spy comedies and war revues and featured many military command nights. Soldiers were admitted at reduced prices, and the theatre organised a serious of performances in aid of war charities. Against the background of this obviously total commitment many commentators have claimed that the British theatre programmes during the Second World War were notably free of any propaganda and war plays.[545] Germany, by contrast, seemed an altogether more likely place for anti-British propaganda in the theatre. Interestingly, however, the contrary is the case: whereas Münster did not produce a single anti-British propaganda play during the war, the share of plays with a distinct anti-German notion reached 13.5% in the Theatre Royal's 1944 programme.[546] Spy comedies, war plays and variety shows reached the stage, plays about Nazi agents entering Britain, French resistance activists and the expected invasion. During "York Warship Week" in April 1942 the Theatre Royal housed a special show on "Arethusa Day (Women's Day)" with an array of nationalistic dramatic and musical performances. The Repertory Company contributed a production of Arthur Jagger's "burlesque" Arms and the Maid, and the whole event ended with a "tableau" entitled Rule Britannia.[547] At the same time – and corresponding to Germany – propaganda for the war and against Nazi Germany was not only presented in straight propaganda drama but also in comedies and revues. The fact that the Theatre Royal marked the 1937 coronation of George VI, for example, with the Phillpotts' comedy Yellow Sands already indicated that the theatre would not only use plays like Watch on the Rhine to foster national morale. Corresponding to their enormous success contemporary comedies, with their funny lines and witty conversations, were increasingly used to put across nationalist ideas. Besides, we have to be aware of the fact that even seemingly non- political plays acquire an increased political quality in war-times. The escapism offered by this fare proved of high importance as it let people

[545] See, for example, Noble, *British Theatre*, 169-173. Instead the theatre world was praised for the fact that it "withstood the shock of events even better than it had done in 1914. Between 4 August 1914 and Christmas of that year sixteen new plays were produced; of these only six were still running in January 1915. But in the last four months of 1939 there were at least thirty-three major productions, of which twenty-nine were still playing at the beginning of 1940" (Hobson, *Theatre in Britain*, 117).
[546] See below for details.
[547] See Theatre Royal Programme Notes, 17 February 1942.

forget not only about the hardships of war, but also about present social problems. In doing so it boosted morale, which was one of the central concerns, for in war "the thing that counts is national morale".[548] On the whole it has been seen that although not featuring as prominently as during the First World War, the share of anti-German plays was considerable.[549]

What constituted the new quality of the Second World War, however, was the increasing involvement of the government in matters theatrical, which for the first time in British history went far beyond the level of general interest. This new policy had an immediate impact on the York stage.[550] Suddenly audiences enjoyed performances with West End stars like Marie Tempest, John Gielgud, Michael Redgrave, Emlyn Williams, and, of course, the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells companies on their regular tours.[551] More importantly the Theatre Royal's own repertoire not only became increasingly nationalistic but also – corresponding to the changed attitude of the state – more educational, with strong emphasis laid on Britain's great dramatic past. Elizabethan drama and Restoration comedies, revivals of Sheridan, Jonson and Vanbrugh, dramatic adaptations of Bronte novels, modern classics by Pinero, Wilde and Shaw were performed alongside old favourites such as 1066 And All That. Suddenly the Theatre Royal even presented modern European classics which it had never dared to do before. The productions of plays by Ibsen and Pirandello clearly have to be seen as part of this new educational concept. And it is interesting to note that this new concept worked perfectly. Ibsen's Hedda Gabler, which received its first production in York in April 1944, was the best- seller of that season.

Theatre during the Second World War also illustrated how quickly repertoires reacted to changes in the general political atmosphere, highlighted in particular by the sudden interest in the dramatic output of the Soviet Union. After Germany had attacked Russia in June 1941 a wave of public support ran through Britain and Russian plays such as Valentin Katayev's Squaring the Circle, Afinogenev's Distant Point and the musical

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[548] Hobson, *Theatre in Britain*, 80. Hobson added that "there is something to be said for frivolity, even though it left the great economic and political problems of the day undiscussed. Its escapism did much to keep the British nation fairly sane, just as A Midsummer Night's Dream's escapism had done for the country in the darkening years after the defeat of the Armada" (ibid.).

[549] Contemporary commentators noted that war plays "were all the rage in the autumn of 1942" with the most successful being The Morning Star, Flare Path and Escort (see Shellard, *Harold Hobson*, 54-55). Out of 30 London shows running in October 1942 six were war plays (see Theatre Arts 26 (1942): 670).

[550] Hobson claimed that the foundation of CEMA provided a "boost to repertory theatre in Britain" (qtd. Shellard, *Harold Hobson*, 40).

[551] York audiences immediately realised that to see such an array of stars on their local stage was their chance of a lifetime, which resulted in "full houses all the week" (see, for example, *YG*, 5 January 1940).

Sorotchinski Fair were produced in the West End.[552] Two years later the Old Vic produced Konstantin Simonov's The Russians and contemporary Soviet drama reached the York stage.[553] At this point the comparative aspect of this study becomes particularly interesting as German provincial theatres showed a similar link to political developments regarding the Soviet Union. For a brief period between autumn 1939 and spring 1941 Russian plays received a revival due to the Hitler- Stalin pact. This example also shows, however, one of the fundamental differences between the two systems. Whereas the German propaganda continuously reminded the public in general and theatre managers in particular of their national duty and sent out countless circulars, the British government did nothing of the sort. Although the political atmosphere towards theatre had changed markedly, there are no examples of direct intervention regarding a certain programme at individual theatres, and even statements regarding repertoire questions appeared only rarely.[554]

This does not mean, however, that the government was not aware of the possible dangers of an excessively critical programme. On the contrary, the government passed far- reaching legislation which meant that for the first time, theatre repertoires could not only be affected by the Lord Chamberlain's decisions or by the police in case of safety problems. From March 1942 Home Secretary Herbert Morrison had the right to interfere directly if a certain play was detrimental to the war effort – a fact, which, crucially, has been overlooked by research so far.

Theatrical censorship in Britain had a long tradition. The Lord Chamberlain, who was appointed by the monarch, carried out his duty as a member of the Royal Household. He was not accountable to the government or Parliament and was, in fact, "outside the law".[555] It is important to note in the context of this particular study, however, that the Lord Chamberlain did not pursue any active theatre politics. Also, and this is perhaps even more important here, the outbreak of the war did not affect the fundamental

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[552] See, for example, the minutes of CEMA's tenth meeting on 1 July 1941, page two (AAD. EL 1/6 Minutes Meetings 1-20).

[553] See Noble, *British Theatre*, 20-21. The Russians was a propaganda play about partisan warfare against the Wehrmacht set in a Russian town on the Eastern front (see ibid., 44).

[554] One of the rare examples are some remarks from Kenneth Lindsay, Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education. As "it is not often that a Government spokesman offers his views on current theatrical fare" the Theatre World was quick to publish them as they "must not be lost". It is interesting to note that Lindsay offered a damning judgement and asserted that "apart from the classics there is hardly a play worth seeing in London at the present time. The trouble is that new drama can only be born out of a live people, and we have been moderately dead for the last 20 years. Since the last war we have been living on our past, and I hope that out of the present war there will be born some fresh artists" (Theatre World April 1940, 94).

principles on which censorship was based. The five reasons on which a play could be banned remained the same: on religious grounds, for depiction of the Royal Family, for dealing with "recent events", for political and diplomatic reasons, and for causing "moral turpitude".[556] Even classical plays were not exempt from censorship and Sophocles' Oedipus Rex was vetoed for many years.[557] In effect, there was also an invisible censorship at work as many British playwrights had learnt to live with the censor's decisions and tried to avoid writing plays which were likely to be banned.[558] Although a public outcry could sometimes change the censor's mind, in other cases the objections were so acute that even the play's international status could not save it.[559]

Where the Lord Chamberlain carried out his duty during the war mainly as he had done before, the government became increasingly interested in exerting its influence over the theatre world. As early as summer 1940 officials saw a direct link between entertainment and raising morale. One of the issues at hand was the "fear" of a quiet winter 1940/41, which might cause social problems and loss of morale. There was no question, therefore, that entertainment for the forces and the civilian population was of the highest importance. At the same time, officials like Kenneth Clark, stressed the fact that they did not just want any kind of entertainment "of the film or music hall order,

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[555] Findlater, *Theatrical Censorship*, 9. Only the music halls and private theatres were outside the censor's jurisdiction.

[556] The censor was obsessed with the alleged protection of the Bible. This prompted the veto of several outstanding plays from abroad, e.g. Hauptmann's Hannele, in which the character of "the Stranger" had to be clean shaven in order not to resemble any picture of Jesus (see Findlater, *Theatrical Censorship*, 97). An example for a play dealing with "recent events" was Rudolf Besier's The Barretts of Wimpole Street. The descendants of Edward Barrett protested successfully against Besier's portrayal of him, and after that such plays were only licensed when the existing relatives of the person depicted approved (ibid., 159). With regarding to the scope of this study the most delicate decision concerned plays banned for political reasons. In the tense atmosphere of the late 1930s the slightest hint of political satire could see a play banned, especially plays which appeared to be disrespectful of Mussolini and Hitler, and would thus offend the heads of friendly powers. Rattigan's Follow My Leader was only licensed after the outbreak of the war and so was Rice's Judgement Day, which dramatised the Reichstag Trial. Sherwood's Idiot's Delight, which was set in Mussolini's Italy, was not allowed to contain any direct reference to Italy or Mussolini. Revues, too, were carefully watched for indiscriminate suggestions that Hitler and Mussolini were figures of fun. As late as 1939, a Herbert Farjeon lyric was banned because it began with "Even Hitler had a mother, Even Musso had a ma" (see ibid., 161).
Plays banned on "moral" grounds were pieces which allegedly dealt with incest, homosexuality or heterosexual frankness, which kept many American and Continental plays off the English public stage or exposed them to heavy cutting. Wedekind, for example, clearly offended the Lord Chamberlain's canon of decency (see ibid., 162-164).

[557] See Findlater, *Theatrical Censorship*, 99. Although the censor claimed that plays written before 1737 were exempt he admitted that a Restoration play, if indecent, might be banned just as well (see ibid., 123).

[558] See Nicholson, *Unnecessary Plays*, 30. This "system" of hidden censorship, however, only worked with some playwrights and Shaw could not be intimidated. At the same time he was the one playwright who suffered most from the censor. It took Shaw's Mrs Warren's Profession 33 years to be publicly produced in Britain (see Findlater, *Theatrical Censorship*, 103-105).

[559] Miss Julie, for example, was only passed for public performance in 1939 (see Findlater, *Theatrical Censorship*, 31-34).

but something to occupy people's minds". He explicitly demanded that the government ought "to take some active part in stimulating activities of this sort".[560]

This active part soon began to take shape in the question of the Sunday opening of theatres, which found increasing support not only in the theatre world but also among the general public.[561] Suddenly, in February 1941, the government agreed to allow theatre performances on Sundays for the first time in three hundred years and the theatre world celebrated having "won the battle".[562] Although Parliament shortly afterwards denied the theatres Sunday opening by a small majority of eight votes, which was a "sad an unexpected blow",[563] the government had nevertheless proved how much it was willing to sacrifice for theatrical entertainment during the war – the resistance of the church had been especially substantial – and how highly it rated its contribution to the war effort.[564]

Soon, however, Home Secretary Herbert Morrison wanted to go far beyond that. In a memorandum on public entertainments in war-time put before the War Cabinet on 27 February 1942 Morrison asked "the War Cabinet [to] consider the present position and make a decision on general policy" – for example on theatre.[565] Morrison complained that his powers regarding entertainments were restricted to security and safety questions. He claimed that the Home Secretary should have additional powers to prohibit performances if they were detrimental to the war effort.[566] The cabinet discussed Morrison's far- reaching memorandum in early March 1942, and only two weeks later the King signed the relevant amending regulation of the defence

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[560] See PRO. Ministry of Information. INF 1/260. Home Morale and Education During the Winter 1940-41. Above quotes from page 14 of the file ("Extract from Minutes of Policy Committee, 26 July 1940").

[561] Members of the Theatrical Managers' Association, the Society of West End Theatre Managers, British Actors' Equity, the Variety Artists' Federation and the Theatrical Trade Unions vigorously fought for Sunday openings "in the National interest". They made representations to the Home Secretary and expressed their view that "entertainment is essential in helping to maintain the good spirits of the military and civil population" (letter from Horace Collins, the secretary of "The Theatrical Managers' Association" to Harold Butler, Regional Commissioner, Southern Region, Reading, 11 December 1940. PRO. Home Office. HO 186 Air Raid Precautions. HO 186/1894 Entertainment).
See also Fairweather, David. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World November 1940: 101, and similar articles in the December 1940 and February 1941 issues.

[562] "Over the Footlights." Theatre World March 1941: 51.

[563] "Over the Footlights." Theatre World April 1941: 75.

[564] Opinion polls carried out during the war show that a majority would have supported Sunday openings. In summer 1943 58% of those asked "Would you approve or disapprove of theatres being allowed to open on Sundays, just as they do on other days?" gave a positive answer, 33% disapproved and 9% said "don't know" (see PRO. Ministry of Information. INF 1/292 (Part 3). Home Intelligence Reports, July 1942-August 1943. 213-214. Appendix to a public opinion survey compiled by the British Institute of Public Opinion, presented on 24 January 1943).

[565] See PRO. Home Office. HO 186 Air Raid Precautions. HO 186/742 Entertainment (1942). 3.

[566] Under point 16 Morrison asserted that "It therefore appears necessary that the Government should be empowered to prohibit or restrict entertainments on the ground that they are inimical to the war effort, irrespective of the degree of risk to those present, and that the Defence Regulations should be amended to give control of entertainments in circumstances where the efficient prosecution of the war is in issue."

regulations.[567] Morrison thereby obtained the "control of entertainments" and, in effect, had at least in principle gained total power over the arts.[568] Although it seems doubtful whether Morrison ever used his new powers of direct control, the importance of the fact that in theory he would have been able to do so can hardly be overestimated.[569]

The one genre, which corresponded perfectly to governmental concepts of entertainment and morale were the classics and especially Shakespeare, now hailed as "our great national poet".[570] Shakespeare's plays received an increasing number of productions and scored record audiences. After decades of neglect Shakespearean drama suddenly attracted the country's greatest actors and producers.[571] In August 1942 alone three new Shakespeare productions started their runs in London with Gielgud's Macbeth, the Old Vic's Othello and Robert Atkins' open air productions in Regent's Park.[572] And in 1944 the Old Vic at the New as well as Gielgud at the Haymarket established their classical repertory. These ventures more than anything else appeared to contemporaries as the dramatic highlight of the war, the quintessence of what Britain was fighting for.[573]

This sudden revival was no coincidence but was closely linked to the war. Although the use of Shakespeare for political purposes was not new, the scale and quality of his

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[567] Statutory Rules and Orders. 1942 No. 502. Emergency Powers (Defence). General Regulations. The amendment enabled Morrison to "prohibit or restrict [...] the use of premises [...] for the purposes of any entertainment, exhibition, performance, amusement, game or sport to which members of the public are admitted, in so far as such prohibition or restriction appears [...] to be necessary or expedient for any of the purposes enumerated in subsection (1) of section one of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1939." (PRO. Home Office. HO 186 Air Raid Precautions. HO 186/742 Entertainment (1942).

[568] Officials were quick to stress that the government did not intend to stop entertainments as war- time policy so far "has been to permit them to continue on a restricted basis in the belief, that, within reason, popular entertainments act as lubricant rather than a brake on the war machine". Although the government may impose restrictions "as may be needed in the interests of the war effort [...] there is no intention of imposing needless hindrances to recreation or of carrying restrictions so far that total war unnecessarily becomes total misery" (PRO. Home Office. HO 186 Air Raid Precautions. HO 186/1894 Entertainment (1944). Statement made by the Minister of Home Security, above mentioned George Gater, in the House of Commons on 12 March 1942 (enclosure to H S Circular No. 74/1942).

[569] The reason for his refraining from any direct intervention was almost certainly twofold. Firstly, the vast majority of theatres did not offer him any opportunity for intervention, because their programmes hardly left anything to be desired. Secondly, the military situation for the Allies improved considerably in the course of 1942 and there was hardly any reason for critical remarks from the stage. In general, Home Intelligence Reports regularly showed how popular Churchill was as a military leader and how overwhelmingly the British supported the present war.

[570] This quote Noble, *British Theatre*, 98.

[571] Sybil Thorndike during her whole career up to 1939 had only appeared in three Shakespearean plays; between 1940 and 1945 alone she appeared in five (see Morley, *Sybil Thorndike*, 149-166).

[572] See Theatre World August 1942: 5. Gielgud's Macbeth was presented "by arrangement with CEMA" and featured incidental music by William Walton (see Theatre World September 1942: 9).

[573] Officials claimed that these two ventures "gave proof of the vigorous quality of the national theatre, its tenacity in preparation and its brilliance in achievement" (CEMA, *Fifth Year*, 5). The Theatre World made it clear that "it is a long time since two Shakespearean productions of such stature as the Hamlet at

revival not only in London but also in the provinces seems unparalleled in British history.[574] The 1916 tercentenary of Shakespeare's death, for example, failed to attract enough support to found the National Theatre, for which an influential pressure group had been fighting for decades.[575] In the early 1940s, however, their idea not only returned to the political agenda it quickly became reality with a prestigious site for the project and generous funding. Contemporary commentators clearly saw the connection between this interest and the increased importance of Shakespeare during the war.[576] Shakespeare was used to establish a link to Elizabethan times with a clear view of constructing a parallel between Hitler's threat of invasion and the defeat of the Armada.[577] Another similar parallel concerned the Napoleonic Wars and led to headlines such as "Appreciation of Shakespeare Unparalleled Since Waterloo".[578] It was made clear that to produce Shakespeare at this particular time was a service to the nation as although Britain faced invasion in summer 1940 her "spirit is undimmed and her speech [...] is still the speech of Shakespeare".[579] Especially remarkable is the way in which the government used Shakespeare to portray a positive image of war-time Britain to the world outside. This national propaganda corresponded to pre-war ideas,

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the Haymarket and Richard III at the New could be seen in London at the same time" (Stephens, Frances. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World November 1944: 5).

[574] Until the mid nineteenth century Shakespeare's image was dominated by aristocratic interpretations, it was undemocratic and he was "designed as an educator for the few" (Taylor, Antony. "Shakespeare and Radicalism: The Uses and Abuses of Shakespeare in Nineteenth-Century Popular Politics." The Historical Journal 45 (2002): 362). After that, however, left-wing politicians and Chartists referred to the "Bard" in their struggle for social justice. The 1864 Tercentenary especially provided an opportunity to reclaim Shakespeare for popular culture by working-class radicals. In fact the plebeian involvement in the Tercentenary was "typical of many similar ceremonies honouring national poets and dramatist throughout Europe at this time" – e.g. the Schiller 1859 Centenary in Germany "which like the Shakespeare Centenary, sought to elevate national traditions, whilst creating an icon of transcendent genius with which all Germans could identify" (ibid., 373-379, quotes 373). In the 1930s it was especially the Russian émigré Komisarjevsky who "was palpably aware of the connection between the theatre and the new ideologies" (Howard, Tony. "Blood and the Bright Young Things: Shakespeare in the 1930s". The British Theatre between the Wars 1918-1939. Ed. Clive Barker and Maggie B. Gale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 152).

[575] See Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 146.

[576] Whitworth, *National Theatre*, 144.

[577] Contemporary commentators stressed that the defeat of the Spanish Armada had "acted as a powerful stimulus. It was a tangible sign of a new, and striking, truth: England was no longer to be subservient to continental influence, direct or indirect, but, whether in matters political or religious, must function as unity, as herself. Immediately a new excitement, a new life, was felt, and that life speaks to us to-day in the words of Shakespeare. To those words England must always return in times of peril" (Wilson Knight, G. This Sceptred Isle. Shakespeare's Message for England at War. Oxford: Blackwell, 1940. 1).

[578] Headline to Harold Hobson's article reviewing Olivier's Richard II at the New, which had by then already attracted record audiences of 37,000 people, in Christian Science Monitor, 29 November 1944. Knight claimed that "just as England's rocky coast 'beats back the envious siege' of ocean, so from time to time she, and all she stands for, has to hurl back invaders form 'less happier lands': in Shakespeare's time the Spanish Armada; in Nelson's, the armies of Napoleon; and in ours, the embattled legions of Hitler. Today the test is sterner than ever, the seas more vast and turbulent, and, as London itself, like a great ocean liner, weathers the storm and lightning of aerial bombardment, one can feel the soul of England buffetted [sic], swaying, but undeflected" (Knight, *Sceptred Isle*, 35).

[579] See Editorial. Theatre Arts 24 (1940): 767.

which stressed the importance of projecting a positive image of Britain. As a "national institution" Shakespeare was regarded as a perfect carrier of such positive ideas.[580] The Bulletins from Britain served this purpose perfectly.[581] They regularly featured articles about theatre in Britain, about festivals and memorable productions especially of Shakespearean drama. The fact that Shakespeare's name in particular appeared again and again not only gave "a reflection of the new spirit in England"[582] it also made clear that nobody could claim anymore that theatre was without a political purpose in the war. It had a clear function and it lived up to it.[583]

It was not only the sheer presence of Shakespearean drama on stage, however, which seemed important but also the interpretation of his plays. Commentators praised the Old Vic's 1941 production of King John for the topical interpretation and its "consistent war-like atmosphere".[584] Sybil Thorndike was congratulated on her apparent presentation of Macbeth as Hitler on her Welsh tour, and a particularly strong anti- Nazi message must have been sent out by the performance of Shylock by the émigré Frederick Valk in The Merchant of Venice in 1943.[585]

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[580] See, for example, Tallents, Stephen. The Projection of England. London: Faber, 1932. 14. Tallents claimed that "no civilized country can today afford either to neglect the projection of its national personality or to resign its projection to others" (ibid., 11-12).

[581] As mentioned before the Bulletin was aimed at providing British officials all over the world with "essential" information about war-time Britain, which they were expected to spread. It was published by the "British Library of Information" in New York and obviously directed at the American "market" as the spelling was American throughout. The Bulletin reads like a propagandistic newspaper, it is desperately reassuring, features a simple typescript and no pictures. After a few issues, however, the layout became more professional with a coloured header. The Imperial War Museum holds a complete run of the Bulletins from Britain from No.1 (27 August 1940) to No.111 (3 October 1942).

[582] The Bulletin wanted to make the change in audience appreciation clear and claimed that "people want to go, at times, to the music-halls and to other places of simple entertainment; but they have grown tired of the society comedies and of realistic dramas that deal with the external trivialities of life. From the theatre at its best they seek something of deeper significance corresponding to the new faith they have discovered in their own lives" (Bulletin from Britain. No. 26, week ending 26 February 1941: 1).

[583] See, for example, Ivor Brown's article for the Bulletin (Brown, Ivor. "In War, British Drama Finds a New Public." Bulletin from Britain. No. 97. 8 July 1942. 15-16).

[584] See "New Plays in Town." Theatre World July 1941: 4.

[585] See Farjeon, *Shakespearean Stage*, 55-56. For the Thorndike claim see Fawkes, Richard. Fighting for a Laugh. Entertaining the British and American Forces 1939-1946. London: Macdonald & Jane, 1978. 71. Although this study is not concerned with cinema it should be briefly mentioned that Shakespeare also provided inspiration for wartime propaganda films such as Henry V with Laurence Olivier in the 1944 film, which reminded audiences of Britain's historic successes in invading the continent. Another example is Richard II, which provided no fewer three film titles alone: This England (1941), The Demi-Paradise (1943) and This Happy Breed (1944) (see Taylor, Philip M. Munitions of the Mind. War Propaganda form the Ancient World to the Nuclear Age. Wellingborough: Stephens, 1990. 143. On the same subject see also Aldgate, Anthony, Jeffrey Richards. Britain Can Take It. The British Cinema in the Second World War. Oxford: Blackwell, 1986; Chapman, James. The British at War. Cinema, State and Propaganda, 1939-1945. London: Tauris, 1998; and Taylor, Philip M. Britain and the Cinema in the Second World War. London: Macmillan, 1988).

Again, York's Theatre Royal reflected the national trend of war-time repertoire, which was in stark contrast to the fare presented during World War One. Then the theatre had concentrated on musical comedies, farces and spy thrillers instead of the "uplifting" repertoire offered after 1939. Ibsen's Ghosts, for example, which was presented in July 1917 after it was "hitherto banned for twenty years", was a rare exception in an effort to offer at least a touch of high culture. Especially remarkable is the sudden reappearance of Shakespearean drama after it had been virtually neglected before. After the above mentioned week of Shakespeare repertory in 1930 – which was an exception in itself as the last Shakespearean play seen in York before had been in 1926 – there was not a single Shakespeare performance at the Theatre Royal. It is no coincidence that the "great national poet" returned in 1942 and from then on appeared at least once a year. The first Shakespearean drama ever to be produced by the repertory company was Romeo and Juliet in November 1942, and the press acknowledged the effort as "a creditable Shakespearean debut".[586] Less than half a year later the Theatre Royal produced The Taming of the Shrew, and the reaction was enthusiastic.[587] The increasing importance attributed to Shakespeare became even more obvious in the following two productions. In December 1943 the repertory company produced a highly successful Hamlet in a two week's special, which "held spellbound the large audiences".[588] The press covered the event in several articles including a preview before the run – an interest never encountered before.[589] Shakespeare's new war-time function becomes apparent not only in the fact that the first night audience included the civic heads, the archbishop, and the "General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command", but also that it was presented to 1,300 schoolchildren in a special matinee performance, which underlined the new educational mission of theatre. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the company received "civic thanks" and were entertained by the Lord Mayor and the Sheriff at the Mansion House. The city officials stressed that the invitation was an "official 'Thank You' for the contribution the company makes to the

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[586] *YEP*, 17 November 1942.

[587] The press celebrated the "Repertory Success in Shakespeare" and claimed that the company "reached heights of cleverness that would have satisfied Stratford's exacting audiences" (*YEP*, 13 April 1943). Audiences were equally thrilled as "not for months have the company received the kind of ovation they got after the opening performance on Monday night, when the audience would not be satisfied until Pauline Letts [...] came before the curtain to make a little speech" (Malton Gazette. 16 April 1943).

[588] *YH*, 8 December 1943. The play was produced between 7 and 19 December and was advertised as the highlight of the season. The production starred Michael Warre and Lalage Lewis. The press celebrated Warre's "masterly Hamlet", which was a "model of Shakespearean acting". The production was "well dressed, but not overdone in spectacle and background" (see *YEP*, 8 December 1943). This praise stands in some contrast to the celebrated costume plays of the 1920s which, as it seems, had to be on a lavish scale to meet with audiences' approval. Corresponding to new ideals of austerity, the 1943 production of Hamlet was explicitly praised for the absence of any splendour and spectacle.

city's social life".[590] It seems hardly imaginable that the company would have received such an honour before the war – even after the foundation of the Citizens' Theatre. It is interesting to note that at this point the new function of the theatre as a quasi- municipal playhouse coincided with its morale- boosting purpose in the war.

After their success with Hamlet the Theatre Royal staged another Shakespearean drama a year later under similar conditions. Othello was performed for "the closing fortnight of our very successful 1944 season" and became another "outstanding success".[591] This fortnight's run stands in clear contrast to the Shakespearean repertories of the 1920s when during one week Frank Benson or Charles Doran produced six or seven different plays to guarantee diversion.[592] The fact that the Theatre Royal produced one Shakespearean tragedy for two weeks at a time normally reserved for money-spinning Pantomime shows the enormous importance now attached to classical drama. This can hardly be overestimated.[593] The Theatre Royal put into practice what The Manchester Guardian had demanded as early as 1940, namely that "no better National Service can be given at the present time, than to present Shakespearean Repertory".[594]

Research so far failed to recognise that not only the attitude towards the classics and modern classics changed, but the whole perception of theatre and its function in society. This phenomenon does not only mark a fundamental difference to the theatre programmes of World Word One it also shows great similarity to German repertoires.

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[589] See *YEP*, 7 December 1943.

[590] *YEP*, 11 December 1943.

[591] See *YEP*, 6 December 1944. The production was staged between 5 and 17 December 1944 and starred Norman Hoult who "infuses Iago with all the Satanic artifice of this troublesome figure" (ibid.).

[592] This qualitative difference is not mirrored in Diagram II. The 1926 season, for example, shows a share of 10% of the classics in the programmes because of the seven Shakespearean plays, which Frank Benson presented at the Theatre Royal. By contrast, the 1944 classical share of below 2% relates to the fact that the theatre only performed Othello. The two weeks' run of that production, however, is double the time of Benson's stay in York, which is not reflected in the Diagram as I only counted the number of productions themselves and runs of more than one week only occurred very rarely. In qualitative terms, therefore, the Othello production should rank much higher than Benson's week of Shakespearean repertory.

[593] York's Shakespearean revival was no exception. In Harrogate the "Shakespearean Festival Society" produced his plays successfully with a strong backing from the community and some 250 members (see "Amateur Stage. Notes and Topics." Theatre World June 1944: 31). Leeds' Grand Theatre had already presented a two week Shakespearean repertory in November 1939, and in Wakefield the first visit of a state- sponsored company in September 1942 was a grand civic event (see Taylor, *Wakefield Theatre*, 218-219).

York's interest in its own theatrical history was equally mirrored in other cities, too. In Huddersfield, for example, the outbreak of the war resulted in a flood of publications regarding its "great" theatrical history. This interest is surprising as some years earlier local commentators had admitted that Huddersfield was not "a good theatre town" and that companies had only reluctantly put the town on their itinerary in the past (see Huddersfield Weekly Examiner [*HWE*], 6 June 1936).

Shakespearean performances at York continued after the war. In January 1946 Donald Wolfit together with Rosalind Iden presented Hamlet, The Merchant of Venice, The Merry Wives of Windsor, King Lear, and Twelfth Night in repertory. The 1947 Shakespearean production at the Theatre Royal was Macbeth.

[594] Qtd. in Fuller, Rosalinde. "A Shakespeare Tour in Wartime." Theatre Arts 24 (1940): 181.

This fact becomes especially obvious in the rise of contemporary drama. In 1937 it was already noted that "York theatregoers have shown in the past two years that they appreciate plays which are something more than mere entertainment".[595] This trend continued over the following years and intensified towards the end of the war.

Regarding the foreign repertoire the outbreak of the war and especially the fall of France in June 1940 prompted a change in public opinion which the Theatre Royal reflected. This change becomes perhaps most obvious with regard to the German repertoire. The theatre did not produce plays *from* Germany any longer but plays *about* Germany and the Germans. As mentioned above, however, even the 1940 season still contained plays with a positive image about Germany, exemplified by the romance Autumn Crocus with its German dialogue.[596] After that there was a clear break in the repertoire and from 1941 such pro-German plays were no longer staged. It was, however, neither the "quality" of the Nazi ideology nor Hitler's war in Europe which radically changed both the mood of the British people and their theatre programmes – it was the immediate fear of being invaded. The production of propagandistic anti-German plays did not commence in 1939 but in 1941.[597] Then, however, spy comedies, war drama and variety shows, plays about Nazi agents entering Britain, French resistance against the Germans and the expected invasion arrived on York's stage in numbers and reached 13.5% in 1944.[598] In contrast to the First World War, however, there are also many differences in the choice of plays. Apart from variety programmes and war comedies there were many dramas which dealt with the war not only in purely entertaining terms but which reflected, for example, the fear of a German invasion.

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[595] *YEP*, 22 May 1937.

[596] After 1932 this was the second production of the play in York within eight years. The production of Autumn Crocus was no singular event. In February 1940 the Tyrolean play Oh, Leo! with lyrics by Howard Dietz and music by Arthur Schwartz was produced in London (see "Plays." Theatre World February 1940: 36).

[597] Until the war came closer to Britain a distinction was made between the Germans and the Nazis. As mentioned earlier, Home Intelligence reports of September 1940 show that bitterness against the Germans was not aroused by Nazi ideology or the war waged on Europe but by direct air attacks on Britain (see PRO. Ministry of Information. INF 1/264. Home Intelligence Daily Reports. 4, 5, 13 and 19 September 1940).

[598] Plays with anti- German sentiments appeared in 1941. On the whole, however, the share of anti-German plays was much lower than during the First World War. Out of 53 performances in 1941 only 6% were in some way directed against Nazi Germany, and for 1942 the share stayed exactly the same. In 1943 it rose slightly to 7% before reaching its peak in 1944 with 13.5%. In 1945 5% of all performances were anti-German.

Examples of the former group of plays include Lynne Dexter's comedy Other People's Houses, which is set in the country home of a war widow,[599] du Garde Peach's "rollicking modern comedy" You Never Know,[600] and the variety show The Hulbert Follies, "a slick, non-stop show, a pot pourri of fun, dancing, music and song". This show, however, also contained a serious piece entitled How Britain Fights by Eric Maschwitz, a "dramatic interlude depicting incidents in the lives of unsung heroes of the 'blitzes'" including a bus driver, a typist and a roof spotter.[601] This serious piece already indicates the importance of plays which dealt with the war in more realistic terms or dramatised social and political questions. To this group belong pieces like Robert Sherwood's remarkable play The Queen's Husband about the question of dictatorship[602] and Geoffrey Kerr's Cottage to Let, which was hailed as "the first spy drama of the present war".[603] Although Kerr's play was announced as a comedy and in the end the villain is unmasked and justice done, the theme mirrored a real fear of many people, all the more so since it coincided with propaganda initiatives by the Ministry of Information.[604] Other examples of this genre include Mary Hayley Bell's drama Men in Shadow about the plotting of anti-Nazi saboteurs headed by a British pilot in France, Edward Wooll's court drama Libel about a baronet supposedly killed after an escape

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[599] "The fun begins with the arrival of brusque Mrs. Short, an evacuee from Brixton and her daughter Saffron. There are sudden complications when the Sheldon's find themselves with new neighbours, the husband 'next door' becoming infatuated with coy and glamorous Saffron, and the wife finding herself quite innocently accused of endeavouring to steal the affections of the RAF fiancé of one of Mrs. Sheldon's daughters" (Theatre Royal Programme Notes, 14 September 1942).

[600] The play was set in a Dales bar "at a date when the invasion of this country was a live issue". The inevitable Nazi spy gets spotted due to the "inquisitiveness of the village gossip" (*YG*, 13 February 1944).

[601] *YG*, 13 June 1941.

[602] The play "chiefly concerns the increasing difficulties of King Eric, a gentle, ineffectual and rather weary monarch, who is more concerned about losing a game of draughts against one of his footmen than he is about the imminence of a revolution which the Prime Minister assures him is likely to break out at any moment. When the first shots of revolution are heard the King is told that the Prime Minister deliberately provoked the revolt in order to get himself appointed dictator, and that whichever side proves victorious in the struggle the King's abdication will be demanded" (*YEP*, 30 March 1940).

[603] The play is set in a village on the English coast in September 1939 and depicts a famous scientist who is engaged in experiments, which prove of great value to the government. "Certain enemy agents" become interested in his invention and "try to kidnap the scientist and convey him to Germany in a U-boat" (*YG*, 13 February 1942).
There were a few plays with a similar pattern, for example the above mentioned Murder at the Ministry by Carey and Thompson, which dramatised the "tragedy of Sir James Reid, working at the Ministry of Protection on a secret weapon" (*YEP*, 19 October 1943).

[604] The Ministry of Information distributed leaflets in June 1940 about what to do "If the Invader Comes". They contained seven rules which the ideal citizen under circumstances of invasion was expected to follow – he was asked "to be brave, calm, alert and obedient to higher authority". Point four read: "Do not give the German anything. Do not tell him anything. Hide your food and your bicycles. Hide your maps. See that the enemy gets no petrol... Remember that transport and petrol will be the invader's main difficulties" (qtd. in McLaine, *Ministry of Morale*, 68). Another example is the MoI poster series "Careless Talk Cost Lives", which stressed the importance of keeping information, which might be of interest to the enemy, to oneself.
The essential study on the subject is Balfour, Michael. Propaganda in War, 1939-1945. Organisations, Policies and Publics in Britain and Germany. London: Routledge, 1979.

from a German prison camp, Joan Brampton's The Portrait, which deals with a Polish refugee who flees to England to escape the Nazis, Henry Marshall's "stirring melodrama of the Armada" Drake's Drum,[605] John Steinbeck's The Moon Is Down with its "microcosm of the resistance movement in Europe, revealed through the medium of a small mining town in Norway" in 1941,[606] Chetham Strode's smugglers' play Strangers' Road about "a period of English history similar in many ways to our own [with] Buonaparte across the Channel awaiting an opportunity to invade this country",[607] and Lionel Brown's This Land of Ours about life on a Shropshire farm during the war. One of the most successful war plays, Lilian Hellman's Watch on the Rhine, developed the topic of spies and fifth columnists even further.[608]

It is interesting to note, however, that playwrights not only dramatised problems corresponding to the war itself, but an increasing number of contemporary dramas also raised questions about the future thereafter. Topics like the uncertainty of the future, the need for social reforms and the question of what this war was fought for, came on to the agenda. Priestley's Desert Highway, for example, addressed exactly this uncertainty about positive war aims and thereby reflected a general mood in the British public, who expected substantial social reforms after the end of the war. At the same time the play is a perfect illustration of how close the connection between theatre and war had become. It was a play specially written for and about the army, it was jointly produced by CEMA and ABCA and was presented by a cast entirely drawn from the army in July 1944.[609] In the same category belongs the visionary drama Burning Gold by Cary and Thompson, which was produced in May 1944 and "radiates the vision with which young Britons went to war in 1939".[610] The play's main theme is "the striving of the younger generation for a plan which will make 'England's green and pleasant land' something more than a phrase".[611] There are a number of similar plays which contribute

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[605] The press stressed that it was "not without parallel since 1939 in Europe" (*YEP*, 14 March 1944) as Drake and his companions "protect the noble Elizabeth of England from the treacherous 'Quislings' of the period" (*NEWS*, 10 March 1944).

[606] Leeds Mercury, 15 August 1944.

[607] *NEWS*, 1 September 1944.

[608] The play, hailed as "one of the great plays, probably the greatest, of the war" (*YG*, 15 January 1943), was set in spring 1940 and concerned an anti-Nazi German who brings his American wife back to her mother's home near Washington, together with their three children. The story "shows how the serenity and security of this home seemingly so remote from the European conflict, is shattered by the far reaching influence of the Gestapo" (*YG*, 8 January 1943).

[609] See Noble, *British Theatre*, 95-96.

[610] *YEP*, 2 May 1944.

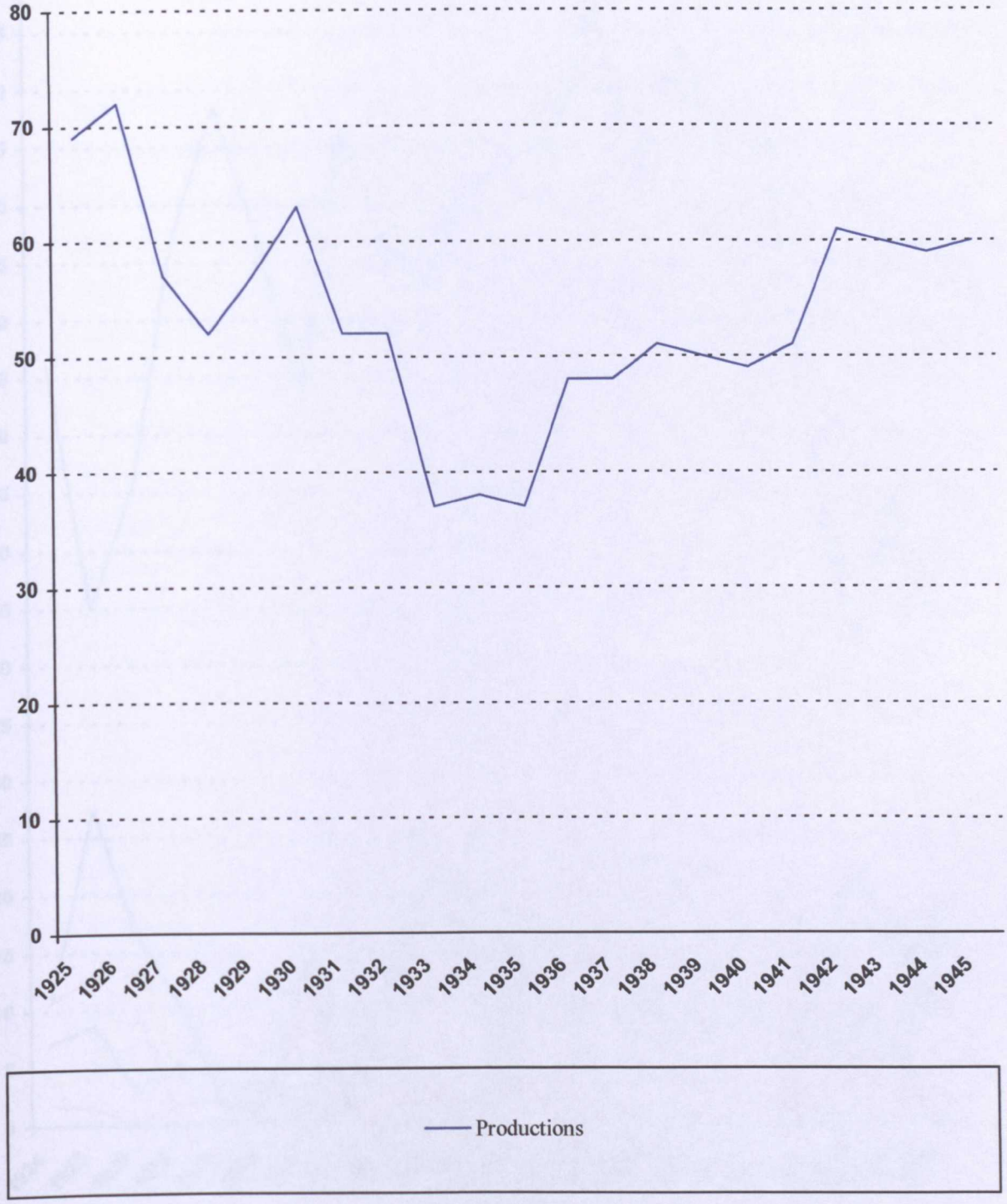
[611] *NEWS*, 28 April 1944.

to the rise of contemporary drama and a 20% share in the 1945 programme.[612] This rise also hints at one of the lasting effects of the war. Although the establishment of the theatre world intended to go back to "business as usual" in 1945 – and effectively did so for the following years – the success of Osborne's Look Back in Anger and the "Kitchen Sink" drama is hardly imaginable without this drama of social relevance at the end of the war. In reflecting wishes and hopes for the future theatre programmes suddenly became platforms for the discussion of social problems. And again we find a direct link to political developments. The landslide victory of the Labour Party in 1945 clearly corresponded to the working- classes' call for a greater share in England's "green and pleasant land".

In view of the comparative perspective of this study it is interesting to note that the outlook of the Theatre Royal's repertoire towards the end of the war became increasingly similar to Münster's.[613] The high share of contemporary comedies declined to about 40%, the share of classical opera and ballet rose, the classics received elaborate two- week productions and contemporary plays dramatised social questions. This repertoire exemplified a new function of local theatre which made it comparable to German provincial theatres. This is, in fact, a finding which runs counter to research so far but could be clearly substantiated through a close study of the repertoire.

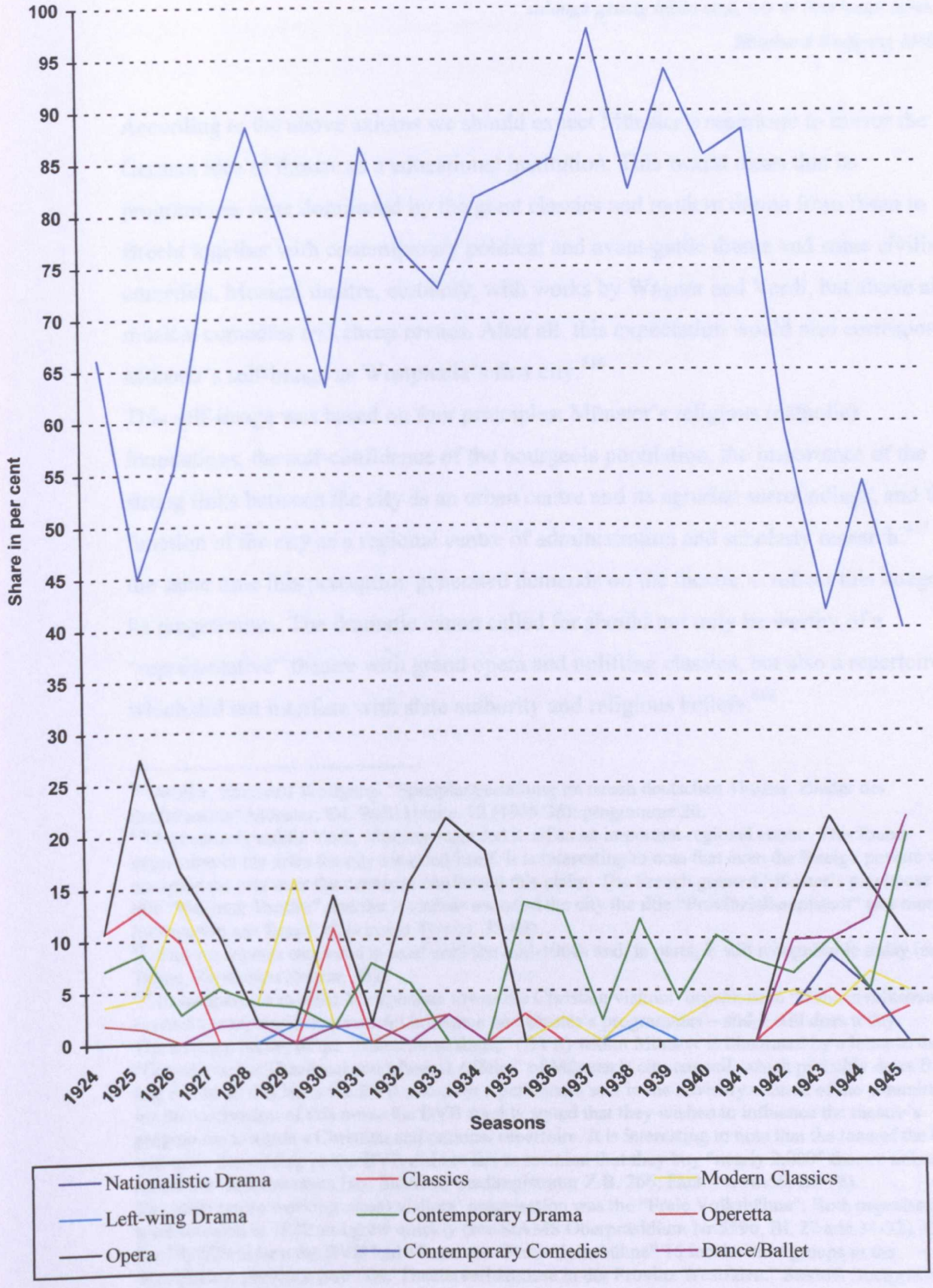
[612] Other examples of noteworthy contemporary drama include Karel Capek's vision of a de-humanised robot future in R.U.R. ("Rossum's Universal Robots") in May 1943 and John Priestley's They Came to a City in March 1945.
[613] See Diagram II.

I. Theatre Royal – Number of Productions each Season[614]



[614] Normally one production per week. Visiting companies sometimes performed up to seven pieces in one week, especially with opera or Shakespearean repertoire. Please note that every single production was counted, even if it was only performed once. Figures of over about 55 productions per season indicate that at least one of these visiting companies performed at the Theatre Royal. At the same time some plays were performed for two weeks, but again only appear as one production in the above diagram.

II. Theatre Royal – Share of Genres in Productions



The Programmes of the Städtische Bühnen

Man darf bei alledem eben nicht vergessen, dass die Aufgabe, den Spielplan des deutschen Theaters zu gestalten, nicht bedeutet, für wenige Monate zu denken, sondern daran, dass unser Volk solange geistig leben muß, wie es überhaupt leben will.

Eberhard Wolfgang Möller[615]

According to the above axioms we should expect Münster's repertoire to mirror the German idea of theatre as a educational institution. This would mean that its programmes were dominated by the great classics and modern drama from Ibsen to Brecht together with contemporary political and avant-garde drama and some civilised comedies. Musical theatre, certainly, with works by Wagner and Verdi, but above all no musical comedies and cheap revues. After all, this expectation would also correspond to Münster's self-image as Westphalia's first city.[616]

This self-image was based on four principles: Münster's religious (catholic) foundations, the self-confidence of the bourgeois population, the importance of the strong links between the city as an urban centre and its agrarian surroundings, and the function of the city as a regional centre of administration and scholarly research.[617] At the same time this perception generated demands on the theatre to reflect this image in its programmes. The dramatic canon called for should not only be worthy of a "representative" theatre with grand opera and uplifting classics, but also a repertoire which did not interfere with state authority and religious beliefs.[618]

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[615] Möller, Eberhard Wolfgang. "Spielplangestaltung im neuen deutschen Theater. Blätter des Stadttheaters" Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 12 (1935/36): programme 20.

[616] Not entirely unlike York, Münster regarded itself as an important regional centre. This found expression in the titles the city awarded itself. It is interesting to note that even the foreign powers who occupied the city over the centuries confirmed this claim. The French granted Münster's playhouse the title "National Theatre" and the Prussians awarded the city the title "Provinzialhauptstadt" (for more information see Teppe, *Politisches System*, 75-80).

[617] This perception was valid at least until the mid-1960s and, in parts, is still recognisable today (see Teppe, *Politisches System*, 76).

[618] In comparison to other Westphalian towns the Christian visitors' organisation "Bühnenvolksbund" exerted a comparatively powerful influence on Münster's programmes – and it still does today.
The strong position of the "Bühnenvolksbund" (BVB) within Münster is illustrated by a letter to the "Committee for Theatrical and Musical Affairs" of Münster's city council, which probably dates from the late 1920s. In this letter the BVB asked for a permanent seat in the advisory council of the committee. As for the motivation of this move the BVB frankly stated that they wished to influence the theatre's programme towards a Christian and national repertoire. It is interesting to note that the tone of the letter was quite demanding as the BVB did not fail to mention that they buy "nearly 2,000" theatre tickets each month for their members (see StdAMS Stadtregistratur Z.B. 266, Fach 14, Nr.56, Bl. 98).
The other (more working-class) visitors' organisation was the "Freie Volksbühne". Both organisations were founded in 1922 and grew quickly (see StAMS Oberpräsidium Nr.5596, Bl. 27 and 31-32). During the 1928/29 season the BVB had 18 and the "Freie Volksbühne" 16 local visitor groups in the Westphalian province (see "Die Theaterverhältnisse in der Provinz Westfalen." StAMS Oberpräsidium Nr.5501. Bl. 101-102).

This demand, therefore, casts a first doubt on the assumption formulated above, especially as regards avant-garde and political drama. And, indeed, a first look at the programmes already shows that Münster's repertoire was conservative rather than revolutionary, conventional rather than experimental from the beginning of the theatre's existence. Regarding its choice of repertoire, however, Münster was no exception. German provincial theatres in general remained largely traditional – even during the years of the Weimar Republic and in contrast to the claims of many scholars who make no distinction between avant-garde experiments in Berlin and the often rather anti-modernist attitudes in the provinces.[619]

But what about the other assumptions? In how far did the Städtische Bühnen fulfil the claim of an institution of high culture, of education and edification? Corresponding to the focus of this study it will also be especially interesting to see how far the political and social changes in 1933 and 1939 affected the repertoire.

Immediately after the First World War had ended the Städtische Bühnen seemed eager to live up to the expectation of it as an institution of high culture. Already during the 1918/19 season the theatre staged an impressive programme consisting of 39 plays, 21 operas, 10 operettas, including three first productions.[620] These figures also indicate that the audience demanded a wide variety of plays. As in the nineteenth century, the theatre managers were anxious to present novelties in order to prevent audience members from feeling themselves compelled to watch the same play twice.[621]

It is interesting to note that the powerful influence especially catholic groups wanted to exert on the repertoire re-emerged in 1945. An interesting example of this indirect censorship are two plays in 1946 (among them Schnitzler's Liebelei), which Münster's mayor Zuhorn insisted be withdrawn from the programme, because they supposedly violated Christian beliefs (see Teppe, *Politisches System*, 70).

[619] The artistic avant-garde was concentrated almost entirely in Berlin. The much celebrated "Weimar Culture" did in most cases not reach the provinces (see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 1-50. For contrasting views see Lacquer, Walter. Weimar. A Cultural History 1918-1933. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. 140-154. Equally misleading Hermand, Jost, Frank Trommler. Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik. Frankfurt: Fischer, 1988. 193-260).

One example of prevailing conservative attitudes in provincial cities like Münster affected the drama of Bertolt Brecht, which, apart from some exceptions, was thoroughly avoided by provincial stages during the Weimar period. The Städtische Bühnen, for example, produced its first Brecht during the 1929/30 season, but the Dreigroschenoper failed disastrously and only received two performances. It seems probable that is was only produced because of its huge Berlin success anyway. After the war it was not until 1969 that The Caucasian Chalk Circle was a huge success with 33 performances and some 27,000 visitors (see Teppe, *Politisches System*, 69).

[620] See Ockert, Otto, ed. Rückblick auf die erste Spielzeit 1918/19 des wiedereröffneten Stadttheaters Münster unter der Direktion Otto Ockert. Münster n.p. n.d.). We have, unfortunately, no information about attendance figures for the 1918/19 season. A number of around 70,000, however, seems probable.

[621] As in other Westphalian towns during the 1920s, Münster's audience wanted to see as many novelties as possible during the season. In Bielefeld, for example, patrons expected at least one new play each week (see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 14-15).

Münster's new status as civic theatre from 1922 only enhanced its cultural claims. Whereas York's prime concern was to distinguish itself from both the glossy cinema as well as the working-class Empire with its boisterous music-hall programme during the 1920s, the demands on Münster's civic theatre went far beyond that.
The theatre had become a municipal endeavour in the full sense of the word, it had been taken over into public ownership, and everyone working at the theatre had suddenly become civil servants. During the Weimar years the theatre employed an average of 20 actors, five producers, 24 singers (soloists for opera and operetta), 10 ballet dancers, a choir plus an additional choir of 48 persons, the municipal orchestra, five directors of music, one prompter, two stage-managers, one painter, two lighting technicians, one set designer, and one costume designer.[622] A typical season's programme consisted of about 50 productions.[623] Normally, plays made up more than half of the productions with opera and operetta each occupying between a fifth and a quarter of the repertoire. The number of performances reached around 500 each season.[624] During the mid- 1920s the theatre flourished and developed into one of the most important stages in Western Germany.[625] Surely, this obvious fulfilment of Lessing's call for a national theatre and Schiller's dictum of the stage as a "moral institution" with its strong educational impact must have had its implications on the repertoire.

A close look at this repertoire, however, reveals that the programmes of the Städtische Bühnen up to 1933 only rarely justified this claim. Concerning plays, for example, classical drama occupied an important but not prominent position.[626] Out of an average of 25 plays produced each season, the theatre presented about six classics: one or two plays by Shakespeare, one or two by Schiller, one by Goethe or another German classic (often Hebbel or Kleist), and sometimes Calderón, Goldoni or Molière. The share in the overall productions of about 15%, however, stood in some contrast to the lower number of performances, which sometimes only reached half that figure. The number of modern classics staged was generally lower and dominated by Naturalistic playwrights with nearly always a Scandinavian dramatist featuring alongside Hauptmann and Shaw.

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[622] See Bernau, Alfred, ed. Das Theater der Stadt Münster in der Spielzeit 1930/31. Verzeichnis der Mitglieder – Spielpläne – Stammsitzbedingungen. Münster: Krick, n.d. [1930]). Not counted are administrative and other technical and secretarial staff.
[623] See diagram III.
[624] See diagram IV.
[625] See Stahl, *Shakespeare und das deutsche Theater*, 642. Stahl sees Münster's theatre playing in the same league as Cologne, Bonn and Essen – a claim hardly anyone would support today.
[626] See Appendix.

The most interesting findings are to be encountered in connection with contemporary political plays. Generally speaking, these plays were more likely to be produced in Münster if they were right-wing, and from 1931 nationalist and "völkisch" plays reached the stage in numbers. By contrast left-wing and avant-garde drama, often regarded as one of the backbones of Weimar repertoires, only played a marginal role and productions were confined to the years 1929 to 1933.[627]

Another surprising finding is the dominant role contemporary comedies increasingly played in the repertoire. Comedies, farces, thrillers and other purely entertaining pieces gained in popularity by the end of the 1930s and eventually made up 35% in the overall production figures.[628] This prominent role of entertainment not only contradicts the many claims – contemporary as well as recent – regarding the high standard and cultural value of theatre programmes during the Weimar years, it also is an interesting parallel to the Theatre Royal. Moreover, this parallel is not only a question of genre but also of the actual repertoire itself. Within the genre of contemporary comedies the Städtische Bühnen staged numerous plays by British playwrights, among them Brandon Thomas, Edgar Wallace, Arnold Ridley, Edward Childs Carpenter, William Somerset Maugham, Frederick Lonsdale, Noel Coward, and St John Ervine.[629] During 1930/31 as well as 1931/32 the theatre produced four British comedies each season.[630] Given these points of contact it even seems fair to assume that apart from one or two classics and some contemporary dramas the Münster repertoire of the early 1930s would have been a success at the Theatre Royal, too.[631]

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[627] It was only in 1930/31 that left-wing drama reached a respectable 11% share in the performance figures. During the preceding and the following seasons this share was much lower and only reached 3% or less. The situation at other Westphalian theatres is similar. Dortmund produced Brecht's Dreigroschenoper in 1930, but only Osnabrück tried its hand at another Brecht play and performed Lindberghflug in 1932.

[628] The most successful playwrights in this genre during the Weimar years were Curt Goetz, Carl Laufs, Franz Molnar, Bruno Frank, Ludwig Hirschfeld, Max Bertuch, Laszlo Fodor, Toni Impekoven, Ludwig Fulda, August Hinrichs, Leo Lenz as well as the duos Arnold/Bach and Bernauer/Oesterreicher.

[629] Arnold Ridley's Ghost Train was performed in York in July 1926 and serves as a good example of the fact that it took British successes at least two years (in this case as long as four) to find their way to German provincial stages. The question of translation was certainly an issue, but agents and publishers also wanted to wait to see whether a certain play could make its way in the West End before transferring it to the continent.

[630] During 1930/31 the theatre produced Ridley's Ghost Train, Thomas' Charley's Aunt, Maugham's The Constant Wife, and Vater sein dagegen sehr, an adaptation of a play by Edward Childs Carpenter. The British plays in 1931/32 were Lonsdale's The Last of Mrs Cheney, Coward's Private Lives and two productions from the preceding season: The Constant Wife and Charley's Aunt. In 1930/31 the British plays had a share of 20% in all the comedy productions (20). The 61 performances they received resulted in a share of 29% in the overall number of comedy performances (209). A year later their production share was again 20%, but they only made up 17% of all the comedy performances. The success of British comedies in Münster continued during the next season. In 1932/33 one of the most successful plays in the Studio was The first Mrs Selby by St John Ervine.

[631] In 1931/32, for example, the theatre produced four classical dramas (two by Goethe and two by Schiller), which might have been regarded as too "heavy" in York. The two right-wing plays Warbeck

These parallels, however, only concern the dramatic programme, the musical repertoire was a different matter. Music had traditionally received wide recognition in Münster, and especially operetta productions proved regular hits with the audience.

It is interesting to note, therefore, that the musical repertoire, too, was traditional and modern "experiments" were avoided.[632] On the whole, opera and operetta reached higher attendance figures than plays, and within the musical programme operetta always scored the biggest successes.[633] The interesting results, which can be gained from a differentiation between production and performance figures, are illustrated in the fact that opera evoked much less audience interest than operetta. A typical example is again the 1931/32 season, during which the shares of opera and operetta productions each made up slightly more than 20% in the overall number of productions at the theatre. Regarding the performances, however, operettas fared much better: their share in all the performances reached 37% in comparison to a meagre 13% share for operas.[634]

On average the operatic repertoire consisted of about 12 operas per season.[635] The pillars of the programme were Wagner, Verdi and Mozart, of whom on average two operas were presented each season. Apart from that the theatre produced at least one opera each by Puccini, Rossini, Bizet, Lortzing, and Mascagni/Leoncavallo, and frequently pieces by Gluck, Beethoven, Offenbach, Cornelius, Strauß, Weber, d'Albert, Donizetti, Gounod, and Händel. Contemporary works were rarely produced and if they were their success was minimal. In any case, they only stood a chance of more than one performance if their score was based on late romantic rather than modern music.[636]

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and Flieger might have had their problems in York, too (probably not so much because they were right-wing but because they were stern and grave tragedies). The seven modern classics by Ibsen, Hauptmann, Halbe, Schönthan, Meyer-Förster and Schönthan/Kadelburg, however, would certainly have been appreciated at the Theatre Royal. Meyer-Förster's Alt-Heidelberg was, after all, turned into The Student Prince, which was one the biggest hits in the British theatre in the first half of the twentieth century. The 20 comedies would certainly have been equally successful in York, and the large musical programme with 12 operas and 14 operettas would have been admired there. German- style operetta at that time experienced a short term revival in London, which had its implications for the provinces, too. Especially famous was White Horse Inn, which, coincidentally, was staged in Münster in 1931/32 in its German original as Im Weißen Rößl, too. See Appendix for details.

[632] The first production of Richard Hagemann's Die Tragödie von Arezzo in March 1932 was as much an exception as the performances of Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's Sly/Big during the 1929/30 season. We also have to note that both pieces were not modern but composed in a late romantic style.

[633] The only exception are the years 1925 to 1928 when opera dominated the musical programme. This was in part due to the Händel revival initiated by Niedecken- Gebhardt.

[634] The preceding season 1930/31, too, showed the prominent position operetta enjoyed in the audience's appreciation. Whereas an opera production received an average of 5.5 and a play of 7.5 performances, the typical operetta ran for 14.5 performances. The operettas' share of 24% in the overall production figures was nearly doubled in the performance figures which reached 40%.

[635] After the First World War until 1925 the theatre regularly produced around 20 operas per season, although this figure went down afterwards. After the 1941 air raid the number of both opera and operetta productions fell to about four each season.

[636] Erik Levi points out that this was a general trend in Germany's musical life. The exciting experiments and variety of musical life in Berlin should not be overemphasised as the influence of the reactionary

The examination of the operetta repertoire is especially interesting because they not only remained favourites with German audiences when they had long lost their appeal to musicals and musical comedies in the United States and Britain, their share in the repertoire as well as their popularity even rose during the 1920s.[637] Whereas during the mid- 1920s only about five operettas were produced each season, this figure rose dramatically towards the end of the decade. By the early 1930s the number of operetta had overtaken the number of opera productions. Towards the mid- 1930s, however, the figures decreased again and opera and operetta productions stood at an even level. Regular favourites were operettas of the old Viennese tradition (Strauß, Lehár, Millöcker, Zeller), the Berlin school (Lincke, Künnecke), and contemporary pieces by Abraham, Kálmán, Fall, Benatzky and Stolz.
We have to note, however, that these contemporary works rarely reflected modern trends in composing but rather stood in the established tradition of the classical operetta. Operettas and musicals which were based on a truly modern score with either Jazz or atonal "experiments" such as the works by Krenek, Weill or Dessau stood little chance of entering the programmes of provincial theatres. Although the Städtische Bühnen played in a different league from the Theatre Royal concerning both the quantity and the quality of its musical programme, the traditional character of its repertoire is similar to the musical provision in York.

Looking through the programmes of the Weimar years it is interesting to note that the theatre took on the challenge of acting as a moral and educational institution after the establishment of the municipal theatre in 1922 and tried to live up to the high expectation of it. In the mid- 1920s the Städtische Bühnen presented long forgotten monumental Händel operas, put special emphasis on Shakespearean drama and staged avant-garde dance performances in opulent settings: Hein Heckroth worked in Münster as a set designer and the famous Kurt Jooss headed the dance company.[638]

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forces was crucial. Although these findings are true for theatre and drama, too, research so far seems to have overlooked this fact. Levi's excellent study is, therefore, all the more important for the cultural historian (see Levi, Erik. Music in the Third Reich. London: Macmillan, 1994. 1-13).

[637] As mentioned before (particularly Viennese) operetta experienced a short-term revival in London during the early 1930s. This phenomenon, however, only lasted for a few months, and even the influx of German and Austrian composers, singers and musicians during the late 1930s failed to spark a renewed interest in a musical genre which seemed to have outlived its time in the Anglo-American world. See Diagram II.

[638] In 1925/26 alone the theatre produced three Shakespearean plays: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Richard II and Hamlet. During the following season, however, it was only one and in 1927/28 none.

These productions, however, were the intellectual highlights of an otherwise quite conventional repertoire. Even outstanding theatre managers like Hanns Niedecken-Gebhardt did not try their hands at experimental plays but concentrated on the established repertoire.[639] As we have seen above, the pillars of the Münster programme especially at the end of the 1920s were not Shakespeare and Brecht but comedies and farces – as in York. And even concerning the playwrights we have found many parallels as Münster presented many contemporary British comedies and modern classics.

We can conclude, therefore, that over a period of 15 years, which covers some of the most radical developments in recent German history, both the musical and the dramatic repertoire at the Städtische Bühnen – and at other German provincial theatres – showed a remarkable stability. Essentially, the Weimar years seem to have generated only two important developments on provincial stages: the appearance of nationalistic and "völkisch" plays and a short period of dramatic experiments around 1930.
In contrast to popular belief, right-wing drama entered German theatre programmes long before the economic crisis precipitated by the Wall Street Crash. As early as 1927/28, during the "prosperous" middle years of the Weimar Republic, Münster's audiences were "treated" to their first nationalistic play, Alfred Neumann's Der Patriot.[640] Contemporary commentators, however, failed to see the potential danger of

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[639] A typical example of the conservative, nationalistic and anti-modernist attitudes prevalent in German provincial towns is an article by Hans Schlaghecke on the current situation of the professional theatre in Germany, which was published in Münster's "Theater- Almanach" (Schlaghecke, Hans. "Lage des Berufstheaters". Almanach 1927. Theater der Stadt Münster. Ed. Intendanz des Theaters. Münster: n.p., 1927. 18-24). Schlaghecke demanded a new spirit in the theatre, which had to deny utilitarianism, intellectualism and individualism in order to reach a unified national theatre true to its cultic roots. Artistic experiments had to go and only works of "enduring value" had a right to survive, as otherwise the theatre was in danger of being excluded from the "living stream of blood" and would "degenerate". It is interesting to see how anti-modernist attitudes mix with proto-Nazi vocabulary in this article. Although almost certainly not a supporter of Hitler himself, Schlaghecke's article could have easily been included in some Nazi publication on the perfect state of the future theatre. The incorporation of this article in a book, which was designed to present the quintessence of Münster's theatre renaissance during the mid-1920s, indicates how accepted these views were. It also shows that Münster's audiences appreciated Niedecken-Gebhardt's efforts to revive Händel's operatic works but would certainly have lent no support to his turning to avant-garde drama.
In countless similar articles commentators criticised Max Reinhardt's experimental stage designs (see Bergenthal, Josef. "Bühne und Publikum". Blätter des Theaters. Ed. Wilhelm Heising 4 (1927/28): 98), expressed their disgust at plays about adultery (see Heising, Wilhelm. "Die Gesellschaftsstruktur der heutigen Zeit". Ibid. 126), demanded a return to Schiller's dictum of the theatre as a moral institution (see Heising, Wilhelm. "Theater, Spielplan und Publikum". Ibid. 130-134) or simply warned against modern approaches in general (see Heising, Wilhelm. "'Klassikertod' und Zeittheater". Blätter des Theaters der Stadt Münster. Ed. Wilhelm Heising. 5 (1928/29): 144-145).
[640] Commentators like Carl Hillekamp likened Der Patriot to Bötticher's Friedrich and Burte's Katte – two plays characterised by völkisch ideas (see also Fischli, Bruno. Die Deutschendämmerung. Zur Genealogie des völkisch- faschistischen Dramas (1897-1933). Bonn: Bouvier, 1976. 134-135 and 143-145).

these plays and insisted that most of them only dealt with "problems of the nation".[641] During the 1931/32 season "völkisch" and nationalistic plays eventually reached the repertoire in numbers, and their share increased further in 1932/33.[642] In that season right-wing drama made up 9% of all the productions and generated 12% of the ticket sales. Contemporary plays by left-wing playwrights only seem to have stood a chance in the repertoire if they were comedies – at least until 1929.[643]

After that, and only for two seasons, Münster's new theatre manager Bernau presented some avant-garde and left-wing plays. Although it is remarkable that dramatists like Sheriff, Hasenclever, Kaiser, Schnitzler, Wedekind, and Brecht eventually entered the Münster stage, it is also telling that Bernau's plans for the season had originally been far more radical.[644] The slightly more modern programme – although, or perhaps because it did only slightly correspond to the term of "Weimar culture" – was successful with Münster's residents and attendance figures rose.[645] The fear of losing especially the

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[641] See Hillekamps, Carl H. "Alfred Neumann und ‚Der Patriot'." Blätter des Theaters der Stadt Münster. Ed. Wilhelm Heising. 4 (1927/28): 49.

[642] Some of the biggest successes of that season were Kolbenheyer's The Bridge, Paul Joseph Cremer's The Battle on the Marne and especially Schäfer's 18th October. Similar to Paul Ernst's nationalistic play Yorck, Schäfer's 18th October centres around the inner conflict in colonel Bauer of the Prussian army between the oath of loyalty he gave to Napoleon and his commitment to the "German cause" (see Schäfer, Walter Erich. "Der 18. Oktober." Theater der Stadt Münster 9 (1932/33): programme no. 4. For more information on this and similar war plays see Fischli, *Deutschendämmerung*, 173-197).

[643] A good example is Georg Kaiser's comedy Der mutige Seefahrer, which was produced in 1927/28.

[644] In the preview for the 1929/30 season Bernau not only promised to produce the unbelievable number of 57 plays, 38 operas and 16 operettas (in the end only 23 plays, 15 operas and 8 operettas materialised), he also mentioned the proposed productions of operas like Hindemith's Hin und zurück, Janáček's Jenufa, Stravinsky's Pulcinella, und Weill's Der Zar läßt sich photographieren (see Bernau, Alfred, ed. Theater der Stadt Münster. Spielzeit 1929/30. Vorteile und Bedingungen der Platzmiete. Münster n.p., n.d.). A similar discrepancy appeared in the following season when Bernau announced the production of 54 plays, 24 operas and 12 operettas. In the end only 35 plays, 12 operas and 10 operettas materialised (see Bernau, Alfred. Theater der Stadt Münster. Zur kommenden Spielzeit 1930/31. Münster: n.p., n.d.). This choice of works would have made a radical change in conservative Münster, and perhaps this was the reason why Bernau did not pursue some of these ideas any further.

Although Bernau did not make a courageous step forward with the repertoire eventually produced, some of the plays stood in clear contrast to the anti-modernist views expressed during the preceding season. One of these plays, Sheriff's Journey's End, was one of the few anti-war plays to be staged in Münster. The vast majority of war drama was right-wing or claimed to be neutral – and was therefore open to interpretation by the Nazis. A good example of such a play is Endlose Straße (Street Without End) by Sigmund Graff and Carl Ernst Hintze, which was one of the most successful plays of 1929. Even liberal commentators praised the play for being supposedly purely factual. In contrast to overtly political pieces like Hanns Johst's Schlageter, Endlose Straße refrains from using bold slogans and, therefore, appears to be entirely about the miserable lives of soldiers in the trenches. Subtly, however, these plays also offered an alternative reading: They told the story of "real" camaraderie at the front, of "true" German values, which no enemy managed to break.

[645] In 1928/29 the theatre was visited by 140,731 patrons (see StdAMS. Statistischer Bericht der Provinzialhauptstadt Münster/Westfalen 1929. 58). Bernau managed to raise this figure by 30% to 184,378 within one year (see *Statistischer Bericht 1930*, 68). Against the background of an increasingly tight civic budget and the constant threat of the opera being closed down, however, Bernau was aware that he not only had to keep his following but was also bound to increase these figures. Especially important was the growing number of season ticket holders, who became the backbone of the theatre's finances. The number of season ticket holders rose from 1,030 in 1927/28 (see *Statistischer Bericht 1928*,

precious season ticket holders was certainly not the only reason for the rather brief encounter with avant-garde plays during the Weimar years, yet this incident nevertheless indicates that audiences had a substantial influence even at subsidised theatres. In any case, after this short period of experiments the theatre returned to its established and conventional repertoire with the 1931/32 season.[646]

The year 1933 did not only mark a change in political terms with the National Socialist take-over, it also heralded radical transformations in Germany's cultural life. As mentioned before, theatre and drama took centre stage in Nazi propaganda from the early days of the party's history.[647] Supporters as well as critics of the Nazis, therefore, expected the take-over to have massive implications for the German theatre. Goebbels, Rosenberg, Ley and Göring all stressed the importance and imminence of radical change. At the same time each of them tried to secure decisive powers over the arts for themselves. In what way, then, were the programmes of the Städtische Bühnen affected by the take-over and the beginning of the "Thousand Year Reich"?

The appointment of the Hitler cabinet came half-way through the 1932/33 season, which, as mentioned earlier, was already featuring a number of nationalist plays. The take-over did indeed result in changes in the programmes. The nationalistic plays Battle on the Marne by Paul Cremers and Ostmark by Berthold Withalm (about "Germanic Austria") appeared in the programmes, the Nazi "Stage of the Militant League" started to exercise an increasing influence on the repertoire by producing its own plays as well

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29) to 1,133 in 1928/29 (ibid), 1,240 in 1929/30 (see *Statistischer Bericht 1929*, 58) and eventually to 1,473 in 1930/31 (see *Statistischer Bericht 1930*, 68). See Table 1.
During the 1930/31 season the income generated from season tickets was more than half the annual box-office receipts. Season tickets alone brought in RM 103,340, whereas the overall box-office takings amounted to RM 195,177 (see StAMS, Oberpräsidium Nr.5501. 17). The fact that this money was received before the start of the season was important factor for the management and resulted in greater financial security (see Bernau, Alfred. "Vorschau auf die Spielzeit 1930/31". Blätter des Theaters der Stadt Münster. Ed. Kurt Richards-Ruzicka. 6 (1929/30): 210; Bernau, Alfred, ed. Das Theater der Stadt Münster in der Spielzeit 1930/31. Verzeichnis der Mitglieder – Spielpläne – Stammsitzbedingungen. Münster: Krick, 1930; Bernau, Alfred. Theater der Stadt Münster. Spielzeit 1931/32. Münster: Krick, 1931. Preface).

[646] From 1930/31 the attendance figures declined again. They fell by almost 10% to 167,662 (see *Statistischer Bericht 1931*, 33). The number of season tickets declined by a record 38% and only reached 915 for the 1931/32 season. The decline in audiences had as its prime reason the fact that the 1930/31 season ended in March, two months earlier than the previous one. The economic crisis had taken its toll. See also Table 1.

[647] Eugen Schmid claimed that "for National Socialism theatre is ideology. National Socialism demands the highest integrity from the theatre; it shall be of exactly the same nature, the same character, the same ideology. What the stage announces, be it overtly or hidden, must eventually concur with what National

as by booking whole performances for its members, and the new city administration organised visits by school parties to some of the nationalistic plays.[648]
At the same time, however, the theatre opened an evening with one-act plays by Arthur Schnitzler and Stefan Zweig on 8 February 1933 – a week after the take-over – and performed this show successfully until the end of the season.[649] Equally inconsistent with claims of a radical change in the repertoire towards a "national" programme is the great number of quite un- heroic comedies and farces, which were produced after the take-over. The musical programme, too, remained traditional as ever and did not feature a single contemporary piece – apart from two operettas by Künnecke which were traditionally escapist.[650] In fact, the overall character of the programmes did not change after January 1933 – at least not until the beginning of the new season.[651]

After the Jewish theatre manager Fritz Berend had been replaced by the "Aryan" Otto Liebscher and the theatre had undergone costly renovation with the participation of Münster's residents (see chapter II), it seemed wholly justifiable for the Nazis to claim the dawning of a new era. The ground was prepared for a truly nationalistic and "völkisch" programme for the 1933/34 season and Liebscher was prepared to deliver. He announced an intention to concentrate on plays about symbolic struggles of heroic characters, which would help to "shape the beliefs" of the audience. He promised that he would not "torment patrons with problem plays or literary experiments".[652] Many equally ideological articles by numerous representatives of the new regime were

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Socialism regards as its own world of thought." (Schmid, Eugen. "Jugend und Theater". Theater Tageblatt 9 November 1933).

[648] See programme for week commencing 19 February 1933 (see Theater der Stadt Münster 9 (1932/33). Ed. Fritz Berend: programme no 20). It is interesting to note that the "Catholic Youth" association booked group tickets for performances of Calderón's Judge of Zalamea in what seems to be a direct reaction to the mass bookings for schools taken out by the "Militant League".

[649] Arthur Schnitzler was Jewish, his plays were forbidden immediately after the take-over – as were the plays by Stefan Zweig. Interestingly, the performances were obviously not attacked by the nationalistic press but, instead, received positive reviews from the social- democrat Volkswille and the conservative Münsterischer Anzeiger (see *VW*, 11 February 1933 and *MA*, 12 February 1933). The reviews appeared at a time when critical comments were still possible. With some newspapers this only changed months after the take-over.

[650] Eduard Künnecke was married to a "non- Aryan", which makes him an unlikely composer of Fascist operettas.

[651] A different position is put forward by Thomas Eicher who claims that "after February 1933 hardly any play by an 'unwanted' dramatist made it onto the stages" (Eicher, *Spielplanstrukturen*, 484). The Münster repertoire clearly proves him wrong. According to Eicher the Schnitzler/Zweig show would neither have been produced after the take-over nor would it have been successful – as indeed it was with five performances between early February and late March 1933.

[652] See Liebscher, Otto. "Die neue Spielzeit des Theaters der Stadt Münster". Das schöne Münster 5 (1933). 256.

gathered in the Programme Notes to demonstrate unanimous support for the venture.[653] In obvious accordance with the claim of a total shake-up of the theatre the common ground of these articles was their call for a radically new repertoire. If we take all these articles, speeches and announcements at face value it seems fair to assume that the Städtische Bühnen was turned into a propaganda stage with the start of the 1933/34 season – taken over by Nazi ideology, Nazi personnel and Nazi drama. To put this assumption to the test it will prove helpful to look at this first season in greater detail.

The first question regarding personnel is difficult to answer as the relevant files did not survive the war. Published contemporary sources such as press articles, pictures of the new company or personnel lists, however, indicate that quite a substantial number of employees had left the theatre at the end of the 1932/33 season. The fact that a number of changes took place, however, does not necessarily mean that all the left-wing and "non-Aryan" members of the theatre were made redundant. It was quite common at German provincial theatres to find regular changes in the personnel at the beginning of a new season, and new theatre managers especially brought members of their old casts with them.[654] The fact that Fritz Berend was still employed by the Münster theatre after 1933, despite his being Jewish, illustrates that the break in 1933 was sometimes not so radical as has often been suggested.

The second aspect of the representation of Nazi ideology concerns the question of dramatic theory. The central issue is: What kind of drama did the Nazis want? The countless articles in the Programme Notes displayed an unanimous resentment of the Weimar years and called for radical changes in German repertoires. The dramatic concepts formulated by Gauleiter Meyer, mayor Hillebrand and the head of the city's theatre department, Ernst Ohle, however, varied greatly and showed a remarkable lack of consistency. This inconsistency, however, does not only occur in Münster's Programme Notes. Theorists, artists and leading politicians in Nazi Germany in general agreed on the need for radical change, on the decadence of the Weimar years and on the central role which theatre played in the "new" Germany, but they failed to formulate a

[653] Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programmes 1-14. In contrast to York, Münster's Programme Notes regularly offered information about plays in the repertoire beyond cast lists and synopses. It comes as little surprise, therefore, that the Notes during the first "national" season featured many articles about the new nationalistic and "völkisch" plays, which flooded the stages now. Examples include Förster's Alle gegen Einen, Einer für Alle (Programme nos. 3, 5), Kolbenheyer's Das Gesetz in Dir (no. 8) and Graff's Heimkehr des Matthias Bruck (no. 11).

[654] See Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 171-198.

positive counter-theory.[655] Agreement was reached on a few general ideas, chief among them the idea that the new drama should be characterised by a super-elevation of the dramatic action.[656] These intense discussions, however, did not lead to any fruitful results.[657] Despite numerous attempts which continued up to the last days of the war a genuine National Socialist dramatic theory was never found.[658] And perhaps even worse for the theorists was the fact that the theatre programmes hardly reflected the lively discussions about dramatic theory.

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[655] It is interesting to note that agreement on what the term "Weimar Culture" meant did not exist either. It was rather a symbol, which subsumed everything the Nazis regarded as inferior or "un-German" under a common idea. According to leading Nazis it was especially the theatre which had been affected by the "Weimar spirit" (see Hitler, Adolf. Mein Kampf. 434th-443rd ed. München: Eher, 1939. 284; Rosenberg, Alfred. Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts. Eine Wertung der seelisch-geistigen Gestaltenkämpfe unserer Zeit. 53rd-54th ed. München: Eher, 1935. 447).

[656] The new drama was to portray nothing realistic or individual but become symbolical and driven by categories such as race, nation or providence. Ultimately the hero was to portray Man himself and transcend his individuality to serve his people. In the hero's struggle against evil and his striving for super-elevation the choric element played an important role, too. The aim of the chorus was to symbolise the "Volksgemeinschaft" (volk or national community), for which the hero was sacrificed. In contrast to Greek drama, however, the function of the chorus was not to reflect and comment upon the action but to shape it together with the antagonists (see Langenbeck, Curt. "Dürfen wir uns bei dem jetzigen hohen Stand der Schauspielbühne beruhigen?" Das Innere Reich 3 (1936): 768). It is interesting to note that this revival of the chorus did not begin with the take-over. On the contrary, the Nazi theorists only continued a discussion which had started long before 1933. Already in the mid- 1920s left-wing activists had plans for proletarian choruses modelled on the Greek example (see Schönlank, Bruno. "Schafft Sprechchöre." Junge Menschen 6 (1925): 159-160).
In essence, these theoretical ideas demanded an entirely new concept of theatre as it became quasi-religious. Arguably, therefore, it was the "Thing" idea which came closest to these theoretical demands. Richard Euringer claimed in his "Thingspielthesen" that with this new cultic drama "there are no spectators. There are no good seats. There is only a nation and a place" (Euringer, Richard. Chronik einer deutschen Wandlung 1925-1935. Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1936. 237). Felix Emmel asserted that the shape of the "Thing" sites should remind the audience of Germanic sacrificial altars "on hills and in holy groves" (see Emmel, Felix. Theater aus deutschem Wesen. Berlin: Stilke, 1937. 92-93. Similarly Schlösser, Rainer. Das Volk und seine Bühne. Bemerkungen zum Aufbau des deutschen Theaters. Berlin: Langen Müller, 1935; Ziegler, Hans Severus. Das Theater des deutschen Volkes: Ein Beitrag zur Volkserziehung und Propaganda. Leipzig: Voigtländer, 1933. 8-9).

[657] For a detailed account of the different theories see especially Ketelsen, Uwe-Karsten. Heroisches Theater. Untersuchungen zur Dramentheorie des Dritten Reichs. Bonn: Bouvier, 1968. 127-208.

[658] Already long before 1933 right-wing theorists like Paul Ernst and Dietrich Eckart aimed at a theatre of "formal neo-classicism", a strict and stiff heroic drama based on "the word". Following Ernst, playwrights like Bacmeister, Langenbeck and Möller after 1933 strove for a drama of superelevated style, the heroic "tragedy of fate". Their ideal was the ancient Greek tragedy. In contrast to this approach, Kolbenheyer, Johst, and Hymnen aimed at "symbolic reality". Their "character drama" was supposed to stand in the tradition of Shakespeare.
Proof of the ongoing fruitless theoretical discussions until the very end of the war were demands that theatres should avoid "cheap, shallow and kitsch entertainment fare" and "inappropriate problem plays" in 1944 (see Schrade, Hans Erich. "Deutsches Theater im 5. Kriegsjahr." Bühnenjahrbuch 1944. Präsident der Reichstheaterkammer, ed. Berlin: Günther, 1943. 3) and claims that the best be made of the bombed out German cities as they offered new opportunities in terms of production (see Billerbeck-Gentz, Friedrich. "Die Bedeutung der Kunst im Kriege." Deutsche Dramaturgie 3 (1944): 7). Similarly Karsten Pagel ("Gegenwart als Dramenstoff." ibid., 15-16) and Karl Künkler ("Es sind immer dieselben!" ibid., 65-66).
It is interesting to note that contemporary theorists were well aware of the fruitless discussions about dramatic theory (see, for example Günther-Konsalik, Hans. "Der Ruf nach neuer Klassik." Deutsche Dramaturgie 2 (1943): 107).

The failure to establish a definite National Socialist dramatic theory made it vital not only for Münster's new theatre management but also for the party and municipal authorities to present a programme clearly characterised by nationalist and "völkisch" ideas.[659] And this is exactly what Otto Liebscher did during his first (and only) season in 1933/34. As mentioned earlier the share of völkisch drama was exceptionally high with seven productions, which made up 35% of all dramatic productions and an impressive 20% share in the overall number of productions. The völkisch plays received extended press coverage and the existing visiting organisations as well as the "Hitler Youth", "Strength Through Joy" and the "Stage of the Militant League" took out block bookings.[660] The huge building and propaganda programme which accompanied the season's start added to a general feeling of the dawning of a new era.

In most respects, however, the 1933/34 season was a fiasco. It not only failed to live up to the high expectations – even worse, it did not even compare favourably to the preceding season, which had, after all, been portrayed as the last of the "decadent" Weimar seasons against which the new theatre was to stand out.[661] The overall number of productions was about the same, the number of purely entertaining operettas even higher and the share of uplifting classical and "völkisch" drama not in any way substantial enough to claim the beginning of new era.[662] The assertion that the "National

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[659] The group of nationalistic and "völkisch" plays divides roughly into three sub-groups. Apart from the war plays mentioned earlier, there is the "Blood and Soil" and the "Weltanschauungsdrama" ("Drama of Ideology"). "Blood and Soil" plays idealised the peasant life and the unspoiled countryside especially in contrast to the "decadent jungle" of the big cities. They had their roots in the "Heimatkunst" ("Art of the Homeland") movement, which had emerged in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century in a deliberate rejection of Naturalism. The "Weltanschauungsdrama" aimed at the creation of abstract ideas of timeless quality without any connection to reality. Rather unsuccessfully, the playwrights tried to put the theoretical ideas of Eckart and Ernst (see above) into practice.

[660] Already at the end of the 1932/33 season – after the take-over – the rising number of closed performances is remarkable. Alfred Rosenberg's "Stage of the Militant League" in particular profited from this development.

[661] The 1932/33 season opened on 1 October 1932 and closed on 31 March 1933. The "Nachspielzeit" between 5 April and 5 May 1933 in the Studio, however, meant that the theatre played on 211 "Spieltage" (performing days). By comparison the 1933/34 season opened on 3 October 1933 and closed on 30 April 1934, and only featured 208 performing days. These figures were certainly no reason to celebrate for the new "national" administration.

[662] In 1933/34 the overall number of 354 performances in both houses was only slightly higher than during the preceding season (344 performances). The first "national" season boasted 192 dramatic, 78 operatic and 84 operetta performances. This means that a stronger emphasis was laid on opera and less emphasis on drama than during 1932/33, when overall performances amounted to 230 dramatic, 38 operatic and 76 operetta. The number of productions in 1933/34 was even lower than during the preceding year and only amounted to 36 (in comparison to 44 in 1932/33). Classics and modern classics together received only five productions (four less than during the preceding season) while the contemporary comedies reached double that figure. Only with respect to "völkisch" drama did Liebscher seem to succeed. The number of seven productions was nearly double the figure of 1932/33. The number of performances, however, was disappointing. Although "völkisch" plays reached a share of 35% in all the dramatic productions their share in the performances stood only at 23%. This discrepancy clearly

Revolution" would immediately set free muted creative and innovative powers could not be sustained – neither during the first season after the take-over nor during any of the following seasons. In terms of choice of topic, for example, the "völkisch" plays remained largely and surprisingly traditional. Parallel to an increasing general attempt to place the Nazi movement firmly in the middle-class establishment in order to get rid of its rough SA image (see above) the majority of the "völkisch" authors dramatised safe historical topics.[663] Apart from this most of the "völkisch" drama produced on German stages was not new but already existed long before 1933.[664] Münster is no exception in this respect. Out of the seven nationalistic and "völkisch" plays produced in 1933/34 only three were recent works, three dated from the 1920s and one was written by a Swiss.[665] On top of that, and even more important for the new administration, was the fact that the success of the new "national" drama was rather poor. The 20% share of the plays in the overall number of productions marked a strong contrast to the 11% they reached in the performance figures. In fact only Friedrich Förster's nationalistic drama All Against One, One for All, which was heavily promoted by the "German Stage" and

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indicates that audiences did not support these plays to the same extent Liebscher must have expected. See Appendix.

[663] Among the most popular historical characters were medieval emperors or Prussian kings. Apart from the attempts in connection with the "Thing" plays the history plays were perhaps the most important dramatic vehicle to put across "völkisch" ideas. Between 1933 and 1938 42% of all premieres were history plays (see Gadberry, Glen. "The History Plays in the Third Reich." London, John, ed. Theatre Under the Nazis. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000. 99-100). Goebbels' ban on dealing with contemporary subject matters on stage certainly endorsed this trend. For many playwrights, however, this ban also seems to have been convenient as dealing with the immediate past posed many potential problems. In that sense it seems fair to claim that the popularity of the history plays also offered dramatists a chance to "flee" into the safety of the past. In any case the fact that so many plays appeared, which in some way corresponded to a format endorsed by Goebbels, does not automatically mean that these dramatists actively supported the Nazi cause, as Gadberry implies (ibid., 100-101).
Popular topics for history plays included plays about England (for example Rebell in England by Hans Schwarz, Oliver Cromwell by Mirko Jelusich), about "exemplary" Germans (for example Jakob Leisler by Hans Friedrich Blunck and Schlageter by Hanns Johst), topics from France as the Nazi paradigm of modernist decadence (especially Richelieu by Paul Joseph Cremers) and plays about Prussian history (mainly the five Prussian plays by Hans Rehberg).
The fact that so many playwrights turned away from contemporary subjects, however, also arose criticism. Commentators like Eckart von Naso condemned the fact that the same topics constantly recurred, and claimed that yet another portrayal of Hermann's victorious battle against the Romans (the "Hermannsschlacht") or the song of the Nibelungs (the "Nibelungenlied") would not exactly pull the crowds any longer (see Naso, Eckart. "Dramaturgie." Kaun, Axel, ed. Berliner Theater-Almanach 1942. Berlin: Neff, 1942. 169).

[664] For a detailed account see Fischli, *Deutschendämmerung*. See also Ketelsen, Uwe-Karsten. Literatur und Drittes Reich. 2nd rev. ed. Schernfeld: SH-Verlag, 1994; especially 218-222. More generally regarding "völkisch" literature see Ketelsen, Uwe-Karsten. Völkisch-nationale und nationalsozialistische Literatur in Deutschland 1890-1945. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976.

[665] See Appendix. Despite these obvious "shortcomings" commentators were anxious not only to propagate the "völkisch" repertoire as something radically new but also to stress the importance of National Socialist readings of these plays – sometimes with hair-raising results (see articles on Ernst's Yorck (Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Otto Liebscher. 10 (1933/34): programme no. 1), Försters' All Against One, One for All (ibid., programme no. 3), Kolbenheyer's Your Inner Law, (no. 8), Graff's Homecoming of Matthias Bruck, (no. 11), and Kyser's Rembrandt in Court (no. 12).

other official bodies, reached a satisfactory number of performances.[666] Audiences in general were disappointingly low, the quality of the productions criticised by the press, while they still could, and the standard of the "völkisch" plays appalling.[667] The failure radically to transform the Städtische Bühnen into a nationalistic model stage eventually cost Liebscher his job.

Looking through the repertoire of this first "national" season it is interesting to note that contrary to expectations it is characterised by a relative stability rather than by radical changes. The outlook of both the opera and the operetta repertoire is similar to any Weimar season.[668] All the classical works, the modern classics and the comedies could have appeared during the 1920s, too. In fact there are only three more or less significant changes to take effect after 1933. The first is the remarkable increase in the production of "völkisch" pieces, the second is the disappearance of left-wing plays. Put into perspective, however, we realise that these changes did not represent radical breaks with the past. "Völkisch" plays had been produced since the late 1920s and left-wing drama had never played any significant role in Münster – or indeed on other provincial

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[666] The other "völkisch" plays reached only between four and seven performances. Even Yorck, after all one of the most important plays by Paul Ernst, the Nazi model dramatist, which was also presented as a first production, only reached four performances – clearly a disappointing result. Still, also the number of 14 performances achieved by Förster's drama seems little in comparison to the most successful comedy of the season. Wenn der Hahn kräht by August Hinrichs reached 23 performances.
Förster's All Against One, One for All (Alle gegen Einen, Einer für Alle) was a play about the "fight for freedom" of the Swede Gustav Erichson Wasa in 1523 against the Danish authorities and was one of the most ardently promoted early "völkisch" plays. It is interesting to note the way in which the "German Stage" tried to push the play and literally forced theatre managers to produce it. In a letter to the Prussian Theatre Council from November 1933 Osnabrück's manager Storz complained about the head of the "German Stage", Walter Stang, and asked whether Stang now fulfilled the function of a general theatre manager who could compel theatres to produce certain plays (see BArch, R56 I/54, Bl. 229-233).
This episode does not only show the rude methods of certain Nazi organisations, it also interesting with respect to the struggles for power within the system. Storz' letter of complaint came in handy for Hans Hinkel of the Prussian Theatre Council and, most of all, for Göbbels who wanted to curtail the influence of the "German Stage", Walter Stang and, ultimately, the powerful figure in the background, Alfred Rosenberg.

[667] Many of the "völkisch" plays were entirely constructed around theoretical concepts and were simply boring to watch because of their lack of theatricality. They bore no relation to reality, the protagonists were stiff figures rather than flesh and blood characters, and the plots were about ideas rather than human conflicts (see, for example, Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 303-311).

[668] The operatic programme was characterised by the classical repertoire and featured only two contemporary pieces, Paul Graener's Friedemann Bach and Richard Strauß' Arabella. Although both composers were celebrated during the Third Reich and accepted official posts, these works did not contain any political messages. Graener's opera was written in 1931 and was regularly performed after 1933 although the libretto was written by a "non- Aryan" (see Drewniak, Boguslaw. Das Theater im NS-Staat. Szenarium deutscher Zeitgeschichte 1933-1945. Düsseldorf: Droste, 1983. 313-314).
Richard Strauß was the best-known living German composer and clearly supportive of the regime in its early years. Goebbels made him president of the Reich Music Chamber in 1933. The opera Arabella (1933), however, featured a libretto by a Jewish writer, too: Hugo von Hofmannsthal, whose works were immediately forbidden after the take-over. In the end it was this collaboration with a "non- Aryan" writer which cost Strauß the prestigious post as president of the Music Chamber.

stages.[669] The third change is more subtle and was probably not realised by everyone. It was, however, the most far reaching development of all. All the works by Jewish composers and dramatists were barred from production immediately after the take-over. This ban would only have affected four works of the 1932/33 season, but it would have banned 14 pieces of the 1931/32 and 15 pieces out the 1930/31 season – in both years, therefore, around 25% of all the productions.[670] It is in this area that Nazi politics were most effective and left their most important and lasting mark.[671]

Still, Liebscher's attempt to mark the beginning of the "new era" with an array of "völkisch" plays not only proved highly unpopular and fatal to his further career, it also remained a singular event at Münster's theatre during the Third Reich. Until the end of the war the total share of "völkisch" plays was considerably lower and never reached the high figure of 20% again. One could even claim with some justification that the theatre increasingly returned to a repertoire which was not too different from the Weimar years. Interestingly, the events in Münster are not singular. Other provincial theatres experienced the same difficulties in concentrating on overtly propagandistic plays in 1933/34.[672] Like Münster most of them soon returned to a more conventional programme. The regime was furious and Goebbels was forced to realise that the

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[669] It has to be stressed, however, that there was only one production in the 1932/33 which in some way corresponded to left-wing ideas anyway. The set of one-act plays under the title "Gaukler – Mimen – Literaten" reached five performances, which means that it had a share of 4% in all the dramatic productions and a share of only 2% in all the dramatic performances. The loss of this genre during the next season was probably not even recognised by Münster's patrons.

[670] The number of Jewish dramatists was especially high in the comedy genre, whereas the highest number of Jewish composers was within operetta. Some of the most successful artists were suddenly forbidden. The comedies by Arnold/Bach and Blumenthal/Kadelburg as well as the operettas by Paul Abraham and Emmerich Kálmán, for example, had been hugely popular during the Weimar years.

[671] Already during the Weimar years Nazi commentators had left no doubt regarding their radical future plans. The Völkischer Beobachter, for example, published a "black list" of authors belonging to the "decadent period of decay" in August 1932. Among others the names of Brecht, Feuchtwanger, Hofmannsthal, Hasenclever, Sternheim, Toller, Unruh, Wedekind, Werfel, Wolf, Zuckmeyer and Zweig featured on that list (qtd. in Reinhardt, Stephan, ed. Die Schriftsteller und die Weimarer Republik. Ein Lesebuch. Berlin: Wagenbach, 1992. 84, 241).
Only in 1935 did the Reich Literary Chamber publish an official "black list" of the "unwanted" authors (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS- Staat*, 184-186).

[672] A sample of Westphalian towns (Hagen, Osnabrück, Bielefeld, and Dortmund) clearly shows that the experiments with "völkisch" drama only lasted for one season and that its share declined afterwards. Dortmund, for example, hardly presented any propaganda plays at all after 1933/34. The most successful plays of the 1934/35 season were the fairy-tale Die Heinzelmännchen and the farce Hau-ruck. In general only light entertainment fared reasonably well in Dortmund, attendances for the dramatic repertoire were low all through the Third Reich (see BArch, R55/20349, Bl.175, 193-194, 245, 299-300, 367-370, 387-388). The story is similar in Bielefeld, although the theatre produced more classics. Apart from a slight rise in "völkisch" plays at the beginning of the war – which fell again quickly in the course of the war –, the theatre fared especially well with purely entertaining pieces (see BArch, R55/20314, Bl.15-17, 52-64, 67-81, 95, 113, 117-127, 163, 175-179).

theatrical start into the "Thousand Year Reich" had been far from satisfactory.[673] It is interesting to note that from the mid- 1930s the offensive politicisation of the programmes, for which Rosenberg had been a strong advocate, did not feature on Goebbels' agenda any longer. Rainer Schlösser claimed in 1935 that the German classics, the classics of world literature and entertaining plays were the essential ingredients of a successful repertoire; propagandistic "völkisch" drama was not mentioned any longer.[674]

With the season 1934/35 Willi Hanke took over as Münster's new theatre manager. He proved to be the right man as he delivered the successes Münster's Nazi administration had longed for: The Städtische Bühnen attracted record attendances. Hanke managed to do so, however, with a different kind of programme. Nationalistic and "völkisch" drama was still staged but to a much lesser extent and now only made up 5% of both the production and the performance figures – a reduction of 75% concerning the former and nearly 50% with respect to the latter in comparison to the preceding season.[675] Although some of the remaining "völkisch" productions were accompanied by massive propaganda the public interest was meagre.[676] It is equally interesting to note that with some other "völkisch" plays Hanke himself was reluctant to put them on stage – quite obviously because of their poor quality.[677]

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[673] In a widely publicised speech held at the Reich Theatre Festival in Hamburg in 1935 Goebbels heavily criticised the theatre managers for their choice of programme. Goebbels complained that repertories had become too pedestrian as "at the outset, too much emphasis had been placed on National Socialism; now the pendulum had swung too much in the opposite direction and nobody seemed to want to mention the subject". He criticised that putting "on only the classics and harmless trivialities was unworthy of the epoch, as was an excessive reliance on foreign pieces". Goebbels added that "it is not as though the ideals of our time are incapable of being translated into art. All that they demand are artists big enough to do the translating." Goebbels also claimed that many managers "escaped" into foreign plays which was equally despicable (quotes taken from Balfour, Michael. Propaganda in War, 1939-1945. Organisations, Policies and Publics in Britain and Germany. London: Routledge and Kegan, 1979. 46).

[674] See Schlösser, *Das Volk und seine Bühne*, 27-29. It seems safe to assume that Schlösser's statement was not only his personal opinion but, as an official statement in his function as the head of the Reich Theatre Chamber and the National Dramaturg, had been backed up by Goebbels, his "line manager".

[675] The share of "völkisch" plays remained at these low levels until the outbreak of the war.

[676] The drama Wiedertaufe 1535 (Rebaptism 1535) by the Münster playwright Prosper Heyl, for example, was produced in 1934/35 and announced as a "world premiere". The drama dealt with the time of the re-Baptists in Münster and had an obvious nationalistic undertone. As part of a massive publicity campaign the theatre produced a special issue of the Programme Notes, and the city urged civil servants to buy tickets. The official circular, however, had little effect, and only five staff wanted to reserve tickets (see StdAMS Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr.135, Bd. IV, Fach 13, Nr.70, Bl.326). Despite the massive propaganda campaign the production only received eleven performances – not bad in comparison to other plays but clearly disappointing in view of a possible propaganda coup.

[677] In October 1936 Schlösser wrote to Friedrich Wilhelm Hymnen, one of the most prolific young Nazi dramatists, and mentioned that he had met Münster's manager Hanke at the Grabbe Festival in Detmold. Schlösser assured Hymnen that Hanke wanted to premiere his latest play The Vasall during the current season. At this point several other stages had already declined to produce the play. More than two months later Hymnen wrote to Schlösser complaining about Hanke and his evasive tactics as he wanted "vor

This does not mean, however, that Hanke refrained from any propaganda, but he made use of a more subtle form of influencing instead.[678] To achieve this, for example with classical plays, Hanke had different methods at his disposal. Firstly, he could leave out the works of some classical dramatists and concentrate on others. The plays by Goethe, for example, were rarely produced, but Schiller regularly played.[679] The most remarkable revival, however, was experienced by Grabbe, whose monumental dramas were deemed heroic.[680] In order to make the "new" spirit at the theatre absolutely clear, Hanke even produced Grabbe's fragmentary drama Marius and Sulla in combination with Hanns Johst's nationalistic play The Loner (Der Einsame).[681] Secondly, he could

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März nicht einmal einen Termin, geschweige denn die Aufführung selbst, festsetzen". Regarding the question of total control of the arts in Nazi Germany (still claimed by some historians and implied throughout in Rischbieter's *Theater im Dritten Reich*) it is interesting to note that at no point it was suggested to exert any pressure on Hanke. On the contrary, Hymnen wanted to refrain from such measures, which might result in Hanke producing the play without much enthusiasm. In January 1937 Schlösser replied that after another "intervention" Hanke had hinted at producing the piece in mid- April. With this time scale in mind Schlösser proposed to have the first production in Bochum instead (see BArch, R55/20231a, Bl.449, 452, 454). As it turned out The Vasall was first produced in Bochum in March 1937, and during the following season received further productions at four minor theatres. Despite Schlösser's intervention, however, the play was never performed in Münster. We can note, therefore, that even with a play by a celebrated Nazi dramatist, who enjoyed support on the highest level, the regime could neither ensure that it was produced at a certain theatre nor that it received more than just a few productions and was completely forgotten afterwards.
A similar case was Felix Dühnen's "völkisch" drama Uta von Naumburg which Schlösser, Goebbels and even Heinrich Himmler wanted to see produced all over Germany in summer 1939. Schlösser noted that although the theatres should not be ordered to produce the play (which the Reich Theatre Law would have made possible in theory) they should receive a circular which made it clear that they were expected to produce the play. The circular went out to 24 theatres on 20 July 1939 and asked the managers to give specific performance dates in the not too distant future. The result of the circular, however, was meagre. After four weeks 17 theatres had not even bothered to answer, and by mid- September nine theatres had already indicated that they would not produce the play at all (see BArch, R55/20258, Bl.64-66, 68, 71-72, 74, 79-80,85-86, 88-89).

[678] Kuropka is wrong when assuming that the highest level of politicisation of the theatre programmes was reached during the Hanke era (see Kuropka, Joachim. "Aspekte des kulturellen Lebens in Münster während der NS- Zeit. Theater – Büchereien – Schulen". Jakobi, Franz- Josef, Thomas Sternberg, eds. Kulturpolitik in Münster während der nationalsozialistischen Zeit. Referate und Diskussionsbeiträge der Tagung am 8. und 9. Juni 1990 im Franz- Hitze- Haus Münster. Münster: Regensberg, 1990. 104, 119). From what we have seen it was definitely the 1933/34 season, which could claim this "privilege".

[679] Friedrich Schiller was interpreted by many Nazi theorists as an archetypal German nationalist and anti-Semitic revolutionary. Hans Fabricius called him a "Kampfgenosse Hitlers" and Goebbels claimed that Schiller was one of the ideological forefathers of the "national revolution" of 1933. Others asserted that Wilhelm Tell clearly corresponded with the Nazi idea of national community ("Volksgemeinschaft"), and Hermann Burte, established a direct line between Schiller's unfinished Demetrius and the Russian campaign of the Wehrmacht (see Ruppelt, Georg. Schiller im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland. Der Versuch einer Gleichschaltung. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1979. 13, 26).
The confusion in the cultural administration, however, also becomes obvious in the case of Schiller. In 1941 his Wilhelm Tell was banned because of its alleged call of tyrannicide (see ibid., 41-45).

[680] Münster's theatre company regularly took part in the national theatre festival in remembrance of Grabbe held annually in the Westphalian town of Detmold. This prestigious festival received national press coverage and so did the Städtische Bühnen and its manager. As has been seen Hanke was no stranger to promoting himself, and the fact that he organised the 1936 Grabbe festival was certainly useful with future applications (for more information on the festival see BArch, R55/20451, R55/20451a, R55/20452 and R55/20452a).

[681] In an internal report to Goebbels the National Dramaturg Schlösser praised Hanke's project and the Münster production, although it had been within the limits of a municipal theatre. Concerning Marius and

work with new translations of Elizabethan plays, Greek tragedies and modern classics. Hanke produced Ibsen's Peer Gynt in a "free" translation by Dietrich Eckart, who had been Hitler's mentor in the early 1920s.[682] Oscar Wilde's Lady Windermere's Fan received a similar treatment during the same season. The aim of the new translation by Karl Lerbs was to make the text "compatible" with the regime.[683] With Shakespeare especially, however, the question of "correct" translation became a matter of national importance, given the role the bard had been playing on the German stage (see below).[684] As a third possibility, Hanke could leave out certain parts of certain plays or put emphasis on particular scenes or characters. One of the best examples is, of course, "Shylock" in Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice.[685]

Sulla Schlösser tried to be polite in his criticism and stated that the "Aufführung war vom besten Wollen und intensivsten Einsatz des gesamten Ensembles getragen" (Schlösser's letter is based on a report of Referent Scherler, which was sent to him on 15 September 1936. See BArch, R55/20451, Bl.148).

[682] The 1935/36 production of Eckart's Peer Gynt adaptation had a successful run at the Städtische Bühnen and received 17 performances. The new "quality" of this adaptation was the presentation of the protagonist not as a "weakling" but as some kind of Scandinavian Faust who is "true to his better self" (Eckart, Dietrich. "Peer Gynt". Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 12 (1935/36): programm no. 1).
The importance of Münster's production was further underlined by Schlösser's presence who, in his speech at the theatre, asserted that Faust and Peer Gynt were "die ersten Kronzeugen für Absicht und Ziel alles dessen, was heute der Nationalsozialismus in Deutschland unternimmt" (Schlösser, Rainer. Ibid.: programme no. 4).

[683] See Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 12 (1935/36): programme no. 1. The theatre's own Oskar Stampfer was anxious to justify the choice of Wilde's popular play and asserted that its main idea was a criticism of Britain's society and its arrogant upper class (see *MZ*, 18 September 1935). Others stressed the importance of the play because it portrayed a decaying society with low morals.
To support such a reading the question of translation became crucial. In this case it was done by Karl Lerbs, himself an author of comedies and an ardent Nazi supporter. The press praised Lerbs' translation because he had tried "durch eine sinngemäße Weiterführung, Ausdehnung und Entlastung des Textes diesen dem Stand des heutigen deutschen Theaters pietätvoll aber entschieden anzugleichen" (*MA*, 19 September 1935).

[684] German translations of Shakespearean plays have a considerable tradition. Questions of translation, therefore, have always met with great interest. After 1933, however, translations did not only need to have literary but also political merit. During the 1920s the traditional Schlegel/Tieck translations had been successfully challenged by Hans Rothe who translated Shakespeare quite freely into modern German. He was heavily criticised by traditionalists, and during the 1930s this criticism was taken over by Nazi critics who accused Rothe of being "antivölkisch" (see a letter by Schlösser to Goebbels dated 18 February 1936 at BArch R55/20218, Bl.43) and as a typical exponent of Weimar decadence (see especially the articles by Werner Kurz, Karl Künkler and Wolf Braumüller in a "Shakespeare/Rothe special issue" of the Bausteine zum deutschen Nationaltheater published in February 1936).
After consulting an "expert panel" Goebbels decided in May 1936 to prohibit Rothe's translations altogether. It is interesting to note that in his circular to the theatre managers Goebbels intended to give his order additional weight by stressing that they should refrain from any further experiments with new translations in view of the high subsidies paid to them from public funds (see BArch, R55/20218, Bl.35). This hidden threat hints at the fact that in contrast to the opinion of the "expert panel" Rothe's translations still enjoyed considerable popularity in Germany (see ibid., Bl.3-22). Rothe subsequently moved to London, but continued to complain about the decision.

[685] In October 1936 the translator Hermann Kroepelin suggested to the Propaganda Ministry the "improvement" of the current Schlegel/Tieck translation of The Merchant of Venice in view of the Race Laws passed in 1935. According to the these laws the relationship between Lorenzo and Jessica – daughter of the Jew Shylock – was no longer desirable. Kroepelin was of the opinion that a few changes regarding the character of Jessica – he thought the inclusion of three verses was enough – would make her "compatible" to the new legislation. The propaganda ministry was fascinated by the idea and offered its support. In particular Kroepelin suggested a solution "nicht durch Herabwürdigung der Jessica, oder

Fourthly, the choice of works by certain dramatists could make all the difference. Lessing's Nathan der Weise was clearly avoided but his Minna von Barnhelm often staged.

In this respect the question of interpretation, of staging a play became crucial. In order to make public the idea of special interpretations, the Programme Notes frequently contained articles which either commented generally on how to interpret classical plays in a National Socialist sense or were directly related to special productions in Münster to ensure that patrons read them in the intended way and understood the underlying message. In one of these articles, Hebbel's Agnes Bernauer is being discussed. The author stresses the idea that

> the individual, magnificent and great, noble and kind as it may be, under all circumstances has to subordinate itself to society, because in society and in its formal manifestation, the state, all human beings live, whereas in the individual only a small portion of society is able to blossom.[686]

In a quite similar way, the production of Ibsen's Pillars of Society is introduced as a play which has to be interpreted from the "spirit of our times":

> The task of the adaptation was to remove the doctrinal socialist ideas in order to put more emphasis on the struggle for social stability with regard to the kind of community socialism, which Ibsen definitely had in mind.[687]

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durch ihre Bastardisierung unter Hörnern des Vaters, – wobei ja immer die Mutter bleibt, – sondern im Gegenteil, dadurch, dass man den Charakter der Jessica zu Ende führt in den vorgezeichneten Bahnen und sie durch den Zusammenbruch des Vaters zum Bewusstsein ihrer Familienverbundenheit führt und so die Verbindung mit Lorenzo im letzten Augenblick unmöglich macht, - indem sie dem Hilferuf ihres Vaters folgt". Kroeplin even claimed that Shakespeare himself suggested such a revision in "Akt V, Scene 1: Etwa Zeile 90 sagt Jessica: ‚Nie macht die liebliche Musik mich lustig' und bekundet damit ein Anders-Sein und eine besonders geartete Intellektualität." In general, therefore, [legt] "Shakespeare ein großes Bedenken deutlich zu Tage und berechtigt uns, darauf weiter fortzugehen in dieser Richtung. Alle Änderungen lassen sich ohne weiteres verantworten, weil sie auch so schon im Sinne Shakespeares sind. Und den Zusatz am Schluss kann uns auch das übelwollende Ausland nicht zum Vorwurf machen: wir haben in keiner Weise am Werk des Dichters gerührt, - wir haben es nur an einer wichtigen Stelle weiter gedacht und gestaltet" (see BArch, R55/20218, Bl.74-77, 88-93).
It seems, however, that this new version was never produced. Another adaptation, which made Jessica Shylock's foster child and eliminated all positive remarks about Jews in the play, was produced in Berlin in 1942. The number of productions, however, was exceedingly low (see BArch, R55/20194, Bl.283, 285, 287, 291-292).

[686] My translation of Rube, Wolrad. "Agnes Bernauer. Ein deutsches Trauerspiel in fünf Akten von Friedrich Hebbel". Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 11 (1934/35): programme no. 9.

[687] My translation of Hattesen, Benno. "Stützen der Gesellschaft". Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 11 (1934/35): programme no. 11 (for similar re-interpretations regarding the "poet of the Nordic spirit" see "Henrik Ibsen und der Norden. Zu Erich Pabst's Inszenierung der ‚Frau im Meere'." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster. Ed. Erich Pabst. 16 (1939/40): programme no. 6).
This reading stands in clear contrast to other articles in the Notes which had been published a few years earlier. In 1929 Richards-Ruzicka described Ibsen as the "classic social critic of his time" (Richards-Ruzicka, Kurt. "Henrik Ibsen". Blätter des Theaters der Stadt Münster. Ed. Kurt Richards- Ruzicka. 6 (1929/30): 23).

But Hanke did not only make demands on classical plays, even comedies were used to transport "völkisch" ideas. Alois Johannes Lippl's comedy Die Pfingstorgel, for example, would not deal with *personal* problems but with *typical* human characters, with farms, villages and rural landscape; and as

> the audience is carefully but deliberately injected with the ideology, one can not escape it, and as the ideology is valuable, the outcome is good and right, too.[688]

This idea seems to have already been applied in the first "national" season. The ban on comedies by Jewish dramatists made it vital that replacements ("Ersatzdramatik") were found. Comedies and farces by dramatists whose political allegiance was beyond doubt were particularly welcome.[689] What mattered was not so much the plot but the ideology behind it. The ultimate consequence of this concept was that any play became a possible carrier of ideas – given it received the right treatment by a clever director. Some contemporary theorists even claimed that the transmission of ideology worked better with seemingly unpolitical comedies because audiences would not expect any attempt to influence them.[690]

These findings, however, should not be generalized. Not all plays were interpreted in a "völkisch" sense. The reasons for this were often quite banal and linked to the production methods at German provincial theatres. Especially with productions which had been in the repertoire for a long time, it is unlikely that the cast could rehearse new interpretations quickly.[691] And it had to be quickly due to the repertory system that

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[688] My translation of Kaehler, Wolfgang. "Alois Johannes Lippl und seine Pfingstorgel". Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 12 (1935/36): programme no. 3.

[689] During the 1933/34 season August Hinrichs and Hans Kyser fulfilled these requirements perfectly. The two most successful comedies of the season (Wenn der Hahn kräht and Krach um Jolanthe) were written by Hinrichs, who became one of the best known playwrights during the Third Reich. Many of his plays were set in rural areas and many of them were originally written in northern German dialect. Although Hinrichs wrote only one "völkisch" play with the "folk drama" Stedings Ehre he was a favourite of the Propaganda Ministry because his unexceptionable comedies of rural life could be easily subsumed under the "Blood and Soil" ideology. Especially during the later years of the regime they delivered worthwhile escapist entertainment. In return he was honoured by the regime with the prestigious "Goethe Medal" in 1939 (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS-Staat*, 157, 221-222).
In principle the same holds true for Hans Kyser, although his comedy Rembrandt in Court was less successful. Kyser, however, was another politically "safe" dramatist the Nazis could rely on. His anti-Polish propaganda piece Fire on the Border was one of the most successful pre- 1933 nationalistic plays. The trend of producing comedies by "völkisch" dramatists continued during the following seasons (see below).

[690] This was the conclusion the organisers drew from a series of "model performances" during Berlin's "Art Winter" in 1934/35. The fact that audiences of comedies did not expect any propaganda but consumed these plays in a rather uncritical manner made them perfect for subtle indoctrination (see Brenner, Hildegard. Die Kunstpolitik des Nationalsozialismus. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1963. 93-94).

[691] See Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 14-15 and 287-289.

demanded the production of a substantial number of plays each season.[692] Additionally, it is doubtful if the actual productions completely reflected the ideas mentioned in the articles.[693] Apart from that, it is even possible that these articles were deliberately included in the Programme Notes to justify the production of seemingly "pointless" comedies and farces and establish some link to a political agenda.[694]

Some aspects of continuity between the Weimar years and the Third Reich regarding the choice of repertoire have already been mentioned. The most important aspect is probably the fact that the Nazis never challenged the role of theatre as a cultural and educational institution. On the contrary, they increasingly stressed this function and tried to profit from the rich theatrical heritage to establish a sentiment of continuity and to recommend themselves to the establishment as a cultured leadership.[695] The crucial role which was attributed to the theatre and the extent to which it was funded by the state are indeed singular in German history.[696] In line with this official support and the

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[692] During the 1918/19 season, for example, 39 plays were produced, three of them first productions. The 1929/30 season saw the production of 20 plays, as did the 1933/34 season. In comparison, during the 2000/01 season the Städtische Bühnen produced only 10 plays.

[693] Already during the Weimar years – and especially under Niedecken-Gebhardt – high theoretical aims could rarely be put into practice. During the 1924/25 and 1925/26 seasons, for example, Niedecken-Gebhardt divided the whole programme into the headings "Feier" and "Spiel". In the Programme Notes contributors discussed the importance of the current opera renaissance, along with aesthetic questions regarding recent artistic developments, modern stage design and the role of the "new" actor (see especially Niedecken-Gebhardt's "Festschrift" Feierspiele Münster Pfingsten 1925. StdAMS, DS 378 Spielpläne Städtische Bühnen. Folder 1923-1929).
These theoretical demands, however, did not find much reflection in the actual repertoire. Audience demand for entertainment had to be catered for and, therefore, operettas and shallow comedies found substantial representation.

[694] Especially radical critics associated with the Rosenberg circle, like the above mentioned Walter Stang, quickly seized opportunities like these to criticise the repertoire policy of theatres.
I am aware of the fact that at this point interviews with contemporary witnesses might have helped to answer some of the questions regarding production and interpretation. I decided against interviews because of methodological problems (see Introduction). In connection with a more specific research project on the lines of "performance and audience" or "audience memory", however, it might be desirable to interview theatre patrons of the 1930s and 1940s.

[695] The "Militant League for German Culture" (KfdK) claimed that the theatre as a moral institution would from now on rank as the strongest means for popular education, together with the schools and churches (see exposé of KfdK entitled "Ursachen und Wirkungen der deutschen Theaterkrise und Vorschläge zu ihrer Behebung", published on 22 March 1933. Qtd. in Ruppelt, *Schiller*, 104).

[696] Some statistical data may suffice to illustrate the extent of state support. In 1933, for example, 147 publicly subsidised theatres employed some 22,000 people. Only seven years later these numbers had risen to 248 theatres with 44,000 employees (see Daiber, Hans. Schaufenster der Diktatur. Theater im Machtbereich Hitlers. Stuttgart: Neske, 1995. 11).
The official support seems to have been successful judging from the rapidly increasing audience figures, which tripled within four years from 520,000 in 1932 to 1.6m in 1936. The rising subsidies can also be gathered from the amount paid to single theatres directly from the Propaganda Ministry. These special subsidies (paid alongside the "normal" municipal subsidies) amounted to RM 9.7m in 1934. By 1942 they had risen to RM 45m (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS- Staat*, 39).
Special emphasis was laid on the international reputation of the Third Reich as a regime concerned with the arts. Festivals like the "Reich Theatre Festival", the "Reich Festivals" at Heidelberg, different "Hitler Youth" theatre festivals and the annual "Day of the Theatre" were organised annually on massive scales

idea of stressing continuing elements rather than revolutionary tendencies, the regime increasingly fostered the production of classical drama, and even more so since the "völkisch" plays had failed so disastrously. Politicians, theatre theorists and practitioners were, therefore, anxious to establish close links to the great classics. They claimed, for example, that Lessing's idea of the National Theatre was only being truly fulfilled in the Third Reich or that Schiller, had he lived in the present "would certainly have been the poetic pioneer of our revolution".[697]

The Städtische Bühnen, too, emphasised its great historical past and stressed the close links to Karl Immermann, Grabbe and Albert Lortzing. The attention paid to the classics was part of a growing attempt to create a continuity from these established works to the present day and place the local theatre in the context of Germany's great theatrical tradition. As mentioned before the Programme Notes, too, moved away from the present and avoided references to contemporaries. Instead, a continuity from ancient Greece via Shakespeare and the German classics to the present day was stressed and accompanied a similar concentration in the repertoire. Karl Immermann, for example, regularly featured in the Programme Notes as one of the most important theatre managers in nineteenth century Germany, with which Münster claimed to have had a close connection through Adolf von Vagedes.[698] To stress this association even more the theatre produced Immermann's play The Prince of Syracuse – though without much success.

Münster claimed a special mission, however, to "save" Grabbe and Lortzing. Münster felt particularly entitled to claim Grabbe's oeuvre because of his Westphalian origin.[699] High importance was attached to the participation of the Städtische Bühnen in the prestigious "Grabbe Festivals". Both the press and the Programme Notes repeatedly

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in the presence of leading politicians. After the war Hitler planned to build a number of massive playhouses all over Germany with seating capacities of 2,000 or more (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS-Staat*, 66-67).

These festivals are good example of the Nazis' attempt not only to control by means of laws but also to exert "positive" influence through national days of celebration.

[697] See Goebbels, Joseph. "Schiller und unsere Zeit." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 16 (1938/39): programme no. 10. For a general overview see Albert, Claudia, ed. Deutsche Klassiker im Nationalsozialismus. Schiller – Kleist – Hölderlin. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994.

[698] See, for example, Immermann, Karl. "'Prinz Friedrich von Homburg', Brief über die Düsseldorfer Aufführung (1833)." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 17 (1939/40): programme no. 10.

See also Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 18 (1940/41): programmes no. 2, 5, 8, 10, 12, and 21; as well as Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 19 (1943/44): programme no. 11.

[699] It is interesting to note, however, that this origin was far from undisputed. Commentators from Lower Saxony, for example, claimed Grabbe for their region (see Schultze, Hermann. "Grabbe, Dramatik aus Niedersachsentum." Bausteine zum deutschen Nationaltheater 4 (1936): 260-267).

stressed the connection between "Grabbe's legacy" and National Socialism.[700] Ultimately, commentators claimed, the commitment to Grabbe was a commitment to the "German cause".[701] These new demands were no exception. During the war new roles and functions were attributed to many classical dramatists. Schiller played a particularly important role as the great "national poet". The Propaganda Ministry asked to use the character of Talbot in Schiller's Jungfrau von Orleans (Joan of Arc), for example, to present Britain as materialistic and hostile to new ideas.[702]

With regard to the scope of this study it is especially interesting to examine the role of Shakespeare as the most important English- speaking dramatist. It has already been mentioned that productions of Shakespearean drama have a long tradition in Germany. In contrast to the virtual neglect of his works on British stages during the 1920s and early 1930s Shakespeare had always been regarded as a central part of the German theatrical canon.[703] Despite some attempts by radical Nazi theorists to prove his "un-Germanness" Shakespeare's presence in the repertoire was never really questioned.[704] On the contrary, there were constant efforts to incorporate Shakespeare in the "völkisch" cultural ideology and interpret him as the archetypal Germanic playwright.[705] Even during the war Shakespeare was still performed all over

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[700] See Schlösser, Rainer. "Grabbes Vermächtnis." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 16 (1938/39): programme no. 2.

[701] *MA* 17 October 1938. The paper covered the "Grabbe Festival" widely and on 17 October alone dedicated a whole page to the event. There were also many reports in the run-up to the festival.

[702] A directive by the "Zeitschriften- Dienst" (National Journal Service) from 23 October 1939 asked the press not only to stress Schiller's strong belief in the German nation but also to avoid any mention of his cosmopolitanism and idealism (see Ruppelt, *Schiller*, 38-39).

[703] Commentators emphasised that whereas in Germany Shakespeare and Shaw were probably performed more often than in Britain, British audiences knew hardly anything about German drama (see Theilkuhl, Wolfgang. Deutsches Land und Deutsches Leben. London: Methuen, 5th ed. 1944. 119-120).
It is interesting to note that every German director was expected to have at least once delivered an important Shakespeare production during his career.
Until today Shakespeare is the most important dramatist on German stages and more often produced there than in Britain. The statistics show that during the 2001/02 season, for example, Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream came fourth in the list of the most popular dramatic works. And during 1999/2000 Shakespeare was the most successful dramatist on German stages with 24 plays in 147 productions and 2,163 performances (see www.buehnenverein.de. Quotes taken from different press releases as published in "Presse und Publikationen", accessed on 8 August 2003).

[704] The Nazis attacked the modern interpretations of Shakespearean drama. We have to note, however, that the attacks on modernist approaches did not start with the Nazi take-over but began during the 1920s (see Hortmann, *Shakespeare*, 2001. 137).

[705] Hermann Türck, for example, claimed that Hamlet was a true hero in the National Socialist sense (see Türck, Hermann. "Hamlet, eine eminent tatkräftige Natur!" Stadttheater und Kammerspiele. Ed. Willi Hanke14 (1937/38): programme no. 12).
Theodor Fischer regarded the end of Hamlet as a victory for the race and as a symbol for the superiority of the nation over the interests of the individual as "das Geschlecht, das Ganze, die Gesellschaft bleibt, der Staat wird gerettet. Und das ist groß" (Fischer, Friedrich Theodor. "Shakespeares 'Hamlet'." Ibid.: programme no. 14).

Germany.[706] Although the theatres had to apply for permission to produce his plays from March 1941 this seems to have been regularly granted.[707] The fact that an application had to be written, however, seems to have put many theatre managements off, as performances of Shakespeare's plays generally declined in the course of the war.[708]

Münster's repertoire mirrors not only the continuing popularity of Shakespeare during the Third Reich but also some interesting points in the theoretical discussions regarding the striving to "Germanify" him.[709] In 1939/40, for example, the Städtische Bühnen

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The influential theorist Wolf Braumüller even made demands on Shakespeare's complete works. According to him Shakespeare clearly championed a "völkisch" ideology, which originates in his "Nordic blood" (see Braumüller, Wolf. "Shakespeare – der Dramatiker der politischen Totalität." Ibid.: programme no. 15).
And Rainer Schlösser claimed that Shakespeare should not only be interpreted as "Germanic" and "heroic" but also as a dramatist clearly expressing ideas central to Nazi ideology. Schlösser asserted that "wenn Shakespeare mit so offenen Armen in Deutschland empfangen wurde, dann deshalb, weil gar nicht daran zu zweifeln ist, dass ihn Blutsbande mit uns verbinden. Mit anderen Worten: wir erkennen in dem universalen dramatische Schaffen von Shakespeare das gleiche rassische Grundelement des Nordischen, auf welches wir die Höchstwerte auch unseres eigenen Volkes zurückzuführen gelernt haben" (see Schlösser, Rainer. "Der deutsche Shakespeare". Shakespeare-Jahrbuch 74 (1938): 23-24).

[706] After the outbreak of the war the Propaganda Ministry made it absolutely clear that despite the fact that some regional party officials had banned Shakespeare performances in November 1939, Shakespeare and Shaw should remain on German stages (see BArch, R55/20258, Bl.41-44).

[707] The German federal archives hold several lists compiled on a regular basis by staff at the Propaganda Ministry of theatres who applied for the permission to stage Shakespeare (see BArch, R55/20218, Bl.177-188). All the surviving lists are from the second half of 1942. Depending on how many theatres applied Goebbels was presented with lists of about ten theatres every fortnight. There is not a single case in which permission was not granted. Only if theatres wanted to produce more than one Shakespearean play within a given period the ministry asked them to stage only one of them. We have to note, however, that the average provincial theatre did not produce more than one Shakespeare each season anyway.
Only during spring 1941 there seems to have been a reluctance at the Propaganda Ministry to grant permission for Shakespeare performances (see Eicher, *Spielplanstrukturen*, 300). As late as 1943, however, the Völkischer Beobachter asserted that "der jedenfalls hat die nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik nicht begriffen, der gegen Shakespeare, Kleist und Schiller Sturm läuft" (qtd. in Ruppelt, *Schiller*, 31).

[708] In Münster there was no Shakespeare production after the 1939/40 season. In Osnabrück, too, the 1938/39 production of Hamlet was the last Shakespeare, after the Deutsches Nationaltheater had performed one Shakespeare play at least per season until the mid- 1930s. In Dortmund and Hagen there were no Shakespeare productions whatsoever during the war.
These figures, however, have to be put in context. The theatres in Dortmund and Hagen had never produced much Shakespeare. Neither the take-over nor the 1941 decree, therefore, changed much in their repertoire policy. And the municipal theatre in Bielefeld is a perfect example for 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.

[709] Shakespearean drama continued to be popular during the Third Reich and regularly belonged to the audience's favourites at the Städtische Bühnen. Münster produced Measure for Measure in 1932/33, Much Ado About Nothing and The Comedy of Errors in 1933/34, The Tempest in 1934/35, King Lear in 1935/36, The Taming of the Shrew and As You Like It in 1936/37, Hamlet in 1937/38, and A Midsummer Night's Dream in 1939/40.
If we take the number of performances into account the figures tell us even more. They show that Shakespearean drama was even more popular during the Third Reich than before. Whereas the 1924/25 production of All is Well that Ends Well, as well as A Midsummer Night's Dream, Richard II and Hamlet in 1925/26, Romeo and Juliet in 1926/27, Othello in 1928/29, As You Like It in 1929/30, Julius Caesar in 1930/31, and Measure for Measure in 1932/33 had been averagely successful, the productions during the

produced A Midsummer Night's Dream with new music composed by Wolfgang Rössler. After 1933 the play could not be performed with Mendelssohn's stage music any longer, because Mendelssohn had been Jewish. The success of the play, however, had been closely linked to Mendelssohn's famous music and despite many attempts equally popular music could never be found.[710]

The crucial translation question is mirrored in Münster, too. Both the 1932/33 and 1934/35 productions of Measure for Measure and The Tempest made use of the controversial Rothe translations, whereas the 1936/37 production of As You Like It appeared in the traditional Wolf Graf Baudissin translation – immediately after Goebbels had banned the Rothe translations in 1936. Both of these examples clearly illustrate that Münster's theatre managers were keen to follow Goebbels directives and to please the regime; possibilities for disobedience or resistance were not seized.[711] Their behaviour also shows that the regime had finally found a way to use the theatre for its purposes. Instead of obvious radical changes, the Nazis made use of the theatre system as it was and stressed continuing elements.

In line with this approach the regime also made demands on the modern classics like Ibsen, Shaw and Hauptmann, although the situation in this genre was more delicate and the official position subject to change. The theoretical discourse was characterised by a near- unanimous rejection of Naturalism and especially the ideas of social criticism (see

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Third Reich were considerably more popular. The 1936/37 and 1937/38 productions of The Taming of the Shrew and Hamlet were two of the most successful plays of the seasons (with 14 and 12 performances respectively), and the 1939/40 production A Midsummer Night's Dream was the most successful drama of that season with 17 performances.

[710] Still the Münster production was a success and received 17 performances (for more information on the Mendelssohn "case" see Levi, *Music in the Third Reich*, 70-74).

It is interesting to note that at the same time even official Nazi journals openly questioned the decision to ban Mendelssohn's stage music. In a letter from February 1937 Christoph von dem Ritter, who worked on the editorial board of the radical SS journal Das Schwarze Korps (The Black Corps), complained to Schlösser about the continued existence of this ban as it was high time "endlich einmal mit den kümmerlichen Versuchen aufzuhören, den „Sommernachtstraum" ohne Mendelssohn'sche Musik aufzuführen. M.E. kommt das, was bislang an Ersatz geboten wurde, nicht an Mendelssohn heran. Halten Sie es für psychologisch falsch, das auch nach aussen hin einzugestehen? Ich finde, es ist viel propagandistischer, wenn man in solch eklatantem Fall, wo man doch wirklich nicht von Zersetzung reden kann, erklärt, dass es bessere Beispiele als Mendelssohn gibt, um den zersetzenden jüdischen Einfluss in der deutschen Musik zu beweisen." Unfortunately Schlösser's hand-written comment on the page is illegible (see BArch, R55/20618, Bl.98).

[711] There are many examples of Shakespeare productions which were used as a vehicle for critical ideas. Most of these productions, however, took place at the famous Berlin theatres where Gustav Gründgens and Heinz Hilpert had more freedom of manoeuvre than provincial theatre managers.

One example is Jürgen Fehling's production of Richard III in March 1937, which had Richard limping in a way which strikingly resembled Goebbels. Fehling produced the play at the renowned Prussian State Theatre under Gründgens' management (see Rühle, Günther. "Ich bin Fehling. Shakespeares 'Richard III.', eine Inszenierung in der Diktatur – Jürgen Fehlings nicht geheures Theater." Theater heute October 2002: 34-41. See also Hortmann, *Shakespeare*, 151-159).

above). At the same time the regime was anxious to incorporate most of the Naturalist dramatists into their ideology and many, if they were still alive, happily lent their support.[712] The general ban on Naturalism, however, made the choice of plays crucial. Plays by the Scandinavian Naturalists have already been mentioned above; they were interpreted as "Nordic" and "Germanic" and remained favourites with audiences.[713] The regime faced more problems with the most important exponents of German Naturalism, Hermann Sudermann and Gerhart Hauptmann, especially with their early works.[714] The regime was at pains, however, to reach a modus vivendi with Hauptmann, who had received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1912, and whom they needed to lend Nazi Germany a cultural façade. On the other hand Hauptmann had been one of the most prominent advocates of the Weimar Republic. A special test case, therefore, was Hauptmann's 80th birthday in 1942, which the regime had to celebrate but tried to keep as low key as possible.[715] The Städtische Bühnen, for example, marked Hauptmann's birthday, but again we can note that the management was anxious not to get into conflict with official policy. According to the guidelines of the Propaganda Ministry

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[712] Knut Hamsun, for example, publicly supported the Nazis.

[713] Apart from Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, Björnstjerne Björnson and Knut Hamsun featured prominently here. Ibsen's Peer Gynt (see above) remained a favourite both with the regime (in the adaptation by Eckart) and the audience (an impressive 17 performances in 1935/36).

[714] In 1935/36, for example, the Städtische Bühnen produced Sudermann's Johannisfeuer and Hauptmann's Der Biberpelz (The Beaver Coat). The two Naturalist plays had a considerable success with nine and 19 performances respectively. We have to note, however, that The Beaver Coat is primarily a comedy and that Johannisfeuer is more concerned with the beauty of the east Prussian landscape than with Naturalistic ideas. Both plays were officially supported during the Third Reich. Sudermann's Drama Johannisfeuer was even turned into a film in 1939 (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS- Staat*, 178).
Willi Hanke, therefore, did not try out any courageous experiments to test Münster's party officials but moved on safe terrain. He did not dare to take any risks although he could have easily done so by choosing a Hauptmann play which the Nazis could not claim for themselves but with which he could have taken a critical position. But Hanke played safe – as did Erich Pabst a few years later.
It is interesting to note that other Naturalists such as Hermann Bahr or Max Halbe were much easier to claim as their plays could often be incorporated in the "Blood and Soil" concept.

[715] The Propaganda Ministry made it quite clear to theatres that it did not wish to see any productions of Hauptmann's early plays such as Die Weber (The Weavers), Fuhrmann Henschel (Drayman Henschel) or Elga.
At the same time the regime was willing to exploit Hauptmann's fame shamelessly. In a note to one of his staff Rainer Schlösser supported the idea of performing Hauptmann's plays all over occupied Europe as this was "propagandistisch ergiebig, da er einerseits zum höheren Ruhme des deutschen Geisteslebens gespielt werden würde, und das Ausland andererseits zugeben müsste, nicht zu deutlicher Tendenz ausgesetzt zu sein" (note by Schlösser to Frenzel dated 12 January 1942. BArch, R55/20235, Bl.41).
As to the celebrations in Germany, the Propaganda Ministry wanted to concentrate the events in Breslau, which was not only Hauptmann's home town but also had the considerable advantage of being far away from Berlin. Apart from that the Ministry allowed "virtually every German theatre" to produce one Hauptmann play preferably in autumn 1942 to mark the occasion. It was made clear though that the National Dramaturg would not speak at the central event in Breslau and that the press was "darüber unterrichtet, dass verhältnismäßig kurz getreten werden soll" (note by Johansson to Haegert in the Propaganda Ministry dated 6 October 1942. Ibid. Bl.184). Only the press in the occupied territories was given more freedom to mark the event as "bezüglich Hauptmann nach dem Ausland hin gilt, dass er dort ein Pfund ist, mit dem sich wuchern lässt" (note by Schlösser to Goebbels dated 27 October 1942. Ibid. Bl.192).

Münster produced a recent literary- romantic rather than Naturalistic play.[716] Although the play received an impressive 17 performances it is interesting to note that it was only performed in the Studio. The theatre also honoured the dramatist with a matinee, but a number of accompanying articles in the Programme Notes avoided any mention of Hauptmann's pre-1933 fame and claimed that he had reached his true stature as an acclaimed artist only during the Third Reich.[717] Although these attempts to incorporate Hauptmann in the regime's accepted dramatic canon appear clumsy they seem to have paid off. The regime seemed to have found a way eventually of using the theatre for its efforts without having to develop a radical new art form. In Münster Hanke managed to achieve his attendance records while deliberately using the established "Stadttheater" as his platform. The concentration on the acclaimed drama of the classics and modern classics also had the advantage of proving to foreign commentators that Nazi Germany was in fact still a "Kulturnation".

There were, however, two problems. Firstly, the classics and modern classics never developed into the mainstay of German repertoires under the Nazis. The idea of exchanging the failed "völkisch" plays with uplifting classics did not work. Their share in the productions all through the 1930s remained at a level already achieved during the Weimar years, or even below that. Comedies and farces, which in their majority could not claim to be morally uplifting to a comparable degree, not only remained the dominant fare but grew increasingly important.[718]

The second problem was perhaps even more disturbing for the Nazis as they faced another ideological disaster after the failure of "völkisch" drama and the abrupt halt to the "Thing" idea. The proclaimed concentration on the German dramatic heritage and "Aryan" playwrights leads us to the logical assumption that – apart from Shakespeare –

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[716] Die goldene Harfe (The Golden Harp) had been first produced in 1933.

[717] In a talk on Hauptmann's oeuvre Walter Kordt mentioned only the plays which had been published after 1933. Kordt made a clear distinction between Hauptmann's "early works" and his "mature oeuvre" during the Third Reich, a progress which he compared to Goethe (a comparison which would have flattered Hauptmann who had clearly modelled his appearance on Goethe from the early Weimar years). Kordt went so far as to claim that Hauptmann's progress "erscheint fast so naturhaft wie das Wachstum eines anonymen Sprößlings zu einem gewaltigen Baum" (see Kordt, Walter. "Gerhart Hauptmann im achten Lebensjahrzehnt. Aus einer Ansprache, gehalten in den Kammerspielen am 14. Februar 1943." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster. Ed. Erich Pabst. 19 (1942/43): programme nos. 17, 21, 24). In a wild attempt Walter Kordt even tried to alienate Hauptmann from Naturalism and linked his late success to the rise of National Socialism. Even to committed Nazis this interpretation must have appeared crude.

[718] During the years leading up to the war the classics' share in both the production and the performance figures stayed relatively low between 6% and 13%. Only after the outbreak of the war did their share rise exponentially and reached as much as 18% in the production and even 26% in the performance figures. See Diagram V.

foreign dramatists and composers were banned from German stages with immediate effect after 1933. Theatres would surely have avoided any works by Wilde, Pinero, and especially by the socialist Bernard Shaw. And indeed, the lively debate on the foreign repertoire on German stages leaves no doubt as to the aim of eliminating every "un-German" influence altogether. In accordance with this aim the works by Jewish dramatists and composers were banned, left-wing drama disappeared, and during the following years the overall share of foreign drama declined. Claims by officials like Otto Laubinger that the regime would still encourage productions of some foreign playwrights seemed like half-hearted attempts to appease the foreign critics.[719] Apart from these exceptions the theoretical discourse seemed to agree on the damnation of everything foreign. Wolf Braumüller claimed that Molière, Sardou and Pailleron were "dated and fuddy-duddy", he rejected Shaw's plays because they were a mere "snobbish fooling about" and did not even "possess an antiquarian quality for the contemporary German stage".[720] Hanns Johst stressed the idea that German authors always ranked higher than foreign dramatists and that the repertoires had to reflect this fact. Domination by foreign works was simply not acceptable.[721]

To the dismay of the regime, however, the share of foreign plays did not seem to decline, and in 1938 Schlösser wrote a dossier concerning the "Überfremdung des Berliner Spielplans", which ran counter to earlier claims of "purification" and certainly outraged Goebbels.[722]

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[719] In his "guidelines" for the 1933/34 season the first National Dramaturg Otto Laubinger (who died in 1934) assured the public that "Shakespeare, Calderón, Molière ebenso wie die großen nordisch – germanischen Dichter Ibsen, Björnson, Hamsun usw. zum unverlierbaren Besitz des deutschen Theaters gehören. Ebenso werden diejenigen modernen Werke der ausländischen Produktion, die überragende Bedeutung haben, stets willkommen sein" (qtd. Wardetzky, Jutta. Theaterpolitik im faschistischen Deutschland. Studien und Dokumente. Berlin (East): Henschel, 1983. 79).

[720] Braumüller, Wolf. "Von den Aufgaben nationalsozialistischer Theaterkritik". Die Deutsche Bühne 7 (1936): 3-4.

[721] See Johst, Hanns. "Das Theater im neuen Reich." Der Autor. May 1933: 8.

[722] The dossier stated that one third of all opera performances had been foreign works, most of all by Italian composers, although Verdi and Puccini would not be a problem. Schlösser complained that "apart from the Staatsoper [...] no opera house produces works by contemporary composers". Although the operetta programme was "nearly one hundred per cent German" the dramatic repertoire showed a high percentage of foreign pieces (between 35% in April and 75% in October) even if "dramatists such as Shakespeare, Ibsen and Björnson [were] counted as German".
Some of the plays by English- speaking authors were Lady Windermere's Fan by Wilde, The Apple Cart, Mrs Warren's Profession, Pygmalion, and Man and Superman by Shaw, as well as Maugham's Jack Straw and Laurence Housman's Victoria Regina (see dossier on the programmes of Berlin theatres between April und October 1938 written by Schlösser and sent to Müller in Goebbels office, dated 9 November 1938. BArch, R55/20258, Bl.155-162).

At the outbreak of the war, however, the regime immediately banned all contemporary Polish, French and English plays.[723] In a letter to Goebbels in September 1939 Schlösser wanted to go even further and expressed his wish to ban some of the established classics such as Molière, too.[724]

An additional problem for the theatre managements was the unpredictable changes in the official policy regarding the foreign repertoire, which were subject to the general political atmosphere. Anti- Polish plays, for example, which had been successful before and after the take-over, were suddenly forbidden after the German- Polish treaty of 1934. Spanish plays, on the other hand, reached the German stages in the course of the Spanish Civil War and Lope de Vega alongside Calderón experienced celebrated revivals. After the inauguration of the "Steel Pact" in 1939 Italy was suddenly hailed as the new theatre- land, and for a brief period of time even Soviet were staged in the course of the 1939 agreement between Molotov and Ribbentrop. After the German attack on the Soviet Union the regime endorsed plays from Hitler's allied countries, especially Hungary, Bulgaria and Finland. And eventually Japan, too, became a dramatic wonderland from early 1942.
This development was mirrored in Münster's programmes, as well. In 1942 the theatre performed Gherardo Gherardi's Feuer im Herbst (Autumn Fire).[725] In May 1941 during the brief period of appeasement between Germany and the Soviet Union Erich Pabst produced Ostrowski's Späte Liebe (Late Love) in the first German production. Only a few months later Pabst paid tribute to the renewed anti- Soviet sentiments with the production of Reinecker's Das Dorf bei Odessa (The Village near Odessa) in 1943.[726]

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[723] See BArch, R55/20258, Bl.220-227.

[724] Schlösser not only wanted to substitute immediately the "depraved" plays by Sardou and Scribe but also Molière. He claimed that the ban on "Maugham, Wilde, Coward and similar pieces" would not result in a vacuum but could be filled easily by comparable German, Scandinavian or Hungarian plays. He did not see any problem with musical theatre either as the foreign influence was negligible anyway. Schlösser added that the only English operettas in the repertoire, Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado and Geisha, could be dispensed with easily (see letter by Schlösser to Goebbels dated 5 September 1939, BArch, R55/20258, Bl.224-226 and Goebbels positive reply from 9 September 1939 on Bl.227).

[725] It is interesting to note that the Städtische Bühnen had originally planned to premiere Autumn Fire but had to forego this right to the prestigious Berlin Volksbühne due to "special circumstances". The fact that the Volksbühne managed to obtain the right from another stage shows how much importance the "Italian connection" was attributed with (see Kordt, Walter. "Zu Gherardo Gherardis ‚Feuer im Herbst'. Anläßlich der Inszenierung in den Kammerspielen." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 19 (1942/43): programme no.25. See also BArch, R55 /20231, Bl.28).
Another example of interest in Italian drama is the comedy Cleopatra the Second by Cesare Meano which was produced in Münster during the 1940/41 season.

[726] The play was quite successful in Münster and received 14 performances, which is all the more interesting as the play was first performed on 16 January 1943 – shortly before the capitulation of the German 6th army at Stalingrad. The production received a glowing review by Wilhelm Vernekohl who presented it as a fight between two ideologies, "die eine, in der alles geordnet ist und auch der Tod seinen

As far as the sudden interest in Japanese drama was concerned Münster followed the trend immediately, too. Pabst produced the "ancient Japanese heroic drama" The 47 Ronin in the presence of the Japanese ambassador in 1942.[727]

Apart from these restricted and politically motivated possibilities, however, everything hints at a drastic reduction of the foreign repertoire after 1933 and a complete elimination after 1939. Again, however, the discrepancy between demands and reality becomes obvious in a close examination of the actual repertoire. First of all the positions in the theoretical debate were far from undivided. Corresponding to other fields in the arts agreement on which foreign dramatists and plays were acceptable to the Third Reich was never reached.[728] Given the scope of this study Shaw is an

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Sinn hat, die andere, in der ein blinder Zufall regiert" (see *MA*, 18 January 1943). As an aside it is worth noting that Vernekohl, who was one of the most important local politicians after 1945 and influenced Münster's post-war cultural life heavily, appears as an ardent supporter of Nazi ideology, not only in this particular review but generally in his work for the press.
The case of the author, Herbert Reinecker, is equally interesting not least because he became one of the most successful script writers for television drama in post-war Germany. Reinecker was a convinced Nazi, a leading figure in the pre-war HJ (Hitler Youth) and an SS war correspondent. In a personal letter to the author Schlösser praised the play because "the underlying idea is clearly based on National-Socialist principles". The play is set in a Ukrainian village days before the German occupation in late summer 1941 presenting the corruption and tyranny of the Soviet system and the desire of the village people for change. An added "topical" interest was the presence of a German minority – honest, brave, "Aryan" – who could not wait to see their homeland freed by the Wehrmacht. Village near Odessa was played all over Germany and received 61 productions in 1942/43 and 13 in 1943/44. The first production was in Hannover on 10 December 1942, and only two days later it was produced by the famous Eugen Klöpfer at the Berlin Volksbühne (see BArch, R55 /21230 [the file has no continuous pagination], letter by Schlösser to Johansson in the Propaganda Ministry dated 4 November 1942; letter from Schlösser to Reinecker, same date; circular by Schlösser to theatre managers dated 14 November 1942; letter from Schlösser to Eugen Klöpfer dated 21 December 1942).
Then, however, the problems started. In a letter from Schlösser to Johansson dated 21 December 1942 he asked him to tell the theatres and the publishers to remove the character of the party commissar Iljitsch from the play because he did not want any audience members to feel sympathy for him – "es empfiehlt sich [...] eine robuste Schwarzmalerei". Another more serious problem occurred only three months later. In a note by Johansson to Schlösser from March 1943 he expressed concerns about the play's concluding sentence "The Germans are coming" as this assertion had caused irritation during recent productions, quite obviously because of the deteriorating situation on the Eastern front after the defeat at Stalingrad. Still, Johansson's proposal "to stop the play until the situation in the East gives cause for more optimism again" was rejected by Schlösser. Schlösser's opinion, however, was not shared by the theatres, several of which rejected the play's production (see BArch, R55 /21230, letter by Billerbeck- Genz, head of the dramaturgical office at the publishing house Eher, 16 March 1943). Later in the war the play became subject to increasing criticism and in June 1944 even the SS complained about a recent production in Bavaria (see BArch, R55 /21230, letter by Roßner to Schlösser, 5 June 1944).
Although commentators criticised the basic idea of the play which was in growing contrast to the actual military situation, with the Red Army already approaching German territory, Schlösser still supported the play.

[727] The connection between this production and the Japanese entry of the war was no secret as Walter Kordt stressed the idea that to show the play now was "einer der lebendigsten Beiträge, die deutsches Theater im gegenwärtigsten Sinne unserer Zeit zu leisten vermag" (see Kordt, Walter. "Über das japanische Drama und Theater." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 18 (1941/42): programme no.17).

[728] It is interesting to note that the theoretical discussion was as inconsistent as the official position regarding certain composers. Hinkel's Prussian Theatre Council regularly disagreed with Schlösser for

especially interesting case. From the mid-1920s the number of performances of Shavian plays had increased all over Germany. He was so popular that the Nazi authorities did not dare to ban his plays after the take-over although, as a British Socialist openly criticising dictatorial regimes and even Hitler personally, Shaw was certainly not popular with the Nazi elite.[729] During the 1930s the continuing presence of Shavian plays in the repertoire was repeatedly questioned, but Goebbels did not want to risk a public outcry.[730] Instead the regime presented Shaw either as an Irishman or as a classic dramatist or both to justify the decision.[731] This propaganda stunt, however, seems to have been rather unsuccessful as internal reports showed that the general public continued to regard Shaw as an Englishman.[732] After the German attack on the Soviet Union, and as further critical remarks by Shaw and complaints by Nazis piled up in the Propaganda Ministry, Hitler himself decided that Shaw's plays should remain in the repertoire.[733] Although the production of his plays became subject to special permission from the National Dramaturg from March 1941 (as with Shakespeare) performances were still possible.[734] Even the delicate question of royalties was dealt with properly and payments went ahead – they were even raised in June 1939.[735]

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example on Meyerbeer or Offenbach whose works the National Dramaturg wanted to see banned (apart from Hoffmanns's Tales, of course). Hinkel, however, defended his different more liberal view.

[729] Even his anti-Hitler play Geneva, however, which openly caricatured Hitler as "Battler" in a costume of Lohengrin, was not forbidden. After numerous complaints, even by the Secret Police (Gestapo) and in official journals such as Der SA-Mann, Goebbels decided that Shaw's plays should continue to be produced (see BArch, R 55/ 20217, Bl.3, 8, 11-13, 24-25, 30-31).

[730] An example of a typical correspondence between a theatre and the office of the National Dramaturg dates from January 1935 and concerns Shaw's play The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles. In its enquiry about a possible production, the Leipzig theatre regarded the play as "in agreement with the demands of the new times", and, indeed, Sigmund Graff in the office of the National Dramaturg had no objections to its production (see BArch, R55/20174, Bl.119-120).

[731] The discussions about Shaw's continuing presence in the programmes became increasingly heated, and by the end of 1937 Schlösser wanted to reach a final decision with Goebbels on the matter. In a note to his colleague Graff he claimed that "Shaw ist heute schon ein halber Klassiker des Dritten Reiches und es führt kulturpolitisch und außenpolitisch zu nichts, sich ernstlich um ihn zu streiten" (see BArch, R55/20217, Bl.3). Two years later, when Schlösser demanded increased attempts to ban foreign works, he added that, of course, "Shaw kann wegen seiner irischen Nationalität zurzeit außer Betracht bleiben" (see letter by Schlösser to Goebbels dated 5 September 1939, BArch, R55/20258, Bl.224).
As late as 1941 Goebbels claimed that Shaw's plays could be used in the regime's anti- English propaganda to such an extent that a ban would be a disaster (qtd. in Wardetzky, *Theaterpolitik*, 81).

[732] "Den Meldungen zufolge wird Shaw in der öffentlichen Meinung immer wieder als Engländer angesehen, zumal er von der Literaturgeschichte und der Publizistik der vergangenen Jahre sehr oft als Engländer herausgestellt wurde" (see „Meldungen aus dem Reich" no.169, 10 March 1941, BArch, R58/158, Bl.63).

[733] Hitler even ordered the press to refrain from polemic remarks concerning Shaw (see BArch, R55/20217, Bl.47-48, 50).

[734] See BArch, R55/20216, Bl.3. As late as 1943 the theatre in Dortmund wanted to produce Shaw and asked the National Dramaturg whether he had any objections to either Pygmalion or Candida (see letter from the "Generalintendant" to Schlösser dated 20 January 1943, BArch, R55 /20349, Bl.400). In his answer Frenzel replied that both plays would be possible but asked Dortmund to produce only one of them (see ibid., Bl.402).

[735] After a short discussion within the Propaganda Ministry regarding the application by Shaw's German publisher (Fischer) to raise the monthly payments from RM 2,000 to RM 3,000 Schlösser decided to give

It was not only Shaw, however, who remained in the repertoire, other foreign dramatists enjoyed similar privileges. The Städtische Bühnen produced Wilde, Scribe, Sardou, and the 1938/39 season even saw two productions of British modern classics.[736] Equally surprising is the fact that although French works were prohibited from 1939, Bizet's Carmen continued to be produced because it was simply too successful.[737]

The possible claim that the regime only left all-time favourites such Bizet, Wilde and Shaw in the repertoire, however, does not correspond to reality either. Münster produced an obscure comedy by Lawrence Huxley in 1935/36,[738] a year later Brandon Thomas' Charley's Aunt made a welcome return, and in 1937/38 Somerset Maugham had a successful run with Die heilige Flamme.[739] The interest in British drama especially remained a characteristic feature of the Städtische Bühnen. During the 1930s Edward Stirling's Paris based "The English Players" came to Münster twice and produced plays in English.[740]

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the increase the go- ahead. These payments, however, seem to have ceased in the course of the war although in August 1942 the Propaganda Ministry in an internal report realised that the confiscation of Shaw's funds had not been justified because as an Irishman he was a national of a neutral country. The report was quick to add, however, that the transfer of any payments to a Swiss bank account would not be feasible either because of the lack of foreign currency (see BArch, R55/703, Bl.16-17, 20-21, 23, 24-27).

[736] Oscar Wilde's An Ideal Husband received nine, Shaw's You Never Can Tell as many as 17 performances – and was one of the most successful comedies in the Studio during that season.
At the same time we have to be aware that the ban on certain foreign works affected some genres more than others. In the operetta repertoire, for example, foreign composers had traditionally only played a marginal role – Jacques Offenbach was the only important exception. Even the works of Gilbert and Sullivan had failed to have a significant impact on German stages. The Mikado was performed a few times in the late 1920s, and Sidney Jones' Geisha received productions in Bielefeld and Münster during the mid- 1930s, but these performances were the exception. The whole genre of musical comedy hardly left any marks in Germany, and even West End hits such as No, No, Nanette only had marginal success on the continent (see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 267).

[737] In a circular from 9 November 1939 the Propaganda Ministry made it clear that "Bedenken gegen die Aufführung der Oper ‚Carmen' nicht mehr erhoben werden" (see BArch, R55/20111, Bl.121. See also a letter by Schlösser to Goebbels from 5 September 1939 regarding foreign repertoire on German stages at BArch, R55/20258, Bl.224-226).
Bizet's presence in the programmes was not even questioned after plausible rumours emerged that he might have been of Jewish decent (see Wulf, *Theater im Dritten Reich*, 114-115).
In Münster Bizet's Carmen was most successful opera in 1935/36 with 21 performances.

[738] Hanke's decision to stage Huxley's comedy Großreinemachen was criticised by Münster's press who called the play a cheap farce with hardly any ideas and filthy humour. The commentator thought it was a shame that such a play would have to be imported, a fact which should encourage young German playwrights to do better (see *MZ*, 23 September 1935).

[739] Somerset Maugham's play appeared in an adaptation by Karl Lerbs (see above).

[740] "The English Players" performed Shaw's Candida in February 1936. In early 1938 there was an interesting exchange of letters between Wilhelm Vernekohl and Gerhard Kaschner with Stirling's company, the "Permanent Continental English Theatre". Stirling offered to come to Münster again with Shaw's Arms and the Man. The two Germans, who worked for the Münsterischer Anzeiger, assured Stirling of Hanke's special interest in him visiting Münster again (see StdAMS, Nachlaß Vernekohl, folder 107.
"The English Players" were based in Paris, where they performed for about five months a year before touring the continent (see TheatreWorld August 1939: 58-59).

Even after war had broken out foreign plays remained in the repertoires. Although the Propaganda Ministry had intended to monitor the situation closely and asked theatres to inform the National Dramaturg about every single foreign play they wanted to produce the Ministry soon dropped this idea and restricted it to premieres.[741] We can conclude, therefore, that although claims regarding a "German" repertoire increased over the years and the share of foreign repertoire certainly declined, musical and dramatic pieces from outside Germany continued to play an important role in the repertoires of provincial theatres.

Münster's operatic and operetta repertoire is another example of how little the Nazis achieved in developing a genuine "völkisch" art. At the same time the strong conservative elements in the musical repertoire proved useful in connection with the Nazi claim of fulfilling Germany's great cultural past.
In the opera Willi Hanke produced the established classical repertoire with only occasional contemporary works.[742] We have to note, however, that although these contemporary pieces were not modernist they can not be branded "völkisch" either – most of the works were simply late romantic.[743] Many successful composers such as

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[741] In the first circular from August 1940 Schlösser asked the theatres to send him the relevant information no later than three weeks before the scheduled production date. This, however, seemed to have proved impossible to carry out. In any case Schlösser had to sent out a new circular only seven weeks later, in which he reduced the number of productions he wanted to be informed about to special performances and first productions. It seems as if a number of theatres had complained about the additional workload or had simply not complied with the directive (see BArch, R55/20111, Bl.257 [circular from 5 August 1940], Bl.269 [circular from 19 September 1940]).

[742] In 1934/35 Münster produced Hans Pfitzner's Der arme Heinrich (Poor Henry), in 1935/36 Nikolaus von Reznicek's Spiel oder Ernst? (Fun or Business?), in 1936/37 Ottmar Gerster's Madame Liselotte, in 1937/38 Ermanno Wolf- Ferrari's Die neugierigen Frauen (The Curious Women) and Norbert Schultze's Schwarzer Peter, and in 1938/39 Richard Strauß' Daphne and Werner Egk's Die Zaubergeige (The Miraculous Fiddle).

[743] Hans Pfitzner's Der arme Heinrich had been written in 1895 in the Wagnerian tradition. Pfitzner was never a party member, although he supported the regime. His oeuvre was fostered after the take-over and Pfitzner received many awards. The big breakthrough, however, never materialised and Hitler was no big fan of his music either (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS- Staat*, 299-301). A special honour for Münster was the fact that the maestro himself conducted the first performance at the Städtische Bühnen on 16 September 1934.
Nikolaus von Reznicek's short opera Fun or Business? was a conservative late romantic piece, probably written long before the take-over. The composer, however, was favoured by the Nazis, received a "Goethe Medal" in 1934 and an "Ehrensold" from 1940. Reznicek presented himself a convinced Nazi and in 1933 wrote the nationalistic overture Befreites Deutschland (Liberated Germany) (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS- Staat*, 162).
Ottmar Gerster's Madame Liselotte with a text by Franz Clemens was first produced in 1933 and is the only piece in Münster's entire operatic repertoire during the Third Reich which at least in some way corresponded to Nazi ideology. The libretto with "its emphasis on German patriotism and sacrifice for a higher ideal" proved open to "völkisch" interpretation (see Levi, *Music in the Third Reich*, 186).
Ermanno Wolf- Ferrari's Die neugierigen Frauen received its first performance already in 1903. It is a comic opera which hardly corresponded to "völkisch" ideas. The composer, however, was supported by the Nazis and in 1939 was made professor at the prestigious Salzburg Mozarteum. He was one of the few Italian composers whose works were still performed after the fall of Italy in 1943 (see Drewniak, *Theater*

Carl Orff and Werner Egk combined their interest in folk melodies with slightly modern connotations which were often inspired by Stravinsky.[744]

Parallel to the demands on classical drama, however, the Nazis tried to incorporate the classic operatic repertoire in their political agenda, too. One of the chief means to achieve this goal was the commission of new translations and adaptations especially for Mozart operas. Corresponding to the claim that Mozart was a German and not an Austrian composer his Italian operas were translated. Whereas in 1933/34 Cosi fan Tutte was still performed in Italian, The Marriage of Figaro was already produced in a German adaptation by Siegfried Anheisser during the following season.[745] Some critics, however, even criticised pieces that were already written in German. Relating to the production of Mozart's Magic Flute the critic of the Münsterischer Anzeiger suggested that the "unfortunate libretto" must have disturbed Mozart.[746] We have to note, however, that the Anheisser adaptations, largely backed by the radical Rosenberg circle, did not survive for long either. In 1941 Goebbels commissioned a more authoritative alternative by Georg Schünemann, which was at least based on the original autographs

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im NS- Staat, 314). We have to note, however, that his pieces also received special interest in Münster because Ermanno's son Fritz became "Oberspielleiter" (director) at the opera in 1939. These family bonds were exploited for the theatre's advertising campaign (see Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst 15 (1939/40): programme no.9).

Another piece failing to subscribe to "völkisch" ideas was Norbert Schultze's "fairy tale opera" for children Schwarzer Peter, which was first performed in Hamburg in 1936. Schultze became well known as the composer of "Lili Marleen" and other songs.

Richard Strauß' Daphne was an opera set in ancient Greece. The central theme is one of peace between humanity and nature with no "völkisch" subtext whatsoever.

Equally unexceptionable is Werner Egk's successful The Miraculous Fiddle, which was a romantic "Volksoper" set in Bavaria. Besides Orff Egk was one of the most important composers of a younger generation during the 1930s. It is interesting to note, however, that the opera failed in Münster. The premiere was poorly attended and the opera was only played twice.

[744] See Levi, *Music in the Third Reich*, 191.

[745] In 1936/37 Mozart's opera Don Giovanni experienced a similar fate as it was translated into German and appeared under the new title Don Juan. Anheisser justified his adaptation as "the German Mozart" had been forced to compose operas in Italian against his will and only because it was en vogue at the time, otherwise he would have certainly preferred German (see Anheisser, Siegfried. "Der deutschen Bühne den deutschen Mozart." Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke 13 (1936/37): programme no. 8.). The press hastened to add that the adaptation was something Mozart himself had longed for as he detested the "obsession with everything foreign" which dominated the theatres at the time (see *MZ*, 27 December 1937).

Linked with the idea of translation was a strong anti-Semitic notion. The original libretti for Mozart's Italian operas had been written by Lorenzo da Ponte, who had been Jewish. The most common German version was equally unacceptable for the Nazis as this had been written by Hermann Levi, another Jew. Although Anheisser had started his translation project before 1933 he quickly seized the opportunity to add an anti-Semitic notion to his work after the take-over. He promptly received the much needed official commissions in 1935 and 1936 (see Levi, *Music in the Third Reich*, 75-76).

In 1938/39 yet another Mozart adaptation appeared on the Münster stage. Gomas und Zaide was produced in an new translation by Willy Meckbach.

[746] See *MA*, 23 September 1935). Despite these comments the production enjoyed a successful run at the theatre and received 14 performances.

held at the Prussian State Library and appeared much less ideologically biased.[747] As with similar decisions at the highest political level Münster's theatre management was quick to show its allegiance. As soon as they appeared Erich Pabst entirely concentrated on the Schünemann versions.[748] The effect the translations had is nearly impossible to measure. The fact, however, that the Anheisser adaptations, which were hailed as the authoritative versions by many commentators, were replaced so quickly, indicates that their educational influence had been fairly limited. Apart from the odd contemporary work, new Mozart adaptations and – although rarely – the "recovery" of a "forgotten" piece, however, the opera repertoire at provincial theatres remained conventional.[749] In fact the choice of operatic works was very similar to the Weimar years.[750]

The operetta repertoire, however, was a different story. Many of the successful Weimar composers had been Jewish and after 1933 a search for new names began. Apart from the classic works by Johann Strauß and Franz Lehár, who remained the backbone of the programme and whose share rose considerably, the repertoire changed drastically with an increasing number of pieces by contemporary composers.[751] In contrast to the "völkisch" plays, however, which audiences failed to support, it is interesting to see

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[747] See Levi, *Music in the Third Reich*, 76-77. Levi convincingly argued that Goebbels' commission can also be interpreted as directed against his arch rival Rosenberg. The archival sources show that in the Rosenberg office it was definitely seen as such (see BArch, NS8/243, Bl.4-5).

[748] In 1940/41 the Städtische Bühnen produced Don Juan (Don Giovanni), in 1941/42 followed Cosi fan Tutte and in 1943/44 the theatre performed The Marriage of Figaro, all in the new Schünemann translations.
Despite these examples of allegiance there were other examples where official announcements and decrees were ignored. In a circular by the Reich Theatre Chamber from 14 September 1940, for example, it was made clear that if theatres produced a musical piece with a libretto by a Jewish writer, they were not allowed to print his name on hand-outs or programme notes (see BArch, R55/20111, Bl.265). The Städtische Bühnen, however, did exactly that as late as 1944 and printed Lorenzo da Ponte's name alongside the announcement for Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro in the Notes (see Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 20 (1943/44): progamme no. 11).

[749] An example of one of these "recoveries" is Nicolai's opera Mariana, one of his "youth operas", with which Willi Hanke and his Nürnberg director of music Loy were commissioned in March 1943. The "Reichsstelle für Musikbearbeitungen" asked Hanke to revise the score according to the following points: change of setting from Scotland to Sicily, deepening of the Enoch Arden theme, in which the self-sacrifice of the woman ends the political conflict between the rivals and, therefore, has a patriotic effect (see BArch, R55/20578, Bl. 56-58).

[750] In general the musical programmes in Germany after 1933 showed only slight differences to the Weimar years. The only significant difference was the disappearance of the works by Gustav Mahler (see Levi, *Music in the Third Reich*, 215-219).

[751] The radical changes also become apparent in Dussel's study which compares the operetta repertoire of 1919-1933 with the 1933-1944 programme. As mentioned before he concentrated on a sample of five cities (Bielefeld, Dortmund, Ingolstadt, Coburg and Karlsruhe). Between 1919 and 1933 the different shares of the operetta composers were as follows: Johann Strauß 13%, Kálmán 10%, Lehar 9%, Benatzky 6% and Jean Gilbert 5%. Of these Kálmán and Gilbert disappeared after 1933. Between 1933 and 1944 the respective shares had changed considerably: Lehar 23%, Strauß 15%, Walter Kollo 7%, Eduard Künnecke 6% und Nico Dostal 5% (see Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 268-269). It is interesting to note in this respect that even the shares of the most successful composers changed considerably with Lehár's share rising by 14%.

how quickly they accepted the new operettas, after the works by Emmerich Kálmán, Paul Abraham, Leo Fall, Jean Gilbert or Oscar Straus had been banned.[752] The new works by Oskar Nedbal and Walter Kollo achieved record attendances, and even pieces by more obscure composers such as Robert Winterberg and Walter Bromme fared reasonably well.[753] In 1935/36 already seven out of ten operettas had been written by contemporary composers.[754] The reason for the quick acceptance of the new pieces lies almost certainly in the fact that they did not differ much from the works they replaced. Music, setting and plot were similar, a happy end and a "good night out" were guaranteed.

A change in the operetta programme appeared to have taken place with the arrival in Münster of the new theatre manager, Erich Pabst in summer 1938. During his first season the number of operettas produced declined dramatically. Whereas Hanke had produced nine operettas in 1937/38 Pabst reduced this number to five in the following season. But it was not only in terms of quantity that things changed, the choice of works also differed from preceding seasons. Pabst almost entirely concentrated on the classical Berlin and Vienna operetta of the late nineteenth century: Johann Strauß (Wiener Blut and Die Fledermaus), Franz von Suppé (Bocaccio) and Paul Lincke (Frau Luna).[755] The articles in the Programme Notes show that these changes did not happen accidentally but were a deliberate move. Commentators criticised the contemporary operettas which had not reached an acceptable quality yet. They claimed that one still encountered the "erotic and exotic atmosphere" which had been a clear "sign of degeneration".[756] Contrary to propagandistic demands a few years earlier, critics such as Harry Ziems now asserted that "down to earth topics with traditional subject matter, peasant dances

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[752] In 1930/31 five out of ten operettas were by Jewish composers, in 1931/32 seven out of the fourteen, and in 1932/33 still two out of eight. If we also count the works by Ralph Benatzky in – who was avoided at first before some of his works returned during the late 1930s – the number of the outlawed would be even higher. In 1931/32 alone the programmes featured four of his works. Additionally, we have to note that the operettas, which now disappeared, had also been some of the most successful pieces in Weimar Germany. During the 1931/32 season, for example, two of the three most popular pieces in Münster had been operettas by Fall and Abraham.

[753] The composers mentioned all featured during the 1934/35 season. It is interesting to note, however, that even the replacement composers did not meet with unequivocal approval from the Rosenberg hard-liners. Nedbal was Czech and the libretto for his operetta Polenblut was written by Leo Rosenstein, who was Jewish. Kollo seemed equally suspect because of rumours about non- Aryan ancestors (see Drewniak, *Theater im NS- Staat*, 338-339, 343).

[754] The trend continued during the following seasons.

[755] Although Paul Linke was still alive at the time – he died in 1946 – his most successful operetta Frau Luna had already been first performed in 1899.

[756] Henrichs, Helmut. "Zur Dramaturgie der Operette." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 15 (1938/39): programme no. 1.

and folk music" were as little desirable as political subjects.[757] In effect, the new operetta of recent years had become rather dull.[758] Although much better than the "Jewish" pieces five years ago,[759] the new operetta lacked "music full of sparkling dance rhythms, relaxation, entertainment, laughing high spirits and healthy humour",[760] which would have guaranteed productions of "clear and clean taste".[761] Despite these theoretical concerns, however, Pabst's alternative repertoire did not have the success expected and attendances stayed considerably lower than in previous years.[762] It seems as if Pabst had attempted to present a musical repertoire which clearly reflected the theoretical discussion of the time. After other attempts to politicise the programmes had failed (especially in connection with the "völkisch" drama) the new manager obviously wanted to prove his political allegiance in another field. As with the "völkisch" plays, however, the management failed again and had to change the outlook of the operetta programme during the following season. In 1939/40 Pabst concentrated on contemporary operettas instead of the classical repertoire. And he was successful with pieces like Franz Lehár's Paganini and Raymond's Maske in Blau, which scored 28 and 34 performances respectively.[763] It is interesting to note that this U-turn was not accompanied by programmatic articles in the Programme Notes as before. In view of the low audience numbers in the preceding season, Pabst quite obviously avoided a theoretical discussion but seemed to be interested solely in the success of the repertoire. The basic character of the musical programme remained the same until the end of the war. Theoretical questions seem to have lost any appeal anyway after the devastating air raid of July 1941 which left the unsuitable city hall as the sole venue for musical performances.

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[757] Ziems, Harry. "Über die Operette." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 15 (1938/39): programme no. 11.
[758] Westermeyer, Karl. "Die Operette, Stiefkind der Ästhetik." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 15 (1938/39): programme no. 20.
[759] Redlin, Fritz- Hartwig. "Ein Wort zur Operette." Ibid.
[760] Ziems, Harry. "Über die Operette." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 15 (1938/39): programme no. 11.
[761] Henrichs, Helmut. "Zur Dramaturgie der Operette." Stadttheater und Kammerspiele Münster (Westf.). Ed. Erich Pabst. 15 (1938/39): programme no. 1.
[762] During the 1938/39 the most successful operetta Die Kosakenbraut (The Cossack's Bride) reached 18 performances, but there were three comedies that achieved more performances. During the preceding season the 30 performances of the most popular operetta Der Zarewitsch could only be beaten by one single play, and the three most successful pieces of that season were two operettas and one comedy. The dominance in popularity of the operetta could, therefore, not be sustained in 1938/39.
[763] Franz Lehár's Paganini was first performed in 1925, Fred Raymond's Maske in Blau in 1937, and Paul Burkhard's Das Paradies der Frauen (Women's Paradise) in 1938. Both Robert Stolz' Himmelblaue Träume (Azure Dreams) and Peter Igelhoff's Liebe auf den ersten Blick (Love at first Sight) were

We have seen that already by the mid- 1930s it had become clear that the Städtische Bühnen could not be turned into a "völkisch" propaganda stage.[764] Willi Hanke was quick to realise that the only possibility of claiming the municipal theatre for the regime was its success in quantitative terms. And it was in exactly this area that he proved most successful. The number of productions and performances rose continually and the duration of the season was consistently extended – by two months in 1934/35 and by another month in 1935/36.[765] The municipal subsidies rose substantially after the take-over, despite official claims that the new regime would put an end to the "fabulous sums" the theatre had allegedly received during the "decadent" Weimar years.[766] The expensive musical theatre especially received a massive boost and the number of productions rose significantly.[767] The Programme Notes, too, were considerably extended and from 1934/35 appeared less propagandistic and more entertaining with many photos and anecdotes. Hanke's best asset, however, was the rising attendance figures. After disappointing audiences during the first "national" season he managed to increase the numbers substantially.[768] The most important factor in his policy was Hanke's return to a programme that was quite unexceptional: a mixture of classical plays, contemporary comedies, established operas and popular operettas.[769] His concentration on a extensive purely entertaining repertoire with comedies and farces is

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contemporary pieces, too. Only Carl Michael Ziehrer's Die Landstreicher (The Tramps), which had been first produced in 1899, was an older piece as it had received its first production in 1899.

[764] Again, Münster was no exception as officials in Dortmund realised just as well that "völkisch" plays failed to gain substantial support. In a report by "Stadtrat" Schüler regarding the repertoire at Dortmund's theatre during the 1935/36 season it also becomes obvious how important this support from audiences was and how much provincial theatres depended on it. Schüler admitted that "bei der Aufstellung des Spielplans muss wohl oder übel darauf Rücksicht genommen werden, dass das Dortmunder Publikum eine mehr volkstümliche Linie des Spielplans wünscht" (report by Schüler written for the Propaganda Ministry, dated 23 July 1936, BArch, R55/20349, Bl.193-194).

[765] After 208 working days during the 1933/34 season, the 1934/35 season's 257 days rose to 291 in 1935/36. The number of performances rose accordingly from 354 in 1933/34 to 495 in 1934/35, and 559 in 1935/36. Hanke managed to keep this level with 511 performances in 1936/37 and even 576 in 1937/38. After that they declined again to 440 in 1938/39, although Pabst managed to lift this figure again to 527 in 1939/40. See Table 1.

[766] The subsidies rose from RM 371,000 in 1932 to RM 398,000 in 1933, RM 525,000 in 1935, RM 724,000 RM in 1937, RM 1,020,000 in 1939 and peaked in 1940 with RM 1,261,000. After that they declined again slightly to RM 1,168,000 in 1941 and RM 1,003,000 in 1944 (see StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 141).

[767] In 1933/34 the Städtische Bühnen had produced nine operas and seven operettas; in 1935/36 these figures had already risen to 13 operas and ten operettas. In 1940/41 the theatre still produced 11 operas and five operettas. Only after that did the figures decline because of the raid on Münster in July 1941. See Appendix.

[768] After 134,270 visitors in 1933/34, the theatre recorded 181,823 visits in 1934/35, 204,896 in 1935/36, 212,041 in 1936/37 and 211,183 in 1937/38 (see StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 138). See Table 1.

[769] Some commentators politely criticised the fact that the Studio had almost entirely concentrated on comedies instead of a more demanding repertoire (quoted in Stampfer, Oskar. "Kammerspiele der Stadt Münster." Theater-Tageblatt 7 (1935): Nr.1607). In an indirect reaction to these critics, Stampfer

especially worth mentioning in this context. This entertainment fare did not differ much in character from the repertoire of the Weimar years. Folk plays, love triangles, detective and crime plays, thrillers, domestic and drawing-room comedies, plays centred around ideas such as the confusion of characters, disguise and deceit, double-meaning and – most important – love and marriage. Successful authors were Leo Lenz, Curt Goetz, Rolf Lauckner, Axel Ivers, August Hinrichs, and Karl Bunje. Their plays increasingly dominated the bill with a share rising to over 50% both in the production and performance figures by the late 1930s and early 1940s.

The mainly entertainment character of the Münster repertoire was no exception. As mentioned before the provincial theatres in general returned to a quite conventional programme with the 1934/35 season. In 1938 the eminent critic Kurt Fischer stated, rather disappointed, that radical changes within the German theatre had still not materialised. Fischer criticised especially that "simple" comedies and "cheap" farces, folk plays and the operetta with its typical clichés still dominated the repertoire.[770] The eagerly awaited new contemporary drama simply did not emerge.[771]
The fact that the "völkisch" drama did not play a decisive role any longer is also illustrated by the official nationwide performance figures, which were published on a regular basis. A study concerned with all the dramatic performances on German stages between 1933 and 1938 stated that Hanns Johst was the most popular "völkisch" dramatist with a total of 1,337 performances.[772] Put into context, however, it becomes obvious how small an achievement this figure was. In the 1937/38 season alone German theatres produced 11 Lehár operettas which received 3,300 performances.[773] And Karl Bunje's farce Der Etappenhase was performed 2,837 times the year before.[774]

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explained that Hanke had to attract the "theatre- weary" public into the Studio again before offering a repertoire which would correspond to its "real" goals.

[770] See Fischer, Kurt. "Vom Theater der Deutschen." Das Innere Reich 4 (1937/38): 863-864. Mettin struck a similar cord. In a review of the 1936/37 season he criticised "eminent" contemporary dramatists like Bethge, Billinger, Johst, Möller and Rehberg because they had not produced any new plays recently (see Mettin, Hermann Christian. "Vom Theater unserer Zeit." Das Innere Reich 4 (1937): 122-128).

[771] This fact was a recurring topic in Münster's Programme Notes, too (see, for example, Hinrichs, August. "Das Theater des Volkes." Blätter des Stadttheaters Münster. Ed. Willi Hanke. 13 (1936/37): programme no. 14; Klaiber, Joachim. "Junge Dramatiker setzen sich durch." Ibid.: programme no. 17).

[772] See Wanderscheck, Hermann. Deutsche Dramatik der Gegenwart. Eine Einführung mit ausgewählten Textproben. Berlin: Bong, 1938. 152).

[773] See Ketelsen, *Heroisches Theater*, 71.

[774] See Frels, Wilhelm. "Die deutsche dramatische Produktion 1936." Die Neue Literatur 38 (1937): 613-616. Concerning the successes of the contemporary comedy see also Dussel, *Heroisches Theater*, 304 and Drewniak, *Theater im NS- Staat*, 212-215. Drewniak concentrates especially on the 1936/37 season.

The purely entertaining repertoire with comedies, farces, detective plays and dialect comedies dominated Münster's bill more than ever before from the 1935/36 season. In view of the comparative aspect of this study it is interesting to note that most of these comedies were contemporary pieces – as in York. During the 1935/36 season 75% of all comedies were contemporary works, which also meant a clear break with the Weimar years. Of all the comedies performed during the 1931/32 season, for example, none appeared during 1935/36. This result, however, does not hint at any political implications but is a typical feature of the entertainment programme. In this genre more than anywhere else the novelty of a play was vital. Although this factor was perhaps even more important in York, where the production of a London hit while it was still being performed there was a sure winner, the managements of German theatres, too, looked for recent successes. The only possible political connotations with regard to the quick change of plays concern the increasing number of right-wing playwrights who, obviously in connection with the failure of their attempts with "völkisch" drama, now turned to writing comedies. This "Ersatzdramatik", as mentioned above, increasingly entered the stages from the mid- 1930s. In 1935/36, for example, two out of the three most successful comedies were pieces by "völkisch" dramatists.[775] It is interesting to note, however, that most of these comedies did not propagate any "völkisch" ideas but presented classical comedy themes – the ménage à trois and similar mishaps. They were in fact not much different from any other comedy in the repertoire.

Another increasingly important factor in Hanke's repertoire policy was the "Low German Stage" ("Niederdeutsche Bühne"). Since 1934/35 the Low German Stage had established closer links to the municipal theatre. Hanke offered them his directors, stage managers, costume designers and a designated rehearsal space free of charge and even guaranteed a place in the programmes for their productions of dialect plays.[776] During the Pabst years this trend became even more significant. In 1940/41, the low German comedy Knubben by Franz Mehring received its first production in Münster and was the most successful play of the season with 51 performances. It is interesting to note that the production of low German drama was endorsed officially as relating to Nazi ideals

[775] Otto Brues' Der alte Wrangel (Old Wrangel) about the Prussian general reached 15, Heinrich Zerkaulen's Der Sprung aus dem Alltag even 22 performances. Other examples include Dietrich Eckart's Ein Kerl, der spekuliert (A Guy who Speculates) in 1934/35 and Sigmund Graff's Die Primanerin (The Graduate) in 1937/38.
Theatre managers clearly avoided any serious pieces by Eckart (after all a "martyr of the movement") and Paul Ernst (equally idealised as the chief dramatic theorist and the spiritual father of the Nazi party).
[776] See StdAMS, *Verwaltungsbericht 1926-1945*, 142. In 1934/35 the programmes featured two dialect comedies, one year later they presented three, in 1936/37 four and in 1937/38 five plays.

of "Blood and Soil". The discrepancy between high demands and reality, however, becomes obvious in this genre, too. The vast majority of these plays were farcial comedies, many of them written long before 1933, which did not contain any "völkisch" ideas. The presence of the Low German Stage, however, is also interesting as another example of parallel developments in Münster and York. Both the Low German Stage and York's Musical and Dramatic Society were made up of local lay actors who took pride in entering the stage of "their" professional theatre on a regular basis. The success of both groups not only shows the strong links between theatre and community but they also fostered these links and probably brought a new clientele into the theatre. The attempts by the Nazi regime to incorporate these activities into their propaganda, however, also illustrates the differences between the two theatres.

We have seen that the year 1933 in many respects did not represent a radical break with the past. And it has already been mentioned that even the outbreak of the war did not affect Münster's theatre to a substantial degree. On the contrary, German provincial theatres in general resembled places largely untouched by the war until the early 1940s.[777] The regime in general and Münster's theatre management in particular were at pains to purvey the impression that theatre life was not affected by the war in any way.[778] The first two war seasons showed another record number of performances and the number of productions was equally high. The dominant genres in the theatre programmes remained the classics and, most of all, light entertainment, followed by operas and operettas. Nationalist and "völkisch" drama was still staged but occupied an even less important place in the production as well as in the attendance figures.[779]

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[777] With the outbreak of hostilities imminent in September 1939 the closure of all theatres only seemed a theoretical option. The telex from Hamburg's Gauleiter hours after war had begun enquiring about the closure of all theatres was a rare exception. Within 23 minutes the Gauleiter had a reply by the furious National Dramaturg who made it clear that "ein Schließen der Theater [etc.] kommt auf keinen Fall in Frage" (see BArch, R55 /20258, Bl.214-215).

[778] In November 1939 Göring, too, made it clear that a closure of theatres and cinemas during the war was out of the question. He added that these venues were important places for propaganda and essential to uphold public morale. Apart from that he warned against underestimating the psychological importance of entertainment during the war (see BArch, R55/20111, Bl.128-131). It is interesting to note that the arguments for keeping places of entertainment open during the war were in fact not too different in Germany and Britain.

[779] It is interesting that Intendant Pabst did not stage a single "völkisch" drama during the 1939/40 and 1940/41 season. This was not due to his political attitudes – some articles which he wrote for the Programmes Notes present him a man absolutely convinced of the Nazi cause – but obviously because of the poor quality of the plays. In 1940/41 contemporary drama did not find any consideration neither in the repertoire nor in any of the articles in the Programme Notes. During the following three seasons, however, the share of right- wing drama rose again.

Although drastic changes in the repertoire did not take place, however, provincial theatres started to play an increasing part in the war effort. Possible niches disappeared, control became more rigid and the "bonds" between theatre and state tighter. The ban on dramatists from Britain, for example, not only meant that the plays by Ridley, Coward, and Wilde disappeared from the stages it also signalled the start of the propaganda war against Britain. Britain was presented as a state without any interest in the arts, where the theatre and its actors did not enjoy any support whatsoever and were left to fight for their bare survival.[780]

Apart from that the Städtische Bühnen increasingly organised special performances especially for the Armed Forces and war workers. These performances grew into an important factor with respect to the function of the theatre as a cultural institution during the war. They were sometimes organised in the theatre itself, but the ensemble (or parts of it) also went to factories and garrisons. Although it is difficult to substantiate the importance of these performances (the archival data does not exist) it seems fair to assume that they had a substantial share in the theatre's activities as early as the 1940/41 season. Such efforts were backed by extensive propaganda, too. From the beginning of the war the regime left no doubt as to the function of theatre. As an "intellectual weapon" it had to support the fight at the front, commentators made it clear that a "l'art pour l'art" attitude had become impossible.[781] Hans Erich Schrade summed up the changes by claiming that the idea of the arts as an island within a sea of war had finally become unacceptable.[782] And indeed, the repertoires at provincial theatres show a remarkable increase of classical plays at the beginning of the war.

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[780] In a press release about his foundation for artists in need Goebbels urged the newspapers to point out that in contrast to the generous help offered to German artists British actors suffered badly (see press release qtd. in Wulf, *Theater im Dritten Reich*, 94).
It is interesting to note, however, that many measures the Nazis took were indeed looked at with envy from across the Channel. British commentators criticised the Reich Culture Chamber, for example, because membership in the chamber was the prerequisite to work as an artist and "non-Aryans" were not allowed to become members. But at the same time many admired the high degree of economic security and a rise in social standing, which the chamber seemed to offer to its members. Commentators admired the social security actors in Germany enjoyed with fixed annual salaries and generous pension funds, the help they enjoyed when looking for a job and their fixed contracts (see Johns, Eric. "The Actor in Germany". Theatre World November 1936: 227).

[781] Ludwig Körner, president of the Reich Theatre Chamber, demanded the theatre to be a "fortress of the German intellect"prepared to fight in the first line on the "intellectual front" (Körner, Ludwig. "Das deutsche Theater, eine Waffe des Geistes." Bühnenjahrbuch 1940. Präsident der Reichstheaterkammer, ed. Berlin: Günther, 1939. 1).

[782] See Schrade, Hans Erich. "Deutsches Theater im 5. Kriegsjahr." Bühnenjahrbuch 1944. Präsident der Reichstheaterkammer, ed. Berlin: Günther, 1943. 4.

In Münster the share of the classics in the overall programme jumps from 9.5% during the last "peace season" to 17.5% during 1939/40.[783] The performance figures are perhaps even more impressive with an all-time record of a 26% share of the classics in the overall performance figures in 1942/43.[784] It is interesting to note that both phenomena, the realisation of theatre as a propaganda tool and the rise of classical drama, are parallel developments in York and Münster. The reaction to the outbreak of the war was not primarily a flight into farces and spy comedies as during the First World War but an awareness of theatre as a cultural institution and a concentration on uplifting classics, on edification rather than entertainment.

At the same time, however, and this runs counter to official claims, the number of contemporary comedies rose, too. Although they never completely dominated the programme to an extent which would have been comparable to the mid- 1930s at the Theatre Royal, their share rose to 54% in the performance figures during the 1941/42 season.[785] The rise of audience interest in contemporary comedies during this particular season, however, also had other reasons and hinted at the most important break in the theatre's history during the Third Reich: in early July 1941 the theatre received a direct hit in an Allied bombing raid and was completely destroyed.
Apart from the material damage, this attack had numerous consequences for the repertoire, too. Dramatic performances had to take place in the Studio from now on and the unattractive town hall was used for opera and operetta. The number of productions and performances dropped drastically, and the musical theatre suffered especially badly.[786] To make things worse, not only had the number of opera and operetta productions to be reduced by half, the number of performances hit rock bottom, too, as opera and operetta in the town hall were very poorly attended.[787] The lack of scenery,

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[783] The share of the classics in the productions remained at this level throughout the war (see Diagram V).
[784] The high share of classics in the programmes have led some post- war commentators to claim that theatre managements deliberately chose these plays as a way of escapism or even subtle criticism of the regime. Theatre had been an "island in a sea of barbarism" as Joseph Prinz implied (see Prinz, *Geschichte des münsterschen Theaters*, 64-66), and managers used the "dominance of the classics" in their repertoire to make public their opposition to the regime (see Wardetzky, *Theaterpolitik*, 84-85). Although this claim may correspond to some of the leading managers at the influential Berlin theatres most of the provincial managements did not dare or did not want to express any critical ideas. As has been seen with Willi Hanke, who seems to have been a typical case, most of the Intendanten were either supportive of the regime or claimed to be apolitical. Admittedly, their room for manoeuvre would have been limited anyway in most cities where the net of mutual control and suspicion grew increasingly tighter in the course of the war.
[785] See Diagram V.
[786] The overall number of productions was nearly halved after the air raid. In 1940/41 the theatre had put 38 productions on stage, a year later this number dropped to 22 (see Diagram III).
[787] After about 180 opera and operetta performances during the 1940/41 the number stood at only 51 at the end of the 1941/42 season (see Diagram IV). The share in the performances equally dwindled,

costumes, properties and elaborate lighting made a visit to the opera hardly an appealing choice for a night out. Still, the theatre made every effort to uphold the image of a cultural institution. In December 1943 Pabst even presented a completely revised production of Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro.[788] Equally remarkable is the fact that among an increasing number of air raids as well as rising logistical and technical problems the number of productions rose again during the last war seasons.

In conclusion, we have seen that the high aims of the regime of the "new" German theatre could not be realised. The Städtische Bühnen was not transformed into a Nazi propaganda stage and the general outlook of the repertoire did not change fundamentally. Neither the theatre managers nor the party authorities were able to establish "völkisch" drama on Münster's stage permanently. The 1933/34 season was an utter failure and a blow to the ambitions of Intendant Liebscher, Gauleiter Meyer and the city authorities.

If we change the perspective slightly, however, and ask whether the Nazis were able to make use of the theatre as a cultural institution and if they managed to incorporate the Städtische Bühnen in their political system, for example by applying their anti- Semitic politics to the theatre, we have to give a positive answer. After the failure of the first season, which remained an exception, Hanke performed successfully with a slightly new strategy. Too much overt propaganda on the stage was avoided and substituted by subtle forms of influence. Seemingly harmless comedies and operettas could be useful even if they did not contain any direct political message. Supposedly, they were even more useful to the Nazi system because they stressed the ideas of normality and continuity. As we have seen, the character of the programmes was quite similar to the Weimar years. Most of the musical and dramatic works could have appeared during the 1920s and indeed a lot of them had done so. In fact, the new propaganda strategy became obvious in the fact that the discussion about the character of the repertoire lost its importance in Münster over the years. Instead, record attendances or Münster's theatrical history moved to the centre of attention. In doing so, the current situation appeared as the fulfilment of the promises of Münster's great theatrical past.[789]

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especially regarding the opera. After a 17% share during 1940/41 operatic performances dropped to a 5% share in the overall performance figures in the following season (see Appendix).

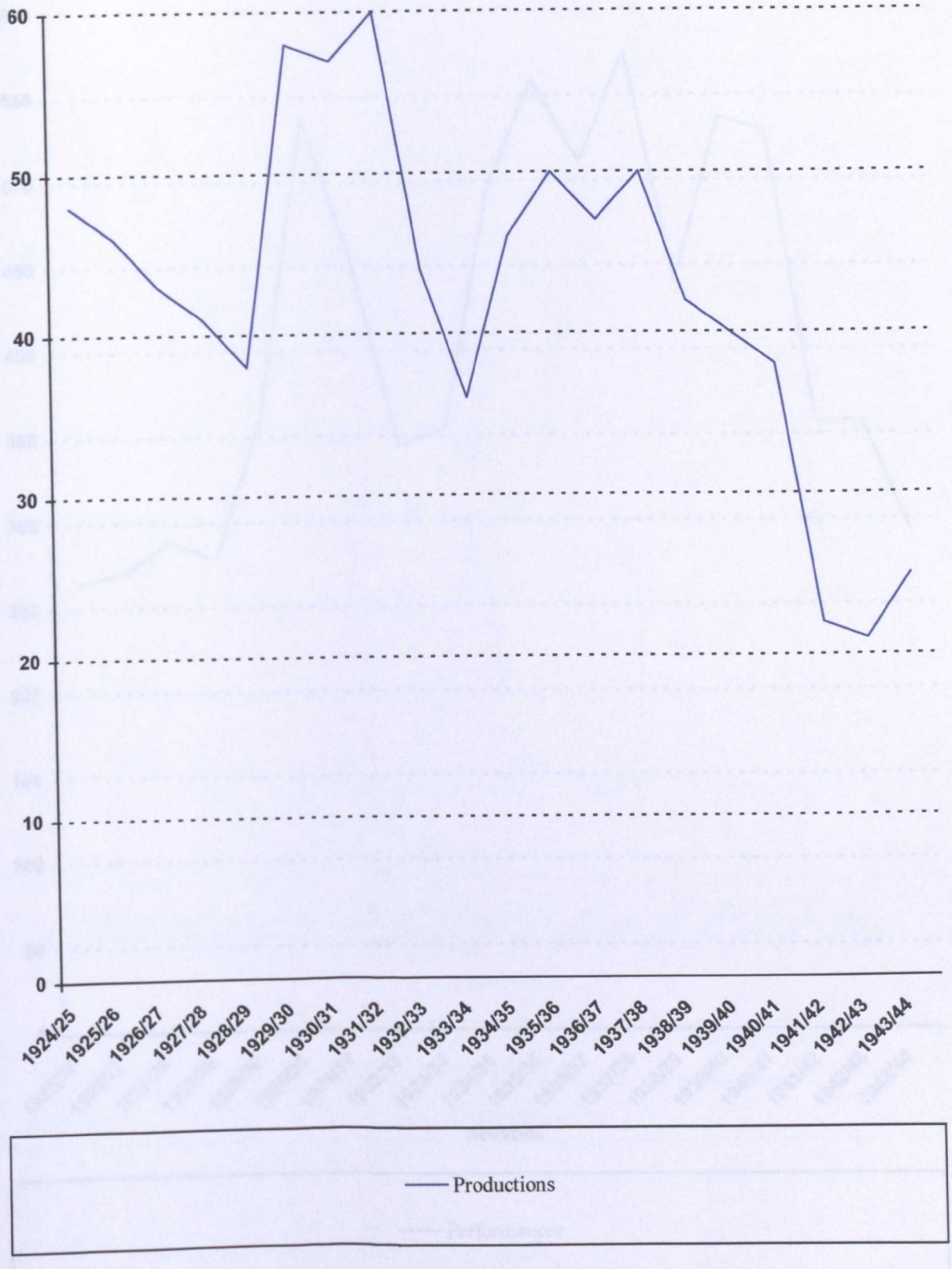
[788] See article "Die Hochzeit des Figaro. Zur Neuinszenierung in der Stadthalle". *MZ*, 18 December 1943.

[789] Again, this method was not unique to Münster. See above for the claims on Lessing and Schiller in particular.

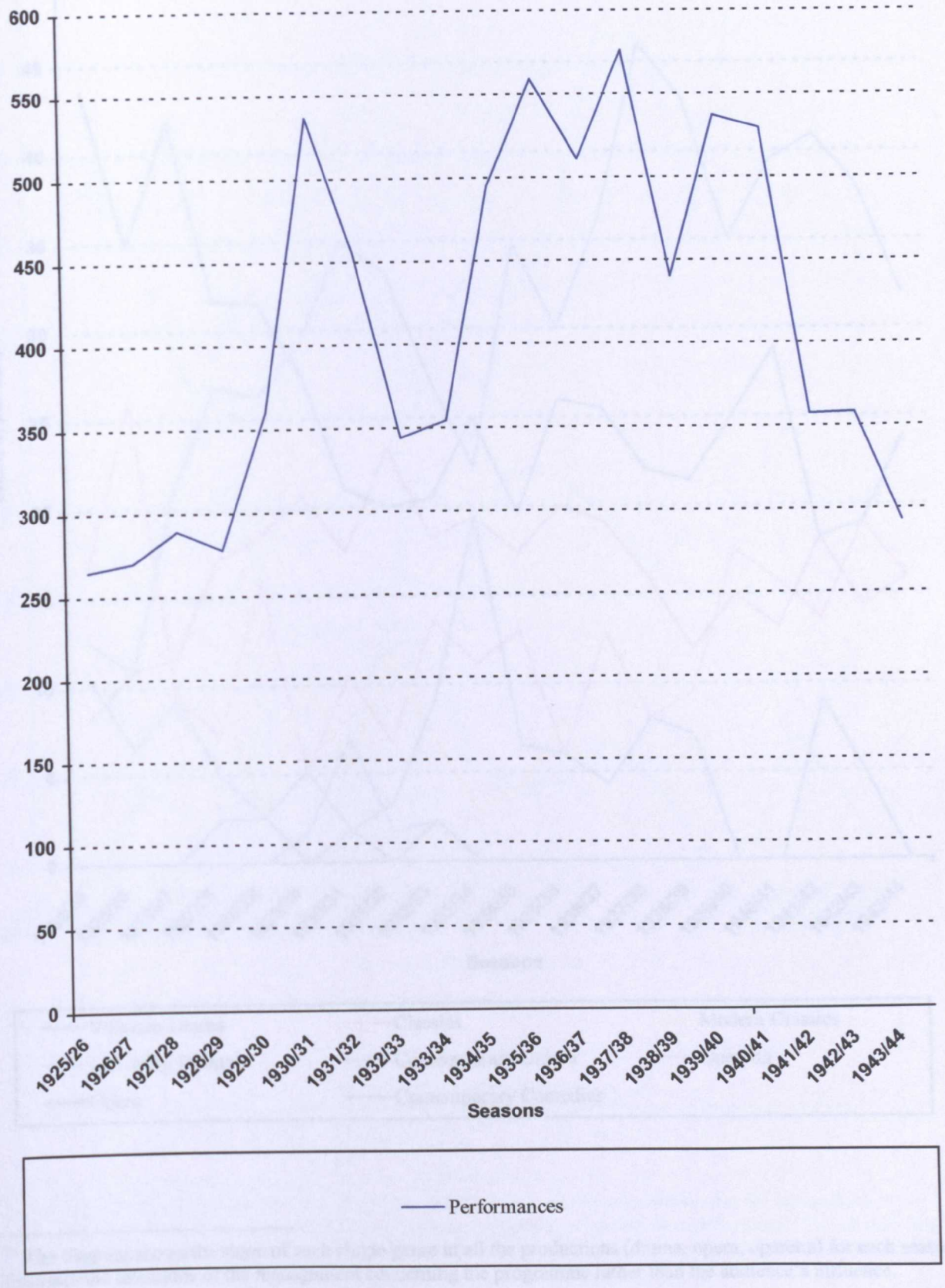
In a nutshell, the Städtische Bühnen in Münster during the Third Reich was a theatre which reflected how little the Nazis achieved, both with respect to the development of their own dramatic theory and regarding the production of "völkisch" plays of decent quality. It was also a theatre, however, which fitted into the system. It was not, and this fact has to be stressed, a critical theatre of any kind. Although there would have been possibilities to express critical ideas especially through a certain kind of repertoire, these possibilities were not explored.[790]

[790] These findings correspond with other provincial theatres in Germany – the Städtische Bühnen was a quite unexceptional theatre. This result, however, becomes important in view of the many apologetic post-war histories of the theatre. The most important of those accounts is the above mentioned article by Joseph Prinz. It is also with respect to these questionable studies that further research in the field is highly desirable.

III. Städtische Bühnen – Number of Productions each Season

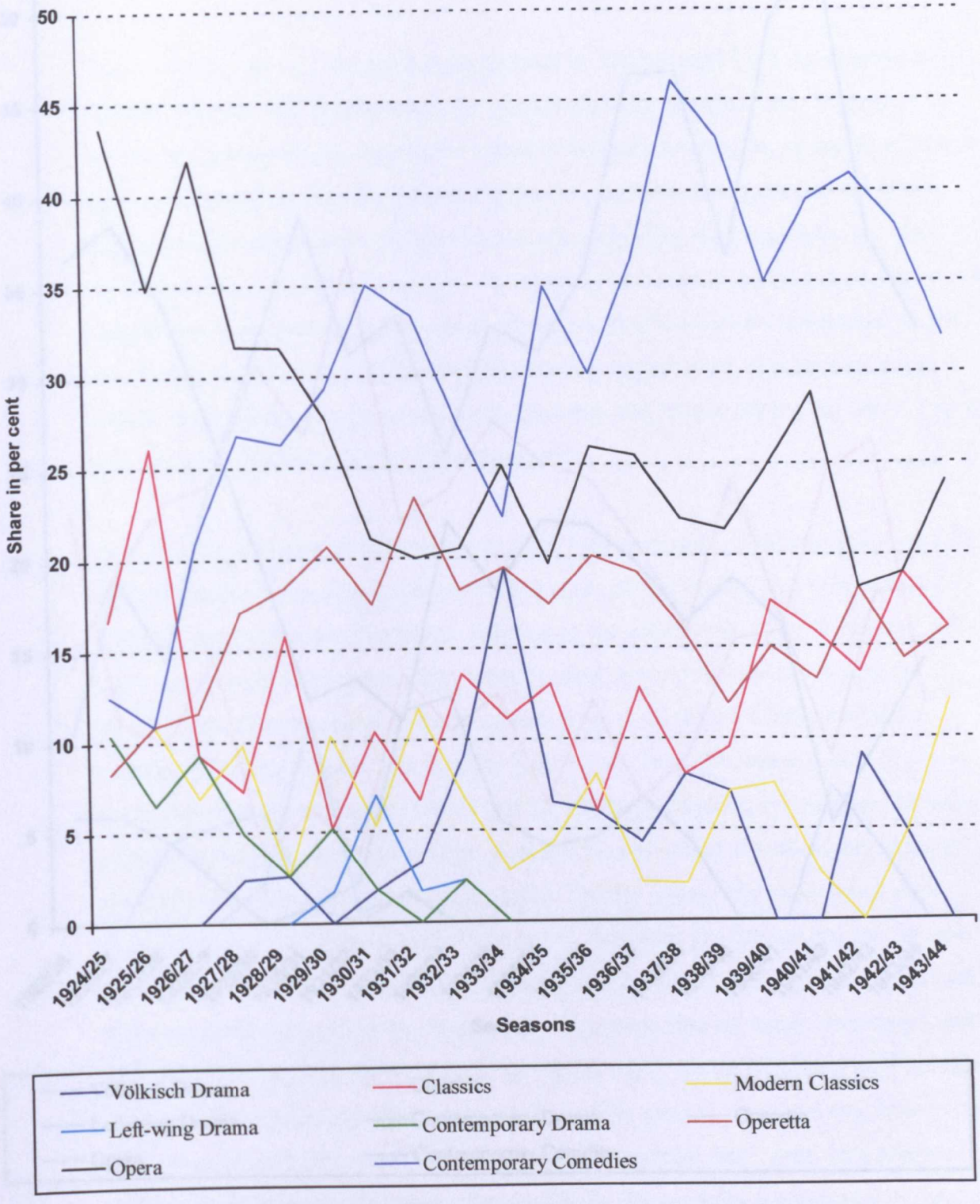


IV. Städtische Bühnen – Number of Performances each Season



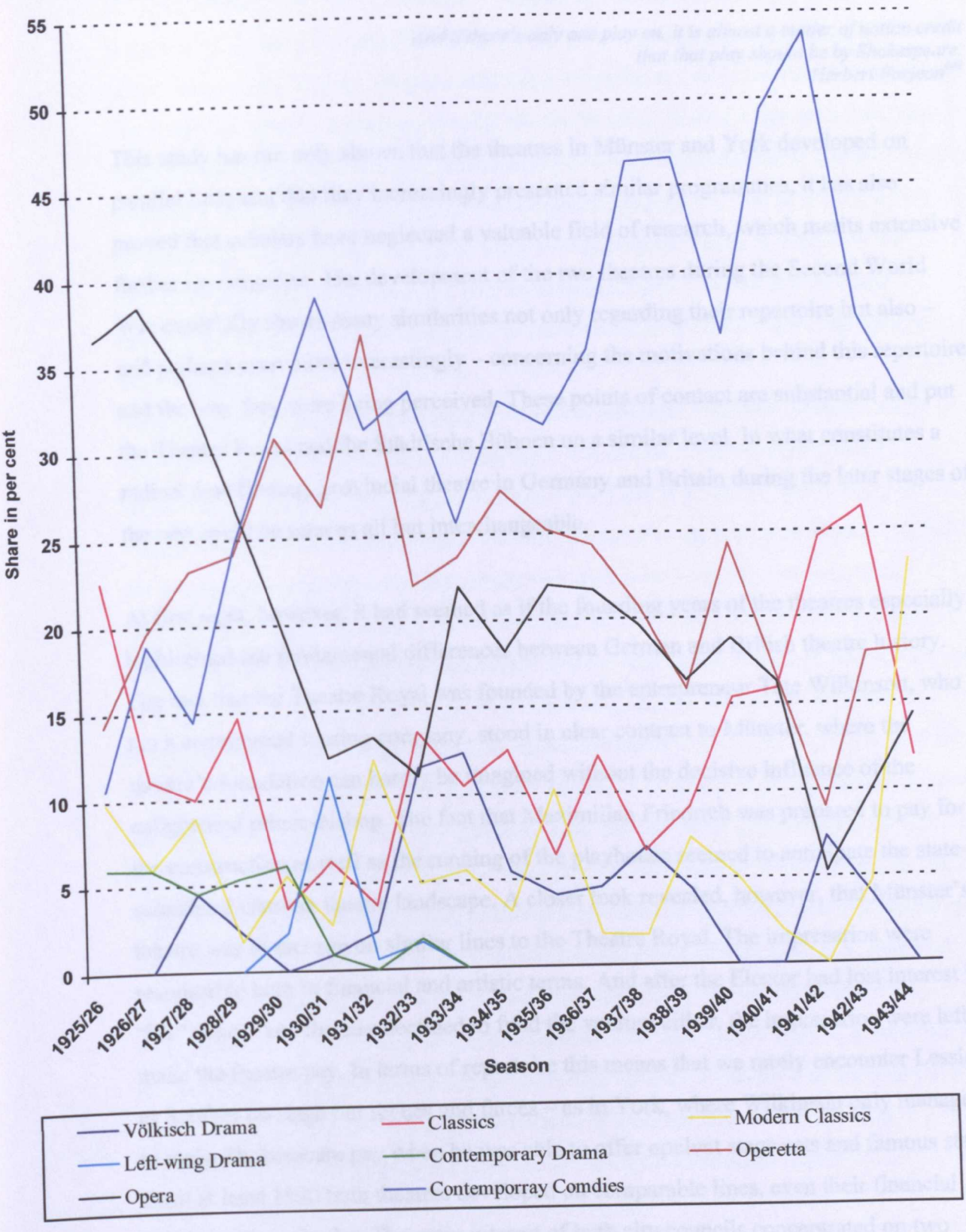
V. Städtische Bühnen – Programme

Productions [791]



[791] The diagram shows the share of each single genre in all the productions (drama, opera, operetta) for each season. It illustrates the intentions of the management concerning the programme rather than the audience's influence.

Performances [792]



[792] The diagram shows the share of each single genre in the total number of performances for each season. It illustrates the reaction of the audience to the programme presented to them by the management. This kind of diagram provides answers to questions concerning the success of single productions or the repertoire policy of managements in general.

Conclusion

And if there's only one play on, it is almost a matter of nation credit that that play should be by Shakespeare.
Herbert Farjeon[802]

This study has not only shown that the theatres in Münster and York developed on parallel lines and that they increasingly presented similar programmes, it has also proved that scholars have neglected a valuable field of research, which merits extensive further investigation. The development of the two theatres during the Second World War especially shows many similarities not only regarding their repertoire but also – and perhaps even more interestingly – concerning the motivations behind this repertoire and the way they were being perceived. These points of contact are substantial and put the Theatre Royal and the Städtische Bühnen on a similar level. In what constitutes a radical new finding, provincial theatre in Germany and Britain during the later stages of the war could be seen as all but interchangeable.

At first sight, however, it had seemed as if the founding years of the theatres especially highlighted the fundamental differences between German and British theatre history. The fact that the Theatre Royal was founded by the entrepreneur Tate Wilkinson, who ran a commercial touring company, stood in clear contrast to Münster, where the theatre's foundation can hardly be imagined without the decisive influence of the enlightened prince-bishop. The fact that Maximilian Friedrich was prepared to pay for the construction as well as the running of the playhouse seemed to anticipate the state-subsidised German theatre landscape. A closer look revealed, however, that Münster's theatre was in fact run on similar lines to the Theatre Royal. The impresarios were responsible both in financial and artistic terms. And after the Elector had lost interest in "his" theatre and the city declined to fund the venture either, the impresarios were left to make the theatre pay. In terms of repertoire this means that we rarely encounter Lessing or Schiller on stage but revues and farces – as in York, where Wilkinson only managed to make Shakespeare pay when he was able to offer opulent stage sets and famous stars. Until at least 1890 both theatres developed on comparable lines, even their financial problems were similar. The main interest of both city councils concentrated on two matters: a morally acceptable repertoire and a prompt payment of the lease.[803]

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[802] On the choice of repertoire after 1939 (Farjeon, *Shakespearean Stage*, 67).
[803] The only example of financial support for an impresario in Münster was in 1849 when the city waived the lease for Pichler because "times were bad" (see Prinz, *Geschichte des münsterschen Theaters*, 52).

Only from the mid-1890s do we find significant differences in the development of theatre in Münster and York. Münster's magistrate became increasingly prepared to subsidise the theatre on a regular basis, thereby acknowledging the importance of the theatre for the community. Over the following years the annual subsidies increased, and eventually the theatre was taken over by the city in 1922. Such far reaching decisions seem hardly imaginable in York. Although the city council increasingly accepted some responsibility for the Theatre Royal, for example by paying for extensive renovation programmes, it is difficult to imagine them ever having the desire to take over the playhouse entirely in order to run it as a municipal theatre. Theatre and business remained related terms – in contrast to Münster where they started to be regarded as separate entities.

Although the two theatres increasingly moved in different directions from the early 1920s many similarities remain. At first sight it seems as if the economic crisis following the Wall Street Crash only affected the Theatre Royal, whereas Münster's theatre not only survived unscathed, but also managed to open its new Studio. Behind the scenes, however, the situation looked very different. At the end of the 1920s Münster's city council reduced its subsidies drastically, dropped the responsibility for the theatre and even reintroduced the lease system once more. Although this option was only taken for a few years it nevertheless illustrates that the status of the theatre as a municipal playhouse was far from safe. Quite obviously councillors did not regard the existence of a civic theatre as a vital asset. Instead, it returned to a lease system similar to York's.[804] And there are more parallels: after the economic crisis had forced the Theatre Royal to close in 1933 and it was under threat of being turned into a cinema, the theatre was taken over by a group of influential residents. Rowntree and his colleagues realised that the only way out of the crisis was to turn the theatre from a commercial concern into a non-profit venture.[805] Ticket prices were reduced, the theatre was refurbished, received its own resident company (after 60 years of touring companies) and reopened as a repertory theatre in 1935. The Citizens' Theatre's prime concern was not to make huge profits but to present drama of a decent standard to the local community. This was clearly a step towards the continental theatre system.

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[804] The ways to save money on running costs were similar, too, and especially the cost of heating the theatres was sometimes reduced, as complaints from patrons show. For the performances of the fairy tale Das dumme Englein in 1930 Münster's theatre was so badly heated that people feared they might catch a cold (see *VW*, 19 December 1930). At about the same time the Theatre Royal's faulty heating caused people to walk out in winter "refusing to come again" (see Theatre Royal Sub-Committee meeting of 5 August 1933 (York City Council, Estates Committee 1931-1940. 142-144).

[805] Cecil Chisholm even claimed that the rise of the repertory movement was "primarily [...] a revolt against commercialism" (see Chisholm, *Repertory*, 10).

The existence of Rowntree's group in itself is another example of parallel development, as Münster profited from a similar local interest group at about the same time. Although theatre seemed to be at the heart of Nazi propaganda, Münster's new city administration was reluctant to improve the financial status of the playhouse after the take-over and its future seemed highly uncertain. The Nazis changed their minds quickly, however, after the public readily supported calls to save their theatre. These calls originated in a campaign by local theatre supporters who had formed a pressure group similar to York's party of businessmen. Despite some apparent differences – notably that Münster's independent campaign was quickly taken over by the Nazi administration and, thereby, became official policy, and the fact that Rowntree's men had far reaching aims with regard to changing the status of their theatre – the fact that both cities featured similar high-profile pressure groups to support their local playhouse is remarkable.[806]
Even seemingly small and unimportant things developed on similar lines in Münster and York. Despite widespread admiration in Britain for the German theatre system and the life of German actors in particular – who allegedly enjoyed an existence of social security and economic safety – the reality was very different. There was high unemployment among German actors around 1930, and for those who had a job life was not much easier. All through the 1930s Münster's actors performed every day of the week without a day's rest, and on Sundays they sometimes even performed twice – similar to York's twice nightly programmes from 1935.[807]
The style of the German press reviews in the early 1930s, too, was similar to their English counterparts.[808] Perhaps even more interesting is the fact that Münster's press criticised the theatre's repertoire for similar reasons as York's. Instead of the latest modern comedies with "questionable" moral standards, commentators called either for a more demanding or for a morally "sound" repertoire – or both.[809]
Linked to this criticism was a fear of modern experiments and avant-garde ideas, which was an important feature not only in Münster and York but generally in both countries. The anti- modernism of the Nazis could build upon well- developed nationalistic and

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[806] The ultimate aim of the Münster group was never to change the basic organisation of the theatre. They wanted to put pressure on the council to increase their subsidies.
[807] The only chance of a rest was the visit of a touring company. These visits do not only represent another parallel to York (at least pre- 1935) they also show that the Städtische Bühnen did not want to rely on their resident company entirely. In some seasons up to five different touring companies performed at Münster's theatre, some of them staying for a whole week.
[808] Both began with general remarks about the production, occasionally added some information about the play, criticised in detail the actors and their roles, and gave a final judgement.
[809] Wilhelm Heising claimed that "Ehebruchskomödien und reine Sensationsstücke stehen an der Spitze im Spielplan unserer Großstadtbühnen" (Heising, Wilhelm. "Die Gesellschaftskultur der heutigen Zeit". Blätter des Theaters der Stadt Münster. Ed. Wilhelm Heising. 4 (1927/28): 126).

petty- bourgeois attitudes developed and fostered during the Weimar Republic and before. Apart from two performances of Brecht's Threepenny Opera, for example, the Städtische Bühnen produced hardly any avant-garde pieces and clearly avoided controversial left-wing drama. Anti- modernist views were widespread in Britain too. The modern art, avant-garde drama and contemporary music by continental composers, which many émigrés brought with them from Nazi occupied Europe, met with stern resentment in the British establishment. Edward Dent is on record as referring to Reger, Mahler, Bruckner and Pfitzner as "all those dreadful composers ending in –er".[810]

We can find points of contact between Münster and York, however, not only in the repertoire they criticised or avoided, however, but also, more importantly, regarding the bills actually produced. These points of contact are increasingly obvious after the mid-1920s as both theatres fostered the drama of the other country. Although the Theatre Royal did not present the German classics, it increasingly offered German comedies and musical plays adapted for the British stage. Münster's interest in Shakespeare and Shaw as well as contemporary British comedies was equally strong. Around 1930 British contemporary comedies actually dominated the comedy bill in Münster.[811] Despite the fact that they had to be translated first, some of these plays even appeared simultaneously in York and Münster. Between 1928 and 1933 both theatres featured plays by Maugham, Coward, Ridley and Ervine. Even the rising American influence had repercussions in Münster.[812] In what research has failed to recognise until now, we can see that the Theatre Royal's interest in plays, topics and music from Germany was equally strong and did not stop either with the Nazi take-over or with the outbreak of war.

These two dates do, however, mark notable changes for German provincial theatre, although we have seen that the year 1933 was not a radical turning- point. Still, performances of foreign drama became less frequent and the rich Jewish contribution to

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[810] Qtd. in Willett, John. "The Emigration and the Arts." Hirschfeld, Gerhard, ed. Exile in Great Britain. Refugees from Hitler's Germany. London: Berg, 1984. 210.

[811] In 1930/31 the Städtische Bühnen produced five contemporary comedies from Britain, which received 80 performances. This represents a share of 25% of the overall number of contemporary comedy productions and a share of more 38% in the number of performances within that genre. The share of British comedies in the contemporary comedy productions of 1928/29 was 20%, in 1929/30 they reached 12%, in 1931/32 20% and in 1932/33 still 17%. The corresponding figures for their share in the performances are 15% in 1928/29, 13% in 1929/30, 17% in 1931/32 and 14% in 1932/33.

[812] The 1928/29 season featured two American comedies, which together managed eight performances and were, therefore, less successful than the two British comedies in that season's repertoire. The Städtische Bühnen produced a translation of Avery Hopwood's Fair and Warmer and a play by Jac Larric (Ölrausch). The only other example of an American play was George Dunning and Phil Abboff's Broadway in 1930/31, which was successful and ran for 19 performances.

drama and music was banned. Wilde and Ibsen were presented in new adaptations, modern translations of Shakespearean drama were prohibited and the bard's oeuvre incorporated in the "völkisch" heritage of the Germanic race. The radical break which many commentators have attributed to 1933, however, was marked by the outbreak of the Second World War. Plays by British playwrights disappeared, and in York pieces espousing anti-German sentiments reached the stage. But again the break is not as clear as one might expect. As late as December 1940 – when the "Battle of Britain" was at its peak – plays which transported a positive image of Germany were still produced in York. And Münster continued to offer Shakespeare and Shaw (whose Irish roots came in handy to justify the continuing production of his plays).

At first sight, however, the war years especially seem to prove those scholars right who stress the differences between theatre in Germany and Britain. Corresponding to Britain's higher level of mobilisation for total war, the theatre and its audiences became accustomed to changes much earlier than Münster's patrons. Evening performances were cancelled, the starting hour of shows was changed and ticket prices were raised. Where the Theatre Royal was closed for a whole week after war was declared, Münster patrons were not aware of any effects of the war until summer 1941. Even this date was early in comparison to other provincial theatres, some of which were not affected by air raids until 1943. Whereas the calling up of members of York's repertory company was discussed publicly and many received special honours when they were on leave, Münster's management wanted to make changes in personnel as discretely as possible. From the beginning of the war British provincial theatres stood on the front line and fears not only of the invasion but also of air raids ran high. In Münster, by contrast, municipal subsidies increased further and life continued to run smoothly. Only with the Wehrmacht's changing fortunes from 1942 did official control over the arts become tighter and theatres were increasingly expected to contribute to the war effort. Closed performances for subdivisions of the Nazi party, the Hitler Youth, "Strength Through Joy" and the forces became vital parts of the theatre's calendar. The contrast between York and Münster is perhaps best illustrated by an announcement in the York press in 1943 that a forthcoming performance of Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro would be sung entirely in English.

At the same time this production highlights a development, which had hugely important implications for the British stage. Although theatre continued to be regarded as a commercial affair in principle, the government realised the propaganda potential of the

arts and increasingly tried to influence the culture sector. The importance of the foundation of ENSA and CEMA, the "invention" of state subsidies on a large scale and the "Morrison Law", which empowered the Home Secretary to interfere directly with theatre repertoires if a play was deemed "inimical" to the war effort, can hardly be overestimated. The cabinet even decided to make theatre performances on Sundays possible for the first time in 300 years.[813] Through all this support the British state acknowledged the importance of theatre in national life and particularly in this war. In just a few years the government did more to commit itself to supporting the theatre than ever before in Britain's history.[814] Although some contemporary commentators were aware of the importance of these far reaching decisions, research has largely ignored this "revolution in the arts".[815]

Not only was state involvement in cultural affairs suddenly acceptable, the arts also met with vast new audiences across the country who were eager to attend concerts of classical music, Elizabethan drama and modern ballet – something many of them would not have dreamt of a few years before. Theatre came to be seen as an integral part of the war effort on the home front.[816] Particularly significant was the fact that, although Britain had to cope with the most desperate war effort in its history, no one objected to spending public money on art. A public opinion survey carried out in 1943 showed that 59% of the British population supported continuing government support of the theatre after the war.[817] For the first time in British history, the arts also showed real promise of voter appeal.

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[813] See Theatre World February 1941: 27, 46; as well as Theatre World March 1941: 51. In the end, however, Parliament voted against this bill by a small majority (see Theatre World April 1941: 75).

[814] Norman Marshall concluded that "when one recalls the hullabaloo in Parliament and the press before the war over a suggestion that a small grant should be made to finance the opera season at Covent Garden, it is remarkable how little opposition there was to CEMA being provided with some of the tax-payers' money to finance plays, opera and ballet" (Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 228).

[815] Bernard Miles claimed that the fact that CEMA received Treasury funding "within four months of its foundation meant that for the first time in history the State recognised the drama as one of the sinews of the national soul, and this was the most important thing that had happened to the British theatre since the birth of Shakespeare" (Miles, Bernard. The British Theatre. London: Collins, 1948. 44). Basil Dean asserted that the system of government support for the arts "represents the most forward step in the advancement of British culture that a British Government has yet taken" (Dean, *Theatre at War*, 530).

[816] Laurence Olivier, for example, claimed that "no other moment has approached in splendour and achievement the glorious Restoration Period, when many notable talents and much vitality and enthusiasm were involved in the rebirth of our theatre. That is, no other moment until now" (Olivier in his foreword to Noble, *British Theatre*, 3).

[817] The public opinion survey was compiled by the British Institute of Public Opinion and was presented to the Ministry of Information in May 1943. Answering question five: "Would you favour continuing, after the war, Government spending in support of music, theatre, films etc.?" a total of 59% answered yes, 26% said no and 17% "don't know". The support was highest in the age group 21 to 29 (64%) and among the higher economic classes (66%) (see PRO. Ministry of Information. INF 1/292 (Part 3). Home Intelligence Reports, July 1942-August 1943. 105-107, quotes from page 106).

This result is even more astonishing in view of the history of state funding in Britain. Whereas official support for the visual arts had always been forthcoming at least to some degree, the theatre had not received such patronage because of its alleged purely commercial character. The changed attitude towards subsidies is perhaps even more surprising in the provinces given the contempt and mistrust many local residents felt when the first theatres not primarily aimed at making a profit emerged during the 1910s. Barry Jackson in Birmingham, for example, met with a lack of public support and a failure to comprehend the importance of such ventures.[818] Even worse, some residents attributed a "more sinister motive" to Jackson's activities and suspected him of trying to educate the public.[819] This, however, was exactly one of CEMA's key aims. Dent praised CEMA for having introduced a new kind of adult education into Britain, and many other contemporary commentators expressed similar enthusiasm for the new quality of war- time repertoires, especially their return to classical drama, opera and ballet. They proudly remarked that war-time escapism had not resulted in "farce and swing" but Shakespeare and Elgar.[820] This means that apart from in purely financial terms, theatre also attained a new level of quality during the war. Government and population alike were not satisfied any longer with the purely entertaining fare offered to them for decades before. New enlarged audiences now looked for something more demanding. Education and edification – another radical change – had lost their negative image and became the catchwords of a new theatrical era.

The most important finding in the context of this particular study – and this is another fact which research has failed to point out before – is that this change also meant that the way in which theatre in Britain started that of being perceived was not too different from the enemy, even though subsidised theatre had clearly been seen as a continental (or even German) and deeply un-British institution.[821] Although commentators during the debate about Britain's future theatre exclusively referred to either the "Comédie Française" or the Soviet theatre as models (depending on their political allegiances), in order to avoid any positive mention of the long-established system of state- subsidised

[818] To run a theatre "for any other reason than for profit seemed to the Midlander a frivolous occupation meriting contempt rather than admiration" (Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 164).
[819] Marshall asserted that "the Englishman has nothing against education but he thinks it should be kept in its place. He resents any attempt to mix it with his amusements" (Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 164).
[820] Since 1939 "symphonic music, opera and plays of Shakespeare have all enjoyed an outstanding success, greater by far than the temporary rubbish compounded of farce and swing that is the true product of escapism" (Haskell, *Ballet Since 1939*, 23).
[821] This view had a long tradition in Britain and had found expression before on many occasions. In a parliamentary debate on a subsidised National Theatre in 1913 MPs warned against efforts to "Prussianise our institutions" (quoted in Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 148).

theatre in German speaking countries, it is obvious that they had these countries in mind, too. The British Drama League's "Civic Theatre Scheme" from 1942, for example, clearly mirrored basic ideas of the organisation of German municipal theatres. On describing the educational role of the Old Vic in connection with his looking for models for a possible post-war theatre, Ashley Dukes called it a typical "Volksbühne" in the German sense of the word. And it was exactly this direction he wanted the Old Vic to continue to pursue after the war.[822] Although Harold Hobson certainly exaggerated when claiming that theatre in Britain developed "in half a century from the supremacy of the commercial to that of the subsidized",[823] the importance of the changes can hardly be overstated.[824]

In production procedures, too, the continental repertory system came increasingly into fashion from the late 1930s. Commentators heaped praise on the 1944 Old Vic and Gielgud companies for offering "true" repertory to London audiences.[825] Even the plays themselves represented a bill worthy of a continental state theatre.[826] It was clearly recognised as one the most important merits of the real repertory system that it allowed for experiments and encouraged the staging of plays which might attract only small audiences – an idea which would hardly have sounded appealing to many pre-war theatre critics and audiences.[827]

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[822] See Dukes, Ashley. "Social Basis. The English Scene." Theatre Arts 24 (1940): 409.
[823] See Hobson, *Theatre in Britain*, 22.
[824] The emerging of state subsidies went hand in hand with a rise in the number of repertory companies. Before the outbreak of the war The Stage listed 75 repertory companies in Britain. By 1946 this figure had risen to 220 (see Marshall, *Other Theatre*, 190).
[825] See, for example, Dukes who claimed that the 1944-45 London theatre season had been the best "for a great many years – perhaps the best since the memorable spring of 1911 which brought us the Ballets Russes, the Frohman Repertory, the first Reinhardt visit" (see Dukes, Ashley. "The English Scene." Theatre Arts 29 (1945): 562). Gielgud stated that "classical repertory has taken London by storm in the sixth year of war. The two theatres housing it [...] hold between nine and eleven hundred persons at every performance" (Gielgud, John. "The Haymarket and the New. London Flocks to Repertory." Theatre Arts 29 (1945): 166). The Old Vic produced at least three pieces each season, but kept earlier productions in the programme in order to build up a repertoire.
[826] During the first season at the Old Vic the company staged Peer Gynt, Arms and the Man, Richard III, Uncle Vanya, two parts of Henry IV and The Critic, and Tennent Plays at the Haymarket presented Hamlet, Love for Love and A Midsummer Night's Dream.
[827] The importance of the "true" repertory was recognised by contemporary commentators. The Theatre World praised the Old Vic's new "repertory fashion" as a "noteworthy feature that cannot be stressed too much" (Stephens, Frances. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World June 1944: 5).

It is, therefore, not only in its role of fostering morale and keeping the spirits high on the home front that we find the most important parallel between British and German provincial theatres.[828] During the First World War theatres had already been expected to fulfil this role. The novel element was the government's perception of theatre as an educational institution, which was completely new in Britain. Although official announcements regarding this new function are extremely rare and only appear as a hidden agenda it seems as if the motifs were similar to Germany, where the propaganda importance of theatre in war-time was constantly stressed.[829] When threatened with invasion, commentators asserted that Britain was defending not only her island but also her rich cultural heritage. The fight to keep Shakespeare alive seemed nearly as important as the fighting at the front. The theatre was, therefore, the perfect place to express this newly found awareness, and the revival of classical drama and opera alongside avant-garde ballet has to be seen in this context. The development culminated in a repertoire which, as has been seen at the Theatre Royal from 1942, became increasingly similar to the bill offered at German provincial theatres. In both countries the close attention devoted to theatrical history and cultural heritage played an important part in war-time propaganda. Shakespeare, Elizabethan drama and the Restoration period in Britain were as often quoted in support of the war effort as Goethe, Schiller and Wagner in Germany. Such historical references proved useful in defending the British Isles as well as justifying the German attack on the Soviet Union. And even on the local level, historical points of reference were found in abundance. As York increasingly looked back on Tate Wilkinson and the "York Circuit" so did Münster with allusions to Karl Immermann and August Pichler.

The new perception of theatre as providing entertainment as well as education met with instant popular success. Patrons flocked to the theatres not only in the West End but also in the provinces. The Theatre Royal broke its attendance records on a regular basis after 1939. In Germany the theatre experienced a similar boost in public support in the course of the war.[830] Secret reports stressed that although some patrons remained

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[828] Commentators repeatedly stressed how successful the theatre was in keeping up national morale. Harold Hobson, for example, stressed that the theatre "did a great deal to keep the morale of the British people high" (Hobson, *Theatre in Britain*, 117).

[829] Nazi propagandists demanded that the theatre had to be aware more than ever of its function as the "great National Stage", "von der eine beträchtliche seelische und geistige Stärkung der inneren Kriegsbereitschaft des deutschen Volkes ausgehen könne" (Meldungen aus dem Reich Nr. 263, 26 February 1942. BArch, R58 /169, Bl.297).

[830] A typical official intelligence report from February 1942 made clear that the theatre experienced an unprecedented popularity and that performances were regularly sold out (ibid.).

focussed on pure entertainment, the majority of visitors became increasingly interested in the classics and other more demanding plays – as in Britain.[831] This educational aspect behind theatre in Germany, however, was nothing new and, as has been seen, many patrons went to the theatre with the expectation of "learning" something, of witnessing some kind of "uplifting" experience – in short, of being taught. For the majority of audiences in Britain, by contrast, the concept of associating entertainment with education was indeed a new idea. It was also linked to a broader concept of emancipation and liberation, which emerged at the end of the war. Education was being related to ideas of social justice and equality as well as increasing calls for political change.[832] One of the results of this changed atmosphere was the Labour Party's win in the 1945 general election.

It might prove fruitful for future research to examine in detail whether this changed attitude towards the arts found any expression in the way the British occupation forces reorganised Germany's cultural life after the war. A first glance at British occupation policy suggests that indeed it did. The British authorities did not interfere in the way German theatres were organised. Although this had partly pragmatic reasons it was also a sign of their admiration for the German theatre system and its classic dramatic literature.[833] It also showed that the authorities clearly saw parallels with their own changing theatre world, in which the "Arts Council of Great Britain" increasingly distributed public money.[834]

After the war public demand for the arts continued to be substantial. It was so high, in fact, that neither the foundation of the Arts Council nor its need for a continual rise in funding met with any substantial criticism – on the contrary, it was widely accepted and supported.[835] Far reaching plans included the idea that every town of over 20,000 inhabitants should have its own arts centre for drama, concerts and other events. These centres would be served by the repertory theatres of the larger towns. These theatres

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[831] See ibid.

[832] As mentioned before the Beveridge Report, the Education Act, plans for a National Health Service as well as the general concept of a welfare state have to be seen in connection with this political change.

[833] See Clemens, Gabriele. "Die britische Kulturpolitik in Deutschland: Musik, Theater, Film und Literatur". Kulturpolitik im besetzten Deutschland 1945-1949. Ed. Gabriele Clemens. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1994. 207.

[834] British occupation policy, however, was also guided by other principles. The above mentioned concept of a positive "projection of Britain" by way of cultural propaganda played an important role, too (see chapter III, page 138).

[835] In 1946-47 the Arts Council received £350,000, but in the next year it passed half a million and mounted steadily thereafter (Minihan, *Nationalization of Culture*, 228).

would in turn be subsidised by the Arts Council to enable them to feature two companies playing alternate weeks. Once the first company had finished its run it would tour the district while the second company took over at the home playhouse. The idea behind this scheme was not only to serve remote communities with quality performances but also to improve the poor production standards at the theatres doing weekly rep.[836] By December 1945 the Arts Council had already taken the first steps with the foundation of the Arts Theatre in Salisbury on the above mentioned lines and attempts for an interchange of provincial repertory companies on a large scale.[837] The Local Government Act of 1948 finally enabled local authorities to spend a certain amount of revenue on entertainment. This – in principle – opened up the possibility of building municipal theatres on similar lines to those in Germany. Thus, the war resulted in an Act which potentially affected the arts throughout Britain and enriched its cultural life as no previous measure had ever done before – another fact which has hardly been touched on by research so far. This change could in theory have moved Britain's theatres even closer to their continental counterparts. Given these new possibilities and the new popularity theatre had gained during the war, however, it is interesting to note that a radical change did not take place. When the Arts Council looked into the effects of the Local Government Act in 1958 they found the overall picture of local spending on the arts was discouraging.

In conclusion we have seen that provincial theatres both in Germany and in Britain not only played their part in the war effort, but that they also increasingly deployed similar means. They presented classical plays, opera and dance, contemporary comedies and straight propaganda. Although many differences remain, it is interesting to see how quickly the British government changed its mind regarding the importance of theatre for the war effort and was even prepared to pay for it. We have seen that the supposition mentioned in the introduction, that the way in which official control was exerted on the theatres was fundamentally different in Germany and Britain, with the Nazi regime's tight system of control in contrast to absolute freedom in Britain, needs to be clarified.

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[836] CEMA's Charles Landstone was one of the driving forces behind this scheme (see Kelsall, Glyn. "CEMA Marches On." Theatre World September 1945: 27-28).

[837] The Theatre World was left speechless at the speed the British theatrical landscape was transforming: "How different the story after the last war, when the theatre in the provinces was allowed to wilt and perish [...]. Few realised then that a country whose provincial theatres are dead (however flourishing the

Until the later stages of the war theatre in Nazi Germany was never totally controlled and the possibility of independent decisions regarding the repertoire was greater than research has so far suggested. And in Britain the freedom of decisions regarding the programme was curtailed from 1942 with the "Morrison law", which offered the possibility of direct state interference in repertoire questions – far reaching powers, which commentators have so far solely attributed to Goebbels. Concerning the repertoire, too, York and Münster operated an increasing similar policy with educational concepts clearly dominating over purely entertaining ideas. The organisation of the Theatre Royal as a non- profit making repertory theatre was another, although perhaps not intended, parallel to German provincial theatres. Although the British government did not fund drama on a scale anywhere near the huge subsidies paid in Germany, the basic idea that theatre was of national importance and not just a commercial affair constituted an interesting parallel with Germany.[838] The changes in the repertoire and in the way it was perceived at the end of the war meant not only that the Theatre Royal's function had changed radically within a few years, but also that together with its non-profit character it had become similar to the Städtische Bühnen – a cultural institution rather than a place for pure entertainment.

The fundamental differences, however, have also become obvious. The similarities found do not in any way imply that theatre in Britain during the Second World War was the same as in Nazi Germany. One seemingly little event from December 1943 can perhaps best illustrate the most important of these differences. At that time Sadler's Wells Opera Company performed in York for two weeks and presented, as usual, European opera classics – among them The Marriage of Figaro. Mozart's opera was given in a new production by Kurt Jooss – the same Kurt Jooss who had been celebrated in Weimar Germany for his avant-garde dance performances, who had helped Münster's theatre to gain nationwide recognition in the mid-1920s, and who was forced to leave Germany by the Nazis.

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stage might be in the capital) is dramatically speaking like a tree without roots" (Stephens, Frances. "Over the Footlights." Theatre World December 1945: 5).

[838] The discrepancy becomes obvious when we compare Münster's soaring municipal subsidies under the Nazis to the financial help the Theatre Royal received. At the same time, however, the exemption from Entertainment Tax as early as 1935 can also be seen as a form of subsidy.

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Malton Gazette

Yorkshire Herald

Yorkshire Evening Press

Yorkshire Gazette

York Star

Appendix I

Theatre Programmes

Theatre Royal York 1925 – 1945

Programmes Theatre Royal 1924– 1928

1924

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Robinson Crusoe"		Xmas Panto	26.12.1923 – 13.1.1924	see above
"Outward Bound"	Sutton Vane	Christian background contemporary drama	14.1. – 20.1.	with programme of music play also performed in Münster
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Company': "The Mikado" "Trial by Jury" "Iolanthe" "H.M.S. Pinafore" "The Gondoliers"	all by Gilbert & Sullivan	operas	21.1. – 27.1.	
"Betty"	Lonsdale/Unger	"great musical success"	28.1. – 3.2.	→ fourth appearance in York
"The Scarlet Pimpernel"	Baroness Orczy & M. Barstow	"world famous play"	4.2. – 6.2.	→ second appearance in York, personal visit of Fred Terry and Violet Farebrother
"The Prisoner of Zenda"	adapted by E. Rose from A. Hope's story	"romantic play"	7.2. – 9.2.	with programme of music
"The Lie"	Henry Arthur Jones	melodrama	11.2. – 17.2.	"great London success" with programme of music
"Katinka"	Otto Hauerbach music by R. Friml	musical comedy	18.2. – 24.2.	by arrangement with A. Hammerstein
"The Likes of Her"	C. McEvoy	comedy	25.2. – 2.3.	preceded by "Op- O'- Me- Thumb", one- act- play by F. Fenn & R. Pryce with programme of music
"The Beggar's Opera"	John Gay music by F. Austin	opera	3.3. – 9.3.	"Revised Version" → second appearance in York

Visit of Mrs Patrick Campbell: "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" (5x) "Magda" (2x)	A. Pinero Hermann Sudermann transl. by L. N. Parker		10.3. – 16.3. 1924	"Great English Tragic Actress" all with programme of music "Magda" English version of "Die Heimat" (1893)
"The Lady of the Rose"	Rudolph Schanzer, Ernest Welisch, adapted by Frederick Lonsdale	musical play	17.3. – 23.3.	with Alec Fraser, second time in York, lyrics by Harry Graham/ music by Jean Gilbert
"The Dancers"	H. Parsons	modern morality play	24.3. – 30.3.	"a warning to the young girl brought up in good surroundings who grows over fond of dancing and late hours" with programme of music
"Sally"	J. Kern/C. Grey	musical comedy	31.3. – 6.4.	→ second appearance in York
"The Passionate Elopment" "The School for Scandal" "She Stoops to Conquer"	Compton Mackenzie Sheridan Oliver Goldsmith	~comedy classics	7.4. – 13.4.	performed by 'Compton Comedy Company' all plays performed twice all with programme of music
"Are You a Mason"	C. Frohman	farcial comedy	14.4. – 20.4.	"The Merriest and Maddest of Comedies", preceded by "The Chance" by G. Paxton with programme of music
"Lilac Time"	music by A.M. Wilmer and Heinz Reichert	musical play with Schubert's music	21.4. – 27.4.	English version by Adrian Ross, music arranged by Heinrich Berté and G.H. Clutsam
'Grand Military Night'			25.4.	[*not counted as production*]
"Bluebeard's 8th Wife"	A. Wimperis	comedy	28.4. – 4.5.	with programme of music → second appearance in York
"The Private Secretary"	Charles Hawtrey	farcial comedy	5.5. – 11.5.	with programme of music
"The Princess' Own"	Roland Daniel	romantic drama	12.5. – 18.5.	with programme of music
"At Mrs. Bean's"	C. K. Mumo	comedy	19.5. – 25.5.	with programme of music

"The Edge o' Beyond"	adapted by Roy Horniman, from novel by Gertrude Page	"A Rhodesian Romance"	26.5. – 1.6.1924	
"Paradise Alley"	R. P. Weston & B. Lee	"Musical Burlesque"	2.6. – 8.6.	
"The Yellow Ticket"	Gladys Cooper	~contemporary drama	9.6. – 15.6.	"powerful play" with programme of music
Closed for "Annual Cleaning and Re- Decorating"			16.6. – 27.7.	→ no summer season → long period of closure
"The Nine O'clock Revue"	H. Simpson & M. Harvey/ M. Lillie	musical revue	28.7. – 3.8.	
"Within the Law"		~contemporary drama	4.8. – 10.8.	with programme of music
"Broadway Jones"	G. M. Cohan	comedy	11.8. – 17.8.	"A Scream" with programme of music
"The Lilies of the Field"	J. Hastings Turner	comedy	18.8. – 24.8.	with programme of music
"It Pays to Advertise"	R. C. Megrue & W. Hackett	farce	25.8. – 31.8.	with programme of music
"Oh I"	music by F. Walls lyrics by Garry Cunningham	musical comedy	1.9. – 7.9.	
"The Rising Generation"	W. Weaver & L. Leycester	comedy	8.9. – 14.9.	with programme of music
"The Lonely House"	adapted from a novel by Mary Belloc Lowndes & C. Randolph	comedy thriller	15.9. – 21.9.	with programme of music
"Charley's Aunt"	Brandon Thomas	comedy	22.9. – 28.9.	→ fifth appearance in York
"The Eternal Spring"	P. Garland	comedy	29.9. – 5.10.	visit of Dennis Eadie preceded by "playlet" "Some Showers" by Pett Ridge

"The Little Minister"	J. M. Barrie	"world- famous romance"	6.10. – 12.10. 1924	visit of Peggy O'Neil and Robert Harris with programme of music
"In the next Room"	E. Robson & H. Ford	"Mystery Play"	13.10. – 19.10.	preceded by "The Touch of Truth", one- act comedy by H. M. Walbrook
"Madame Pompadour"	adapted by F. Lonsdale & H. Graham, music: L. Fall	musical comedy	20.10. – 26.10.	German piece!
"The Honourable Mr. Tawnish"	J. Farnol	"Romantic Costume Play"	27.10. – 2.11.	with Dennis Neilson Terry and Mary Glynne with programme of music
"Toni"	Douglas Furber & Harry Graham, music by Hugo Hirsch	"new musical play" farcial musical comedy	3.11. – 9.11.	played by 'George Edwardes Company' sounds very German
"The Return"	J. E. H. Terry & A. Rose	new adventure of Sherlock Holmes	10.11. – 16.11.	visit of Eille Norwood with programme of music
"The Merry Widow" ("Die Lustige Witwe"!)	Victor Leon & Leo Stein music by Franz Léhar	operetta	17.11. – 23.11.	played by 'George Edwardes Company' lyrics by Adrian Ross
"Mrs. Dane's Defence"	H. A. Jones	melodrama	24.11. – 30.11.	visit of Ethel Irving with programme of music
'Mr. Charles Doran & his Shakespearean Company': "Midsummer Night's Dream" "As You Like It" "Twelfth Night" "Merry Wives of Windsor"	all W.S.	all classics	1.12. – 7.12.	all with programme of music
"Plus Fours"	H. A. Vachell & H. Simpson	comedy	8.12. – 14.12.	with programme of music
"Our Betters"	W. S. Maugham	contemporary drama	15.12. – 21.12.	with programme of music
"Jack and Jill"	J. Hickory Wood	Xmas Panto	26.12. – 18.1.1925	produced by Harry Bistow plus: "The Two Martells"

General Remarks:

- 56 productions: 37 comedies, 4 contemporary dramas, 6 classics, 6 operas, 1 operetta, 2 modern classics

1925

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Jack and Jill"	J. Hickory Wood	Xmas Panto	26.12.1924 – 18.1.1925	produced by Harry Bistow plus: "The Two Martells"
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Company': "Cox and Box" "H.M.S. Pinafore" "The Yeoman of the Guard" "Ruddigore" (3x)	all by Gilbert & Sullivan	operas	19.1. – 25.1.	
"Pierrottic Entertainment"	Burnaby/de Bear	~comedy	26.1. – 1.2.	played by 'The Co- Optimists' theatre company
"Catherine"	music by Tschaikowsky English version by R. Arkell & F. de Gresac	musical play	2.2. – 8.2.	performed by R. Courtneidge's company story: Peter the Great and Catherine of Russia in 1702
"The Street Singer"	F. Lonsdale music by H. Fraser Simson	musical play	9.2. – 15.2.	
'The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company': "The Tales of Hoffmann" "The Daughter of the Regiment" "Cavalleria Rusticana"&"I Pagliacci" "Maritana" "Madam Butterfly" "The Bohemian Girl"	see above!	operas	16.2. – 22.2.	always similar (or even the same) repertoire! double bill counted as one production!
"The Creaking Chair"	A. Tupper Wilkes revised by R. Pertwee	~comedy "London's Latest and Greatest Success"	23.2. – 1.3. 1925	"over 1000 performances"

'The York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society': "Highwayman Love"	F. R. Bell, music by W. H. Bullock	romantic light opera set in York in 1720	2.3. – 8.3.	played in aid of the County Hospital
"Katinka"	O. Hauerbach music by R. Friml	musical comedy set in the Balkans	9.3. – 15.3.	→ second appearance in York
"Stop Flirting"	F. Jackson with music by W. Daly & P. Lannin	~musical comedy	16.3. – 22.3.	with additional numbers by George Gershwin
"Outward Bound"	Sutton Vane	contemporary drama/ Christian background	23.3. – 29.3.	with programme of music → second appearance in York
"White Cargo"	Leon Gordon	~contemporary drama/ colonial play	30.3. – 5.4.	"A Vivid Play of the Primitive Unvarnished Life in the Tropics"
"The Eye of Siva"	Sax Rohmer	"Eastern Mystery Play"	6.4. – 12.4.	Rohmer American thriller writer with programme of music
"Lilac Time"	music by A.M. Wilmer and Heinz Reichert, English version by Adrian Ross	romantic love story with Schubert's music	13.4. – 19.4.	with original actor Courtice Pounds → second time in York
Repertory Season with Lena Ashwell Players:			1925	first announced 2 March, seven weeks in residence, with actress Esmé Church, nearly all productions with programme of music
"The Earth"	J. B. Fagan	~contemporary drama	20.4. – 26.4.	
"The Tragedy of Nan"	J. Masefield	~contemporary drama	27.4. – 3.5.	
"The Importance of Being Earnest"	O. Wilde	modern classic	4.5. – 10.5.	actors "being dressed in the fashion of 1895"
"The Truth About Bladys"	A. A. Milne	comedy	11.5. – 17.5.	"funniest racing play ever written"
"Dandy Dick"	A. W. Pinero	modern classic/comedy	18.5. – 24.5.	
'Military Command Night'			22.5.	
"Her Husband's Wife"	A. E. Thomas	farcial comedy about "Hypercondria"	25.5. – 31.5.	"central idea is not strong enough to sustain the three- act structure" (*YEP*, 26/5/25) "rather sparsely filled house";
"The Country Wife"	William Wickerley (written in 1675, played here in Garrick's version)	classic "Restoration comedy-restored" (*YEP*, 2/6/25)	1.6. – 7.6.	one could have wished for "a little more latitude than the discreet emendations have seen fit to allow us" (*YEP*, 2/6/25)

"A Little bit of Fluff"	Walter E. Ellis	farce	8.6. – 14.6.1925	"still a favourite with playgoers" (*YEP*, 9/6/25) → second appearance in York
"Brown Sugar"	Lady (Arthur) Lever presented by Stanley Ravenscroft	comedy	15.6. – 21.6.	"light entertainment of a very acceptable character" (*YEP*, 16/6/25)
Theatre closed for summer vacation			22.6. – 19.7.	
"Tiger Cats"	presented by Arthur Hardy	thriller	20.7. – 26.7.	
"Anna Christie"	Eugene O'Neil	contemporary drama	27.7. – 2.8.	presented by Hugh Bernard "sensational play"
"The Cat and Canary"	John Willard	mystery thriller	3.8. – 9.8.	with Helen De Broy
"Rising Generation"	W. Weaver & L. Leycester	comedy	10.8. – 12.8.	with programme of music → second appearance in York
"Eliza Comes to Stay"	H. V. Esmomd	farce	13.8. – 15.8.	"Comedy on football v. theatres" with programme of music → third appearance in York
"Romance"	E. Sheldon	"Most Beautiful Love Story Ever Written"	17.8. – 23.8.	1045 performances at the Lyric Theatre
"The Balkan Princess"	F. Lonsdale music by Paul Rubens	musical comedy	24.8. – 30.8.	
"East of Suez"	Somerset Maugham	contemporary drama "spectacular play"	31.8. – 6.9.	with programme of music
"Gipsy Love"	music by Franz Lehar	musical comedy = operetta	7.9. – 13.9.	
"The Green Goddess"	W. Archer	"Play of Adventure"	14.9. – 20.9.	with programme of music

'Charles Doran's Shakespearean Co': "Othello" "As You Like It" "Julius Caesar" "A Midsummer Night's Dream" "Much Ado About Nothing" "Hamlet" "The Tempest" "The Merchant of Venice"	W.S.	classical drama	21.9. – 27.9. 1925	
"The Sport of Kings"	Ian Hay	comedy	28.9. – 4.10.	with programme of music
"The Nine O'clock Revue"	H. Simpson & M. Harvey/ M. Lillie	musical revue	5.10. – 11.10.	→ second appearance in York
personal visit of Percy Hutchison in: "The Man from Hong Kong"	C. Mills	(comedy) thriller	12.10. – 18.10.	specially designed front page of the programme with P.H.'s photo in naval uniform and another one of Marjorie Gordon (actor) with programme of music
'Military Command Night'			14.10.	
"Saint Joan"	B. Shaw	modern classic	19.10. – 25.10.	with programme of music
"The Maid of the Mountains"	Frederick Lonsdale	musical comedy	26.10. – 1.11.	→ sixth appearance in York
"Plus Fours"	H. A. Vachell & H. Simpson	comedy "spring- time romance"	2.11. – 8.11.	"comedy of laughter" with programme of music → second appearance in York
"Pierrottic Entertainment"	Burnaby/de Bear	~comedy	9.11. – 15.11.	by 'The Co- Optimists' → second appearance in York

'O'Mara Opera Company': "Il Trovatore" "Carmen" "Romeo and Juliet" "Tannhäuser" "The Jewess" "Rigoletto" "Bohemian Girl"			16.11. – 22.11. 1925	similar programme as before
"Monsieur Beaucaire"	?	romantic play	23.11. – 29.11.	visit of Gerald Lawrence with Madge Compton & Co, with programme of music
"Storm"	C. K. Munro	comedy	30.11. – 6.12.	
"The Pelican"	F. Tennyson Jesse & H. M. Harwood	~comedy	7.12. – 13.12.	with programme of music
"The Bambola"	H. M Vernon & Guy Bolton	musical comedy	14.12. – 20.12.	for the first time in York
"Red Riding Hood"	presented by George Brydon Phillips	Xmas Panto	26.12. – 3.1.1926	

General Remarks:

- 69 productions: 31 comedies, 9 classics, 3 modern classics, 6 contemporary dramas, 19 operas, one operetta
- N.B.: classics and operas often only produced once or twice whereas normally productions are performed for a whole week!

1926

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Red Riding Hood"	presented by George Brydon Phillips	Xmas Panto	26.12.1925 – 3.1.1926	→ second appearance in York
"No! No! Nanette"	Otto Harbach and Ivring Caesar	musical comedy	4.1. – 10.1.	music: Vincent Youmans, book and adaptation by Frank Mandel from a play by himself
'The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Comp.': "Cavalleria Rusticana"&"I Pagliacci" "Carmen" "Il Trovatore" "Rigoletto" "Samson & Deliah" "Madam Butterfly" "Faust"		operas	11.1. – 17.1.	
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Co.': "The Mikado" 2x "Iolanthe" 2x "Patience" 2x "Ruddigore"	all by Gilbert & Sullivan	operas	18.1. – 24.1.	
"Little Nellie Kelly" 'Military Command Night'		comedy	25.1. – 31.1. 28.1.	
"The Farmer's Wife"	Eden Phillpotts	comedy	1.2. – 7.2.	"clean wholesome humour" with programme of music
"Madame Pompadour"	adapted by F. Lonsdale & H. Graham, music: L. Fall	musical comedy	8.2. – 14.2.	→ second appearance in York
"The Passing of the Third Floor Back"	Jerome K. Jerome	comedy	15.2. – 17.2.	visit of Frank Forbes Robertson & Comp.

"Sweet Nell of Old Dury"	Paul Kester	~comedy "world famous play"	18.2. – 20.2. 1926	presented by Fred Terry and Julia Nelson with programme of music
"Charley's Aunt"	Brandon Thomas	comedy	21.2. – 27.2.	→ sixth appearance in York
"The Mikado"	Gilbert & Sullivan	comic opera	1.3. – 7.3.	played by "The York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society"
"The Last Waltz"	music by Oscar Straus	musical comedy	8.3. – 14.3.	performed by Robert Courtneidge's Company
"White Cargo"	Leon Gordon	contemporary drama/ "Vivid Play"	15.3. – 21.3.	with music from the 'Theatre Royal Orchestra' → second appearance in York
Visit of Sir Frank Benson: "The School for Scandal" "The Tempest" "Twelfth Night" "She Stoops to Conquer" "Hamlet" "Macbeth" "Julius Caesar"	all W.S. Oliver Goldsmith	classics	22.3. – 28.3.	performed by the "renowned Shakespearean actor"
"The Rising Generation"	?	comedy	29.3. – 4.4.	
"The Street Singer"	F. Lonsdale, music by H. Fraser Simson	musical comedy	29.3. – 4.4.	
"Katja, the Dancer"	Leopold Jacobsohn and Rudolph Österreicher, music by Jean Gilbert, adapted by F. Lonsdale & H. Graham	musical comedy	12.4. – 18.4.	Jean Gilbert's real name was Max Winterfeld (obviously a German Jew), typical exponent of the "Berlin Operetta", fled 1933
"Nicolette"	?	musical comedy	19.4. – 25.4.	
"Tess of the D'Urbervilles"	Thomas Hardy	"A Play of Foreshow"	26.4. – 2.5.	with programme of music by the 'Theatre Royal Orchestra'

Repertory Season with Lena Ashwell Players: "The Likes of 'Er"	Charles McEvoy	~comedy	1926 3.5. – 9.5.	preceded by "The House with the Twisty Windows" by Mary Pakington ("A Story of Life in Russia after the Revolution")
"The Witch"	John Masefield, adapted from the Norwegian of H. Wiers- Jennsen	"thrilling story of witchcraft"	10.5. – 16.5.	
?	?	?	17.5. – 23.5.	
"The Romantic Age"	A. A. Milne	~comedy	24.5. – 30.5.	with programme of music
"The Silver Box"	J. Galsworthy	contemporary drama	31.5. – 6.6.	with programme of music
'Grand Civic Night'			3.6.	
"Wife to a Famous Man"	Martinez Sierra			translated by H. Granville Barker
plus: "The Proposal"	Chekhov	modern classic	7.6. – 13.6.	"Russian Burlesque"
"What Every Woman Knows"	J. M. Barrie	comedy	14.6. – 20.6.	with programme of music
Theatre closed for "complete redecoration of the interior"			21.6. – 18.7.	→ "following upon the most successful seven weeks visit of the Lena Ashwell Players"
'York Grand Military Torchlight and Searchlight TATTOO'			30.6. – 3.7.	in aid of York & Military Charities
"The Second Blooming" or "The Duchess Decides"	Fred Jackson	~ romantic play	19.7. – 25.7.	visit of Violet Vanbrugh
"The Ghost Train"	Arnold Ridley	thriller with "realistic train effect"	26.7. – 1.8.	"The sensational effects, both audible and visible throughout the piece, were noticeably arresting, and provoked enthusiastic applause" (*YEP*, 27/7/26); with Ethel Warwick; as played in Münster
"No. 17"	Jefferson Farjeon	mystery play/ "Joyous Melodrama"	2.8. – 8.8.	with Basil Bowen with programme of music
"The Right Age to Marry"	H. F. Maltby	"Successful Lancashire Comedy"	9.8. – 15.8.	with programme of music

"The Girl in the Taxi"	Frederick Fenn and Arthur Wimperis, music by Jean Gilbert	musical comedy	16.8. – 22.8. 1926	German piece!
"Alf's Button"	W. A. Darlington	comedy	23.8. – 29.8.	with programme of music
"It Pays to Advertise"	R. C. Megrue & W. Hackett	comedy/farce	30.8. – 5.9.	→ second appearance in York
'The Macdona Players' in Bernard Shaw repertory: "Man and Super Man" (2x) "Pygmalion" (3x) "The Doctor's Dilemma" (2x) "Fanny's First Play" (2x) "You Never Can Tell" (2x) "Mrs. Warren's Profession" (1x) "Getting Married" (1x) "Arms and the Man" (1x)			6.9. – 19.9.	"The audience was of substantial proportions – a highly favourable sign for the rest of the engagement" (*YEP*, 7/9/26) "'Mrs. Warren's Profession' has dated considerably" although "the spiritual value of the play remains" (*YEP*, 14/9/26) "Man and Superman" given in its entirety = six hours with Esmé Percy
"The Last of Mrs. Cheyney"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	20.9. – 26.9.	"clever drama" with Zena Dare
"The Unfair Sex"	Eric Hudson	farcial comedy	27.9. – 3.10.	preceded by "The Perfect Butler" by R. Arkell with programme of music
"Cock O' the Roost"	R. J. Young	comedy	4.10. – 10.10.	personal visit of Percy Hutchison with Catherine Lacey
"Sun- Up"	Lula Vollmer	"moving play"	11.10. – 17.10.	Vollmer American; production features a visit of Lucille La Verne ("A Second Bernhardt") with programme of music
"Just Married"	A. Matthews & A. Nichols	farcial comedy	18.10. – 24.10.	with programme of music
"No, No, Nanette"	book & lyircs by F. Mandel, O. Harbach, I. Caesar	musical comedy	25.10. – 31.10.	music by V. Youmans "same company as last visit" → second appearance in York
"A Cuckoo in the Nest"	B. Travers	comedy "A Misadventure"	1.11. – 7.11.	with programme of music

"Hay Fever"	Noel Coward	comedy	8.11. – 14.11. 1926	visit of Eva Moore
"Saint Joan"	Bernard Shaw	modern classic	15.11. - 21.11.	"greatest and most inspired play of modern times", visit of Dorothy Holmes- Gore [→ see Xerox]
"Mercenary Mary"	Frederick Jackson, lyrics by Irving Caesar, music by William Friedlander and Con Conrad	musical comedy	22.11. – 28.11.	
"The Naughty Wife"	?	~comedy	29.11. – 5.12.	visit of Ivy Duke
"Broadway Jones"	?	~comedy	6.12. – 12.12.	→ second appearance in York, with Harry Piddock
"Dracula"	Hamilton Deane, based on Bram Stoker's novel	~thriller	13.12. – 19.12.	with programme of music
"Up in Mabel's Room"	?	~comedy	20.12. – 26.12.	
"Rose Marie"	Otto Harbach, Oscar Hammerstein, music by Rudolf Friml and Herbert Stothart	musical comedy	27.12. 1926 – 9.1.1927	German piece!

General Remarks:

- 72 productions: 40 comedies, 7 classics, 10 modern classics, 2 contemporary dramas, 12 operas, one question mark
- *YEP* = Yorkshire Evening Press
- N.B.: classics and operas (and modern classics during this season, too) often only produced once or twice whereas normally productions are performed for a whole week!

1927

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Rose Marie"	Otto Harbach, Oscar Hammerstein, music by Rudolf Friml and Herbert Stothart	musical comedy	27.12. 1926 – 9.1.1927	German piece!
"The Ringer"	Edgar Wallace presented by Frank Curzon	mystery thriller	10.1. – 16.1.	"certainly the finest melodrama that has appeared in York for some time" (*YEP*, 11/1/27)
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Company': "The Gondoliers" (2x) "Patience" (2x) "Ruddigore" (1x) "Cox & Box" (2x) "The Pirates of Penzance" (2)	all Gilbert and Sullivan	(comic) operas	17.1. – 23.1.	"enthusiastic reception [...] entirely well-deserved" (*YEP*, 18/1/27)
"Brewster's Millions" 'Grand Military Command Night'	Winchell Smith and Byron Ongley	comedy	24.1. – 30.1. 28.1.	personal appearance of Percy Hutchison and farewell prior to South African tour "see the famous ship scene"
"The Farmer's Wife"	Eden Phillpotts	Devonshire farm comedy	31.1. – 6.2.	"a priceless comedy" (*YEP*, 1/2/27) → second appearance in York
"Betty in Mayfair"	?	musical play about a modern "flapper"	7.2. – 13.2.	"as a play with a plot it hardly came up to expectation" (*YEP*, 8/2/27)
Frank Forbes- Robertson in: "The Call of the Road" "Sweet Lavender" "David Garrick"	 adapted by Ellis Williams Arthur W. Pinero T. W. Robertson	 romantic play comedy ~comedy	 14.2. 15.2. 16.2.	adaptation from Tom Gallon's novel
Julia Neilson & Fred Terry: "The Wooing of Katherine Parr"		romantic play	17.2. – 20.2.	"delightful and most finished performance" (*YEP*, 18/2/27)

"Lilac Time"	Willner, Reichert, A. Ross presented by Macdonald & Young	"musical comedy play" about Schubert	21.2. – 27.2. 1927	"It was the real Schubert all the time" (*YEP*, 22/2/27) → third appearance in York
"Yvonne"	Percy Greenbank music by Jean Gilbert presented by George Edwardes Company	"London's latest musical comedy success" (*YEP*, 26/2/27)	28.2. – 6.3.	"the house was crowded, and enthusiasm ran high. A production of this calibre is almost above criticism" though: "We did not expect and original plot and we did not get it", besides, "the music was inclined to be commonplace" and ranged from Jazz to Mendelssohn (*YEP*, 1/3/27); with Jay Laurier
'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society' in: "The Mountebanks"	libretto: W. S. Gilbert music: Alfred Cellier	opera	7.3. – 13.3.	"both action and musical tempi will bear quickening" and "entries and exits were too obvious" (*YEP*, 8/3/27)
"White Cargo"	Leon Gordon presented by Molesworth & Powell	contemporary drama/ "real, live drama" (*YEP*, 15/3/27)	14.3. – 20.3.	"perhaps the strangest play ever written" (*YEP*, 12/3/27) → third appearance in York
"Katja, the Dancer"	Jacobsohn, Österreicher, adapted Lonsdale and Graham	musical comedy	21.3. – 27.3.	with Ena Dale; "delightful entertainment" (*YEP*, 22/3/27) → second appearance in York
"Aloma"	J. B. Hymer & Le Roy Clemens	"Tale of the South Seas"	28.3. – 3.4.	"one of the outstanding features of the play is the wonderful tropical thunderstorm" (*YEP*, 26/3/27) with programme of music
"Escape"	J. Galsworthy	contemporary drama/ "Thrilling Play"	4.4. – 10.4.	visit of Gerald Ames; play has "broken all records at the Ambassador's"
"Cabaret Up- To- Date"		dance performance	11.4. – 17.4.	engagement of dancer Lydia Kyasht
"Rookery Nook"	Ben Travers	farce	18.4. – 24.4.	"Funniest Farce Ever"
"The Terror"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	25.4. – 1.5.	with Mary Glynne, Dennis Neilson-Terry; "York was chosen as the first city in the country to stage the new plays – a pretty compliment" (*YEP*, 27/4/27)

Repertory Season			1927	seven weeks repertory season with Lena Ashwell Players
?			2.5. – 8.5.	
"The Ware Case"	G. Pleydell	~comedy	9.5. – 15.5.	
"The Magistrate"	A. W. Pinero	modern classic	16.5. – 22.5.	all productions with programme of music
"The Little Minister"	J. M. Barrie	comedy	23.5. – 29.5.	
"The Fugitive"	J. Galsworthy	contemporary drama	30.5. – 5.6.	
"The White Headed Boy"	Lennox Robinson	comedy	6.6 – 12.6.	
"Trilby"	George Du Maurier	comedy	13.6. – 19.6.	→ end of their third season
Repertory Season				season with Vivian Edmond's Repertory Company
"Hobson's Choice"	H. Brighouse	"Lancashire Comedy"	20.6. – 26.6.	
"Woman of no Importance"	O. Wilde	modern classic	27.6. – 3.7.	
"Within the Law"	?	~comedy	4.7. – 10.7.	
"Lady Windermere's Fan"	O. Wilde	modern classic	11.7. – 17.7.	with Gladys Ford- Howitt
"Eliza Comes to Stay"	H. V. Esmond	"bubbling farce"/ "mellow old comedy"	18.7. – 24.7.	→ fourth appearance in York
"This Woman Business"	Benn W. Levy	comedy	25.7. – 31.7.	with programme of music
"Devonshire Cream"	E. Philpotts	comedy	1.8. – 7.8.	visit of 'Birmingham Repertory Theatre Co.' with programme of music
"The 100th Chance"	Ethel M. Dell	love story	8.8. – 14.8.	
"Shavings"	P. Phelps & M. Short	comedy	15.8. – 21.8.	visit of Courtice Pounds with programme of music
"The Joker"	Noel Scott	detective play	22.8. – 28.8.	with programme of music
"The Strangler"	Norman Lee	"shock & thrill mystery"	29.8. – 4.9.	preceded by "Coral Cane" with programme of music
"Alf's Button"	?	comedy	5.9. – 11.9.	→ second appearance in York
"The Gipsy Princess"	?	~musical comedy	12.9. – 18.9.	visit of Florence Smithson
"Just a Kiss"	?	~comedy	19.9. – 25.9.	

"And so to Bed"	J. B. Fagan	comedy	26.9. – 2.10. 1927	with programme of music
"The Ghost Train"	Arnold Ridley	"clever play"	3.10. – 9.10.	"wonderful 'Train' effect"; with music → second appearance in York
"The Best People"	D. Grey & Avery Hopwood	comedy	10.10. – 16.10.	with programme of music
"Mercenary Mary"	music by B. Friedlander & C. Coward	musical comedy	17.10. – 23.10.	→ second appearance in York
"Lady Luck"	Firth Shephard	musical comedy	24.10. – 30.10.	
"The Blue Mazurka"	?	musical comedy	31.10. – 6.11.	
"Interference"	R. Pertwee & H. Dearden	~comedy	7.11. – 13.11.	with programme of music
"The Whole Town's Talking"	Anita Loos & J. Emerson	farcial comedy	14.11. – 20.11.	with programme of music
"Marigold"	L. A. Harker & F. R. Pryor	comedy	21.11. – 27.11.	with programme of music
"Castles in the Air"	R. W. Peck music: P. Wenrich	romantic musical comedy	28.11. – 4.12.	
"Yellow Sands"	E. & A. Philpotts	comedy	5.12. – 11.12.	played by Birmingham Repertory Theatre Co. with programme of music
"Ask Beccles"	C. Campion & E. Dignon	comedy	12.12. – 18.12.	
Closed for Panto rehearsals			19.12. – 25.12.	
"Jack and the Beanstalk"		Pantomime	26.12.1927 – 1.1.1928	

General Remarks:

- 57 productions: 44 comedies, no classics, 3 modern classics, 3 contemporary dramas, 6 operas, one dance production
- N.B.: operas often only produced once or twice whereas normally productions are performed for a whole week!

1928

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Jack and the Beanstalk"		Pantomime	26.12.1927 – 1.1.1928	
"The Blue Train"	R. Arkell & D. Titheradge music: Robert Stolz	musical comedy	2.1. – 8.1.	German piece!
"The Constant Nymph"	M. Kennedy & Basil Dean	~comedy	9.1. – 15.1.	with programme of music
"Broadway"	P. Dunning & G. Abbott	comedy	16.1. – 22.1.	with programme of music
"My Son John"	lyrics: G.J., H. Graham, L. Carter, music by Oscar Straus	musical comedy	23.1. – 29.1.	book by Graham John German piece!
"The Ringer"	E. Wallace	"best crook play yet presented in this country"	30.1. – 5.2.	"an answer to the challenge 'Buy British Goods' for it is a thoroughly British play by a great British author → second appearance in York
"Sunny"	music by Jerome Kern book & lyrics: O. Harbach & Oscar Hammerstein	musical comedy	6.2. – 12.2.	
"Comin' Thro' the Rye"	Constance Stuart	romantic play	13.2. – 15.2.	visit of Frank Forbes Robertson
"The Scarlet Pimpernel"	Baroness Orczy & M. Barstow	~comedy	16.2. – 19.2.	visit of Julia Nelson and Fred Terry → third appearance in York
"The Wrecker"	Arnold Ridley	"Another Train Mystery"	20.2. – 26.2.	Ridley successful author of mystery plays in the 1930s; with programme of music
"The Student Prince" (first production [=UA] 1924)	musical version of George Alexander's "famous production 'Old Heidelberg'" (UA 1902),	musical comedy set in Germany with programme of music	27.2. – 4.3.	"some of the old German student college songs are either introduced or paraphrased in a very acceptable manner including a very spirited drinking song" film version by Ernst Lubitsch in 1928

'York Amateurs': "Iolanthe"	Gilbert & Sullivan	opera	5.3. – 11.3.1928	performances in aid of York County Hospital
"Thark"	Ben Travers	comedy	12.3. – 18.3.	with programme of music
"The Spot on the Sun"	John Hastings Turner	comedy	19.3. – 25.3.	visit of Violet Farebrother with programme of music
"The Rat"	David L'Estrange	~Western	26.3. – 1.4.	"Story of an Apache" with programme of music
"The Private Secretary"		~comedy	2.4. – 8.4.	
"Whispering Wires"	Kate McLaurin	"thrilling mystery play"	9.4. – 15.4.	
"Tip Toes"	book by G. Bolton & F. Thompson	musical comedy	16.4. – 22.4.	lyrics: Ira Gershwin, music: George Gershwin
"The Sign of the Cross"	Wilson Barratt	contemporary drama/ religious drama	23.4. – 29.4.	set in ancient Rome → third appearance in York
"The Silent House"	John G. Brandon & George Pickett	mystery play	30.4. – 6.5.	Brandon (1879-1941) prolific author of detective fiction with programme of music
Repertory Season with Lena Ashwell Players:			7.5. – 15.7.	Ashwell's fourth Summer season all plays with programme of music
"French Leave"	Reginald Berkeley	~comedy	7.5. – 13.5.	
"Outward Bound"	Sutton Vane	"delights & mystifies"	14.5. – 20.5.	"right play for race week", third time in York
"The Sport of Kings"	Ian Hay	comedy	21.5. – 27.5.	
"The Great Broxopp"	A. A. Milne	comedy	28.5. – 3.6.	"thrilling incidents and dramatic situations"
"Diplomacy"	Victorien Sardou	modern classic	4.6. – 10.6.	
"The Thirteenth Chair"	Bayard Veiller	detective play	11.6. – 17.6.	
"The Professor's Love Story"	J. M. Barrie	"play of love & laughter"	18.6. – 24.6.	
'Grand Military Night'			22.6.	
"The Case of Rebellious Susan"	Henry Arthur Jones	modern classic	25.6. – 1.7.	
"Lord Richard in the Pantry"	Sidney Blow & Douglas Hoare	farce	2.7. – 8.7.	→ third appearance in York
"Daddy Long Legs"	Jean Webster	comedy	9.7. – 15.7.	→ fifth appearance in York

"When Blue Hills Laughed"	Seamark & Marius	comedy	16.7. – 22.7. 1928	"loveable Cowboy Play" with programme of music
"Lost Property"	?	"Jewish Comedy"	23.7. – 29.7	visit by Barney Lando
"Danger"	?	~thriller	30.7. – 5.8.	with programme of music
"The Monster"	?	thriller	6.8. – 12.8.	
"Sunny"	music: Jerome Kern, book: O. Harbach, O. Hammerstein	musical comedy	13.8. – 19.8.	→ second appearance in York
"His Wife's Children"	Harold Owen	~comedy	20.8. – 26.8.	with programme of music
"The Bambola"	H. M. Vernon & G. Bolton	musical comedy	27.8. – 2.9.	→ second appearance in York
"Gala Nights"	dance show	"Entirely New Cabaret"	3.9. – 9.9.	performed by Lydia Kyasht and company
"Meet the Wife"	?	comedy	10.9. – 16.9.	
"The Desert Song" (UA 1926)	book: O. Hammerstein, O. Harbach, Frank Mandel, music: Sigmund Romberg	musical play set in French Morocco	17.9. – 30.9	played for two weeks! German piece!
"Aloma"	J. B. Hymer & Le Roy Clemens	"romance of the South Seas"	1.10. – 7.10.	with programme of music
"The Crooked Billet"	Dion Titheradge	melodramatic comedy	8.10. – 14.10.	preceded by Marie Makino in "Character Impressions" with programme of music
"Lumber Love"	book: L. Styles, music: Bertie & Emmett Adams	musical play	15.10. – 21.10.	play about the life in Canada
"So this is Love"	S. Lupino & A. Rigby music: Hal Brody	musical play	22.10. – 28.10.	"Outstanding Musical Success"
"The Black Spider"	Carlton Dawe	mystery play	29.10. – 4.11.	Dawe prolific thriller writer, play based on 1911 novel; with programme of music

"Lord Babs"	Keble Howard	farce	5.11. – 11.11. 1928	with programme of music
"The Man who Changed his Name"	E. Wallace	"grim comedy"	12.11. – 18.11.	with programme of music
"Plunder"	Ben Travers	farce	19.11. – 25.11.	with programme of music
"S.O.S."	Walter Ellis	~thriller	26.11. – 2.12.	with programme of music
"Compromising Daphne"	Valentine	farce	3.12. – 9.12.	with programme of music
"Seven Keys to Baldpate"	G. M. Cohan	comedy thriller	10.12. – 16.12.	"as full of laughs as mystery"
Theatre closed			17.12. – 25.12.	
"That's a good Girl"	book: D. Furber, music: P. Charig & J. Meyer, lyrics: D. Furber, Ira Gershwin & D. Carter	musical comedy	26.12.1928 – 6.1.1929	"Grand New Year Attraction"

General Remarks:

- 52 productions: 46 comedies, no classics, 2 modern classics, 2 contemporary dramas, one opera, one dance production
- for the first time in many years no visiting opera company

Programmes Theatre Royal 1929 – 1931

1929

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"That's a good Girl"	book: D. Furber, music: P. Charig & J. Meyer, lyrics: D. Furber, Ira Gershwin & D. Carter	musical comedy	26.12.1928 – 6.1.1929	"Grand New Year Attraction"
"The Squeaker"	Edgar Wallace presented by Barry O'Brien's company	thriller "Wallace's masterpiece"	7.1. – 13.1.	"one of the most enjoyable productions witnessed at the Theatre Royal for some time" (*YEP*, 8/1/29), played to "crowded houses"
"Peggy Ann"	presented by Horsfield & Langstaff	musical play	14.1. – 20.1.	
"The Flying Squad"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	21.1. – 27.1.	presented by Barry O'Brien's company
"Hit the Deck"	Herbert Fields, lyrics by Leo Rohn and Clifford Grey, "anglicised" by R.P. Weston & Bert Lee, music: Vincent Youmans	musical comedy	28.1. – 3.2.	with Frankie Seymour, Herbert Raymond, Jack Williams; "good evening's entertainment" (*YEP*, 29/1/29) supposedly American musical presented by MacDonald & Young's company
"Alibi"	adapted by Michael Morton from Agatha Christie's novel	detective play/murder mystery	4.2. – 10.2.	with Francis L. Sullivan as "Hercule Poirot" presented by Lionel Burte & B. A. Meyer
"The Vagabond King"	W.H. Post and Brian Hooker, based on McCarthy's romance, music by Rudolf Friml	"wonderful musical play"	11.2. – 17.2.	with Eric Woodburn, Cecile Forbes "The general mounting of the play is on an elaborate scale" (*YEP*, 12/2/29)

"Lady Mary"	? presented by Lee Ephraim's company with Ursula Hughes, Ivan Samson	musical comedy	18.2. – 24.2. 1929	"comes as a relaxation and a restful relief from the pronounced jazz type of musical play so common nowadays", "The fact that it is a British production is not the only recommendation of the play"(*YEP*, 19/2/29)
"Passing Brompton Road"	?	comedy	25.2. – 3.3.	presented by Warwick W. Broomfield with Connie Ediss
"The Gondoliers"	Gilbert & Sullivan	comic opera	4.3. – 10.3.	'York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society'; "Triumph for York Amateurs" (*YEP*, 5/3/29)
"Lady Luck"	?	musical comedy	11.3. – 17.3.	presented by Barry O'Brien
"The Farmer's Wife"	Eden Phillpotts	"West- country dialect comedy"	18.3. – 24.3.	presented by Clifton Alderson with Barry V. Jackson
"The Silent House"	John G. Brandon & George Pickett	thriller	25.3. – 31.3.	
"The Ringer"	Edgar Wallace presented by M. Barry O'Brien's company	thriller	1.4. – 7.4.	"audience found it better than most 'crook plays'" (*YEP*, 2/4/29) → third appearance in York
"Looking for a Wife" special performances: 'Grand Civic Night' 'Military Command Night'	Frederick Jackson	comedy	8.4. – 14.4. 9.4. 12.4.	presented by Percy Hutchison and his London company with Percy Hutchison, Renee Kelly, Olive Sloane; "entertainment for modern audiences" (*YEP*, 9/4/29)
"Many Waters"	Monckton Hoffe	~comedy	15.4. – 21.4.	"comedy and tragedy in vivid contrast" presented by Arthur Gibbons & Dennis Eadie
'Shaw Repertory': "Pygmalion" "Fanny's first Play" "Man and Superman" "Mrs. Warren's Profession" "You Never Can Tell" "The Doctor's Dilemma" "Arms and the Man"	all by Shaw	modern classics	for two weeks: 22.4. – 5.5.	presented by Macdona Players players "enjoy a well deserved popularity with York theatre patrons" (*YEP*, 30/4/29)

'Repertory Season with Lena Ashwell Players':			6.5. – 14.7. 1929	engagement for 10 weeks, Ashwell's fifth repertory season
"The Lilies of the Field"	J. Hastings Turner	comedy	6.5. – 12.5.	"splendid reception" by York audience and "confident assurance for the ensuing repertory season being the best yet experienced" (*YEP*, 7/5/29)
"Sign on the Door"	Channing Pollock	~contemporary drama	13.5. – 19.5.	
"The Enchanted Cottage"	Arthur W. Pinero	modern classic	20.5. – 26.5.	
"Bulldog Drummond"	"Sapper" & Gerald du Marnier	"ever- popular play" (*YEP*, 28/5/29)	27.5. – 2.6.	
"The Adventure of Lady Ursula"	Anthony Hope	comedy	3.6. – 9.6.	
"I'll Leave it to You"	Noel Coward	comedy	10.6. – 16.6.	theme "based upon domestic and family affairs and the need and desire for money" (*YEP*, 11/6/29)
"The Man from Hongkong"	Clifford Mills	"thrilling drama"	17.6. – 23.6.	"full of exciting incident and thrilling situations" (*YEP*, 15/6/29)
"Caste"	Tom Robertson	comedy	24.6. – 30.6.	"clever combination of delightful humour and polished dramatic art", "audience vastly amused" (*YEP*, 25/6/29)
"The Green Goddess"	William Archer	"play of adventure on the Indian Frontier" (*YEP*, 29/6/29)	1.7. – 7.7.	→ second appearance in York
"The Schoolmistress"	Arthur Wing Pinero	modern classic	8.7. – 14.7.	"General appreciation has been won by the happy choice of plays this season" (*YEP*, 9/7/29) end of repertory season

Theatre Closed for redecoration			15.7. – 4.8.	
"The Wrecker"	Arnold Ridley & Bernard Merivale,	mystery thriller	5.8. – 11.8.	another "Great Train Mystery" by Ridley with Charles Cullum and "Principal Touring Company" (E. J. Carroll & Harry I. Cohen)
"A Damsel in Distress"	Ian Hay & P. G. Wodehouse	comedy	12.8. – 18.8.	"abounds in breezy wit throughout" (*YEP*, 13/8/29); presented by "The Regent Play Company"
"The Man at Six"	Jack Celestin & Jack de Leon	detective play	19.8. – 25.8.	
"Journey's End"	R. C. Sheriff presented by Clifford Hamilton's company	contemporary anti-war drama "the greatest play of the century" (*YEP*, 24/8/29)	26.8. – 1.9.	"an epic of the trenches, told with the simplicity of truth by one who fought in them" (*YEP*, 24/8/29); concerning the production: some "intense moments should have been carried through in a lower key. The total effect was unnecessarily shrill" (*YEP*, 27/8/29) big advertising campaign!!
"Bird in Hand"	John Drinkwater presented by Barry Jackson & Prince Littler's company	"popular Gloucestershire comedy"	2.9. – 8.9.	play is "typically English, and probably that is why the play is so popular, quite a change from these American plays which one sees nowadays" (*YEP*, 31/8/29) with Fred Rivenhall, Enid Clark
"The Last Hour"	?	mystery play/thriller	9.9. – 15.9.	"gruesome performance which holds the house spellbound" (*YEP*, 10/9/29)
"The Patsy"	Barry Connors presented by Macdonald & Young	comedy	16.9. – 22.9.	"much talked about London success" (*YEP*, 17/9/29); with Mary Mousley, Hodgson Taylor, Maud Holland
"Miss Adventure" <u>special performances</u>: 'Grand Military Command Night'	adapted by Reginald Berkley from the French "Il Manquait un Homme"	~comedy "new play"	23.9. – 29.9. 27.9.	with Renee Kelly, Morris Harvey, Jack Hobbs "prior to immediate London Production" presented by Percy Hutchison

"77, Park Lane"	Walter Hackett	~ comedy thriller "an adventure"	30.9. – 6.10. 1929	presented by M. Barry O'Brien, with Jack Knight, Doris Rogers
"By Candle Light"	Harry Graham from the German of Siegfried Geyer	comedy set in Vienna	7.10. – 13.10.	"continental comedy" with programme of music
"Young Woodley"	?	~comedy	14.10. – 20.10.	with Lilian Hall Davis "the dramatic event of the year"
"Baby Cyclone"	Goerge M. Cohan presented by Reginald Fry & Prince Littler	farcial comedy	21.10. – 27.10.	production from Lyric Theatre "the funniest play for years" (*Daily Mail*), "audience was kept in roars of laughter" (*YEP*, 22/10/29)
"Virginia"	Jack Waller & J. A. Turnbridge	musical play/comedy	28.10. – 3.11.	presented by Macdonald & Young
"The Trial of Mary Dugan"	Bayard Veiller presented by Macdonald & Young	contemporary drama	4.11. – 10.11.	"the greatest trial scene on the stage" (*YEP*, 31/10/29), with Dorothy Neave as played in Münster during the 1928/29 season
"Lucky Girl"	? adapted by Reginald Berkley	musical comedy	11.11. – 17.11.	presented by B. A. Meyer with Marie Picquart
'Hamilton Deane Repertoire Company': "Raffles" (4x) "The Man from Toronto" "Frankenstein" "The Watching Eye" "John Glayde's Honour"	 Eugene Presbrey & E. W. Hornung ? based on the novel ? ?	 detective play ~comedy ~thriller ~comedy ~comedy	18.11. – 24.11.	
"So this Is Love"	Stanley Lupino and Arthur Rigby, lyrics by Desmond Carter, music by Hal Brody	"British musical comedy"	25.11. – 1.12.	"Its libretto, music, producers and cast are all British", "The most interesting part about the play, of course, is that it is an entirely British production, a fact in itself sufficient to attract a large audience" (both quotes *YEP*, 23/11/29)

"Irene"	Leslie Henson (?) presented by Jack O'Shea	musical comedy	2.12. – 8.12.1929	contains "music that at times, when it forgets the American idiom, is very attractive" (*YEP*, 26/11/29) "did not tickle our palate as it might have done" (*YEP*, 3/12/29)
"Blackmail"	Charles Bennett	thriller	9.12. – 15.12.	presented by Langley Howard with Muriel Martin Harvey
Theatre Closed obviously for Panto rehearsals			16.12. – 25.12.	
"Puss in Boots"	presented by George Brydon- Phillips' Company	"gorgeous Pantomime"	26.12.1929 – 5.1.1930	with Renda Rudd, Una Brewer, etc. "sterling quality" (*YEP*, 28/12/29) "colourful dresses, imaginative scenes, and the immortal Panto songs" (*YEP*, 31/12/29)

General Remarks:

- 57 productions: 44 comedies, no classics, 9 modern classics, 2 contemporary dramas, one opera, one left-wing/anti war play
- N.B.: classics and operas (and modern classics during this season, too) often only produced once or twice whereas normally productions are performed for a whole week!

1930

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Puss in Boots"	presented by George Brydon- Phillips' Company	"gorgeous Pantomime"	26.12.1929 – 5.1.1930	with Renda Rudd, Una Brewer, etc. "sterling quality" (*YEP*, 28/12/29) "colourful dresses, imaginative scenes, and the immortal Panto songs" (*YEP*, 31/12/29)
"Mr Cinders"	Clifford Grey and Greatrex Newman, music by Vivian Ellis and Richard Myers	musical comedy	6.1. – 12.1.	presented by Macdonald & Young "plot is an ingenious development of the 'Cinderella' legend" (*YEP*, 4/1/30); "The singing is the weakness in the production" (*YEP*,7/1/30);with Phyllis Heryet
"The Squeaker"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	13.1. – 19.1.	presented by M. Barry O'Brien
"The First Year" 'Grand Civic Night' 'Grand Military Command Night'	Frank Craven	"tragic comedy of married life"	20.1. – 26.1. 23.1. 24.1.	with Percy Hutchison, Neil Carter, William Devereux "met with enthusiastic reception [...] last night", "A simple story of domestic troubles and containing a continual flow of witty dialogue" (*YEP*, 21/1/30)
'The O'Mara Grand Opera Co.': "Tales of Hoffman" "Faust" "Carmen" "Barber of Seville" "Bohemian Girl" "Maritana" "Il Trovatore"	 Offenbach Gounod Bizet Rossini Balfe Wallace Verdi	all operas	27.1. – 2.2.	concerning "Tales of Hoffman": "the opera is by no means heavy. On the contrary, it is refreshing and includes many humorous fragments" (*YEP*, 28/1/30) O'Mara present the usual programme, nothing new!

"Journey's End"	R. C. Sheriff presented by Clifford Hamilton	anti- war play	3.2. – 9.2.1930	"the success of the past year", "accepted for production in no less than 48 theatres in different parts of Germany, a record which no other play has ever achieved" (both quotes *YEP*, 1/2/30); "war is shown stripped of romance, a horrible, unspeakable thing, a crime against civilisation" (*YEP*, 4/2/30) → second appearance in York
"The Desert Song"	book: O. Hammerstein, Otto Harbach, Frank Mandel music: Sigmund Romberg	musical comedy/ "The Proved Greatest of all Great Successes"	10.2. – 16.2.	17 principals, chorus of 50 voices with Franklyn Tilton; "in many parts it is equal to light opera" – which is regarded as a "higher category" (*YEP*, 11/2/30)
"A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur"	musical adaptation by Herbert Fields of Mark Twain's book music & lyrics by Richard Rodgers & Lorenz Hart	musical comedy	17.2. – 23.1.	60 people in the cast with Billy Holland, Horace Percival; played by 'George Edwardes Daly's Theatre Company'
"The Student Prince"	musical version of George Alexander's "famous production 'Old Heidelberg'"	musical comedy set in Germany	24.2. – 2.3.	production "maintained the popularity of a famous piece" with programme of music
'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society': "The Pirates of Penzance" preceded by "Trial by Jury"	Gilbert & Sullivan	operas	3.3. – 9.3.	chorus of 69 voices 21 players in the orchestra
"The Limping Man"	Will Scott	mystery play	10.3. – 16.3.	with Franklin Dyall, Mary Merrall; prior to London production presented by Arthur Hardy
"The Passing of the Third Floor Back"	Jerome K. Jerome	"an allegory"	17.3. – 19.3.	with Frank Forbes- Robertson & Sydney Thornton; "a play that makes one think" (*YEP*, 18/3/30) → second appearance in York

"Sweet Nell of Old Drury"	?	~comedy	20.3. – 22.3. 1930	"remarkable" farewell visit of Julia Neilson and Fred Terry
"Persons Unknown"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	24.3. – 30.3.	presented by Edgar Wallace himself
"Simba" (Film!)		"Great Travel Film"	31.3. – 6.4.	"the lion war of the Lumbwa tribe"
"The Chinese Bungalow"	Marion Osmond & James Corbet	"melodrama of the East"	7.4. – 13.4.	"deals with the marriage of an English girl to a Chinese", "the sinister working of the Oriental mind are portrayed in an interesting and novel manner" (both quotes *YEP*, 5/4/30) presented by Barry O'Brien
"The Patsy"	Barry Connors	comedy	14.4. – 20.4.	"comedy of youth" presented by Macdonald & Young
"The Luck of the Navy"	Clifford Mills	"famous war play" spy play from First World War	21.4. – 27.4.	with German spies "masquerading as English people" (*YEP*, 22/4/30) with Percy Hutchison supported by "full West End company"
"Mr. What's his Name"	translation of a French farce by Yves Mirande	"Screamingly Funny Farce"	28.4. – 4.5.	presented by Percy Hutchison supported by Margaret Swallow translation obviously not good: "Though Paris is mentioned we are a long distance from the gay city" (*YEP*, 24/4/30)
'Grand Opening of the **Repertory Season** under Distinguished Patronage': "The Skin Game" "The Liars" "The Last of Mrs. Cheyney" 'Grand Military Command Night'	 John Galsworthy Henry Arthur Jones Frederick Lonsdale	 contemporary drama comedy comedy "with sparkling dialogue" (*YEP*, 20/5/30)	summer 1930 5.5. – 11.5. 12.5. – 18.5. 19.5. – 25.5. 23.5.	the **'Percy Hutchison's Players'** (PHP) in repertory; "Percy Hutchison is making a bold bid for the support of the first- class plays, acted by a capable company, at ridiculously cheap prices" (*YEP*, 6/5/30) "splendid English play", with Sybil Jane Percy Hutchison himself acting, "staging of the play [...] is far above that seen in most provincial repertory theatres" (*YEP*, 20/5/30)

"The Laughing Optimist"	Rida Johnson Young	comedy	26.5. – 1.6.1930	with P.H. himself, staged in York before (1926) as "Cock O' the Roost"
"The Admirable Crichton"	James M. Barrie	comedy	2.6. – 8.6.	with P.H. himself "most ambitious experiment in repertoire history" (Theatre Royal press advert), production a "phenomenal success" (*YEP*, 16/6/30)
"The Great Adventure"	Arnold Bennett	comedy	9.6. – 15.6.	"a shrewd comment on the ethics of art in general and hero- worship in particular" (*YEP*, 7/6/30)
"Dear Brutus"	James M. Barrie	"a phantasy"	16.6. – 22.6.	after the play speech by P.H.: "I have faith in York and in my players, and in English plays"
"Berkeley Square"	John L. Balderston	romantic play – comedy	23.6. – 29.6.	"the greatest attempt this season", "huge production" transferred from the Lyric Theatre
"His Excellency The Governor"	Robert Marshall	comedy and "unusual love story"	30.6. – 6.7.	"acting was as good as the laughter was hearty" (*YEP*, 1/7/30)
"General Post"	Harold Terry	comedy	7.7. – 13.7.	"deals with the topsy- turveydom which the war inflicted on us" – "We see the interchange of rungs in the social ladder that breaks so devastatingly the peace of an old- established English aristocracy"; only fault of the performance "was the voice of the prompter – a little too audible at times" (*YEP*, 8/7/30) last play of the repertory season
Theatre Closed for cleaning and redecoration			14.7. – 27.7.	
'Three Weeks Season' with Annie Saker:	Walter Howard presented by Annie Saker & her players		28.7. – 3.8.	"had the longest run of any drama in the world"; "entertaining play chiefly about the war, a couple of spies and a couple of love affairs" (*YEP*, 29/7/30)
"Seven Days' Leave"		revue		
"The Story of the Rosary"	Walter Howard	"beautiful play"	4.8. – 10.8.	"built around a war epic" (*YEP*, 5/8/30)
"The Silver Crucifix"	Walter Howard	~comedy	11.8. – 17.8.	"the story of a Paris dancer's reclamation from sin" (*YEP*, 12/8/30)

"Good Morning, Bill"	P. G. Wodehouse	comedy	18.8. – 24.8. 1930	based on a Hungarian story
"The Calendar"	Edgar Wallace	racing comedy	25.8. – 31.8.	presented during York's race week
"Murder on the Second Floor"	Frank Vosper	comedy	1.9. – 7.9.	
"Piccadilly Cabaret"	presented by Lydia Kyasht	revue show/dancing	8.9. – 14.9.	famous Russian dancer; revue, but "reminds one not a little of old time variety" (*YEP*, 9/9/30)
"The Apple Cart"	Bernard Shaw	modern classic	15.9. – 21.9.	"play sparkles with typically Shavian wit" and "shows us a democracy of the year 1980 [...] in which politics have been deserted in favour of 'Big Business'" (*YEP*, 16/9/30)
"The Middle Watch"	Ian Hay & Stephen King-Hall	"romance of the Navy" – comedy	22.9. – 28.9.	presented by Basil Foster & Tom Miller
"Rose Marie"	O. Harbach, O. Hammer-stein, music by Rudolf Friml/Herbert Stothart	musical comedy	29.9. – 5.10.	set in Canada presented by Macdonald & Young
"On the Spot"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	6.10. – 12.10.	"set in the underworld of Chicago" (*YEP*, 7/10/30)
"Miss Adventure"	F. Candera adapted from the French by Reginald Berkeley presented by Percy Hutchison	"modern play"/ comedy	13.10. – 19.10.	with Renee Kelly and "full London company", "treatment of the theme is new and extremely entertaining – so new, in fact, that snatches of the dialogue might be a trifle too outspoken for a purist audience" (*YEP*, 14/10/30)
Henry Baynton in: "Hamlet" "The Merchant of Venice" "Macbeth" "The Taming of the Shrew" "Twelfth Night" "As You Like It" "Othello"	W.S.	classics	20.10. – 26.10.	"success of Shakespeare week" (*YEP*, 21/10/30)

"The Man in Possession"	? – presented by Neldike Ltd., played by Terence Duff & company	comedy	27.10. – 2.11. 1930	"nothing in this cleverly presented little comedy to shock anyone's feelings" (*YEP*, 28/10/30); preceded by "The Best Policy" as curtain- raiser
"The Five O'clock Girl"		musical comedy	3.11. – 9.11.	presented by Macdonald & Young
"The First Mrs. Fraser"	St. John Ervine	comedy	10.11. – 16.11.	"should be seen by all who appreciate British plays" (*YEP*, 11/11/30) presented by Alban Limpus & B. O'Brien
"Third Time Lucky"	Arnold Ridley	comedy	17.11. – 23.11.	"London's funniest play", "extremely good all round cast" (*YEP*, 18/11/30) presented by Howard Leslie
"The Desert Song"	book: O. Hammerstein, Otto Harbach, Frank Mandel, music: Sigmund Romberg	musical play	24.11. – 30.11.	17 principals, 40 chorus; with Sanders Warren, Sylvia Welling; "probably the most musical of all modern comedies" (*YEP*, 25/11/30) for the second time this year!
"Country Life"	Armitage Owen	comedy	1.12. – 7.12.	with Lucy Murray; play "has a lesson to teach. It shows the tendency of modern children to try and overrule their parents, and their aversion to work in any shape or form" (*YEP*, 2/12/30)
"Simba" (Film!)		"Great Travel Film"	8.12. – 14.12.	"the lion war of the Lumbwa tribe" as shown before!
'Special Matinee' in aid of the York County Hospital			9.12.	under patronage of HRH Princess Mary who is present, auction as part of the show
Theatre Closed			15.12. – 25.12.	
"Aladdin and his Lamp"	presented by G. Bryden-Phillips, Charles Danvers	"Gorgeous X-Mas Fairy Pantomime"	26.12.1930 – 4.1.1931	with Fred Culpitt, Phyllis Nesbit, Kaw & Kooney

General Remarks:

- 63 productions: 40 comedies, 7 classics, 1 modern classic, 1 contemporary drama, one left- and right- wing (war) play each, 9 operas, one dance production and two films
- N.B.: classics and operas often only produced once or twice whereas normally productions are performed for a whole week!

1931

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Aladdin and his Lamp"	presented by G. Bryden-Phillips & Charles Danvers	"Gorgeous X-Mas Fairy Pantomime"	26.12.1930 – 4.1.1931	with Fred Culpitt, Phyllis Nesbit, Kaw & Kooney
"Here Comes the Bride"	presented by Macdonald & Young	"musical comedy on the lavish scale"	5.1. – 11.1.	"probably one of the best pieces produced at the Theatre Royal for some time" (*YEP*, 6/1/31); with Dora Barnes, George Carney
"Lilac Time"	Willner, Reichert, English version by A. Ross	musical play	12.1. – 18.1.	with Hughes Macklin as F. S., played over 2000 performances "Schubert's Masterpiece"
"Mr. Cinders"	Clifford Grey and Greatrex Newman, music by Vivian Ellis and Richard Myers	"ever popular musical comedy"	19.1. – 25.1.	with Leslie Hatton, Phyllis Heryet & London company, pres. by Macdonald & Young
"Cinderella"	Harry Russell	Panto	26.1. – 1.2.	"100% Living British Singing, Talking and Dancing", with 70 artists
"Her first Affaire"	Merrill Robers & Frederick Jackson	comedy	2.2. – 8.2.	"excellent satire on the idiosyncrasies of some young moderns" (*YEP*, 31/1/31); presented by Joseph Cunningham, with Geoffrey Clark, Marilyn St. Aubyn
"Almost a Honeymoon"	Walter Ellis	farce	9.2. – 15.2.	fun is "fast and furious" (*YEP*, 10/2/31) presented by Arthur Gibbons
"Michael and Mary"	A. A. Milne; presented by Clifford Hamilton	"brilliant dramatic love story"	16.2. – 22.2.	"one of the most natural of plays [...] seen for a long time" (*YEP*, 17/2/31)

"Let and Sub- Let"	Adelaide Matthews & Martha Stanley	farcial comedy "an excellent night's entertainment" (*YEP*, 24/2/31)	23.2. – 1.3. 1931	with Percy H. supported by Mary Brackley and "actual London company" "immediately prior to Presentation in the West End"
"Two Deep"	Sidney Blow & Gordon Whitehead	comedy	2.3. – 8.3.	with Hilda Trevelyan & London company, produced prior to London production with "distinguished and excellent cast" (*YEP*, 3/3/31)
"Nine till Six"	C. B. Cochran	„Great Mannequin Play"	9.3. – 15.3.	all female cast presented by Barry O'Brien
"Peter Pan"	J. M. Barrie	fantasy	16.3. – 22.3.	with Kathleen Vaughan, Mary Casson, Cyril Harrocks presented by Daniel Meyer Co
"The Mikado" performed by 'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society'	Gilbert & Sullivan	comic opera	23.3. – 29.3.	produced "in view of the fact that a D'Oyly Carte company is not visiting York this season" (*YEP*, 21/3/31); "most charming production" (*YEP*, 24/3/31) in aid of York County Hospital
Recital of Jan Kubelik (on "his famous Strad")	various	musical performance	1.4.	only one performance of "the renowned violinist", apart from this Theatre Royal closed during Holy Week
"Silver Wings"	? presented by Macdonald & Young	romantic musical comedy	4.4. – 12.4.	with Helen Cooney, Elsie Judge and a cast of 60 story adapted from the play "The Broken Wing"
"When Knights Were Bold"	Charles Marlowe	comedy	13.4. – 19.4.	"enthusiastically received" (*YEP*, 14/4/31) with Bromley Challenor
"The House of the Arrow"	A. E. W. Mason	thriller	20.4. – 26.4.	set in France
"Nightie Night"		comedy set in New York	27.4. – 3.5.	personal visit of Percy Hutchison supported by Mary Brackley & Faith Liddle

Repertory Season with **'Percy Hutchison Players'** (PHP):			4.5. – 6.9.1931	"present a selection of High- Class West End successes" assembled "to maintain the traditions of York's Historic Theatre"
"Interference"	Roland Pertwee & Harold Dearden	love story	4.5. – 10.5.	"performance called for congratulation" (*YEP*, 5/5/31)
"Mr. Pim Passes By"	A. A. Milne	comedy	11.5. – 17.5.	with Arthur Burne, Faith Liddle
"A Country Mouse"	Arthur Law	"laughter play"	18.5. – 24.5.	"delightful satire on the drama of the early years of this century" (*YEP*, 16/5/31)
"9:45"	Owen Davies & Sewell Collins	"thrilling mystery play"	25.5. – 31.5.	"really excellent performance", "York turned out in a block to be thrilled" (*YEP*, 30/5/31)
"The Witness for the Defence"	A. E. W. Mason	thriller	1.6. – 7.6.	"magnificent acting" (*YEP*, 2/6/31)
"The Dover Road"	A. A. Milne	farce/comedy	8.6. – 14.6.	"something not to be missed" (*YEP*, 9/6/31), with Steuart West
"Mrs Dane's Defence"	Henry Arthur Jones	thriller	15.6. – 21.6.	personal appearance of Percy Hutchison
"The Ghost Train"	Arnold Ridley	thriller	22.6. – 28.6.	
"Cynara"	H. M. Harwood & R. Gore Brown	contemporary drama – "story of an imperfect lover" – "a provocative play"	29.6. – 5.7.	"moral: have a good time with the shop- girls, gents, and then get back to your wife in time for supper" (*YEP*, 30/6/31), obviously some kind of outburst in York
"The Crooked Billet"	Dion Titheradge	thriller	6.7. – 12.7.	"jolly fine entertainment" (*YEP*, 7/7/31)
"The Butterfly on the Wheel"	E. Hemmerde, Francis Neilson	court/crime play	13.7. – 19.7.	with Faith Liddle, Arthur Burne
"Fair and Warmer"	Avery Hopwood	farce	20.7. – 26.7.	PHP "set it most delightfully to action" (*YEP*, 21/7/31)
"Under Cover"	Roi Cooper Megrue	"real thick- ear drama of smuggling"	27.7. – 2.8.	"the large house – including the late- arrivals, the programme- rustlers, the chatterers and the seat- bangers – was vociferously approving" (YEP, 28/7/31)

"A warm Corner"	Arthur Wimperis & Laurie Wylie	farcial comedy	3.8. – 9.8.1931	with Enid Cooper played by Cecil Barth's Company
'PHP' continued: "Grumpy"		comedy	10.8. – 16.8.	with F. G. Thurstons "whose presence on the stage was a continual delight" (*YEP*, 11/8/31)
"The Outsider"	Dorothy Brandon	contemporary drama/ medical drama	17.8. – 23.8.	
'Grand Flying Matinee' with Sophie Tucker & all star cast		show	22.8.	Sophie Tucker the "famous American comedienne"
"My Wife's Family"	Fred Duprez	farce	24.8. – 30.8.	played by Duprez' company as PHP are "on the road again", "the funniest play in the world"
"On Approval"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	31.8. – 6.9.	farewell performance of **PHP**
"Piccadilly Cabaret"	show around the dancer Lydia Kyasht	cabaret dance show	7.9. – 13.9.	show with "clever dancing, bright comedy, good singing and up- to date music" (*YEP*, 5/9/31), "song and dance show of the conventional kind" (*YEP*, 8/9/31)
"Private Lives"	Noel Coward	comedy	14.9. – 20.9.	"modern play with a modern theme" presented by Colliss & Duff
"The Chocolate Soldier"	Leopold Jacobson & Rudolf Bernauer, English version by Stanislaus Strange, music by Oscar Straus	"world- famous comic opera" based on Shaw's "Arms and the Man" ~musical comedy	21.9. – 27.9.	"the greatest musical revival of all time in York" (Theatre Royal advertisement in *YEP*, 19/9/31); "Anne Croft and star cast score heavily" (*YEP*, 22/9/31)
"To See Ourselves"	E. M. Delafield	comedy "a play for husbands and wives"	28.9. – 4.10.	preceded by one- act thriller "The Medium" "witty and entirely charming" presented by Arnold V. Neilson
"Oh! Daddy"	adapted by Austin Melford from the play by Franz Arnold & Ernst Bach called "It's a Boy"	farce	5.10. – 11.10.	with Jimmy Godden, Ilena Sylva performance sometimes is on "the level of the cheapest kind of music- hall" (*YEP*, 6/10/31)

"Nippy"	written by Arthur Wimperis, Austin Melford, music by Billy Mayerl	musical comedy	12.10. – 18.10. 1931	"a first- class show", "You have to see this one" (*YEP*, 13/10/31) presented by Macdonald &Young
"Brewster's Millions"	Byron Ongley & Winchell Smith	"comedy of the difficulty of getting rid of lots and lots of money" (*YEP*, 20/10/31)	19.10. – 25.10.	with Percy Hutchison and PHP supported by Mary Brackley; "R. Steuart West and George Feason [...] warmed our hearts with performances that vividly recalled the happy days of repertory" (*YEP*, 20/10/31)
"The Eternal Magdalene"	Robert McLaughlin	contemporary drama about a prostitute, "very throbbing stuff"	26.10. – 1.11.	produced by P. H., London company with Annie Saker, prior to London production
"The Barrett's of Wimpole Street"	Rudolf Besier presented by Prince Littler	~comedy	2.11. – 8.11.	play about "the age- old problem of prostitution" (*YEP*, 27/10/31) with Nora Delany
"The King's Messenger"	Frederick Jackson	mystery play	9.11. – 15.11.	personal visit of Martin Harvey, Miss De Silva & company, preceded by short two- act play by Pinero: "A Private Room"
"Just Married"	Adelaide Matthews & Anne Nichols	comedy	16.11. – 22.11.	presented by Herbert Mansfield's company with Jayne Grey
"Traffic"	Noell Scott; presented by Welbeck Productions	crook play/comedy thriller	23.11. – 29.11.	"an undoubted success" (*YEP*, 24/11/31)
"The Marriage of Kitty"	adapted from the French by Cosmo Gordon Lennox	comedy	30.11. – 6.12.	with Renee Kelly, Jane Wood, Gerald Lawrence "example of an adaptation surpassing in merit its original" (*YEP*, 28/11/31), produced by Herbert Jay

"After All"	John van Druten presented by Barry O'Brien with Violet Vanbrugh and Rex Harrison	~contemporary drama "Conventions may change with the generations, but ever the bounds of love set by parents will be as bounds of slavery to the children – that was realised 'After All'" (*YEP*, 8/12/31)	7.12. – 13.12. 1931	"unfolds the eternal conflict of thought between parents and children", but: "finally confirms the established theory that though conditions may vary and externals change the governing factors of human action remain practically unalterable" (*YEP*, 5/12/31); same source: Queen attended the London production and "expressed great pleasure at the performance"
Theatre Closed			14.12. – 25.12.	
"Robinson Crusoe"	"Limbert & Russell's Grand Pantomime" book by George Melbah	Pantomime music by Coleridge Taylor with an underwater ballet	26.12.1931 – 7.1.1932	"promises to achieve unusual success" (*YEP*, 26/12/31) "Some of the scenes stamp themselves on the mind through their sheer beauty." (*YG*, 26/12/31) with Iris Olga, Dave O'Toole (as Dame), George Mayfield, Gwen Clark, plus: June Dancers

General Remarks:

- 52 productions: 45 comedies, no classics, no modern classics, 4 contemporary dramas, one opera, one dance production, one classical concert
- no touring companies this year to bring the classics or opera to York!
- *YG* = Yorkshire Gazette

Programmes Theatre Royal 1932 – 1934

1932

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Robinson Crusoe" 'Grand Farewell Performance'	"Limbert & Russell's Grand Pantomime" book by George Melbah	Pantomime music by Coleridge Taylor with an underwater ballet	26.12.1931 – 7.1.1932 9.1.	"promises to achieve unusual success" (*YEP*, 26/12/31), "Some of the scenes stamp themselves on the mind through their sheer beauty." (*YG*, 26/12/31) with Iris Olga, Dave O'Toole (as Dame), George Mayfield, Gwen Clark, plus: June Dancers
"Autumn Crocus"	C. L. Anthony (pseudonym to Miss Dodie Smith) presented by Reginald Fry	"Romantic, Friendly and so Amusing Play" set in Tyrol near Innsbruck	11.1. – 17.1.	some of the characters "speak throughout German – a pleasant change from stage French, even if one does not understand it" (*YEP*, 12/1/32)
'The O'Mara Grand Opera Company': "Il Trovatore" "The Barber of Seville" "Madam Butterfly" "Faust" "Tannhäuser" "The Bohemian Girl" "The Daughter of the Regiment"	 Verdi Puccini Gounod Wagner Balfe	operas	18.1. – 24.1.	"The Cheapest Prices that Grand Opera has ever been played to in York – 7d. to 3s.8d." (Theatre Royal advert in *YEP*, 18/1/32 and throughout the week) Gounod's opera based on Goethe's "Faust"
"It's a Boy"	Austin Melford; presented by John Baxter & John Barter	farce	25.1. – 31.1.	original by Franz Arnold and Ernst Bach

"The Belle of New York" (UA 1897 in New York)	Hugh Morton, music by Gustav Kerker	musical comedy revival	1.2. – 7.2. 1932	first American musical to cross the Atlantic with entire company
"Arsene Lupin"		thief detective drama	8.2. – 14.2.	'Grand Anniversary Week': 21st birthday of Percy Hutchison's management personal appearance of P.H. supported by Mary Brackley and the "Famous Repertory Players"
"Lilac Time"	Willner, Reichert, English version by Adrian Ross	musical play about the life of Franz Schubert	15.2. – 21.2.	presented by Leon Underwood music arranged by Heinrich Berté, G.H. Clutsam
"Aren't We All"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	22.2. – 28.2.	for the first time in York played by **PHP** special (cheaper) prices
"The Silent Witness"	?	"thrilling play"	29.2. – 6.3.	"I raise my hat to the PHP. They are an outstanding success" (*YEP*, 1/3/32)
"The High Road"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	7.3. – 13.3.	played by PHP, for the first time in York "a first- nightish dependence on the prompter was admittedly noticeable" (*YEP*, 8/3/332)
'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society': "Miss Hook of Holland"	Paul Rubens	musical comedy	14.3. – 20.3.	"amateurs have done well" (*YEP*, 15/3/32)
Theatre Closed			21.3. – 26.3.	
"A Murder Has Been Arranged"	Emlyn Williams	thriller	26.3. – 3.4.	"A splendid play, admirably performed – and the thrill of a lifetime" (*YEP*, 29/3/32) – **PHP**
"The Case of the Frightened Lady"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	4.4. – 10.4.	"The Star of this company is rising week by week", "They are, undoubtedly, much improved on last year." (*YEP*, 5/4/32) – **PHP**
'Three Week Repertory' "The Best People" "Spring Cleaning"	 Avery Hopwood Frederick Lonsdale	 comedy comedy/satire	April 1932 11.4. – 17.4. 18.4. – 24.4.	with "Well Know London Actress" Olive Sloane and **PHP** "excellent" (*YEP*, 19/4/32)

"Rain" "Looking for a Wife" "By Candle Light"	Somerset Maugham Frederick Jackson Siegfried Geyer, adapted by Harry Graham	dramatic/psycho-analytic play based on Freud light comedy comedy	25.4. – 1.5.1932 2.5. – 8.5. 9.5. – 15.5.	"The most courageous and ambitious production ever staged by Percy Hutchison" (advert) "Olive Sloane delighted us all" (*YEP*, 3/5/32) extension of the repertory season "owing to enormous success" "Delightful comedy for parent or child" (*YEP*, 10/5/32)
"The Nelson Touch"	Neil Grant	comedy	16.5. – 22.5.	personal appearance of P.H. who "gave a lively show [...] although in the first act he had a definite first night difficulty in setting down" (*YEP*, 17/5/32), first time out of London
"Three Wise Fools"	Austin Strong	comedy "Human Appeal and Strong Love Interest"	23.5. – 29.5.	"needs not one compromising situation to keep the house convulsed. It is clean humour – and good humour" (*YEP*,24/5/32)
"Hawk Island"	Howard Irving Young	thriller	30.5. – 5.6.	"a thriller with little mystery" (*YEP*, 31/5/32); played by PHP
"Easy Virtue"	Noel Coward	comedy	6.6. – 12.6.	"somewhat weak first act" (YEP, 7/6/32); played by PHP
"Lavender Ladies"	Daisy Fisher	~comedy	13.6. – 19.6.	"fresh and fragrant success" (Theatre Royal advert), played by PHP
"The Letter"	Somerset Maugham	contemporary drama/ "intensely dramatic play"	20.6. – 26.6.	"a provoking type of play" (*YEP*, 21/6/32); played by PHP
"Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary"	St. John G. Ervine	comedy	27.6. – 3.7.	"If feeling need of a really hearty laugh you cannot do better than see this clean and clever comedy" (*YEP*, 28/6/32); played by PHP
"In the Night"	adapted from the French from Cyril Harcourt	contemporary drama/ "Strong Dramatic Play"	4.7. – 10.7.	played by PHP
Theatre Closed			11.7. – 31.7.	"for cleaning, extensive alterations and improvements" (*YEP*, 4/7/32)

repertory season with PHP: "The Middle Watch"	Ian Hay & Stephen King-Hall	"funny naval play"	1932 1.8. – 7.8.	
"White Cargo"	Leon Gordon	contemporary drama set in West Africa	8.8. – 14.8.	"sensational success of England and America" (Theatre Royal advert in *YEP*, 4/7/32)
"Her Past"	Alice Delysia (or Frederick Jackson?)	comedy	15.8. – 21.8.	"To miss it is to miss one long hearty laugh" (*YEP*, 16/8/32)
"Our Betters"	Somerset Maugham	satire/comedy	22.8. – 28.8.	"brilliant satire of English society seen from an American angle" (*YEP*, 23/8/32)
"Home and Beauty"	Somerset Maugham	comedy	29.8. – 4.9.	"sheer farce"
"The Naughty Wife"	Frederick Jackson	comedy	5.9. – 11.9.	
"Loose Ends"	Dion Titheradge	"strong dramatic play"	12.9. – 18.9.	"the season is ending in a strain worthy of the best of York repertory" (*YEP*, 13/9/32)
start of Winter season: "The Maid of the Mountains"	book: Frederick Lonsdale music: Harold Fraser-Simson	musical comedy	19.9. – 25.9.	"worthy a place among the musical comedies which have been revived of late with so much success" (*YEP*, 20/9/32) presented by Macdonald & Young
"The Price of Wisdom"	Lionel Brown produced by Harold V. Neilson	~comedy	26.9. – 2.10.1932	with Irene Vanbrugh (for the first time in York), "excellent show, played to an unusually good first- night audience" (*YEP*, 27/9/32)
"The Beggar's Opera"	John Gay music by Frederic Austin produced by Sidney Foster	opera "humorous presentation of the seamy side of London of 1728" (*YEP*, 4/10/32)	3.10. – 9.10.	scenery and costumes from the Lyric theatre production "It is not an opera as we know it; nor does it seem to be a very determined burlesque on the old Italian opera [...]; rather is it witty entertainment" (*YEP*, 1/10/32)
"The Improper Duchess"	James B. Fagan	comedy	10.10. – 16.10.	success based partly on "the pleasure one derives from a good laugh at the 'American conscience' and moral uplift" (*YEP*, 8/10/32)

"Bitter Sweet"	Noel Coward presented by Macdonald & Young	operetta	17.10. – 23.10. 1932	with Nan Liddle, Marguerite Moreton, C. Webster Millar & company of 60 artists, "no rise in prices" (T.R. advert), "not a musical comedy, neither is it comic opera, but is refreshingly free from the conventions and trammels of both in its own little niche called operette" (*YEP*, 18/10/32)
"For the Love of Mike"	H. F. Maltby, presented by Barry O'Brien	musical play	24.10. – 30.10.	with Leslie Hatton, "fast moving, witty, and at times uproarious comedy" (*YEP*, 25/10/32)
"The Green Pack"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	31.10. – 6.11.	with P.H. and company
"The Geisha"	George Edwardes	musical play another revival	7.11. – 13.11.	West End company of 50 artists, incl. Barry Lupino,Eileen Moody "first- class entertainment" (*YEP*, 8/11/32)
"Mary's other Husband"		comedy	14.11. – 20.11.	with Renee Kelly "house rocking with laughter" (*YEP*, 15/11/32)
"While Parents Sleep"	Anthony Kimmins	comedy	21.11. – 27.11.	"strikes a daring note" (*YEP*, 22/11/32)
"Musical Chairs"	Ronald Mackenzie	~comedy	28.11. – 4.12.	with Muriel Forbes- Robertson, Cecil Fowler, Basil Bartlett
"Counsel's Opinion"	Gilbert Wakefield	farcial comedy	5.12. – 11.12.	with Olwen Roose, Jack Knight presented by Barry O'Brien
Theatre Closed for Panto preparation			12.12. – 24.12.	
"Goody Two Shoes"	presented by the Pinder troupe, produced by Harry Russell & Roy Limbert	Pantomime	26.12.1932 – 8.1.1933	with Marie Ambrose, Jose Santoi, George Mayfield, Harry Levaine, etc.

General Remarks:

- 52 productions: 40 comedies, no classics, no modern classics, 3 contemporary dramas, 8 operas, one operetta

1933

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Goody Two Shoes"	presented by the Pinder troupe, produced by Harry Russell & Roy Limbert	Pantomime	26.12.1932 – 8.1.1933	with Marie Ambrose, Jose Santoi, George Mayfield, Harry Levaine, etc.
"The Barretts of Wimpole Street"	Rudolf Besier presented by Prince Littler	comedy	9.1. – 15.1.	set in the Victorian age as performed preceding season
"Tell her the Truth"	music: Jack Waller, Joseph Tunbridge, lyrics: R. P. Weston, Bert Lee	musical comedy	16.1. – 22.1.	with Leslie Hatton "show is clean and first rate comedy throughout" (*YEP*, 17/1/33) presented by Barry O'Brien
'The Wonder Woman of the World'	show with Ruth Draper	one- woman show of sketches and character studies	23.1. – 29.1.	first appearance in York "audience held spellbound for more than two hours" (*YEP*, 24/1/33)
"The Good Companions"	J. B. Priestley, dramatisation by E. Knoblock presented by Jack O'Shea and George Lawrence	~comedy	30.1. – 5.2.	played by company of 70 "deserving of a far better audience than [...] last night" (*YEP*, 31/1/33)
"It's a Girl"	Austin Melford	farce, "an idiotically funny one" (*YEP*, 7/2/33)	6.2. – 12.2.	"There is many a laugh in this show – and, for the women, some exquisite gowns" (*YEP*, 7/2/33)
"Wonder Bar"	Geza Herczeg and Karl Farkas, arranged for English stage by Rowland Leigh, music by Robert Katscher	musical play	13.2. – 19.2.	with Hugh Rene; set in the night life at a cabaret in Vienna Hungarian play
"Dangerous Corner" preceded by curtain raiser "A Bite of the Apple" (comedy)	J. B. Priestley	"new, exciting and original play" (T.R. advert in *YEP*, 21/2/33)	20.2. – 26.2.	"Priestley seems [...] to have woven his plot artificially – as intricately as he could" (*YEP*, 21/2/33)

"Marigold"	presented by Graham Pockett	comedy	27.2. – 5.3.1933	with Jean Clyde
'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society': "The Arcadians"	Mark Ambient & A. M. Thompson music by Lionel Monckton and Howard Talbot	musical comedy	6.3. – 12.3.	vocally "some thinness was evident", "the dancing being a improvement on last year", "some pruning to enable the show to be performed inside three hours is desirable" (*YEP*, 7/3/33)
"Intimate Relations"	Stafford Dickens	comedy	13.3. – 19.3.	with Iris Hoey; "All is delightful, refreshing comedy yet with nothing blatantly funny about it." (*YEP*, 14/3/33)
programme with dancer Lydia Kyasht		dancing with additional variety programme	20.3. – 26.3.	world- famous ballerina plus "The English and Russian Ballet" (T.R. advert in *YEP*, 14/3/33)
"Fresh Fields"	Ivor Novello presented by Cedric Osmond Bermingham	comedy	27.3. – 2.4.	"a fine success" (*YEP*, 28/3/33)
"Mixed Marriages"	St. John Ervine	comedy- drama	3.4. – 9.4.	set in Ireland preceded by one- act comedy "The Coiner" by Bernard Duffy presented by Fred O'Donovan and The Irish Players
Theatre Closed for Passion Week			10.4. – 14.4.	
"Mr. Cinders"	Clifford Grey, Greatrex Newman, music b Vivian Ellis and Richard Myers	musical comedy	15.4. – 23.4.	→ third time in York presented by Jack O'Shea & George Lawrence
Theatre permanently closed no more productions			from 24.4.1933	Percy Hutchison bankrupt!

Reopening on 18/9/33: "The Chocolate Soldier"	Leopold Jacobson & Rudolf Bernauer, music by Oscar Straus, English version by Stanislaus Strange based on Shaw's "Arms and the Man"	comic opera	18.9. – 24.9. 1933	with Anne Croft, Horace Percival "Anne Croft is a Yorkshire woman" (*YEP*, 14/9/33)
"No, No, Nanette"	Mandel, Harbach, Caesar	musical comedy	25.9. – 1.10.	cast of 28, orchestra of 12 presented by O'Shea & Lawrence
"The Holmeses of Baker St."		comedy- drama	2.10. – 8.10.	with Hamilton Deane
"A Cup of Happiness"	Eden Phillpotts	comedy	9.10. – 15.10.	"lightly amusing" (*YEP*, 10/10/33) presented by Cecil Barth
"Betty"	George Edwardes	musical comedy	16.10. – 22.10.	with Delys Hendie as played in York before presented by O'Shea & Lawrence
"Bitter Sweet"	Noel Coward	operetta	23.10. – 29.10.	set in Vienna presented by Macdonald & Young
"The Belle of New York" (UA 1898)	Hugh Morton, music by Gustav Kerker	musical comedy	30.10. – 5.11.	with Kathleen Burgis "wins all hearts again" (YEP, 31/10/33) presented by Vyvian Thomas
"Crime on the Hill"	? presented by Roy Chesterton	thriller	6.11. – 12.11.	"excellent play and a splendid performance" (YEP, 7/11/33)
"Lilac Time"	A.M. Willner, Heinz Reichert, English version by Adrian Ross	musical play	13.11. – 19.11.	music arranged by Heinrich Berté, G.H. Clutsam "sure to charm you all again" (*YEP*, 14/11/33)
"The Passing of the Third Floor Back" (3x) "The Call of the Road" (2x) "David Garrick" (2x)		comedies	20.11. – 26.11.	programme with Frank Forbes- Robertson & Miss Sydnes Thornton plus "first- class London company"

'The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Co.' "Cavalleria Rusticana" & "I Pagliacci" "Faust" "Carmen" "Il Trovatore" "Barber of Seville" "Madame Butterfly" "The Bohemian Girl"	as above	operas	27.11. – 3.12. 1933	again presenting the established programme
"Ten Minute Alibi"	presented by Reginald Fry	mystery thriller	4.12. – 10.12.	"the audible hum of people comparing notes on the elements of mystery must sometimes have been a trial to the players" (YEP, 5/12/33); "It is hoped that last night's decided increase in the size of the audience will be maintained" (ebd.)
"The Gipsy Princess"	? presented by James Shirvell	musical comedy	11.12. – 17.12.	"not the strongest of favourites" (YEP, 12/12/33)
Theatre Closed for cleaning			18.12. – 22.12.	
"Cinderella"		"favourite Pantomime"	23.12.1933 – 12.1.1934	with Harry Russell and Madge Allan

General Remarks:

- 37 productions: 27 comedies, no classics, no modern classics, no contemporary drama, 8 operas, one operetta, one dance production

1934

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Cinderella"		"favourite Pantomime"	23.12.1933 – 12.1.1934	with Harry Russell and Madge Allan children at half- price
"Jack and the Beanstalk"	presented by Randolph Sutton	another Panto	15.1. – 21.1.	children at half- price normally the T.R. only showed one Panto (the "Empire" used to show more than one)
Circus programme: "Great Cavalcade"		circus show by four different companies	22.1. – 28.1.	programme including: trapeze shows by Cee Mee and Art Pinder and Lady, "Captain Eddie Pinder's versatile pony", "Tommy, the horse that counts", "Maltese and fox terriers [...] walking on front legs and on hind legs, umbrella carrying and dressing- up work", "the six performing lions", "horsemanship and trick riding", "Juggling, mimicry and equilibristic work", "table jumping", "veil waving on a white Arab horse by Madam Florence" (all: *YEP*, 23/1/34); children at half- price
'The Great Carmo' presents "Magic Nights"		"A Wonder Show to Appeal to All" BUT: "This is not a circus" (so it is one!)	29.1. – 4.2.	"Lions, Monkeys, Birds, Etc., A Noah's Ark of Animals, and Full Supporting Company of First- Class Artistes"; "show is more than a blend of sleight- of- hand, magic in general and animal attractions"; Carmo "astonished us by his conjuring with a cannon ball, put life into a mummified figure" (all quotes: *YEP*,30/1/34)
"The Brontes"		~comedy	5.2. – 11.2.	"make any sacrifice to see this play", "the diction is splendid, whether of English, French, or West Riding dialect" (*YEP*, 6/2/34)

"La Poupee" ("The Doll")	?	musical comedy	12.2. – 18.2. 1934	with Delys Hendie presented by George Lawrence
"The Desert Song""	book: O. Hammerstein, Otto Harbach, Frank Mandel, music by Sigmund Romberg	"great musical success"	19.2. – 25.2.	with Doris Francis, Ivan Wilmot "little slowness in the action in the opening act" (*YEP*, 20/2/34) presented by James Shirvell
"None so Blind"	Armitage Owen	comedy	26.2. – 4.3.	"company deserves far better support than given last night" (*YEP*, 27/2/34)
'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society': "The Quaker Girl"	book: James T. Tanner; lyrics: Adrian Ross, Percy Greenbank music: Lionel Monckton	musical comedy	5.3. – 11.3.	playing praised by the Press, however "one could only wish that the vocal resources were of a like quality" (*YEP*, 6/3/34)
"Night of the Garter"	Avery Hopwood, Wilson Collison, revised by Austin Melford	comedy	12.3. – 19.3.	presented by D. Rewse- White "very laughable entertainment" (*YEP*, 13/3/34)
"He Wanted Adventure"		musical comedy	20.3. – 25.3.	with Leslie Hatton; article about this play in *YEP*'s Monday edition (19/3) but no T.R. adverts during the week (→ highly unusual)
"Whistling in the Dark"		comedy thriller	26.3. – 1.4.	set in New York again, no daily T.R. adverts
'O'Mara Opera Company': "Cavalleria Rusticana" & "I Pagliacci" "Faust" "Carmen" "Il Trovatore" "Madame Butterfly" "The Bohemian Girl" "Marriage of Figaro"	see above	operas	2.4. – 7.4.	same repertoire again! opera founded on Goethe's "Faust"!
'The York Garrick Club Players'		variety programme	8.4. 1934	this ensemble never appeared before on the Theatre Royal's stage – why now? → obviously financial reasons

Closure of Theatre Royal from 9.4.1934			9.4. – 19.8.	BUT: no official announcements
Re- Opening as "York Citizens' Theatre Company, Limited"			20.8.	
"Music in the Air"	book and lyrics: Oscar Hammerstein II, music: Jerome Kern (half German) presented by Prince Littler	musical comedy set in Bavaria with all the characters having German names	20.8. – 26.8.	speech by Seebohm Rowntree assuring the audience "that with one exception only No.1 companies had been engaged", but: support needed! (*YEP*, 21/8/34) with Lord Mayor & Sheriff there
"Touch Wood"	Dodie Smith presented by Reginald Fry	~ comedy	27.8. – 2.9.	with Percy Marmont, Moira Lynd, Marian Spencer
"The Wind and the Rain"	Merton Hodge presented by Barry O'Brien	comedy	3.9. – 9.9.	"light and thoroughly entertaining" (*YEP*, 4/9/34)
"The Dubarry"	?	musical comedy	10.9. – 16.9.	with Muriel Barron; "A vote is being taken this week among theatre- goers on smoking during performances" (*YEP*, 11/9/34)
"Sixteen"	Aimee & Philip Stuart	comedy	17.9. – 23.9.	"A good play which will make you think" (*YEP*, 18/9/34)
"Ladies' Night"	?	musical comedy	24.9. – 30.9.	with Jack Williams
"Richard of Bordeaux"	Gordon Daviot presented by Parnell & Zeitlin	"romantic historical play"	1.10. – 7.10.	1/10: visit of the Princess Royal with Patricia Bradfield, Anthony Eustrel; "show is brilliantly dressed" (*YEP*, 2/10/34)
"The late Christopher Bean"	Gilbert Miller	comedy	8.10. – 14.10.	with Virginia Field, Viola Lyel, Eric Messiter
"Nice Goings On"	Douglas Furber & Arthur Schwartz	musical comedy set in Scandinavia	15.10. – 21.10.	"notable for clever dancing and witty dialogue, rather than for musical quality" (*YEP*, 16/10/34) with John E. Coyle, Ena Peel

"First Episode"	Terence Rattigan	comedy	22.10. – 28.10. 1934	with Florence Smithson Rattigan a Oxford student then
"The Arcadians" → profits from the performances go to 'York County Hospital Building Fund'	?	musical comedy	29.10. – 4.11.	with Horace Kenney, George Gregory; "With a little more pep infused into the first act [...], the show would have been perfect" (*YEP*, 30/10/34)
"The Minute Alibi"	Anthony Armstrong presented by Reginald Fry	mystery drama	5.11. – 11.11.	
"Laburnum Grove"	J. B. Priestley	"suburban comedy"	12.11. – 18.11.	with Ralph Roberts, Petrina Fry "good and wholesome entertainment" (*YEP*, 13/11/34)
"Without Witness"	Anthony Armstrong & Harold Simpson	thriller	19.11. – 25.11.	presented by Ronald Adams
"Marigold"	?	Scottish comedy	26.11. – 2.12.	set in the Victorian Edinburgh of 1842 "brought the house down" (*YEP*, 27/11/34)
'York Amateurs': "The Rose Without a Thorn (An Episode in the Private Life of Henry VIII)"	Clifford Bax	historical play/ ~comedy	3.12. – 9.12.	"It is a determined effort by York artists to maintain interest in the theatre" (*YEP*, 1/12/34) produced by E. Martin Browne
"It's You I Want"	Maurice Braddell	farce	10.12. – 16.12.	with Geoffrey Saville, Diana Fawcett; preceded by cello recital of Samehtini; "you smile, you chuckle, you laugh, you roar" (T.R. advert) "funniest play seen this year at the Theatre Royal" (*YEP*, 11/12/34)
Theatre Closed			17.12. – 25.12. 1934	probably in preparation of the Panto

"Babes in the Wood"		Pantomime	25/12/1934 – 20/1/1935 four weeks!	"10 wonderful scenes, 60 artists, 900 dresses" (T.R. advert,1/1/35) "Yorkshire's biggest and best Pantomime" (T.R. advert, 7/1/35) with Fred Kitchen, Eddie Henderson, Renee Reel, etc.

General Remarks:

- 38 productions: 31 comedies, no classics, no modern classics, no contemporary dramas, 7 operas

Programmes Theatre Royal 1935 – 1938

1935

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Babes in the Wood"		Pantomime	25/12/1934 – 20/1/1935 four weeks!	"10 wonderful scenes, 60 artists, 900 dresses" (T.R. advert,1/1/35) "Yorkshire's biggest and best Pantomime" (T.R. advert, 7/1/35) with Fred Kitchen, Eddie Henderson, Renee Reel, etc.
"Tulip Time"	Worton David & Alfred Parker	musical comedy	21.1. – 27.1.	"preparatory to production in London" (YEP, 22/1/35) "delightful entertainment" (ebd.) with Anne Croft
Theatre closed for rehearsals			28.1. – 3.2.	in preparation of the **repertory company's start**
"Queen's Husband"	Sherwood	comedy	5.2. – 10.2.	first play of new repertory company (4/2: inauguration of the theatre's own company) "recommended to all lovers of good English drama" (*YEP*, 6/2/35)
"Fallen Angels"	Noel Coward	comedy	11.2. – 17.2.	"highest hopes fulfilled" (*YEP*, 12/2/35); piano recital by Guy Spaul as curtain raiser
"Wings over Europe"	Robert Nichols & Maurice Browns	contemporary drama	18.2. – 24.2.	played by "York Citizens' Company" (YCC) and local amateurs; play about a young scientist who masters the atom, goes to the British Cabinet and asks them to accept his discovery
"London Wall"	John van Druten	comedy	25.2. – 3.3.	"slim prompting in the first act" (*YEP*, 26/2/35)

"Sporting Love"	?	musical comedy	4.3. – 10.3. 1935	"thoroughly good – and wholesome – entertainment" (*YEP*, 5/3/35) – staged by touring comp.
"Eight Bells"	?	"stirring sea drama"	11.3. – 17.3.	played by YCC, preceded by short farce "Suppressed Desires" "few lapses when prompting was necessary" (*YEP*, 12/3/35) setting: "the interior of a 'windjammer', with three British officers and a crew partly German"(who later start a mutiny) at the outbreak of WWI (*YEP*, 12/3/35)
"Alice in Wonderland"	presented by Emile Littler	"delightful show for all ages" (*YEP*, 19/3/35)	18.3. – 24.3.	touring company visit "company of 60. 16 scenes"
'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society': "Princess Charming"		musical play	25.3. – 31.3.	"light entertainment, with romance and plenty of fun" (*YEP*, 26/3/35) chorus of 60
"Wilde Violets"	Tom Arnold	musical comedy, set in Switzerland in "beautiful Alpine scenery"	1.4. – 7.4.	"Gigantic Drury Lane Production", "Revolting Stage", "Ice Skating", "spectacular production" (all quotes *YEP*, 2/4/35)
"Private Lives"	Noel Coward	comedy	8.4. – 14.4.	**return of repertory company** after a "brief season of musical productions", attended by Dame Sybil Thorndike, guest stars: Roy Longford, Peggy Rawlings
"The Dark Hours"	Don Marquis	"Passion play" "reminiscent of the Oberammergau Passion Play" (*YEP*, 13/4/35)	15.4. – 21.4. special performance on Good Friday	"staged for the first time in this country"; "A Germanic form of stagecraft is being used, with a special platform projecting into the auditorium, so that the action of the production rises from the auditorium into infinity" (*YEP*, 13/4/35)
"Sally Who?"	Dion Titheradge	musical play	22.4. – 28.4.	with Betty Huntley Wright, Leslie Hatton, Hamilton Deane (→ touring company)
"The Brontes of Haworth Parsonage"	John Davison	~contemporary drama (in period costumes)	29.4. – 5.5.	return of the repertory company incl. some new faces; play centres around the Bronte sisters

'Jubilee Week. Crazy Week' → 25 years of King's reign → "The King's Speech will be relayed from the stage on Monday night" (T.R. advert)	various	"Crazy Revue" performed by an augmented repertory company	6.5. – 12.5. 1935	"light entertainment comprising dancing, singing, several comedy sketches and a large number of lavish scenes" (*YEP*, 4/5/35); "During the week there will be on view in various parts of the theatre dresses worn by famous people, including one worn by Queen Victoria" (*YEP*, 4/5/35)
"Wuthering Heights"	adapted from Emily Bronte's novel by Mary Pakington & Olive Walter	contemporary drama	13.5. – 19.5.	"tense drama which will thrill and chill you" (*YEP*, 14/5/35) played in period costumes again
"Fresh Fields"	Ivor Novello	comedy	20.5. – 26.5.	"should enjoy a good week's run" (*YEP*, 21/5/35)
"Viceroy Sarah"	Norman Ginsbury	historical play about the reign of Queen Anne	27.5. – 2.6.	presented by repertory company "and a number of local amateurs"; "thoroughly enjoyable show, with plenty of light touches, well- dressed and admirably produced" (*YEP*, 28/5/35); play gives "insight into the court intrigues" (*YEP*, 25/5/35)
"The Bat"	?	detective story	3.6. – 9.6.	scheduled was the "world premiere performance" of "Iseabeau de Bavarie" ("Elizabeth of Bavaria") and then – obviously – cancelled at short notice as "Bat" performances only started on Wednesday: "Monday and Tuesday, closed for rehearsals"
"Clive of India"	W. P. Lipscomb & R. J. Minney	contemporary drama/ historical play	10.6. – 16.6.	"40 speaking parts" "masterly, commanding acting of Wilfred Bentley"; although "a somewhat artificial opening and a few lapses in memory" (*YEP*, 11/6/35); last play of the season
open air performance in Museum Gardens: "A Midsummer Night's Dream"	W. S.	classic	19.6. – 22.6.	in aid of Archbishop's Benevolent Fund 200 participants in case of rain move to T. R.

Theatre Closed → obviously due to reorganisation			17.6. – 15.9. 1935	⇒ closure of three months remarkable and quite obviously a sign of the problems faced
"Sweet Aloes"	Jay Mallory	comedy set in New York and "still running in London"	16.9. – 22.9.	**start of new repertory season** "very promising beginning", "very finished company" (*YEP*, 17/9/35)
"Libel"	Edward Wooll	Law Court play	23.9. – 29.9.	"excellent entertainment", "acting is powerful" (*YEP*, 24/9/35)
"All Rights Reserved"	N. C. Hunter	comedy	30.9. – 6.10.	"The diction and acting were good and the production all that could be desired" (*YEP*,1/10/35)
"Evensong"	Edward Knoblock & Beverley Nichols	dramatisation of Nichols' novel	7.10. – 13.10.	"triumph for Irene Relph" (*YEP*, 8/10/35)
"Bird in Hand"	John Drinkwater	comedy	14.10. – 20.10.	"a play that can be recommended absolutely" (*YEP*, 15/10/35)
"Escape Me Never"	Margaret Kennedy	~comedy	21.10. – 27.10.	Eric Howard plays "a jerky little German, Herr Heinrich" (*YEP*, 22/10/35)
"The Fourth World"	A. A. Milne	thriller	28.10. – 3.11.	"clever company of actors" (*YEP*, 29/10/35)
"The Circle"	Somerset Maugham	social comedy	4.11. – 10.11.	"another triumph for the company" (*YEP*, 5/11/35)
"The Distaff Side"	John van Druten	~comedy	11.11. – 17.11.	
"Eden End"	J. B. Priestley	"moorland play ~ contemporary drama	18.11. – 24.11.	
"Someone at the Door"	Dorothy & Campbell Christie	"adventure in comedy and crime" comedy- thriller	25.11. – 1.12.	"our Repertory Company friends kept us guessing" (*YEP*, 26/11/35)
"The Silver Cord"	Sidney Howard	comedy drama	2.12. – 8.12.	"the best thing they have done to date" (*YEP*, 3/12/35)

"The Quitter"	?	gangster play set in the underworld of New York	9.12. – 15.12. 1935	final week of repertory season
"Charley's Aunt"	Brandon Thomas	comedy classic	16.12. – 23.12.	"perhaps the most popular comedy of the British stage" (*YEP*, 14/12/35)
Theatre Closed			24.12. – 25.12.	
"Waltzes from Vienna"	presented by Tom Arnold music by Johann Strauss	"famous musical romance"	26.12.1935 – 5.1.1936	

General Remarks:

- 37 productions: 31 comedies, one classic, no modern classics, five contemporary dramas, no operas

1936

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Waltzes from Vienna"	presented by Tom Arnold music by Johann Strauss	"famous musical romance"	26.12.1935 – 5.1.1936	
"Rhythm Is Our Business"		revue "a new rhythmical romp"	6.1. – 12.1.	"The biggest thing in York this week (apart from the Minster, of course)" (*YEP*, 7/1/36); with Teddy Brown & Phyllis Robins
Harry Lauder and company: variety show		in variety programme	13.1. – 19.1.	guest production with the famous comedian Sir Harry Lauder
"A Waltz Dream"	music by Oscar Straus presented by Leon Underwood	"musical comedy in the true Straus tradition" (*YEP*, 21/1/36)	20.1. – 26.1.	set in Germany at "one of those little German Courts" (*YEP*, 21/1/36) with Eddie Garr, Victor Peduzzi, Truman Taylor, etc., plus "West End Company of 50 Performers"
"Jack O'Diamonds"	? presented by Macdonald & Young	musical comedy	27.1. – 2.2.	"will appeal to those who ask no more of a musical play than that it shall contain catchy melodies, pep and splashes of colour" (*YEP*, 28/1/36); with Renee Reel, Reginald Palmer, Robert Willard, etc.
'York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society': "The Cinema Star"	?	musical farcial comedy	3.2. – 9.2.	"light, tuneful and thoroughly entertaining stuff" (*YEP*, 4/2/36)
"The Dominant Sex"	Michael Egan	comedy	10.2. – 16.2.	return of the repertory company with programme of music
"Living Dangerously"	Reginald Simpson & Frank Gregory	~comedy	17.2. – 23.2.	with programme of music

"Lovers' Leap"	Philip Johnson	comedy	24.2. – 1.3. 1936	with programme of music
"The Shining Hour"	Keith Winter	~comedy	2.3. – 8.3.	with programme of music
"The Sacred Flame"	Somerset Maugham	contemporary drama	9.3. – 15.3.	with programme of music
"The Whole Town's Talking"	John Emerson & Anita Loos	farce	16.3. – 22.3.	with programme of music
"After All"	John van Druten	comedy	23.3. – 29.3.	"very pleasant play on the subject of the relationship of parents and their children" with programme of music
"Symphony in two Flats"	Ivor Novello	comedy	30.3. – 5.4.	"modern comedy, a little tragedy and plenty of romance" with programme of music
"The Outsider"	Dorothy Brandon	romantic drama	6.4. – 12.4.	with programme of music
"He walked in her Sleep"	Norman Cannon	comedy	13.4. – 19.4.	with programme of music
"Interference"	Roland Pertwee & Harold Dearden	contemporary drama	20.4. – 26.4.	with programme of music
"Distinguished Gathering"	James Parrish	"amusing and exciting play"	27.4. – 3.5.	with programme of music
"Youth at the Helm"	Paul Vulpius adapted by Hubert Griffith	light comedy with programme of music	4.5. – 10.5.	"played to large audiences" – according to season's review German original called "Jugend voran!"
"Family Affairs"	Gertrude Jennings	dramatic comedy	11.5. – 17.5.	play "founded on family life" with programme of music
"The Black Eye"	James Bridie	comedy	18.5. – 24.5.	with programme of music
"Candida"	G. B. Shaw	modern classic	25.5. – 31.5.	with programme of music

"Barnett's Folly"	Jan Stewer	comedy	1.6. – 7.6. 1936	"West country play" with programme of music
"Alibi"	adapted by Michael Morton from novel by Agatha Christie	thriller	8.6. – 14.6.	with programme of music
"The School for Husbands"	Frederick Jackson	comedy	15.6. – 21.6.	with programme of music
"East of Suez"	W. Somerset Maugham	contemporary drama	22.6. – 28.6.	topic of the play: "East meets West" with programme of music
"The Cathedral"	Hugh Walpole	contemporary drama	29.5. – 5.6.	with programme of music
"The Happy Ending"	Ian Hay	comedy	6.6. – 12.6.	with programme of music
"Double Harness"	Edward Poor Montgomery	comedy	13.6. – 19.6.	with programme of music
Theatre Closed			20.6. – 16.8.	
"Dusty Ermine"	Neil Grant	comedy	17.8. – 23.8.	
"I'll leave it to you"	Noel Coward	light comedy	24.8. – 30.8.	with programme of music
"The Joker"	Noel Scott	mystery thriller	31.8. – 6.9.	with programme of music
"The Promise"	Henri Bernstein	comedy	7.9. – 13.9.	translated from the French by H. M. Harwood
"The Venetian"	Clifford Bax	"dramatic story of love and intrigue in 16th century Venice"	14.9. – 20.9.	→ "period play" chosen for "Birthday Week" of the Repertory Company (first year) with programme of music
"Too Young to Marry"	Martin Flavin & Emile Littler	comedy	21.9. – 27.9.	"Scottish comedy that takes a jump into farce and then jumps back again into comedy" (*YG*) with programme of music

"Fame"	Audrey & Waverey Carten	contemporary drama	28.9. – 4.10. 1936	subject of the play is the "irony of fate" with programme of music
"Faithful Heart"	Monckton Hoffe	love story – drama	5.10. – 11.10.	"sentimental little play" (*YH*, 6/10/36) with programme of music
"The Farmer's Wife"	Eden Philpotts	comedy	12.10. – 18.10.	"West Country comedy" (*YEP*, 1/10/36) with programme of music
"Lady Precious Stream"	S. I. Hsiung	Chinese play "A Fantasy"	19.10. – 25.10.	"charming Chinese play" (*YEP*, 1/10/36); "artistic but thoroughly misunderstood" (*YEP*, 25/11/36)
"The Constant Nymph"	Margaret Kennedy & Basil Dean	"A Famous Play" (*YH*, 29/10/36)	26.10. – 1.11.	the play "did not impress as one of the company's best efforts" (*YH*, 29/10/36) with programme of music
"Love from a Stranger"	Frank Vosper & Agatha Christie	thriller	2.11. – 8.11.	"A Splendid Thriller", "strong meat" (*YH*, 3/11/36) with programme of music
"The Truth Game"	Ivor Novello	comedy	9.11. – 15.11.	"lightly amusing and, doubtless, sufficient" (*YEP*, 10/11/36) with programme of music
"Winter Sunshine"	G. A. Thomas	"a cruising comedy"	16.11. – 22.11.	"all the action set on the promenade deck of a ship [...] bringing with it ship board glamour" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Behold We Live"	John van Druten	contemporary drama	23.11. – 29.11.	"problem play with [...] poignant ending" (*YEP*, 24/11/36) a "tragedy of modern times" with programme of music
"Murder on the Second Floor"	Frank Vosper	comedy thriller	30.11. – 6.12	"genuine thrills after we get past the[..] slow-moving first act"(*YG*) with programme of music
"By Candle Light"	adapted by Harry Graham from the German of Siegfried Geyer	comedy (set in Vienna) "continental comedy"	7.12. – 13.12.	"modern interpretation of more romantic age" (*YG*, 3/12/36) with programme of music

"The Best People"	David Gray & Avery Hopwood	comedy	14.12. – 20.12. 1936	"one of those modern, flippant comedies" (*YEP*, 15/12/36) with programme of music
Theatre Closed for Panto rehearsals			21.12. – 25.12.	
"Robinson Crusoe"	presented by Harry Russell and Will Seymour and an "all- star cast"	"most spectacular Pantomime"	26.12. 1936 – 10.1.1937	"with a brilliant company of star artists"; incl.: "Four Mannels", "16 Mayfair Babes", "16 Bettina Girls"

General Remarks:

- 48 productions: 41 comedies, no classics, one modern classic, six contemporary dramas, no music theatre
- no touring companies whatsoever!

1937

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"Robinson Crusoe"	presented by Harry Russell and Will Seymour and an "all- star cast"	"most spectacular Pantomime"	26.12. 1936 – 10.1.1937	"with a brilliant company of star artists"; incl.: "Four Mannels", "16 Mayfair Babes", "16 Bettina Girls"
"San Toy"	Edward Morton & Adrian Ross, music by Sidney Jones	"brilliant Chinese musical comedy"	11.1. – 17.1.	played by 'York Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society'
"1066 and all That"	adapted by Reginald Arkell from Sellar & Yeatman comic	"famous musical comedy of English history"	18.1. – 24.1.	performance by a visiting company presented by Emile Littler
"All-in Marriage"	Emile Littler & Aurania Rouverol	"hearty human comedy"	25.1. – 31.1.	start of repertory again/fourth season with programme of music
"The Two Mrs Carolls"	Martin Vale	thriller/"gripping drama"	1.2. – 7.2.	"stern realism", "drama with a sinister edge" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Miss Smith"	Henry Bernard	~comedy	8.2. – 14.2.	"effectively produced play" with "many humorous lines and situations" (*YEP*, 9/2/37) with programme of music
"The Shadow"	H. F. Maltby	thriller	15.2. – 21.2.	audience kept in laughter "so that they forget the weaknesses of the play" (*YEP*, 16/2/37)
"The Man in Possession"	H. M. Harwood	comedy	22.2. – 28.2.	"play is a delightfully clashing of the ready wits of two rather charming people" (*YEP*, 23/2/37) with programme of music
"Mr Wu"	Harry M. Vernon & Harold Owen	"Anglo- Chinese drama"	1.3. – 7.3.	lavish play, and a success, too (according to *YG*, 6/3/37); with programme of music
"Lucky Dip."	Frank Vosper	comedy "an uproariously funny party"	8.3. – 14.3.	"An attractively staged comedy with two laughs and a surprise to every line – even to the final curtain" (*YEP*, 8/3/37) with programme of music

"Little Woman"	Marian de Forest (from the famous story by Louisa M. Alcott)	comedy	15.3. – 21.3. 1937	"a beautiful play, telling of those sweet, refreshing things that go to make the substance of domestic life" (*YG*, 20/3/37) with programme of music
"The Passing of the Third Floor Back"	Jerome K. Jerome	~comedy "An Idle Fancy"	22.3. – 28.3.	"A fitting production for Holy Week, the beauty of its theme is presented with due thought to all its implications." (*YEP*, 23/3/37) with programme of music
"It's a Boy"	Austin Melford (original by Franz Arnold & Ernst Bach)	farce/comedy "It's a Yell!!"	29.3. – 4.4.	"This is a show at which you will laugh until you can laugh no more." (*YG*, 3/4/37)
"Tovarish"	Jacques Deval transl. by Robert Sherwood	comedy	5.4. – 11.4.	"quite the best the repertory company have given to us this season" (*YG*, 12/4/37) with programme of music
"Full House"	Ivor Novello	comedy	12.4. – 18.4.	"York Repertory Company return to their best form this week" (*YEP*, 13/4/37)
"No Exit"	George Goodchild & Frank Witty	thriller	19.4. – 25.4.	"Only eight players are in the cast, but they keep things lively" (*YG)* with programme of music
"Anthony & Anna"	St. John Ervine	comedy "still running in the West End"	26.4. – 2.5.	"A production which no one should miss, for its lively humour and entertaining characters place it among the best of the Company's earlier plays" (*YEP*, 27/4/37) with programme of music
"Do You Remember"	John Carlton & Edith Savile	"comedy of youth"	3.5. – 9.5.	"An interesting play with [...] a lot underneath its crust."(*YG*, 8/5/37)
"Yellow Sands"	Eden & Adelaide Phillpotts	comedy "chosen for Coronation week"	10.5. – 16.5.	"The King's Speech will be relayed in the theatre at the first performance on Wednesday" (*YEP*, 8/5/37) with programme of music
"The Naughty Wife"	Fred Jackson	comedy	17.5. – 23.5.	"fun is yielded in abundance" (*YG*, 22/5/37) with programme of music

"Pride and Prejudice"	Jane Austen, adaptation by Helen Jerome	"sentimental comedy"	24.5. – 30.5. 1937	"It is a joy to have these classics presented to us, sandwiched in with other theatrical fare" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Black Coffee"	Agatha Christie	thriller	31.5. – 6.6.	play better than "Alibi" which the company staged some months ago (according to *YEP*, 1/6/37); with programme of music
"Heart's Content"	W. Chetham Strode/Stode	comedy	7.6. – 13.6.	"the 'eternal triangle' approached from a clean and healthy slant", as "nothing of illicit companionship or divorce enters in, and nothing at all bears even the resemblance of ugliness" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Busman's Honeymoon"	Dorothy L. Sayers & M. St. Clare Byrne	"a new Lord Peter Wimsey detective novel" – comedy	14.6. – 20.6.	with programme of music
"Lean Harvest"	Ronald Jeans	~comedy	21.6. – 27.6.	"There is [...] rich harvest for those who desire entertainment" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Last of Mrs. Cheney"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	28.6. – 3.7.	"best known and brightest of F. L.'s plays" (*YG*) with programme of music end of fourth season
Theatre Closed for 'Complete Renovation':	reseating, redecorating, recarpeting,	heating overhauled, completion of panelling	4.7. – 1.8.1937	
"Spring Tide"	George Billam & J. B. Priestley	comedy/drama	2.8. – 8.8	with programme of music ⇒ third year of York Repertory Company starts/fifth season
"And the Music Stopped"	Noell Scott	detective play/comedy thriller	9.8. – 15.8.	play a great success (according to *YEP*, 11/8/37)
"Aren't We All?"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	16.8. – 22.8.	play "floats gaily through three acts venturing perilously near farce" (*YG*) with programme of music

"The Astonished Ostrich"	Archie N. Menzies	"an extremely modern comedy"	23.8. – 29.8. 1937	"The difficulty lies in the poorness of the play, and it is a tribute to the ability of the five [actors] that the production is as interesting as it is." (*YG*, 28/8/37); with programme of music
"Many Waters"	Monckton Hoffe	comedy	30.8. – 5.9.	"a straightforward human document, convincing, moving and dramatic" (Programmes) with programme of music
"London Wall"	John van Druten	comedy	6.9. – 12.9.	not the best effort of the company "for the female side [...] has not quite the strength and personality [...] of the male members of the cast" (*YEP*, 7/9/37)
"To-night at 8-30"	Noel Coward	comedy – series of nine one- act plays	13.9. – 19.9.	chosen for York: "Still life", "Ways and Means", "Red Peppers"
"The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse"	Barrre Lyndon	thriller	20.9. – 26.9.	"unusual crook play", "play is a winner" (*YG*, 25/9/37); with programme of music
"Michael and Mary" one charity performance	A. A. Milne	romantic play	27.9. – 3.10. 3.10	"one of the most beautifully human plays of recent years" (*YG*) with programme of music "In aid of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families' Association"
"Bats in the Belfry"	Diana Morgan & R. Macdermot	light comedy	4.10. – 10.10.	"hearty and continuous laughter" (*YEP*, 5/10/37) with programme of music
"The Sign on the Door"	Channing Pollock	"fine 'straight' play"/ thriller; with music	11.10. – 17.10.	performance "is interesting rather than outstanding" (*YEP*,12/10/37)
"The King's Leisure"	Edith Saville & John Carlton	"pleasant sentimental comedy"	18.10. – 24.10.	"a quite delightful play" (*YG*, 23/10/37) with programme of music
"Cynara"	H. M. Harwood & R. Gore Browne	"novelty play"	25.10. – 31.10.	"lovely play" (Programmes); "prompts some stern questionings" (*YG*); as played in 1931 to similar critical reactions pf the public with programme of music
"Whispering Gallery"	Terence de Marney & Percy Robinson	comedy thriller	1.11. – 7.11.	"has more weird qualities than most" thrillers (*YG*, 6/11/37); with programme of music

"Jane Eyre"	Charlotte Bronte, dramatised by Helen Jerome	contemporary drama	8.11. – 14.11. 1937	"No follower of the repertory company can afford to miss this play" (*YG*, 13/11/37) "beautiful love story faithfully brought to life" (Programmes); with programme of music
"Night of the Garter"	Avery Hopwood & Wilson Collison (adapted by Austin Melford)	farce	15.11. – 21.11.	"Night of Laughter" (*YEP*, 16/11/37)
"Musical Chairs"	Ronald Mackenzie	~comedy play set in Poland	22.11. – 28.11.	"Effective acting, sensitive production, and a pleasantly designed setting combine to make this a noteworthy play." (*YEP*, 25/11/37) with programme of music
"Smoky Cell"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	29.11. – 5.12.	"Thrill heaps on thrill, and the play is interesting for the light it throws on American gangster-dom" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Laughter in Court"	Hugh Mills	comedy	6.12. – 12.12.	"heap of bright and clever comedy touches" (*YG*); with programme of music
"The Admirable Crichton"	J. M Barrie	comedy	13.12. – 19.12.	"Crichton is about as deathless as Peter Pan" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Devonshire Cream"	Eden Phillpotts	comedy "festive setting" (*YG*)	20.12. – 26.12.	"a little of the too silly stuff in the last act, which can scarcely be in the script, might well be dispensed with" (*YG*) with programme of music
"When Knights Were Bold"	Charles Marlowe	"famous farce"	27.12. 1937 – 2.1.1938	produced instead of a musical comedy, but: "full compensation" (*YG*) with programme of music

General Remarks:

- 48 productions: 41 comedies and one contemporary drama
- no touring companies whatsoever!

1938

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"When Knights Were Bold"	Charles Marlowe	"famous farce"	27.12. 1937 – 2.1.1938	produced instead of a musical comedy, but: "full compensation" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Housemaster"	Ian Hay	comedy	3.1. – 9.1.	set in a "pukka public school" (*YG*) sixth season starts
"The Unguarded Hour"	Bernard Merivale, from a play by Ladislaus Fodor	thriller	10.1. – 16.1.	with programme of music
"Three Wise Fools"	Austin Strong	comedy	17.1. – 23.1.	with programme of music
"Parnell"	Elsie T. Schauffer	"great historical play" set in the 1880s	24.1. – 30.1.	"effective dramatisation of the movement [...] and feeling preceding the mistake of this Irish patriot, who generalled the Home Rule battle in Gladstone's days" (*YG*); with music programme
"Yes, my Darling Daughter"	English version by Rodney Ackland, original by Mark Reed (American?)	"vastly entertaining play"	31.1. – 6.2.	"very modern" play; "Players better than the play" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Mile Away Murder"	Anthony Armstrong	thriller	7.2. – 13.2.	"entertaining problem- thriller" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Mr. Faint- Heart"	Ian Hay	comedy	14.2. – 20.2.	play set on board the liner "Homeric" during a cruise in the Mediterranean with programme of music
"Judgement Day" first performance 1934 (obviously in America)	Elmer Rice	left-wing drama with programme of music	21.2. – 27.2.	play "takes place in the Palace of Justice in a capital of South Eastern Europe" but really it is based on the Reichstag trial; play was banned by Lord Chamberlain, but obviously only for London production, in November 1939 it was still banned (see *Daily Telegraph*, 9/11/1939, or BArch, R55/20217, Bl.24)

"The Importance of Being Earnest"	Oscar Wilde	modern classic	28.2. – 6.3. 1938	"best example of late Victorian comedy ever written" (Programmes, 21/2/38) with programme of music
"Blondie White"	Bernard Merivale & Jeffrey Dell	thriller/detective play	7.3. – 13.3.	"ingenious, exciting and funny"
"Private Lives"	Noel Coward	comedy	14.3. – 20.3.	"inconsequential, light entertainment" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Night must Fall"	Emlyn Williams	thriller – "murder mystery play"	21.3. – 27.3.	"grand drama wedded to slick humour" (Programmes, 14/3/38) with programme of music
"Strange Orchestra"	Rodney Ackland	contemporary drama	28.3. – 3.4.	play "might be termed a symphonic tone poem of human nature [with] a touch of Chekhov" (*YEP*, 29/3/38); "play with pathos, humour, cynicism, love and genuine drama skilfully blended" (The Sketch)
"Laburnum Grove"	J. B. Priestley	light comedy	4.4. – 10.4.	
"Quinney's"	Horace Annesley Vachell	comedy	11.4. – 17.4.	
"Orders Are Orders"	Ian Hay & Anthony Armstrong	"romping comedy" (*YG*)	18.4. – 24.4.	
"Gallows Glorious"	Ronald Gow	about John Brown and US Civil War	25.4. – 1.5.	"fine play of heroic enterprise" (Programmes, 18/4/38); with programme of music
"Yes and No"	Kenneth Horne	"comedy of courtship" (*YG*)	2.5. – 8.5.	"lightest of light fare" (*YG*)
"Blackmail"	Charles Bennett	~thriller	9.5. – 15.5.	with programme of music
"Call it a Day"	Dodie Smith	comedy	16.5. – 22.5.	"its virtue lies in the fact, that it does not touch very deeply" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Our Betters"	W. Somerset Maugham	satirical comedy	23.5. – 29.5.	"a satire on American heiresses who marry into the English peerage"; with programme of music

"The Phantom Light"	Evadne Price	comedy- thriller	30.5. – 5.6. 1938	with programme of music
"Almost a Honeymoon"	Walter Ellis	farcial comedy	6.6. – 12.6.	with programme of music
"Square Pegs"	Lionel Brown	comedy	13.6. – 19.6.	with programme of music
"White Cargo"	Leon Gordon	contemporary (obviously quite right-wing) drama	20.6. – 26.6.	"vivid play of the primitive unvarnished life in the tropics" (Programmes, 13/6/38); "Men go out determined to clean up things, but the place gets them" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Wise To- Morrow"	Stephen Powys	"problem play"/ contemporary drama	27.6. – 3.7.	with programme of music
"The Middle Watch"	Ian Hay & Stephen King-Hall	comedy	4.7. – 10.7.	set on the "cruiser Falcon, in China waters" (*YG*); with programme of music last play of season
Repertory Holidays			11.7. – 31.7.	
"Black Swans"	Geoffrey Kerr	"clever domestic comedy"	1.8. – 7.8.	with programme of music start of seventh season
"Touch Wood"	Dodie Smith	"psychological" play	8.8. – 14.8.	Smith is the "foremost English woman playwright"
"Death on the Table"	Guy Beauchamp & Michael Pertwee	comedy- thriller	15.8. – 21.8.	with programme of music
"Night Alone"	Jeffrey Dell	comedy	22.8. – 28.8.	with programme of music
"To Have and to Hold"	Lionel Brown	comedy	29.8. – 4.9.	"good acting in weak play" (*YG*) with programme of music
'York Theatrical Fete': - 70 attractions, band & prizes - dancing competition	various	performances on open air stage	3.9.	proceeds in aid of the York County Hospital

"Black Limelight"	Gordon Sherry	thriller	5.9. – 11.9. 1938	"thriller of high order" (*YG*)
"Three blind Mice"	Stephen Powys	comedy	12.9. – 18.9.	"a comedy of husband catching" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Green Bay Tree"	Mordaunt Shairp	contemporary drama/ "strong play"/"problem play"	19.9. – 25.9.	"a magnificent play" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Secrets"	Rudolph Besier & May Edginton	love story	26.9. – 2.10.	"play of sentiment" (*YG*) with programme of music
"A Spot of Bother"	Vernon Sylvaine	farce	3.10. – 9.10.	"the players let themselves go" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Wanted for Murder"	Terence de Marney & Percy Robinson	melodrama – thriller	10.10. – 16.10.	"well- conceived thriller" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Island"	Merton Hodge	contemporary drama/ "powerful, interesting, and dramatic"	17.10. – 23.10.	"dramatic values[..] are laid against a background of boredom at an isolated military station" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Ghost for Sale"	Ronald Jeans	light comedy	24.10. – 30.10.	use of "mediumistic tomfoolery" (*YG*) with programme of music
"People of Our Class"	St. John Ervine	comedy	31.10. – 6.11.	"play has piquancy of situation and is packed with clever dialogue" (*YG*) with programme of music
"I Killed the Count"	Alec Coppel	murder thriller	7.11. – 13.11.	with programme of music
"Mrs. Warren's Profession"	G. B. Shaw	modern classic with programme of music	14.11. – 20.11.	staged after 31 years of ban through the Lord Chamberlain's office (controversy in the press!) "The whole play leaves me ice cold and angry, and the nineties should long ago have had their naughtiness interred."(*YG*) "Shaw's satirical treatise rings too crudely today for one to see entertainment in it" (*YG*)
"George and Margaret"	Gerald Savory	domestic comedy	21.11. – 27.11.	with programme of music

"The Squeaker"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	28.11. – 4.12. 1938	with programme of music
"I Have Been here Before"	J. B. Priestley	contemporary drama	5.12. – 11.12.	with "Dr. Görtler", a German professor – NO political play though with programme of music
"Poison Pen"	Richard Llewellyn	thriller	12.12. – 18.12.	with programme of music
"Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure"	Walter Hackett	"an Arabian Night's entertainment"/ comedy	19.12. – 25.12.	with "full- blooded piracy act" (*YG*); last play of the repertory season with programme of music
"The Desert Song"	book: O. Hammerstein, Otto Harbach, Frank Mandel music: Sigmund Romberg presented by James Shirwell	musical comedy	26.12.1938 – 1.1.1939	with Harry Welchman & Doris Francis

General Remarks:

- 51 productions: 42 comedies, 2 modern classics, 6 contemporary dramas and one left-wing (anti-Nazi) play
- no touring companies whatsoever!

Programmes Theatre Royal 1939 – 1942

1939

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
"The Desert Song"	book: O. Hammerstein, Otto Harbach, Frank Mandel music: Sigmund Romberg	musical comedy	26.12.1938 – 1.1.1939	with Harry Welchman & Doris Francis presented by James Shirwell
"Peter Pan"	J. M. Barrie	musical comedy	2.1. – 8.1.	
"Victoria Regina"	Laurence Housman presented by Emile Littler	~comedy	9.1. – 15.1.	play set during the reign of Queen Victoria
"The Young Idea"	Noel Coward	comedy	16.1. – 22.1.	return of the repertory company, eighth season with programme of music
"Counsellor- at- Law"	Elmer Rice	"packed with thrills"	23.1. – 29.1.	with programme of music
"Young Madame Conti"	Bruno Frank, Hubert Griffith, Ben W. Levy [Bruno Frank German!]	melodrama	30.1. – 5.2.	story "tough and violent" (*YG*) "exciting modern thrills" but "genuine humour intermingled"; with programme of music
"Double Door"	Elizabeth McFadden	thriller – melodrama	6.2. – 12.2.	with programme of music
"Arms and the Man"	G. B. Shaw	modern classic	13.2. – 19.2.	"it has gained rather than lost point by the passage of the years" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Stag"	Beverley Nichols	"social drama"/thriller	20.2. – 26.2.	with programme of music
"The Scarlet Pimpernel"	Baroness Orczy & Montague Barstow	"famous romantic play"	27.2. – 5.3.	"the best play of its type produced during this Twentieth Century"; with programme of music

"Sauce for the Goose"	Frederick Carlton	comedy, set in Vienna	6.3. – 12.3.1939	"lighter farce" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Fly by Twilight"	Paul Dornhurst	~ thriller	13.3. – 19.3.	"unusual domestic study" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Milestones"	Arnold Bennett & Edward Knoblock	comedy	20.3. – 26.3.	play about "homely familiar commonplaces"
"Third Time Lucky"	Arnold Ridley	comedy	27.3. – 2.4.	with programme of music
"Grumpy"	Horace Hodges & T. Wigney Percyval	comedy	3.4. – 9.4.	"evergreen comedy" (*YG*) played several times before in York
"Sally Who?"	Dion Titheradge	comedy	10.4. – 16.4.	"never in danger of descending into farce" (*YG*) with programme of music and songs
"Spangled Hemp"	Guy Paxton & Edward V. Hoile	thriller	17.4. – 23.4.	sinister story "but held up by plenty of relief" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Windows"	John Galsworthy	comedy	24.4. – 30.4.	moral of the play is "that there is, after all, a great deal of human nature in men and women" (Programmes, 17/4/39); with music programme
"Lot's Wife"	Peter Blackmore	"modern comedy"	1.5. – 7.5.	set in "Sodom" in Asia Minor with programme of music
"The Letter"	Somerset Maugham	~ thriller/crime story with psychological background	8.5. – 14.5.	"as an exercise The Letter is perfect but never once does it come alive" (*YG*) with programme of music
"People at Sea"	J. B. Priestley	"a story wise, funny, and thrilling by turns" (*Daily Mail*)	15.5. – 21.5.	"undoubtedly J. B. Priestley's most entertaining play" (Programmes, 8/5/39) with programme of music
"On the Spot"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	22.5. – 28.5.	"Wallace's best play" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Heroes Don't Care"	Margot Neville	comedy	29.5. – 4.6.	about a Polar expedition with programme of music
"Spring Cleaning"	Frederick Lonsdale	domestic comedy	5.6. – 11.6.	"always reckoned among the cleverest of our dramatists" (Programmes, 29/5/39); with music

"Little Ladyship"	Ian Hay – adapted from the Hungarian	comedy – "Grand Fun"	12.6 – 18.6. 1939	first production outside London where it was still playing; with programme of music
"Loyalties"	John Galsworthy	contemporary drama/ "fine straightforward"	19.6. – 25.6.	interesting: problem of anti- Semitism mentioned; with programme of music
"Plan for a Hostess"	Thomas Browne	comedy	26.6. – 2.7.	"initial effort of a new playwright" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Painted Sparrows"	Guy Paxton & Edward V. Hoile	comedy	3.7. – 9.7.	set in a Sussex farmhouse with programme of music
'York Theatrical Fete' in aid of the York County Hospital: - with 70 attractions - open air stage	various	various but mostly purely entertaining	8.7.	"Amusements under the management of past and present members of the Repertory Company"
"Tilly of Bloomsbury"	Ian Hay, adapted from the novel "Happy-Go-Lucky"	comedy	10.7. – 16.7.	last play of the season with programme of music
Theatre Closed			17.7. – 6.8.	
"To Kill a Cat"	Ronald Pertwee & Harold Dearden	~comedy	7.8. – 13.8.	"As a play it is not first class; as a vehicle for introducing the new members of the company it is excellent." (*YG*) – ninth season with programme of music
"And so to Bed"	J. B. Fagan	comedy about the life of Samuel Pepys	14.8. – 20.8.	set in 1669
"Glorious Morning"	Norman Mac Owen	"great drama"/ contemporary drama	21.8. – 27.8.	"drama of totalitarian ideology", essence: "God is greater than the state" (*YG*); with music
"The Little Dog Laughed"	Geoffrey Thomas	comedy	28.8. – 3.9.	"Enough to make a cat laugh" (Programmes, 21/8/39); "takes the mind off the seriousness of the political situation" (*YG*); with music
only scheduled: "The Silent House"			4.9. – 10.9.	BUT: cancelled due to outbreak of war (all the cinemas and theatres in GB were closed during this first week of WWII) → see copies about discussions & controversies

"The Silent House"	John G. Brandon & George Pickett	comedy- thriller	11.9. – 17.9. 1939	Theatre Royal reopened as in "neutral area" "excellent diversion" (*YG*) with programme of music
"French Without Tears"	Terence Rattigan	famous light comedy	18.9. – 24.9.	"just completed 1000th performance in London" with programme of music
"Chase the Ace"	Anthony Kimmins	comedy- thriller	25.9. – 1.10.	"another light- hearted play" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Worth a Million"	Vernon Sylvaine	farce	2.10. – 8.10.	"I do not recall having ever seen a more amazing piece of tom-foolery put on the stage" (*YG*); with programme of music
"Fresh Fields"	Ivor Novello	comedy with programme of music	9.10. – 15.10.	"flagrantly unpersuasive, but rewardingly absurd [...] – sheer delight" (Programmes, 2/10/39); "the sort of fare to take us out of ourselves in times like these. [...] Impecunious gentility may be one of the little legacies of this war, who knows?" (*YG*)
"First Stop North"	Nicholas Phipps	crime play about a gang of car thieves in North London	16.10. – 22.10.	"packed [...] with interesting situations, interspersed with good comedy" (Programmes, 9/10/39); with programme of music
"Without the Prince"	Philip King (a Harrogate repertory player)	new comedy	23.10. – 29.10.	"one of the jolliest comedies I have seen for a long time" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Chained to a Male"	A. A. Rawlinson & Michael Pertwee	comedy	30.10. – 5.11.	some situations "are quite good fun in spite of the thinness of the story" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Gas Light"	Patrick Hamilton	thriller – "something grim"	6.11. – 12.11.	"a thriller that is not conventional according to the conventions of today" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Magic Cupboard"	Percy Walsh	farcial comedy	13.11. – 19.11.	"capital entertainment, packed with amusing situations, and considerable Cockney humour" (*YG*); with programme of music

"Mary's other Husband"	Larry E. Johnson	farcial comedy "continuous laughter" (*YG*)	20.11. – 26.11. 1939	"a mysterious American playwright who has solved his countrymen's difficulty of writing a real British play for British audiences" (Programmes, 13/11/39) with programme of music
"Ask Beccles"	Cyril Campion & Edward Dignon	comedy	27.11. – 3.12.	"interesting entertainment without any profundity therefore results", "comedy, thrill, and romance" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Spring Meeting"	J. M. Farrell & John Perry	comedy	4.12. – 10.12.	Irish setting, "a comedy that is out of the ordinary", "yet it is truly a play about poverty" (*YG*); with programme of music
"French Leave"	Reginald Berkeley	light comedy	11.12. – 17.12.	→ see copy with programme of music
"The Wind and the Rain"	Merton Hodge	comedy	18.12. – 24.12.	"plenty of fun that never runs to ribaldry" (*YG*) set in Scotland with programme of music
"Nothing but the Truth"	James Montgomery	farcial comedy	25.12. – 31.12.	set in the US last play of the season with programme of music

General Remarks:

- 50 productions: 47 comedies, one modern classic, two contemporary comedies
- no touring companies whatsoever!

1940

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
Season of special shows with West End stars: "Dear Octopus"	Dodie Smith	comedy "play [...] about ourselves"	1.1. – 7.1.1940	guest star: Dame Marie Tempest, the "Queen of the British stage" play about the Randolph family is "illustrative of the reality of family bonds, and of that strength in them which has helped to make England great" (*YG*)
"The Corn is Green"	Emlyn Williams	comedy	8.1. – 14.1.	visit of Phyllis Neilson- Terry play set in New South Wales presented by Emile Littler
"Robert's Wife"	St. John Ervine	"human" play/comedy	15.1 – 21.1.	visit of Fay Compton and Owen Nares
"Quiet Wedding"	Esther McCracken	comedy	22.1. – 28.1.	repertory starts again, tenth season
"They Walk Alone"	Max Catto	thriller	29.1. – 4.2.	a play "that will thrill even those most inured to thrills" (*YG*)
"Goodness, how Sad"	Robert Morley	comedy	5.2. – 11.2.	featuring Captain Angst, a likeable German seal trainer; "full of wit and whimsy and good spirits, dealing with the inner life of a repertory company down on its luck" (*YG*)
"The White Assegai"	Story of the African "Veldt" by Allan King	African (colonial) drama	12.2. – 18.2.	about a Commissioner whom "the native tribes [..] have come to look upon [...] almost as a god" (*YG*)
"One of the Family"	Kenneth Webb	comedy	19.2. – 25.2.	"rich domestic comedy" (*YEP*, 20/2/40)
"Dracula"	adapted from Bram Stoker by Hamilton Deane	thriller	26.2. – 3.3.	

"Meet the Wife"	Lynn Starling	light comedy	4.3 – 10.3.1940	light entertainment "and nothing more" (YEP, 5/3/40)
"The Chinese Bungalow"	Marion Osmond & James Corbet	"worth while entertainment"	11.3. – 17.3.	"amply picturesque in the settings" (*YG*) play set in Singapore
"Outward Bound"	Sutton Vane	"Famous Fantasy", "sincere and moving play"	18.3. – 24.3.	play of "perennial interest" and of "character studies" (*YG*), set on board of a ship as played in York several times before
"It's a wise Child"	Larry E. Johnson	comedy	25.3. – 31.3.	"Brisk American Comedy" (*YEP*, 27/3/40), "a poor representative of the drama of America", "a mediocre play" (*YG*)
"The Queen's Husband"	Robert Emeret Sherwood	"great romantic comedy", "costume play"	1.4. – 7.4.	"vastly entertaining fare" (*YEP*, 2/4/40), played with augmented company play set on a North Sea Island
"The Price of Wisdom"	Lionel Brown	comedy with "a moral" set in Shropshire	8.4. – 14.4.	play "chiefly concerns a mother and her daughter" (*YG*)
"Ten Minute Alibi"	Anthony Armstrong	crime thriller	15.4. – 23.4.	
"Grouse in June"	Norman C. Hunter	comedy, "a laughter-maker all the way"	22.4. – 28.4.	Americans – "so unmindful of tradition" (*YEP*, 23/4/40) – make holidays in Scotland
"Pygmalion"	G. B. Shaw	modern classic/ comedy	29.4. – 5.5.	"remains a first- class draw", "drawing big houses" (*YG*)
"The Case of the Frightened Lady"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	6.5. – 12.5.	play miscast (see *YEP*, 7 and 8/5/40)
"Behind the Schemes"	Geo H. Grimaldi	comedy	13.5. – 19.5.	"fare sufficiently light to meet a holiday mood" (*YG*,17/5/40)
"Bill of Divorcement"	Clemence Dane	contemporary drama "holding dramatic tensity"	20.5. – 26.5.	"controversial play" (*YG*) about marriage, divorce and insanity
"Saloon Bar"	Frank Harvey (husband of former repertory member M. Inchbold)	comedy thriller set in a Soho pub	27.5. – 2.6.	"essentially a play of character studies" (*YG*, 31/5/40)

"The Shoemaker's Last"	Geoffrey Thomas	~ domestic play set partly in Vienna	3.6. – 9.6.1940	"play is disjointed and pointless" (*YG*, 7/6/40); with a "garrulous German" [=talkative]
"Tell me the Truth"	Leslie Howard	farcial comedy	10.6. – 16.6.	"Repertory company in top form" (*YEP*, 12/6/40); with programme of music
"I Done a Murder"	E. G. Cousins	comedy- thriller	17.6. – 23.6.	"really good evening's entertainment" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Mother Knows Best"	A. R. Whatmore	comedy	24.6. – 30.6.	theme: "the woman with ambitions" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Barretts of Wimpole Street"	Rudolf Besier	"great romance"	1.7. – 7.7.	"The Play of the Season", the company "have never done better work" (*YG*); as played before; with programme of music
"While Parents Sleep"	Anthony Kimmins	comedy	8.7. – 14.7.	last play of the season
Theatre Closed			15.7. – 4.8.	
"Peg o' my Heart"	J. Hartley Manners	"comedy of youth"	5.8. – 11.8.	set in Scarborough; with programme of music start of eleventh season
"The Silver Box"	John Galsworthy	contemporary drama	12.8. – 18.8.	"Galsworthy's finest contribution to the Drama" about "the haves and the have- nots" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Passing Brompton Road"	Jevan Brandon- Thomas	light comedy	19.8. – 25.8.	story is "on the thin side"
"The Man who Changed his Name"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	26.8. – 1.9.	with programme of music
"Ma's bit o' Brass"	Ronald Gow	comedy	2.9. – 8.9.	"It has a background of class consciousness [...] dealt with lightly and without any serious attempt to state a problem. The whole aim of the play is to amuse" (*YG*)
"The Painted Veil"	Bartlett Cormack from the novel by Somerset Maugham	contemporary drama	9.9. – 15.9.	with programme of music

"When We Are Married"	J. B. Priestley	comedy	16.9. – 22.9. 1940	"perfect type of entertainment for Birthday Week" (5th birthday) with programme of music
"Plus Fours"	H. A. Vachell & Harold Simpson	light comedy	23.9. – 29.9.	comedy is "wholesome" and "fit for anybody from 17 to 70" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Ghost Train"	Arnold W. Ridley	comedy thriller set in a Cornish railway station	30.9. – 6.10.	"good, robust melodrama with mysterious happenings" (*YEP*, 1/10/40); as played before
"The Dover Road"	A. A. Milne	comedy	7.10. – 13.10.	"lavish mounting and setting" (*YG*) as played in York before
"Sheppey"	W. Somerset Maugham	~ contemporary drama	14.10. – 20.10.	"very moving play" (*YG*, 18/10/40), producer William Sherwood takes the title role
"The First Mrs Fraser"	St. John Ervine	comedy	21.10. – 27.10.	"A nicely produced play with some very good acting" (*YG*, 25/10/40)
"The Apple Cart"	G. B. Shaw	modern classic "political extravaganza"/satire	28.10. – 3.11.	"At a time when Democracy is on trial for its life at the hands of dictators, Shaw's play [...] has a certain appropriateness." (*YEP*, 29/10/40) (→ see copy)
"The Green Pack"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	4.11. – 10.11.	"A good and gripping story, and the eight members of the cast unfold it well." (*YG*, 8/11/40)
"Storm in a Teacup"	James Bridie (appears as the author but really it is an adaptation of Bruno Frank's comedy!)	comedy	11.11. – 17.11.	"comedy of Scottish life", "satire on local politics" (*YEP*, 12/11/40) successful adaptation of Bruno Frank's comedy "Sturm im Wasserglas" (1930) with a Scots setting (first produced in 1936)
"The late Christopher Bean"	Rene Fauchois adapted by Emlyn Williams	comedy	18.11. – 24.11.	"measures of fun and romance were well balanced" (*YEP*, 19/11/40), company "go from good to better" (*YG*)
"Suspect"	Rex Judd	"thrilling drama"	25.11. – 1.12.	"House of mystery on Cornish coast" (*YEP*, 26/11/40)

"Tony Draws a Horse"	Lesley Storm	"delightfully amusing comedy"	2.12. – 8.12. 1940	"fails as a play but is a happy choice for a light evening's entertainment" (*YEP*, 3/12/40)
"Autumn Crocus"	Dodie Smith	~ romance set in Tyrol	9.12. – 15.12.	"World Famous Play" as played in York before (in 1932)
"For the Love of Mike"	H. F. Maltby & Clifford Grey	"excellent farce"	16.12. – 22.12.	"keeping an audience in uproarious laughter" (*YG*) last play of repertory season
"The Chocolate Soldier"	Leopold Jacobson & Rudolf Bernauer, English version by Stanislaus Strange, music by Oscar Straus	musical comedy in a Balkan setting	26.12.1940 – 5.1.1941	performances once nightly complete cast from Shaftesbury Theatre, London first play in a "series of special attractions" (*YG*)

General Remarks:

- 49 productions: 42 comedies, 2 modern classics and 5 contemporary dramas
- no touring companies whatsoever!

1941

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
series of special attractions: "The Chocolate Soldier"	Leopold Jacobson & Rudolf Bernauer, English version by Stanislaus Strange, music by Oscar Straus	musical comedy in a Balkan setting	26.12.1940 – 5.1.1941	performances once nightly complete cast from Shaftesbury Theatre, London first play in a "series of special attractions" (*YG*)
"On Approval"	F. Lonsdale, play produced by Irene Hentschel	light romantic comedy	6.1. – 12.1.	Barry Barnes, Diana Churchill, Cathleen Nesbitt, Roland Culver; "brilliant acting" (*YG*)
"The Light of Heart"	Emlyn Williams	comedy "a play to lighten all hearts in these stern times" (*YG*, 10/1/41);	13.1. – 19.1.	"biggest success of the wartime theatre" (*STAR*, 10/1/41); with appearances of Emlyn Williams, Angela Baddeley; "At no time does it even touch the fringe of melodrama" (*YG*)
"Plays and Music" → variety programme (see copy)	Noel Coward	"delightful entertainment"	20.1. – 26.1.	with Vic Oliver, Sarah Churchill (daughter of Winston), Joyce Carey
"Rebecca"	Daphne du Maurier adapted from her novel	"intense drama full of surprise element"	27.1. – 2.2.	start of repertory's 12th season "You can feel the sincerity behind the story, and its emotional qualities are built on a true basis" (*YG*)
"Hay Fever"	Noel Coward	comedy	3.2. – 9.2.	good comedy as it "dispels all realistic thought" (*YEP*, 4/2/41); "now that the Germans are in Pairs and you cannot go there, try to remember whether Bliss senior, novelist, is right in his curtain declamation that the Rue St. Honore runs into the Place de la Concorde" (*YG*)
"A Murder Has Been Arranged"	Emlyn Williams	"clever superthriller" (*YG*)	10.2. – 16.2.	"contains suspense and thrill in abundance" (*YEP*, 11/2/41)

"Eliza Comes to Stay"	H. V. Esmond	comedy	17.2. – 23.2. 1941	"fresh touch to an old, though popular play, even though it takes place in an old-fashioned era"(*YG*)
"The Bishop Misbehaves"	Frederick Jackson	comedy	24.2. – 2.3.	"team work of the company in this play was never better" (*YG*)
"Eve"	Lionel Brown	comedy	3.3. – 9.3.	about a Scottish girl marrying an artist; they then move to Chelsea, "to an environment of sophistication and Bohemianism" (*YG*)
'West Yorkshire Regiment Concert Party'		concert, with comedy programme	9.3.	concert in aid for 'Comforts Fund for the Troops', comedy programme by Alec Fraser
"The Crime at Blossoms"	Mordaunt Shairp	thriller	10.3. – 16.3.	set in a country cottage
"Mary Rose"	J. M. Barrie	~romance "Barrie's famous play"	17.3. – 23.3.	with "a strange atmosphere of beauty and heartache" (*YG*)
"Thunder Rock"	Robert Ardrey	"modern drama"/ contemporary drama set in a lighthouse	24.3. – 30.3.	play "whose anti-isolationism and defiance of cynical pessimism on the subject of 'wars for progress' were exactly suited to the mood of Britain after the Battle of France" (Bulletin from Britain 97 (1942), p.15) main character "seeks to hide from the maelstrom of war and creates in a dream a party of people who were drowned some years before" (*YEP*, 26/3/41)
"The Crooked Billet"	Dion Titheradge	"quick action thriller of the old, enjoyable type" (*YG*)	31.3. – 6.4.	"tense mystery"
"Sweet Lavender"	Arthur W. Pinero	modern classic	7.4. – 13.4.	54 years since it was first produced
"The Sport of Kings"	Ian Hay	racing comedy	14.4. – 20.4.	played to "a crowded Easter audience" (*YEP*, 15/4/41)
"The Man in Half Moon Street"	Barré Lyndon	thriller about the "'perfect crime' idea"	21.4. – 27.4.	about a scientist's "endeavour to create immortal life"

"Springtime for Henry"	Benn W. Levy	~comedy	28.4. – 4.5. 1941	
"Berkeley Square"	John L. Balderston & J. C. Squire	"highly imaginative play"	5.5. – 11.5.	about "a young American with a love for 18th century England" (*YG*)
"Whistling in the Dark"	Laurence Gross & Edward Childs Carpenter	"a typical American gangster play" (*YG*)	12.5. – 17.5.	"with no particularly new slant", though "action and dialogue are peppy enough" (*YG*)
'Grand Military Concert by the I.T.C. Concert Party of the West Yorkshire Regt.'			18.5.	as part of the 'Grand War Weapons Week Attraction'
"The Millionairess"	George Bernard Shaw	modern classic "famous play"	19.5. – 25.5.	"a cuttingly satirical slant on such things as divorce, sweating, and big business" (*YG*)
"Death Takes a Holiday"	Walter Ferris & Alberto Casella	comedy set in Italy	26.5. – 1.6.	"A macabre and ethereal element are deeply impressed on the audience" (*YEP*, 27/5/41) with programme of music
"The Rising Generation"	Wyn Weaver & Laura Leycester	farcial comedy with musical programme	2.6. – 8.6.	"hilarious farce of honest, clean fun" (*YEP*, 3/6/41); end of Repertory Season
'Season of West End attractions': "The Hulbert Follies" → comedy entertainment programme with 21 items which "make a slick, non- stop show, a pot pourri of fun, dancing, music and song" (*YG*, 13/6/41))	various (see copy) "devised and produced by Jack Hulbert as a war time entertainment [...] with plenty of comedy, brilliant dancing, good music and pretty girl"	"high- class show"	9.6. – 15.6.	starring Jack Hulbert, Cicely Courtneidge, Claude Hulbert, etc. programme includes: "How Britain Fights" by Eric Maschwitz, "a dramatic interlude depicting incidents in the lives of unsung heroes of the 'blitzes'", which is "an impressive serious piece" (*YG*, 13/6/41); presented by Lee Ephraim with all- star cast including John Gielgud, Margaret Rawlings, Zena Dare, Muriel Pavlov, Ursula Jeans; "a production of which the English theatre [...] can be proud especially in times like the present" (*STAR*, 13/6/41)
"Dear Brutus"	J. M. Barrie produced by John Gielgud	~comedy/"dream play" with music programme	16.6. – 22.6.	
"The First Mrs. Fraser"	St. John Ervine	comedy	23.6. – 29.6.	appearance of Dame Marie Tempest, A. E. Matthews, Rosalyn Boulter, Milton Rosmer, etc.

Theatre Closed for cleaning and decorating			30.6. – 20.7. 1941	
"The Wandering Jew"	E. Temple Thurston	contemporary drama "world- famous play" about the history of the Jews	21.7 – 27.7.	return of repertory company in their 13th season play first produced in 1920 Patrick Crean "outstanding" (*YG*)
'Grand Variety Concert'	Band of the Royal Army Service Corps		27.7.	in aid of 'The National Air Raid Distress Fund' show supported by "well- known artists"
"The Bat"	Mary Roberts Rineheart & Avery Hopwood	comedy thriller	28.7. – 3.8.	"splendid team work" (*YEP*, 29/7/41)
"Lord Richard in the Pantry"	Sidney Blow & Douglas Hoare	farce	4.8. – 10.8.	"extremely good farce" (*YEP*, 5/8/41)
"Here and Now"	Lionel Brown	dramatic play/ contemporary drama	11.8. – 17.8.	play depicts "domestic life of three generations"; play about "ordinary people, of types we all know" (*YG*)
"Mr Pim Passes By"	A. A. Milne	"charming comedy"	18.8. – 24.8.	"its very lightsomeness and fragility carry it along" (*YG*)
"Peril at End House"	Arnold Ridley, Agatha Christie adapted	comedy thriller	25.8. – 31.8.	staged instead of "Henry V" "racy enough entertainment" (*YG*)
"Marigold"	L. Allan Harker & F. R. Pryor	romantic comedy costume play	1.9. – 7.9.	"Romance in the home of a Scottish minister in early Victorian days" (*YEP* 2/9/41)
"Russian Salad" first performance ever	Jack and Roy Forster	comedy thriller set in a Shanghai club	8.9. – 14.9.	"compliment to the Repertory Players to be entrusted with the tryout" of the play (*YEP*, 9/9/41)
"It Pays to Advertise"	Walter Hackett & Roi Cooper Megrue	"riotous farce"	15.9. – 21.9.	"full house rocking with laughter" (*YEP*, 16/9/41); play with an American setting
"See Naples and Die"	Elmer Rice	"frivolous light comedy" set in Italy	22.9. – 28.9.	play with a mixture of characters, e.g. Hugo von Klaus, a "Germanic factotum" (*YG*)
"Wasn't it odd"	Kenneth Horne	"unusual comedy"	29.9. – 5.10.	"re-decorates the old theme of an invisible presence prying [neugierig] into confidential secrets" (*YEP*, 30/9/41)

"Libel"	Edward Wooll	court drama/ contemporary drama	6.10. – 12.10. 1941	play of "absorbing interest" about a baronet supposedly "killed after an escape from a German prison camp towards the end of the last war" (*YG*)
"Why Men Leave Home"	Avery Hopwood	American farce	13.10. – 19.10.	"a farce of the broadest and most hilarious kind" (*STAR*, 10/10/41)
"Contact"	various (obviously)	comedy revue	19 10.	performed entirely by the personnel of an RAF station in aid of the RAF benevolent fund – result: £96 10s. 6d. (*YEP*, 31/10/41)
"The Marquise"	Noel Coward	18th century comedy	20.10. – 26.10.	setting: "gay, sophisticated France in the days of periwigs and crinolines" (*YEP*, 21/10/41)
"Love from a Stranger"	Frank Vosper & Agatha Christie	thriller	27.10. – 2.11.	with an American guy who reveals himself as a modern "Bluebeard"
"The High Road"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	3.11. – 9.11.	"Good acting [...] brings out the high lights of a story that has point" (*YG*)
"Tons of Money"	Will Evans and Valentine	"riotous farce"	10.11. – 16.11.	"succession of laughs from the first scene" (*YEP*, 11/11/41); Hal Osmond's farewell appearance before joining the RAF
"The Cat and the Canary"	John Willard	mystery play	17.11. – 23.11.	"There is an abundance of sliding panels, hidden staircases and mysterious motives in this chilling drama." (*YEP*, 18/11/41)
"The Man with a Load of Mischief"	Ashley Dukes	"romantic comedy"	24.11. – 30.11.	set in an 18th century inn only six players in the cast
"He Walked in her Sleep"	Norman Cannon	farcial comedy	1.12. – 7.12.	"abundance of the hilarious non-sense of a type which the Repertory Company always enjoys." (*YEP*, 2/12/41); six players only
"Jane Eyre"	Helen Jerome's dramatisation of Charlotte Bronte's novel	"drama, comedy and romance are perfectly blended"/"love story"	8.12. – 14.12.	"comes to the York stage as a refined, charming play that makes satisfying entertainment" (*YG*, 12/12/41)
"A Cuckoo in the Nest"	Ben Travers	riotous farce "bedroom farce"	15.12. – 21.12.	"A brilliant farce, cleverly produced and intelligently acted" (*YEP*, 16/12/41) final play of 13th season

Season of London productions: "More 1066 and All That" including: - 23 "gay scenes" - full ballet - chorus - augmented orchestra - company of 50 artists	adapted by Reginald Arkell music by Alfred Reynolds produced by Emile Littler	musical comedy of English history	26.12.1941 – 4.1.1942	"Fun is poked whole- heartedly at dignified English institutions and traditions and touches of delicious satire obtrude at times." (*YG*, 2/1/1942) with Kenneth Blain, Brenda de Banzie, etc.

General Remarks:

- 51 productions: 45 comedies, 2 modern classics and 4 contemporary dramas
- no touring companies whatsoever!

1942

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
Season of London productions: "More 1066 and All That" including: - 23 "gay scenes" - full ballet - chorus - augmented orchestra - company of 50 artists	adapted by Reginald Arkell music by Alfred Reynolds produced by Emile Littler	musical comedy of English history	26.12.1941 – 4.1.1942	"Fun is poked whole- heartedly at dignified English institutions and traditions and touches of delicious satire obtrude at times." (*YG*, 2/1/1942) with Kenneth Blain, Brenda de Banzie, etc.
"Skylark"	Samson Raphaelson	"new American comedy" with "domestic theme" and "set in the fashionable world of successful young people" (*NEWS*, 2/1/42)	5.1. – 11.1.	starring Constance Cummings, John Clements, Hugh Sinclair, Valerie Taylor "first presentation before immediate London production" (*YEP*, 5/12/41)
"The Merchant of Venice" "The Witch"	W. S., produced by Esme Church adaptation from the Norwegian by John Masefield	classic contemporary drama	12.1. – 14.1. 15.1. – 17.1.	first York visit of Old Vic Company (tour in association with CEMA), with Jean Forbes-Robertson & Frederick Valk (émigré actor)
'Sadler's Wells Opera Company': "Madame Butterfly" (2x) "Rigoletto" (2x) "La Traviata" (2x "The Barber of Seville" (2x)	 Puccini Verdi Verdi) Rossini	all operas	19.1. – 25.1	"a memorable operatic week, with the theatre deservedly crowded at all performances" (*YG*, 23/1/42) – first visit of the company to York ever

"Good- Night Children"	J. B. Priestley	"new comedy of broadcasting" – satire	26.1. – 1.2. 1942	with guest stars Gillian Lind & Leslie Banks – "It is [..] a frolic" (*Vide Press*); given prior to immediate London production
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Company': "The Gondoliers" (2x) "Iolanthe" (2x) "The Yeoman of the Guard" (2x) "The Mikado" (2x)	Gilbert & Sullivan	operas	2.2. – 8.2.	"crowded houses in the theatre" with Darrell Fancourt
"The Cardinal"	Louis N. Parker	dramatic play/ contemporary drama	9.2. – 15.2.	set in 16th century Rome return of the Repertory Company in their 14th season
"Cottage to Let" first produced in London in summer 1940	Geoffrey Kerr	"the first spy drama of the present war" (*YG*, 13/2/42) produced during "York Warship Week"	16.2. – 22.2.	set in a village on the English coast on 2/9/1939; "The central figure of the play is a famous scientist who lives in a quiet part of the country, where he is engaged on an important experiment which may prove of great value to the government. Certain enemy agents are bent on securing details of the new invention, so it becomes necessary to kidnap the scientist and convey him to Germany in a U- boat. (...) not until the last minute is the villain unmasked and justice done." (*YG*, 13/2/42)
"The School for Husbands"	Frederick Jackson	farcial comedy	23.2. – 1.3.	"comedy of married life" (*YG*)
"Yellow Dog Dingo"	Jack and Roy Forster	spy comedy and "amusing thriller"	2.3. – 8.3.	"set in the Far East soon after the outbreak of the present war" (*YG*) first performance of the play
"This Woman Business"	Benn W. Levy	"charming comedy"	9.3. – 15.3.	background: "a party of misogynyists tucked away in an old Manor House" (*YG*)

"You Never Can Tell"	G. B. Shaw	modern classic	16.3. – 22.3. 1942	"story of Mrs. Lamprey Clandon and her unorthodox or quixotic children, from whom she had tried to keep their father's identity"(*YG*)
"Distinguished Gathering"	James Parish	mystery play/thriller	23.3. – 29.3.	"fine drama" (*YG*) about a perfect murder
"The Elder Miss Blossom"	Ernest Hendrie & Metcalfe Wood	romantic comedy	30.3. – 5.4.	"a sentimental story, but with nothing mawkish or sloppy in it" (*YG*); first produced in 1898
"Fair and Warmer"	Avery Hopwood	"hilarious farce" of domestic life	6.4. – 12.4.	old favourite, "fun is fast and furious" (*YG*)
"The Queen was in the Parlour"	Noel Coward	romantic drama of Ruritania	13.4. – 19.4.	about "the old conflict between love and duty" (*YG*)
"Someone at the Door"	Dorothy and Campbell Christie	"Adventure in Comedy and Crime" – comedy thriller	20.4. – 26.4.	"entertaining and amusing play" about a journalist "seeking to make a quick name for himself through working up a publicity stunt" (*YG*)
"Bird in Hand"	John Drinkwater	comedy	27.4. – 2.5.	"two hours of wholesome comedy" (*YG*, 1/5/42)
"Ladies in Retirement"	Edward Percy and Reginald Denham	thriller	3.5. – 9.5.	"The Best New Play Since War Broke Out" (*STAR*, 1/5/42)
"The Truth About Blayds"	A. A. Milne	comedy	10.5. – 16.5.	dominating force is "an old man who has earned fame as a poet" but claims he did not write them
"Love in a Mist"	Kenneth Horne	light comedy	17.5. – 23.5.	"comedy of a honeymoon" (*YG*)
"Bats in the Belfry"	Diana Morgan & Robert Macdermot	"very light comedy"	24.5. – 30.5.	"A play packed with healthy laughter" (*YG*) with programme of music
"The Portrait"	Joan Brampton	"story of Anna Ingleby, a beautiful Polish refugee who fled to England to escape the Nazi menace"	1.6. – 7.6.	"full of topical interest" about a "Nazi spy [who] gets confused" (*YG*); but eventually "the machinations of the German agent is foiled" (Programmes, 25/5/1942) with programme of music

"Square Pigs"	Lionel Brown	comedy	8.6. – 14.6. 1942	"A charming play, well turned out" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Once a Crook"	Evadne Price & Ken Attiwell	comedy- thriller	15.6. – 21.6.	"full of Cockney wisecracks and hair raising thrills"; with programme of music
"Little Women"	Marion de Forest	comedy	22.6. – 28.6.	dramatized version of the "classical story" by Louisa M. Alcott; with programme of music
"Payment Deferred"	Jeffrey Dell	murder play	29.6. – 5.7.	"full of suspense and excitement", "cannot fail to thrill"; with programme of music
"When Knights Were Bold"	Charles Marlowe	"world- famous farcial comedy"	6.7. – 12.7.	play "goes with a bang"; with "Jew Isaacson"; return of Hal Osmond; with musical programme last play of present season
Theatre Closed			13.7. – 2.8.	closed for three weeks 'Spring Cleaning'
"77 Park Lane"	Walter Hackett	comedy- adventure	3.8. – 9.8.	return of repertory company start of the 15th season
"Geneva"	G. Bernard Shaw	modern classic comedy/satire about the trial of two dictators at The Hague	10.8. – 16.8.	"Shaw makes the dictators' figures of fun, but full opportunity is provided for them to state their view points, and if the trial gets nowhere, and is broken up by the reception of a weather report, that is quite in keeping with Shaw's brand of logic." (*YG*, 14/8/1942)
"Take four Eggs"	Thomas Browne	light comedy of domesticity	17.8. – 23.8.	"In these days when many women are doing men's work, the picture of a man doing a woman's job makes a unique contrast, and it is this contrast that provides the background for [this] unusual comedy." (*YG*, 14/8/42)
"And the Music Stopped"	Noel Scott	thriller	24.8. – 30.8.	"will be regarded by many as he York Repertory Company's best production this season" (*YG*)
"The Roundabout"	J. B. Priestley	"sharp satire" (*YG*) with programme of music	31.8. – 6.9.	"Priestley is in his element as he exploits the situations that arise from a clash between the foppery of a British bourgeois family and the realism of two ardent young Communists" (*YG*)

"The Path to Glory"	L. du Garde Peach	satirical comedy with programme of music	7.9. – 13.9. 1942	about "two mythical states which get to was after a frontier incident" however: both try to lose the war for economic reason
"Dandy Dick"	Arthur W. Pinero	modern classic/ "famous farce"	14.9. – 20.9.	"evergreen farce" about a "decorous Dean left floundering after a racing indiscretion" (*YG*) with programme of music
"Other People's Houses"	Lynne Dexter	topical comedy set in the county home of a "war widow" with programme of music	21.9. – 27.9.	"the fun begins with the arrival of brusque Mrs. Short, an evacuee from Brixton and her daughter Saffron. There are sudden complications when the Sheldon's find themselves with new neighbours, the husband 'next door' becoming infatuated with coy and glamorous Saffron, and the wife finding herself quite innocently accused of endeavouring to steel the affections of the R.A.F. fiancé of one of Mrs. Sheldon's daughters." (Programmes, 14/9/42)
"Dangerous Corner"	J. B. Priestley	comedy/"balanced entertainment"	28.9. – 4.10.	play "on the wisdom of telling the whole truth at all times" (*YG*); "polished performance"
"Old Acquaintance"	John van Druten	new light comedy with programme of music	5.10. – 11.10.	"A background of fashionable New York with its complete remoteness from the war atmosphere affords a welcome relief" (*source?*)
"Within the Law"	Bayard Veiller	contemporary drama with programme of music	12.10. – 18.10.	"a young girl is sent to prison for a crime she never committed" and plans a revenge (Programmes)
"The Anatomist"	James Bridie	"thrilling drama" based on the lamentable story of Dr. R. Knox, the anatomist	19.10. – 25.10.	"a reversion from the modern type of chronicle play to a type less concerned with historical facts than with entertainment" (Programmes) with programme of music
"Jam Today"	Denis Waldock & Roger Burford	light comedy	26.10. – 1.11.	"adroit little story of a domestic mess- up" (*YG*, 30/10/42); "right kind of show to take your mind off war worries" (*Sunday Chronicle* as quoted in Programmes, 19/10/42)

"The Ringer"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	2.11. – 8.11. 1942	"the tempo of the acting might with advantage be quickened up" (*YG*)
"Devonshire Cream"	Eden Phillpotts	comedy	9.11. – 15.11.	"this love story of a Blanchard and a Widecombe" (*YG*)
"Romeo and Juliet"	W. S.	classic	16.11. – 22.11.	the company "made a creditable Shakespearean debut" (*YEP*, 17/11/42) first Shakespeare production of the repertory company!
"The Man at Six"	Jack Celestin & Jack de Leon	detective play	23.11. – 29.11.	"enough excitement and suspense, corpses and 'coppers', shootings and impersonations to satisfy the keenest thriller fan" (*YH*,21/11/42)
"The Best People"	David Gray & Avery Hopwood	"sophisticated comedy"	30.11. – 6.12.	about "modern democratically- minded young people and their class- conscious parents"; "remark-ably well done" (*YG*, 4/12/42)
"Rope"	Patrick Hamilton	~comedy/"gripping drama"	7.12. – 13.12.	play about the perfect murder committed by two students
"The Private Secretary"	Charles Hawtrey	farcial comedy in period dressing and setting	14.12. – 20.12.	with guest star Hal Osmond "utter slapstick of the palatable variety" (*YEP*, 15/12/42)
'Sadler's Wells Ballet Company': "Coppelia", "The Birds", "Hamlet", "Casse Noisette", "Les Sylphides", "The Rake's Progress"		in ballet repertoire	24.12.1942 – 3.1.1943	with stars Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann plus full company! played to "very large" audiences for the first time in York! ⇒ start of special Winter season

General Remarks:

- 61 productions: 36 comedies, 2 classics, 3 modern classics, 2 right-wing/war plays, 4 contemporary dramas, 8 operas, 6 ballet productions

Programmes Theatre Royal 1943 – 1945

1943

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
'Sadler's Wells Ballet Company': "Coppelia", "The Birds", "Hamlet", "Casse Noisette", "Les Sylphides", "The Rake's Progress"		in ballet repertoire	24.12.1942 – 3.1.1943	with stars Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann plus full company! played to "very large" audiences for the first time in York! ⇒ start of special Winter season
"The Duke in Darkness"	Patrick Hamilton	war play/"stark drama" set in 16th century France during the civil wars but with parallels to present war!	4.1. – 10.1.	with Leslie Banks, Michael Redgrave, Mervyn Johns, Walter Fitzgerald; "spirit running through the play which suggests why France – free France – can never die" (*YG*, 8/1/43)
"Watch on the Rhine" turned into a successful film in the US in 1943	Lilian Hellman directed by Emlyn Williams	war play set in the spring of 1940	11.1. – 17.1.	with Zena Dare, Roger Livesey, Ursula Jeans "hailed by critics as the best play of the war" (*YG*, 8/1/1943), "one of the greatest plays for years" (*YEP*, 9/1/43), "one of the great plays, probably the greatest, of the war" (*YG*, 15/1/43) about "an anti- Nazi German who brings his American wife back to her mother's luxurious home near Washington, together with their three children The story shows how the serenity and security of this home seemingly so remote from the European conflict, is shattered by the far reaching influence of the Gestapo." (*YG*, 8/1/1943)

"Shirley"	adapted from the novel of Charlotte Bronte by V. A. Pearn produced by Esmé Church	contemporary drama set in the West Riding at the time of the Napoleonic War	18.1. – 24.1. 1943	centres around the problems arising from the introduction of the 'Spinning Jenny' presented by the Old Vic in conjunction with C.E.M.A. with Nova Pilbeam, Edward V. Robson, Frank Petley, Eugene Leahy, Audrey Fildes
'Sadler's Wells Opera': "Madam Butterfly" "The Marriage of Figaro" "Rigoletto"		operas	25.1. – 31.1.	"policy of the Wells to present opera in English in first- class translations" (*YG*, 22/1/43)
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Co.': "The Mikado" "Iolanthe" "Patience" "The Yeoman of the Guard" "The Gondoliers"	all by Gilbert & Sullivan	operas	1.2. – 7.2.	"received by crowded houses" (*YG*, 5/2/43)
Theatre Closed for rehearsals			8.2. – 12.2.	
"Romance" first produced in England in 1913	Edward Sheldon	comedy	13.2. – 21.2.	repertory company back in 16th (8th) season; "the sugar content never turns to cheap saccharine" (*YG*); "everything about the show is first- rate" (*YEP*, 16/2/43)
"Too Young to Marry"	Martin Flavin, adpated by Emile Littler	comedy	22.2. – 28.2.	domestic comedy "attracted good audiences" (*YH*, 27/2/43)
"Jupiter Laughs"	A. J. Cronin	contemporary drama	1.3. – 7.3.	play about the conflict between science and religion, set in a mental home; "remarkable play produced in an exemplary way" (*YG*)
"Mr Wu"	Harold Owen & H. M. Vernon	melodrama set in China	8.3. – 14.3.	Mr. Wu "kidnaps a shipowner's son as ransom for his mother, when he falls in love with Mr. Wu's daughter" stage design of Lotus garden with bridge & profuse blossoms noted in *YG*

"Indoor Fireworks"	Arthur Mc Crae	farcial comedy set in Cambridge	15.3. – 21.3. 1943	"a gay little box of verbal explosives" (*YG*, 19/3/43)
"School for Scandal"	Richard Brinsley Sheridan	classic first produced in 1777	22.3. – 28.3.	"to- day a classic model of the playwright's art" (28/3/43); performance is "colourful and altogether satisfying" (*YG*, 26/3/43)
"Whispering Gallery"	Terence De Marney & Percy Robinson	comedy-thriller set in Cornwall	29.3. – 4.4.	"entertainment fare which appeals to the masses" (*YEP*, 30/3/43)
"Squaring the Circle" (UA 1927 in Moscow)	Valentin Katsev or Kataev translated by N. Goold-Verschoyle	comedy/farce "brilliant satire" "Russian comedy of marriage" (*YG*) about the misfortunes of two young communist couples	5.4. – 11.4.	cast of only 5; "Although it mercilessly caricatures the domestic life of two young newly- married Soviet couples living in one rather drab room, this comedy is a favourite of the Moscow Arts Theatre and is proof of the fact that modern Russia, unlike Hitlerite Germany, retains a rich sense of humour enabling it to laugh at itself." (*YEP*, 6/4/1943)
"Taming of the Shrew"	W. S.	classic	12.4. – 18.4.	company "reached heights of cleverness that would have satisfied Stratford's exacting audiences" (*YEP*, 13/4/43)
"Passing of the third Floor Back"	Jerome K. Jerome	comedy/ "idle fancy"/ "simple human drama"	19.4. – 25.4.	first produced in 1908 "its point goes home" (*YG*)
"Rookery Nook"	Ben Travers	farcial comedy "packed with uproariously funny situations"	26.4. – 9.5. for two weeks!	"drawing packed houses"; one character is an "irascible [jäh-zornig] German step-father" (*YG*)
"R.U.R." ("Rossum's Universal Robots")	Karel Capek, translated from the Czech by P. Silver, adapted by Nigel Playfair	contemporary drama with "glimpses into the world of 1980"	10.5. – 16.5.	"In a world of the future, mechanical creatures work for man's enjoyment, but after awhile the very existence of mankind is threatened with extinction, by the horrible automata of human invention." (*YG*, 7/5/43)
"The Man in dark Glasses"	Mabel L. Tyrrell & Peter Coke	comedy set in a country guest house	17.5. – 23.5.	"does the one thing every play should do – it entertains" (*MG*, 14/5/43)

"Cock Robin"	Elmer Rice & Philip Barry	thriller set during the rehearsal and performance of an 18th century costume play	24.5. – 30.5. 1943	"contains a wealth of entertainment" (*YEP*, 25/5/43); "holds as much of comedy as tragic stuff" (*YG*)
"Flat to Let"	Arthur Macrae	comedy	31.5. – 6.6.	"large audiences thoroughly enjoyed the love affairs of a very sophisticated family" (*YG*, 12/6/43); cast of only seven
"The Sacred Flame"	W. Somerset Maugham	contemporary "much discussed" drama	7.6. – 13.6.	play about "an airman, who, after a crash, has no hope of getting better, and whose young wife has an affair with his brother" (*YG*) "dealing with a problem dear to the feminine heart" (*MG*, 4/6/43)
"Billeted"	F. Tennyson Jesse & H. M. Harwood	farcial comedy	14.6. – 20.6.	"afforded much amusement to large audiences" (*YH*, 19/6/43); about "what happens [...] when the adjutant who gets billeted with the colonel turns out to be the husband [...] of the woman who keeps the house" (*YG*)
"Granite"	Clemence Dane	"gripping drama"/ tragedy set in 1820	21.6. – 27.6.	"A pulsating story of conflicting emotions" (*YEP*, 23/6/43)
"Blithe Spirit"	Noel Coward	"witty farce"/ "improbable farce"	28.6. – 11.7. → unusually presented for a fortnight!	"brilliant farce sparklingly acted", "will roll you over with laughter" (*YG*, 2/7/43); "If one can be pardoned on Americanism the whole thing is 'a wow'" (*YG*); cast of 7; put on while still running in London; end of repertory season
Theatre Closed			12.7. – 1.8.	
"Lord Babs"	Keble Howard	farcial comedy	2.8. – 8.8.	with guest artist Hal Osmond play is "essentially light and the story thin" but it "provides fun" (*YG*, 6/8/43)
"Candida"	G. Bernard Shaw	modern classic	9.8. – 15.8.	cast of only 6

"Even Money"	Lionel Brown	comedy	16.8. – 22.8. 1943	play about "the dilemma of a race-horse owner" who is compelled to sell his "bloodstock" (*YH*, 14/8/43); cast of 7
"The Dominant Sex"	Michael Egan	"ultra modern comedy" "problem play"	23.8. – 29.8.	"comedy on marriage ideals and ideas" (*YEP*, 24/8/43)
"Murder Without a Crime"	J. Lee Thompson	"psychological thriller"	30.8. – 5.9.	"entertainment out of the ordinary" cast of only 4
"Seven Keys to Baldpate"	George L. Cohan	"mysterious melo-dramatic farce"/"mirth and melodrama"	6.9. – 12.9.	"a well-knit play with its full quota of murder, crazy hermits and political skulduggery" (*YG*)
"Life Line"	Norman Armstrong	play about the "bitter war at sea", "wartime sea drama" (*YG*), set in the present war	13.9. – 19.9.	"Eighth Birthday Production" the "company's tribute to the merchant seamen"; "tells the story of the courage and endurance of Britain's seamen" (*YH*, 18/9/43)
"Barnett's Folly"	Jan Stewer	comedy	20.9. – 26.9.	West Country/Devonshire comedy
"The Little Foxes"	Lillian Hellman	~comedy	27.9. – 3.10.	"story of a set of unpleasant people" (*YH*) American play
"Men in Shadow"	Mary Hayley Bell	war play	4.10. – 10.10.	"the plotting in France of anti- Nazi saboteurs headed by an R.A.F. pilot" (*YH*), "exciting play about Occupied France" (*YEP*, ?)
"High Temperature"	Avery Hopwood	farce	11.10. – 17.10.	"inoffensive bedroom farce, introducing burglars, police-men and frantic husbands" (*YH*); "undoubtedly a hit" (*YEP*, 12/10/43)
"Murder at the Ministry"	Faulkland. L. Carey & A. A. Thompson (both from Harrogate)	war play/mystery-drama	18.10. – 24.10.	"The tragedy of Sir James Reid, working at the Ministry of Protection on a secret weapon, has a topical touch", but there are "as humorous relief some sharp tilts at the Civil Service" (*YEP*, 19/10/43)
"The Importance of Being Earnest"	Oscar Wilde	modern classic/ "trivial comedy for serious people"	25.10. – 31.10.	"The trivialities of Oscar Wilde and his period are a diversion from the serious trend of thought do- day" (*YEP*, 26/10/43)

"Spring Harvest"	Alan Kennington	"poignant war story of conflicting emotions and sacrifice"	1.11. – 7.11. 1943	"the affair that arises between the wife of a preparatory school principal, while he is on active service, and his locum" (*YEP*, 2/11/43)
"Why not To-night"	C. Stafford Dickens	farcial comedy	8.11. – 14.11.	"domestic complications of two married couples who decide to change partners" (*YG*, 5/11/43)
"George and Margaret"	Gerald Savory	comedy	15.11. – 21.11.	"being revived in response to a large number of requests" (*YH*, 13/11/43)
"Petrified Forest"	Robert Emmet Sherwood	"thrilling entertain-ment" set in Arizona	22.11. – 28.11.	blend of "philosophy and thrills" (*NEWS*, 19/11/43); American play
"Ladies in Waiting"	Cyril Campton	"crime play"	29.11. – 5.12.	all-woman presentation
"Hamlet"	W. S.	classic	7.12. – 19.12. two weeks special!	"for the closing fortnight of our very successful 1943 season"; company "held spellbound the large audiences" (*YH*, 8/12/43) starring Michael Warre & Lalage Lewis end of repertory season
Theatre Closed			20.12. – 26.12.	
'Sadler's Wells Opera': "Madame Butterfly" "The Barber of Seville" "Hansel and Gretel" "La Boheme" "The Marriage of Figaro"	 Puccini Rossini Humperdinck Puccini libretto by E J Dent	all operas	27.12.1943 – 9.1.1944	start of "little season" "Hansel and Gretel" for the first time in York "Barber of Seville" and "Marriage of Figaro" in English translation "triumphant visit" of the company "Figaro" produced by Kurt Jooss

General Remarks:

- 60 productions: 25 comedies, 3 classics, 2 modern classics, 5 right-wing/war plays, 6 contemporary dramas, 13 operas, 6 ballet productions
- newspapers: *MG* = Malton Gazette, *MM* = Malton Messenger

1944

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
'Sadler's Wells Opera': "Madame Butterfly" "The Barber of Seville" "Hansel and Gretel" "La Boheme" "The Marriage of Figaro"		all operas	27.12.1943 – 9.1.1944	start of "little season" "Hansel and Gretel" for the first time in York "Barber of Seville" and "Marriage of Figaro" in English translation "triumphant visit" of the company
"Night must Fall"	Emlyn Williams	"famous thriller"	10.1. – 16.1.	personal appearance of Emlyn Williams with Kynaston Reeves and Elliot Mason plus full London company
"The Druids Rest"	Emlyn Williams (also director)	new comedy of Welsh village life	17.1. – 23.1.	with Gladys Henson, Roddy Hughes, Michael Shepley, etc.; presented prior to London production; "big success" (*YG*)
"Cinderella"	presented by Harry Benet	Pantomime	24.1. – 30.1.	"all star cast" including Berry Leslie Smith, Albert Grant; being presented after a month's successful run at the New Theatre, Hull, with "crystal coach" and ponies
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Comp.': "The Gondoliers" "The Yeomen of the Guard" "Iolanthe" "The Mikado"	all Gilbert & Sullivan	comic operas	31.1. – 5.2.	all in "new dressings and settings" "attracting packed houses" "final stage" of special winter season
'Band of the West Yorkshire Regiment'		'Grand Concert'	6.2.	in aid of the 'West Yorkshire Prisoners of War Fund' [*not counted towards production figures*]
Theatre closed			7.2. – 11.2.	

"You Never Know"	L. du Garde Peach	wartime "rollicking modern comedy"	12.2. – 20.2. 1944	opening play of the 17th season; play set "in a Dales bar parlour at a date when the invasion of this country was a live issue" (*YG*)
"Good Morning, Bill"	Hal Osmond, based on the story by Ladislaus Fodor	"light-hearted farce" farcial comedy	21.2. – 27.2.	with special appearance of Hal Osmond on "busman's holidays"
"The Silent Witness"	Jack De Leon and Jack Colestin	modern drama	28.2. – 5.3.	"unusual murder play" with long court scene
"Full House"	Ivor Novello	light comedy/ "comedy is a very bright affair"	6.3. – 12.3.	set "in the house of a scatter-brained woman who sets up a gaming house behind a charity barrier"; one character is "a Jewish benefactor of the house" (*YG*)
"Drake's Drum"	Henry Marshall	"romantic melodrama"	13.3. – 19.3.	"stirring melodrama of the Armada [...] not without parallel since 1939 in Europe" (*YEP*, 14/3/44); Drake and his companions "protect the noble Elizabeth of England from the treacherous 'Quislings' of the period" (*NEWS*, 10/3/44) "play [with] an irresistible appeal to our present wartime sense"(*YG*)
"Play with Fire"	Edward Percy	thriller	20.3. – 26.3.	"audience called for six curtains" with antique- dealer and murderer "Descius Hess" – name coincidence?
"A Roof and four Walls" first produced in 1923	E. Temple Thurston	comedy	27.3. – 2.4.	"tale of a sweet and simple woman who becomes a world famous prima donna, will appeal to the most critical theatre- goer" (*NEWS*, 24/3/44)
"A Man's House"	John Drinkwater	biblical play set in Jerusalem	3.4. – 9.4.	"sharing the influence of Jesus [...] in the household of a wealthy merchant of Jerusalem" *(YG)* at the time of the Crucifixion; "this is more than entertainment: it is an inspiration" *(YG)*
"The Fur Coat"	A. G. Macdonald	farcial comedy	10.4. – 16.4.	"gay, irresponsible comedy"

"Hedda Gabler"	Henrik Ibsen	modern classic	17.4. – 23.4. 1944	first production of an Ibsen play in York; "Ibsen may not be everybody's meat, but his dramatic power is definite" *(YG)*
"The Joker"	Noel Scott	thriller	24.4. – 30.4.	"crook stuff with a good brand of humour running through it" *(YG)*
"Burning Gold"	Falkland L. Cary & A. A. Thompson (both from Harrogate)	war drama "a bold, convincing and compelling play"/ "one of our best war plays" (*YG*, 5/5/44)	1.5. – 7.5.	"play radiates the vision with which young Britons went to war in 1939" (*YEP*, 2/5/44) theme is "the striving of the younger generation for a plan which will make 'England's green and pleasant land' something more than a phrase" (*NEWS*, 28/4/44); hero returns "home lame and blind after bringing down two enemy planes and being brought down himself, with a vision" *(YG)* [of England's future that is]
"Arms and the Man"	G. Bernard Shaw	modern classic	8.5. – 14.5.	"Shaw's messages on the absurdity and futility of war"; "more amusing than ever in the circumstances of the present day" *(YG)*
"The late Christopher Bean"	Emlyn Williams adapted from the French play by Rene Fauchois	comedy	15.5. – 21.5.	set in Wales, with an "Jewish picture dealer" *(YG)*
"A Hundred Years Old"	Serafin & Joaquin Alvarez Quintero, translated by Helen & Harvey Granville- Barker	"extremely beautiful story" set in Andalusia	22.5. – 28.5.	"about the preparations for and the celebration of a dear old gentleman's one hundredth birthday"(*NEWS*,19/5/44)
"Broadway"	Philip Dunning & George Abbott	"back- stage play" set in a night club in New York	29.5. – 4.6.	play "deals with back- stage life and has a strong plot"; features "gangster ingredients" *(YG)* (discussions about the play in the press)
"Shadow and Substance"	P. V. Carroll	Irish tragedy about "an Irish variant of the legend of Joan of Arc" (*STAR*, 2/6/44) [which is St Brigid]	5.6. – 11.6.	"The devoted little handmaid of an Epicurean Canon sees and converses with her saintly namesake [...]. The Canon declare this converse illusory and forbids its indulgence." (*STAR*, 2/6/44)

"As You Are"	Hugh Mills & Wells Root	North Country comedy "rollicking entertainment in the ultra-modern vain" *(YG)*	12.6. – 18.6. 1944	about a "firm who manufacture ladies' underwear and his efforts to introduce a new transparent material"
"The Good Young Man"	Kenneth Horne	comedy	19.6. – 25.6.	"deals with the reactions of a family towards a missionary's son who makes his home with them on arrival from his father's jungle parish" (*YH*, 17/6/44)
"Milestones"	Arnold Bennett & Edward Knoblock	~comedy	26.6. – 2.7.	story of a family through three generations (1860-1912); end of repertory season
"Desert Highway"	J. B. Priestley produced in association with C.E.M.A. and A.B.C.A. and presented by Army actors	war play specially written for and about the Army; "great sense of humour predominates throughout"	3.7. – 9.7.	central question of the play: "What are we fighting for?"; "Monday performance for H.M. Forces only"; "anyone who expects it to be some sort of modern version of R. C. Sheriff's Journey's End will reap disappointment" *(YG)*
Theatre closed for vacation			10.7. – 30.7.	
"A Pageant of the People"	L. Du Garde Peach	contemporary drama in eight episodes	31.7. – 6.8.	with cast of over 120, incl. "York Repertory Company Chorus of 50 and Full Orchestra" play is "Peach's tribute to the Rochdale pioneers", he is "telling in spectacular and colourful way the story of the social conditions of the people of this country" and "the struggles of the working classes" *(YG)*
"French Without Tears"	Terence Rattigan	"extremely bright comedy"	7.8. – 13.8.	start of 18th season; *YG* criticizes the newcomers' "unfinished performances" with programme of music
"The Moon Is Down"	John Steinbeck	war play set in a small Norwegian mining town in 1941	14.8. – 20.8.	"play is a microcosm of the resistance movement in Europe, revealing through the medium of a small mining town in Norway" (*Leeds Mercury*, 15/8/44)

"I'll Leave it to You"	Noel Coward	"witty play" – comedy	21.8. – 27.8. 1944	set in "Mulberry Manor" near London with programme of music
"Living Room"	Esther McCracken	"domestic play" or "drama [...] nicely interspersed with domestic comedy"	28.8. – 3.9.	"tense dramatic (not melodramatic) power" in the play (*YG*, 29/8/44); play includes some social criticism with programme of music
"Strangers' Road"	W. Chetham Strode	adventure play about "smuggling in Napoleonic days" *(YG)*, set in 1805	4.9. – 10.9.	"a period of English history similar in many ways to our own. Buonaparte was across the Channel awaiting an opportunity to invade this country" (*NEWS*, 1/9/44) with programme of music
"Major Barbara"	Shaw	modern classic "famous morality play"	11.9. – 17.9.	"strikingly topical" as Shaw is "diagnosing one of the major problems of civilisation, that of seeing that Right has Might in its own hands", play "delighted large audiences" *(YG)* with programme of music
"The Circle"	Somerset Maugham	"light sophisticated comedy drama"	18.9. – 24.9.	"dealing with the problem of marriage and divorce"; with programme of music
"A Doll's House"	Henrik Ibsen	modern classic performed with special programme of music (e.g. Grieg)	25.9. – 1.10.	"different tastes and the glamour of famous actresses have helped more in this play's success than its merit as entertainment", in the end she leaves her husband, "and her drastic desertion seems an unconvincing and foolishly wrong way out of a good climax" *(YG)*
"Quinney's"	Horace Annesley Vachell	comedy	2.10. – 8.10.	"very refreshing play" *(YG)* with programme of music
"Lottie Dundass"	Enid Bagnold	"strong and dynamic play"/"drama in the grand vein" *(YG)*	9.10. – 15.10.	with Elizabeth Kentish story show haw Lottie "is ruled by heredity" *(YG)*
"Badger's Green"	R. C. Sheriff	"comedy on rural life"	16.10. – 22.10.	"author has captured the spirit of village- life as truly as he did that of the trenches" (*STAR*, 13/10/44); with programme of music

"Youth at the Helm"	Paul Vulpius (German original called "Jugend voran!")	comedy "jolly good fun"	23.10. – 29.10. 1944	about a young man "with a Hitler- like disregard of convention" (*source?)* with programme of music
"To Have and to Hold"	Lionel Brown	comedy/"delightful and intriguing play" of the "triangle type"	30.10. – 5.11.	play "presented a peacetime atmosphere so refreshing after many war- time plays" with programme of music only seven characters in the play
"Mr. Bolfry"	James Bridie	comedy & new play set in the Highlands	6.11. – 12.11.	"A little Cockney Jew and an undergraduate, cast by the Army into a lonely station in the Western Highlands, find themselves billeted in a Wee Free Manse." *(YG)*; only seven characters with programme of music
"Charles and Mary"	Joan Temple	contemporary drama set in the 18th century	13.11. – 19.11.	a "literary play", "as beautiful as a painting by an old master, and it touches heart and mind in much the same way" (*YG*, 18/11/44)
"Legacy at Loon"	L. du Garde Peach	comedy "a happy story from Holland"	20.11. – 26.11.	"Holland, that very brave and picturesque country, for which we have such an affection" (*NEWS*, 17/11/44) with programme of music
"Close Quarters"	W. O. Somin English version by Gilbert Lennox (Somin most probably German)	~comedy "full of drama, comedy and suspense"	27.11. – 3.12.	play with only two characters: Gustav and Liesa Bergmanns, set "in a working- class tenement in a Continental Capital" (Programme) [which almost certainly is Berlin]
"Othello"	W. S.	classic	5.12. – 17.12. for "the closing fortnight or our very successful 1944 season"	two weeks' production great success although W. S. "imposes so great a demand on the capabilities of the actor that it is no lightly to be taken in the stride of weekly entertainment" (*YEP*, 6/12/44)
Theatre Closed			18.12. – 25.12. 1944	preparation for "Little Season" of West End successes

'Sadler's Wells Ballet': "Coppelia" "Les Sylphides" "Promenade" "Hamlet" "Giselle" "Festin De L'Araignee" "Le Lac des Cynes"		in ballet repertoire	26.12.1944 – 7.1.1945 (for 2 weeks!)	with Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann "high artistry"; "reception accorded the Sadler's Wells company after last night's [...] performance was outstanding" (*YEP*, 3/1/45) Sadler's Wells "are to tour France, Belgium and Holland after leaving York" – a "tour under joint auspices of E.N.S.A. and the British Council" *(YG)*

General Remarks:

- 59 productions: 32 comedies, 1 classic, 4 modern classics, 3 right-wing/war plays, 3 contemporary dramas, 9 operas, 7 ballet productions

1945

Title	Author/Composer	Kind of Work/ Genre	Dates of Performance	Remarks
'Sadler's Wells Ballet': "Coppelia" "Les Sylphides" "Promenade" "Hamlet" "Giselle" "Festin De L'Araignee" "Le Lac des Cynes"		in ballet repertoire	26.12.1944 – 7.1.1945 (for 2 weeks!)	with Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann "high artistry"; "reception accorded the Sadler's Wells company after last night's [...] performance was outstanding" (*YEP*, 3/1/45) "there is no doubt from the tremendous ovation at each performance, that local audiences have appreciated immensely the work of the company" (*YH*, 6/1/45)
'D'Oyly Carte Opera Comp.': "The Mikado" "The Gondoliers" "Patience" "The Yeoman of the Guard" "Iolanthe" "The Pirates of Penzance"	all Gilbert & Sullivan	all comic operas	8.1. – 21.1. (2 weeks!)	"splendidly attacking chorus, even if wartime has taken away some of its numerical strength" (*YEP*, 12/1/45), "pre- dawn queues [...] for bookings have testified to the evergreen popularity of Gilbert and Sullivan [...] operas" (*YEP*, 5/1/45); "third wartime visit" of the company
"Jack and the Beanstalk"	presented by Harry Benet (Hull production)	Panto "in fifteen gorgeous scenes"	22.1. – 28.1.	"surprise that wartime difficulties can be overcome to the extent shown by this lavish production", "Altogether, something of a feat to tour such a show under wartime restrictions." (*YG*, 26/1/45)
"The Desert Song"	book & lyrics: Otto Harbach, Oscar Hammer-stein & Frank Mandel, music: Sigmund Romberg	musical comedy set in Arabia	29.1. – 4.2.	with Wilfred Gartrell, Joan Brett, Leonard Henry "heavy bookings" presented by James Shirvell
'Grand Concert' under the auspices of the York and District Anglo-Polish Society	with musicians mainly from RCAF		4.2.	in aid of "Lady Sinclair's British fund for relief in Warsaw"

Theatre closed			5.2. – 11.2. 1945	
"This Happy Breed"	Noel Coward	"deals with the adventures of a Cockney family between the wars of 1914 and 1939"	12. – 18.2.	return of the repertory company "after a most successful ENSA tour" in England "splendid choice with which to start the season" and played to a "nightly packed theatre" (*YG*, 13/2/45); with programme of music
"Viceroy Sarah"	Norman Ginsbury	historical drama about "intrigues of Queen Anne's Court in the early 18th century", at a time when British troops fought on European battlefields	19.2. – 25.2.	the hero is "John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, illustrious ancestor of our own fighting Prime Minister" (*STAR*, 16/2/45) → interesting parallel to war time films which supported Churchill's war!
"Six Characters in Search of an Author"	Luigi Pirandello	contemporary drama/ "theatre fantasy" with music	26.2. – 4.3.	*YG* reviewer remarks on the quality of the play "I don't make much of [it]" → performed almost 20 years after Münster!
"Give Me Yesterday"	Edward Percy & Reginald Denham	comedy with programme of music	5.3. – 11.3.	"play has a musical background and a Bohemian atmosphere" (*STAR*, 2/3/45)
"Double Door"	Elizabeth McFadden	thriller	12.3. – 18.3.	play "slipping nearly to melodrama at times" *(YG)*
"They Came to a City"	J. B. Priestley	plays poses a "social problem" performed with music	19.3. – 25.3.	"Nine people, coming from all walks of life, with opposite thoughts, distinctions and status, are thrown together by fate's deliberation outside the walls of a strange city." *(YG)*
"The Berg"	Ernest Raymond	"extremely moving play"	26.3. – 1.4.	"author has taken the 'Titanic' disaster as a model"; "the company serve by revealing how the spirit can, or cannot [...], rise above disaster" *(YG)*; with programme of music
"A Soldier for Christmas"	Anthony Beckwith	comedy	2.4. – 8.4.	"how a Canadian soldier visited an English family for Christmas and captivated them all" (*YH*, 31/3/45)

"Pygmalion"	G. Bernard Shaw	modern classic "ever- green"	9.4. – 15.4. 1945	being revived in response to many requests and played before "crowded audiences"
"The Cathedral"	Hugh Walpole	contemporary drama/ "stirring dramatic story"	16.4. – 22.4.	"perhaps a little 'heavy' in its texture" (*YG*, 20/4/45); with programme of music with Barry Letts who is on leave from the Navy
'Special Sunday Concert' for the Airborne Security Fund			22.4.	Norman Evans and all-star cast
"The Breadwinner"	Somerset Maugham	comedy/"provocative play"	23.4. – 29.4.	"throws a vivid sidelight on family life of 20 years ago"; with programme of music
"Tovarish"	Robert E. Sherwood	"delightful play" with programme of music	30.4. – 6.5.	story of an "impoverished but warm- hearted Russian Grand Duchess and her consort, living after the revolution in a cheap Paris hotel" (*YG*, 4/5/45); as played in Münster
"Noah"	Andre Obey, translated from the French by Arthur Wilmurt	"modern interpretation of the Flood and the survival of man"	7.5. – 13.5. "Victory Week"	"stimulating work in an eventful play" (*YG*, 11/5/45) → pure coincidence? with programme of music
"Claudia"	Rose Franken	"a play which has charm and humanity" (*YG*, 18/5/45)	14.5. – 20.5.	"play moves along its domestic way" (*YG*, 18/5/45), with programme of music Rose Franken American
"Army of Preoccupation"	Colin Morris	comedy/farce "play about Army life" set in England 1940/41	21.5. – 27.5.	play "is going to keep Britain laughing to the end of the Japanese war" (*YEP*, 22/5/45) with programme of music
"Distant Point"	Afinogenev translated by Hubert Griffith	"remarkable Soviet play" that shows "the modern tendency of the Russian theatre" (*STAR*, 25/5/45)	28.5. – 3.6.	"a picture of Soviet philosophy as seen at a wayside railway station between Moscow and Vladivostock" (*YEP*, 26/5/45); "a revelation of a considerable stride forward in Russian drama" *(YG)*; with programme of music
"Boyd's Shop"	St. John Ervine	entertaining comedy	4.6. – 10.6.	"comedy of life in a small village in Northern Ireland"; with programme of music
"Rain"	Somerset Maugham	psychological drama, set on an island in the South Seas	11.6. – 17.6.	"tense sensationalism and drama with real touches of humour" with programme of music

"Quality Street"	J. M. Barrie	comedy set during the Napoleonic Wars with programme of music	18.6. – 24.6. 1945	"story is [...] comfortably remote from the disturbing realities of to- day" "when young ladies did not rush into munition factories even if there was a war on, but remained young ladies always and in all circumstances" (*YG*, 15/6/45) end of season, however, instead of a vacation the company went on an ENSA tour to Scotland for 7 weeks!
Theatre Closed			25.6. – 1.7.1945	company on ENSA tour "scheduled for troops and war- workers in Scotland" (*YEP*, 22/6/45)
'Special Six Weeks **Festival Season' *:** "The Alchemist" "The Confederacy" "The Spinsters of South Street"	Ben Jonson John Vanbrugh* R. F. Delderfield *the famous architect who built Castle Howard	classic Restoration comedy "a new play" about Florence Nightingale and her fight to get the Army Medical services reformed	2.7. – 12.8. 2.7. – 15.7. 16.7 – 29.7. 30.7. – 12.8.	produced by Geoffrey Staines, with appearances of London guest artists, e.g. Jean Forbes-Robertson, Baliol Holloway, R. Meadows White, Gabrielle Blunt, Rosamund Burne season meant as "an introduction of the theatre's post- war planning" *(YG)*, but public support was lacking and audiences were small (see letter-to-the-editor in *YEP*, 4/8/45), plus: articles in *YEP*, 22/8/45 and in *YG*
Theatre Closed			13.8. – 19.8.	
"Peg O' my Heart"	Hartley Manners	comedy	20.8. – 26.8.	start of the autumn repertory season (20th season); with programme of music
"The Long Mirror"	J. B. Priestley	contemporary drama/ "psychic play"	27.8. – 2.9.	set in North Wales
"Missing, Believed Married"	Colin Morris	comedy "very foolish and highly entertaining"	3.9. – 9.9.	"centres round a war- time bride who had such shock on receiving a 'missing, believed killed' message, that she lost her memory. On the conclusion of the war three men put in an appearance and each claims to be the missing husband." (*YH*, 1/9/45)

"Trilby"	George Du Maurier, adapted by Paul Potter	"play has colour, life, comedy, drama, tragedy and pathos" (*NEWS*, 7/9/45)	10.9. – 16.9. 1945	first produced in 1895; with musical programme "story deals with the hypnotic influence wielded by one, Svengali, a sinister and overbearing Jewish musician on a simple hearted artist's model" (*NEWS*, 14/9/45) repertory company celebrate 10th birthday
"Murder on the Second Floor"	Frank Vosper	comedy thriller	17.9. – 23.9.	with programme of music
"Ghosts"	Henrik Ibsen, in a new English version by Lance Sieveking	modern classic	24.9. – 30.9.	to be followed by one- act comedy "When the Bells Rang" by Olive Conway with programme of music
"The two Mrs Carrolls"	Martin Vale	~comedy	1.10. – 7.10.	revival requested by many residents with programme of music
"How Are They at Home?"	J. B. Priestley	comedy with programme of music	8.10. – 14.10.	especially written for ENSA to entertain the troops in Africa and "to reassure the troops that we were all in it" *(YG)* → homefront image!
"An Ideal Husband"	Oscar Wilde	modern classic	15.10. – 21.10.	with programme of music
"Three Wise Fools"	Austin Strong	comedy	22.10. – 28.10.	with programme of music
"Bitter Glory"	Caryl Jenner	"historical romance"/ dramatisation of Leon Thornber's novel	29.10. – 4.11.	deals with the love story of Chopin and George Sand with programme of music
"It Depends What You Mean"	James Bridie	comedy	5.11. – 11.11.	set in a northern Military centre (which could be York!); with programme of music
"The Land of Promise"	Somerset Maugham	"set in the days just prior to the 1914- 18 war" *(YG)*	12.11. – 18.11.	about a lady called Noah Marsh who escaped to Canada with programme of music
"Ten Little Niggers"	Agatha Christie	thriller	19.11. – 25.11.	with programme of music

"This Land of Ours"	Lionel Brown	~ contemporary drama	26.11. – 2.12. 1945	"life on a Shropshire farm during the war period" (*STAR*, 30/11/45)
"Uncle Harry"	Thomas Job	contemporary drama/ "psychological drama"	3.12. – 9.12.	
"Charley's Aunt"	Brandon Thomas	farcial comedy	10.12. – 16.12.	with programme of music end of the season "packed houses goggling" *(YG)*
'International Ballet Season': "Aurora's Wedding" "Prince Igor" "Danses Espagnoles" "Carneval" "Everyman" "Twelfth Night"		all pieces new to York	24.12.1945 – 4.1.1946	with Mona Ingoldsby, Leslie French, Rovi Pavinoff

General Remarks:

- 60 productions: 24 comedies, 2 classics, 3 modern classics, 12 contemporary dramas, 6 operas, 13 ballet productions

Appendix II

Theatre Programmes

Städtische Bühnen Münster

1925 – 1945

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1924 – 1928

1924/25

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Ende gut, alles gut"	Shakespeare	classic		original title: "All Is Well That Ends Well"
"Maria Stuart"	Schiller	classic	1	
"Kabale und Liebe"	Schiller	classic		
"Iphigenie auf Tauris"	Goethe	classic	1	
"Der zerbrochene Krug"	Kleist	classic	1	
"Demetrius" UA	Hebbel	classic		first performance
"Maria Magdalene"	Hebbel	classic		
"Medea"	Grillparzer	classic	1	
"Christus"	Strindberg	modern classic		
"Ein Glas Wasser"	Scribe	modern classic		German adaptation (obviously) by Pfahl
"Liebelei"	Schnitzler	modern classic		
"Die Ratten"	Hauptmann	modern classic		

"Der Nachtwächter"	Körner	drama (modern classic) ?	[1924/25]	[*counted as contemporary drama*]
"Wintersonnenwende" UA	Gottfried Hasenkamp	contemporary drama		first production!
"Prinz Louis Ferdinand"	Fritz von Unruh	contemporary drama	1	religious drama
"Kreidekreis"	Klabund	contemporary drama		this version first performed in 1925
"Kolportage"	Georg Kaiser	comedy		first performed in 1924
"Unsere kleine Frau"	Avery Hopwood	comedy		original title: "Our Little Wife"
"Ingeborg"	Curt Goetz	comedy		
"Der goldene Schnitt" UA	Berger	comedy		first production!
"Der Störenfried"	Benedix	comedy		
"Das Christernlein" UA	Vicki Baum	fairy- tale	1	productions of Baum's plays forbidden after 1933 [*counted as comedy*]
"Altflämisch"	Lanzelot and Sanderein	comedy		
"Der Streit zwischen Phöbus und Pan"	J.S. Bach	opera		„szenische Kantate"
"Herakles" UA	Händel	opera	3	"szenisches Oratorium" first performance!
"Julius Cäsar"	Händel	opera	3	
"Der betrogene Kadi"	Gluck	opera		
"Die Entführung aus dem Serail"	Mozart	opera		

"Figaros Hochzeit"	Mozart	opera	[1924/25]	
"Fidelio" ("Ur- Leonore")	Beethoven	opera	1	
"Troubadour"	Verdi	opera		
"Rigoletto"	Verdi	opera		
"Othello"	Verdi	opera		
"Madame Butterfly"	Puccini	opera		
"Tosca"	Puccini	opera		
"Hoffmanns Erzählungen"	Offenbach	opera		
"Die Opernprobe"	Lortzing	opera		
"Der Barbier von Bagdad"	Peter Cornelius	opera		Cornelius was born in 1825
"Der Dorfbarbier"	Schenk	opera		
"Das höllisch Geld"	Bittner	opera		
"Don Gil von den grünen Hosen"	Walter Braunfels	opera		after Spanish original by Tirso de Molina, light comic opera
"Die ersten Menschen"	Rudi Stephan	opera		born 1887, died in 1915 in WWI, opera written in 1914
"Die arme Mutter und der Tod"	Petyrek	opera		first production in Germany
"Ein Krippenspiel" UA	Ludwig Weber	opera		first production!

"Eine Nacht in Venedig"	Johann Strauß	operetta	[1924/25]	
"Der Vogelhändler"	Zeller	operetta		
"Orpheus in der Unterwelt"	Offenbach	operetta	1	
"Der lieben Augustin"	Leo Fall	operetta		

General Remarks:

- share in productions (48 productions altogether): 23 plays = 47,9%, 21 operas = 43,7%, 4 operettas = 8,3%
- within drama: classical drama: 8 productions (34,8% of total drama share); comedy 6 productions (26,1%); modern classics: 4 productions (17,4%); contemporary drama: 5 productions (21,7%)
- re performances:
  - I. when number of performances stated: handwritten comments on original document, believed to be true!
  - II. many productions obviously only received a low number of performances
  - III. above list only used for ***production figures***!
- dates of season: start 22 September 1924, end 20 May 1925
- special performances not counted: five productions of the theatre's own dance company (among them a dance to music by Egon Wellesz [later emigrated to GB], Ernst Toch and Paul Hindemith); four "Morgenfeiern" (special matinees) with talks relating to certain plays in the programme; and seven guest productions (including two dance performances and three mask plays)
- season's review devided in "Die Feier", "Das Spiel", "Cyklus deutscher Singspiele und Spielopern" and "Operette" in Musiktheater and „Die Feier" and „Das Spiel" in „Schauspiel"
- source: review of season in "Festschrift" (Cohen, Fritz Alexander (Hg.). Festschrift Feierspiele Münster Pfingsten 1925. Dortmund: Krüger, 1925), BUT: Festschrift does not feature any performance figures!

1925/26

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Ackermann aus Böhmen"	Johannes von Saaz	drama	7	medieval play dating back from around 1400
"Mariechen von Nymwegen"		drama	5	old Flemish play (dating back from Middle Ages), author unknown
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	Shakespeare	classic	8	with Mendelssohn's music German title: "Der Sommernachtstraum"
"Hamlet"	Shakespeare	classic	1	
"Richard II."	Shakespeare	classic	7	
"Die Andacht zum Kreuze"	Calderon	classic	6	translated by Otto Zoff
"Das Hirtenspiel"	Lope de Vega	classic	5	
"Der Diener zweier Herren"	Goldoni	classic	3	
"Leonce und Lena"	Büchner	classic	3	
"Judith"	Hebbel	classic	4	
"Sappho"	Grillparzer	classic	7	
"4 lustige Spiele"	Cervantes Eichendorff	classic	4	counted as one production
"Bunbury" or "Ernst sein ist alles"	Oscar Wilde	modern classic	5	original title: "The Importance of Being Earnest"
"Caesar and Cleopatra"	Shaw	modern classic	4	translated by Siegfried Trebitsch (attacked in the Third Reich because of being Jewish)

"Gabriel Schillings Flucht"	Hauptmannn	modern classic	2 [1925/26]	
"Der Raub der Sabinerinnen"	Schönthan brothers	modern classic	7	
"Der Herr Senator"	Franz and Paul Schönthan/Gustav Kadelburg	modern classic/ comedy	8	
"Die Bettler" UA	Alex von Frankenberg	contemporary drama	3	religious drama (obviously) about the "Wiedertäufer"
"Lübecker Totentanz"	Hans Holtorf (who was a director at Münster's theatre)	contemporary drama	5	another religious drama based on texts which were published in Lübeck between 1463 and 1520
"Das Apostelspiel"	Max Mell	contemporary drama	8	Mell Austrian, play obviously a „Krippen-spiel" with strong Catholic undertone, Mell later active Nazi in pre-1938 Vienna
"Nebeneinander"	Georg Kaiser	comedy	3	"Volksstück"
"Die 5 Frankfurter"	Rössler	comedy	6	
"Charleys Tante"	Brandon Thomas	comedy	9	
"Pension Schöller"	Carl Laufs	comedy	9	
"Die drei Zwillinge"	Toni Impekoven and Carl Mathern	comedy	1	
"Dido and Aeneas"	Purcell	opera	4	
"Theodora"	Händel	opera/ oratorio	10	"szenisches Oratorium"
"Venus und Adonis"	Alessandra Scarlatti	opera/ "serenata"	3	alternative title "Der leichtfertige Adonis"
"Cosi fan tutte"	Mozart	opera	5	

"Aida"	Verdi	opera	12 [1925/26]	
"Don Carlos"	Verdi	opera	7	
"Der Barbier von Sevilla"	Rossini	opera	4	
"Cavalleria Rusticana" "Der Bajazzo"	Mascagni/ Leoncavallo	operas	6	counted as one opera performance
"Tannhäuser"	Wagner	opera	8	
"Der fliegende Holländer"	Wagner	opera	5	
"Zar und Zimmermann"	Lortzing	opera	6	
"Casanova" UA	Lortzing	opera	7	first production of the piece!
"Ariadne auf Naxos"	Richard Strauß	opera	7	libretto by Hugo von Hoffmansthal
"Der Bürger als Edelmann"	R. Strauß based on Molière	opera	1	
"Hänsel und Gretel"	Engelbert Humperdinck	opera	8	
"Der Widerspenstigen Zähmung"	Hermann Goetz	opera	4	first production 1874 in Mannheim, based on Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew"
"Die Fledermaus"	Johann Strauß	operetta	9	
"Der Zigeunerbaron"	Johann Strauß	operetta	7	
"Die Csardasfürstin"	Emmerich Kalman	operetta	8	
"Mister Kitsch aus Halifax" UA	Harry Nerad text by Georg Grillmayer	operetta	6	

"Die beiden Nachtigallen"	Bredschneider	operetta	8 [1925/26]	probably contemporary piece
"Spielzeugschachtel"	Debussy	dance	9	*dance productions not counted towards analysis*!
"Larven" UA	Kurt Jooss	dance	4	
"Die Brautfahrt"	Kurt Jooss	dance	11	"Sommermärchen"
"Tragödie" UA	Kurt Jooss	dance	4	"Tanzdichtung in vier Akten"
"Kammertänze", "Neue Kammertänze", "Lustige Tänze"	n/a	dance performances	3	three different productions all performed by Münster's "Tanzbühne"

General Remarks:

- 265 performances altogether: 130 dramatic (49,1%), 97 operatic (36,6%) and 38 operetta (14,3%)
- share in productions (46 productions altogether): 25 plays = 54,3%, 16 operas = 34,8%, 5 operettas = 10,9%
- within drama: classical drama (including the two medieval plays): 12 productions (48%), 60 performances (46,2% share in drama total); comedy: 5 productions (20%), 28 performances (21,5%); modern classics: 5 productions (20%), 26 performances (20%); contemporary drama: 3 productions (12%), 16 performances (12,3%)
- special performances not counted: at least five matinee performances ("Morgenfeier/Morgenveranstaltung") with different talks (one by Niedecken- Gebhardt, one on old English music by Dr. Dent), guest performance by Ludwig Schmitz (in the farce "Der wahre Jakob" – five times, in the dialect comedy "Schneider Wibbel" by Müller- Schlösser – five times), Pirandello "Six Characters in Search of an Author"
- many performances took place in the town hall
- start of season 20 September 1925, end of season 30 June 1926; on Sundays four performances: 12.15pm, 3.15pm, 7.30pm – no day rest!
- source: Programme Notes (Stadtarchiv and Wahn), issues 1-20, review of season in programme no.20, list complete as rest checked with *MA*

1926/27

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Romeo und Julia"	Shakespeare	classical drama	7	
"Minna von Barnhelm"	Lessing	classical drama	6	
"Egmont"	Goethe	classical drama	6	
"Die Jungfrau von Orléans"	Schiller	classical drama	11	
"Rausch"	August Strindberg	modern classic	5	
"Die heilige Johanna"	Shaw	modern classic	7	
"Hanneles Himmelfahrt"	Hauptmann	modern classic	4	
"Das Grabmal des unbekannten Soldaten"	Paul Raynal	contemporary drama	2	guest performance of the Düsseldorf theatre company
"Juarez und Maximilian"	Franz Werfel	contemporary drama	8	
"Ein Spiel von Tod und Liebe"	Romain Rolland	contemporary drama	4	play about the French Revolution, set in 1794 translated by E. Rieger
"Christgeburt"	Ludwig Weber	Christian drama	2	probably played before X-mas [*counted as contemporary drama*]
"Alt-Heidelberg"	Wilhelm Meyer-Förster	comedy	4	successful comedy, during the Third Reich protests against the author because of claims that he was not "Aryan"
"Die heimliche Brautfahrt"	Leo Lenz	comedy	7	

"Doktor Klaus"	A. L'Arronge	comedy	5 [1926/27]	
"Die Großstadtluft"	Blumenthal/Kadelburg	comedy	5	
"Im weißen Rößl"	Schönthan/Kadelburg	comedy	3	
"Rotkäppchen"	Grimm brothers	fairy- tale	7	probably as Christmas production [*counted as comedy*]
"Das goldene Kalb"	Otto Schwartz and Carl Mathern	comedy (Schwank)	7	
"Der Fussballkönig"	Max Reimann and Otto Schwartz	comedy	7	
"Flachsmann als Erzieher"	Otto Ernst	comedy	6	Ernst died in 1926
"Magd als Herrin"	Pergolesi	opera	6	„Spieloper"
"Alexander Balus" UA	Händel	opera	2	first performance of the opera!
"Ezio"	Händel	opera	5	the Händel operas brought in the highest revenue of that season (see *MA*, 20/2/1927)
"Die Zauberflöte"	Mozart	opera	7	
"Fidelio"	Beethoven	opera	5	
"Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg"	Wagner	opera	8	
"Die Macht des Schicksals"	Verdi	opera	3	
"Turandot"	Verdi	opera	4	
"Carmen"	Bizet	opera	14	

"Der Bajazzo"	Leoncavallo	opera	5 [1926/27]	
"Der Freischütz"	Carl Maria von Weber	opera	10	
"Zar und Zimmermann"	Lortzing	opera	5	
"Der Wildschütz"	Lortzing	opera	11	
"Das Glöckchen des Eremiten"	Maillart	opera	4	
"Tiefland"	Eugen d'Albert	opera	3	
"Die verkaufte Braut"	Bedrich Smetana	opera	3	
"Elektra"	Richard Strauß	opera	3	performed in the City Hall
"Salome"	Richard Strauß	opera	6	Oscar Wilde adapted
"Die lustige Witwe"	Franz Léhar	operetta	15	
"Das Dreimäderlhaus"	Schubert/Berté	operetta/Singspiel	2	
"Gräfin Mariza"	Emmerich Kálmán	operetta	21	first performance 1924 in Vienna
"Die Czardasfürstin"	Emmerich Kalman	operetta	5	
"Mädi"	Robert Stolz	operetta	10	
"Pulcinella"	Pergolese/Strawinsky	dance piece	6	
"Suite"	Keith	dance piece	2	first performance

"Puppenfee"	J. Hassreiter, F. Gaul, J. Bayer	dance piece/ballet	11 [1926/27]	piece especially for children
"Die ungleichen Liebhaber"	Jens Keith	dance piece (Tanzspiel)	4	*dance productions not counted towards analysis*!
"Kammertänze"	n/a	dance piece	at least once	
"Pantomimen und Tänze"	n/a	dance piece	at least once	

General Remarks:

- 270 performances altogether: 113 dramatic (41,8%), 104 operatic (38,5%) and 53 operetta (19,6%)
- share in productions (43 productions altogether): 20 plays = 46,5%, 18 operas = 41,9%, 5 operettas = 11,6%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (20%), 30 performances (26,5% share in drama total); comedy: 9 productions (45%), 51 performances (45,1%); modern classics: 3 productions (15%), 16 performances (14,2%); contemporary drama: 4 productions (20%), 16 performances (14,2%)
- start of season: 18 September 1926, end of season: 24 June 1927
- not counted: six dance productions with at least 25 performances by the theatre's own dance ensemble, special performance in remembrance of Rilke, guest performance of the Vienna Burgtheater, a number of puppet theatre performance by the "Niederdeutsche Puppenspiele" and "Iwowskis Puppenspiele", several guest performances of dance companies, guest performance by Ludwig Schmitz with comedy "Stöpsel", by Eugen Klöpfer with "Menschenfreunden" by Dehmel, matinee performance of Stravinsky's "Die Geschichte vom Soldaten"
- source: Programme Notes published by the theatre management (Stadtarchiv und Wahn), especially "Spielplanvorschau" published on pages 9-10 (ibid.) – although this preview listed many more pieces than were actually produced – complete rest checked with *MA* (only exceptions: 1 November to 3 November 1926 and 28 December 1928)

1927/28

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Die Räuber"	Schiller	classic	8	
"Prinz Friedrich von Homburg"	Heinrich von Kleist	classic	8	
"Gyges und sein Ring"	Hebbel	classic	5	
"Weh dem, der lügt"	Grillparzer	classic	8	
"Peer Gynt"	Ibsen	modern classic	9	one as a matinee with a lecture about Ibsen by Friedrich Muckermann
"Die Journalisten"	Gustav Freytag	modern classic	10	
"Die heilige Johanna"	Shaw	modern classic	7	original title "Saint Joan"
"Der Patriot"	Alfred Neumann	contemporary nationalist drama	13	set during the wars against Napoleon (~1800) first right-wing play in MS!
"Gesellschaft"	John Galsworthy	contemporary drama	8	
"Überfahrt"	Sutton Vane	contemporary (Christian) drama	5	original title: "Outward Bound", as played at York in January 1924, author almost certainly British
"Der mutige Seefahrer"	Georg Kaiser	comedy	1	first performed in 1926
"Der dunkle Punkt"	Gustav Kadelburg Rudolf Presber	comedy (Schwank)	4	
"Pong Majong"	SLING	comedy (Lustspiel)	3	set in a German spa

"Die verlorene Tochter"	Ludwig Fulda	comedy	8 [1927/28]	
"Das Ekel"	Toni Impekoven/ Reimann	comedy (Schwank)	6	
"Im weißen Rößl"	Schönthan/Kadelburg	comedy	1	obviously repeated from last season
"So'n Windhund"	Curt Goetz and Arthur Hoffmann	comedy (Schwank)	5	"Es ist ganz nebensächlich, ob das Stück literarischen Wert hat. Es hat mit Literatur nichts zu tun! Aber es ist ein gesundes, fröhliches, übersprudelndes Stück" (*MA*, 23/5/1928)
"Im Zauberreich des Hutibrass"	?	Christmas fairy- tale	5	aimed at children [*counted as comedy*]
"Die Logenbrüder"	Carl Laufs and Curt Kraatz	comedy (Schwank)	5	
"Liebfraumilch"	Heinrich Ilgenstein	comedy (Lustspiel)	3	
"Week End"	Noel Coward, transl. Johannes von Günther	comedy	1	first German production in 1925 last play of the season, taken over into next
"Don Juan"	Mozart	opera	11	→ „Don Giovanni" (a German version in Münster as early as 1927!)
"Bastien und Bastienne"	Mozart	opera	10	
"Rigoletto"	Verdi	opera	5	
"Tosca"	Verdi	opera	3	
"Lohengrin"	Wagner	opera	8	
"Der Waffenschmied"	Albert Lortzing	opera	11	
"Undine"	Albert Lortzing	opera	13	

"Tiefland"	Eugen d'Albert	opera	2 [1927/28]	revival from last season
"Hoffmanns Erzählungen"	Offenbach	opera	8	
"Der Rosenkavalier"	Richard Strauß	opera	8	
"Das Christ- Elflein"	Hans Pfitzner	opera (Spieloper)	7	first performance of the opera in 1917 "urdeutsche Weihnachtsoper" (*MA*, 5/2/1928)
"Versiegelt"	Leo Blech	opera	5	short opera, often performed as double bill with "Bastien and Bastienne"
"Schlag 12"	Franz Ludwig	opera	8	first performance! contemporary composer from Münster
"Das Dreimäderlhaus"	Schubert/Berté	operetta/Singspiel	9	taken over from last season
"Die Zirkusprinzessin"	Emmerich Kálmán	operetta	13	first performance of the piece in 1926 in Vienna
"Gräfin Mariza"	Kálmán	operetta	12	revival from last season, at the end of 1927 theatre celebrates the 25th performance!
"Jugend im Mai"	Leo Fall	operetta	5	
"Olly Polly"	?	operetta	13	
"Der Orlow"	?	operetta	8	
"Filmzauber "	Rudolf Bernauer/ Rudolph Schanzer, music by Walter Kollo/Willy Bredschneider	operetta	7	„Posse mit Gesang"

General Remarks:

- 289 performances altogether: 123 dramatic (42,6%), 99 operatic (34,3%) and 67 operetta (23,2%)
- share in productions (41 productions altogether): 21 plays = 51,2%, 13 operas = 31,7%, 7 operettas = 17,1%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (19%), 29 performances (23,6% share in drama total); comedy: 11 productions (52,4%), 42 performances (34,1%); modern classics: 3 productions (14,3%), 26 performances (21,1%);right-wing drama: 1 production (4,8%) and 13 performances (10,6%);contemporary drama: 3 productions (9,5%) and 13 performances (10,6%)
- start of season: 18 September 1927, end of season: 23 June 1928
- special performance not counted: Bicheroux- Bühne (based in Düsseldorf) with "Der Bürge" by Paul Claudel (12/1927), Tilla Durieux in Dario Niccodemi's "Der Schatten", ? with "Der blaue Vogel", Paul Wegener in Strindberg's "Totentanz" (2/1928), Vienna Burgtheater, Asta Nielsen (German film star) in "Die Kameliendame", Ludwig Wüllner in "King Lear" (six times) towards the end of the season, Theo Lingen in the comedy "Der Lebemann", several talks by Friedrich Muckermann in the theatre, matinees with Westphalian poets in so-called "Morgenfeiern", which were quite popular
- interesting: obviously no dance performances! Dance ensemble cancelled?
- source: Programme Notes published by the theatre management (Stadtarchiv und Wahn), plus *Münsterischer Anzeiger* weekly programmes (above list is complete)

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1928 – 1930

1928/29

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Nubmer of Performances	Remarks
"Othello"	Shakespeare	classic	7	
"Der Londoner verlorene Sohn"	Shakespeare	classic	6	in the traditional translation by Ludwig Tieck
"Faust"	Goethe	classic	9	
"Minna von Barnhelm"	Kleist	classic	5	
"Der lebende Leichnam"	Tolstoy	classic	6	
"Der Revisor"	Nikolaj Gogol	classic	8	first performed in 1836
"Einsame Menschen"	Gerhart Hauptmann	modern classic	5	
"Katte"	Hermann Burte	nationalistic drama	6	
"Der Prozeß derMary Dugan"	Bayard Veiller German adaptation by Rudolf Lothar	contemporary drama/ "Zeitstück"	15	judicial subject, tendency against capital punishment in the play, Veiller American Lothar Jewish, as played in York!
"Zwölftausend"	Bruno Frank	comedy	8	
"Unter Geschäftsaussicht"	Arnold/Bach	comedy (Schwank)	9	
"Week End"	Noel Coward	comedy	3	first German production in 1925 taken over from last season

"Hurra ein Junge"	Arnold/Bach	comedy	7 [1928/29]	see York's programmes and the performance of "It's a Boy"!
"Das Geld auf der Straße"	Bernauer/Österreicher	comedy	5	
"Der Hexer"	Edgar Wallace	thriller	7	original title: "The Ringer"? (as first produced in 1926 and performed in York in early 1927?)
"Ölrausch"	Jac Larric	comedy	5	American play
"Katharina Knie"	Carl Zuckmayer	comedy	6	play about a girl dancing on a rope first production in 1928 in Berlin
"Der Mustergatte"	Avery Hopwood	comedy	3	original title: "Fair and Warmer" as played in York
"Peterchens Mondfahrt"	?	fairy tale	15	special performance for children [*counted as comedy*]
"Die Zauberflöte"	Mozart	opera	9	
"Figaros Hochzeit"	Mozart	opera	8	
"Ein Maskenball"	Verdi	opera	5	
"La Bohème"	Puccini	opera	10	
"Tannhäuser"	Wagner	opera	6	
"Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor"	Otto Nicolai	opera	8	
"Fra Diavolo"	Auber	opera	3	
"Martha"	von Flotow	opera	3	
"Cavalleria Rusticana"/ "Versiegelt"	Mascagni Leo Blech	opera short opera	4	"Versiegelt" taken over from preceding season counted as one production as double bill

"Der Evangelimann"	Wilhelm Kienzl	opera	7 [1928/29]	contemporary piece
"Der Liebhaber als Arzt"	Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari	opera	7	contemporary piece
"Schwanda der Dudelsackpfeifer"	Jaromir Weinberger	opera (Volksoper)	6	contemporary piece
"Paganini"	Franz Lehar	operetta	10	
"Wiener Blut"	Johann Strauß	operetta	14	
"Die gold'ne Meisterin"	Edmund Eysler	operetta	10	Viennese operetta based on the comedy "Die goldene Eva" by Franz Schönthan (1896) first production in 1927 in Vienna
"Gräfin Mariza"	Emmerich Kálmán	operetta	6	performed for the third season in a row!
"Die Kaiserin"	Leo Fall	operetta	10	
"Uschi"	Jean Gilbert	operetta	9	
"Pit-Pit"	?	operetta	8	

General Remarks:

- 278 performances altogether in both houses: 135 dramatic (48,6%), 76 operatic (27,3%) and 67 operetta (24,1%)
- share in productions (38 productions altogether): 19 plays = 50%, 12 operas = 31,6%, 7 operettas = 18,4%
- within drama: classical drama: 6 productions (31,6%), 41 performances (30,4% share in drama total); comedy: 10 productions (52,6%), 68 performances (50,4%); modern classics: 1 production (5,3%), 5 performances (3,7%); right-wing drama: 1 production (5,3%) and 6 performances (4,4%); contemporary drama: 1 production (5,3%), 15 performances (11,1%)
- start of season: 20 September 1928, end of season 25 June 1929
- two performances on Sundays
- special performances not counted: dance matinee performances by Münster's own ensemble, many chamber music matinee concerts, Deutsches Theater with Helene Thimig in Goethe's "Iphigenie" (directed by Max Reinhardt), Paul Wegener in "Der Gedanke" by the Russian playwright Leonid Andrejew, the Westphalian School for Music in "Das Nachtlager von Granada" (several performances), Max Adalbert in "Der Dickkopf", Düsseldorf theater with "Grabmal des unbekannten Soldaten", Vienna Burgtheater (play?), Ludwig Wüllner in "Merchant of Venice" (five times), Moscow Arts Theatre with a dance performance, Karl Wagenfeld's "Hatt giegen Hatt" in celebration of Wagenfeld's 60th birthday, lecture by Mönkeberg, celebration of Ilse von Stach (local/regional poet)
- guest performances of the Städtische Bühnen in Ahlen
- list complete, checked with *MA*

1929/30:

Main House:

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Was Ihr wollt"	Shakespeare	drama	2	
"Don Carlos"	Schiller	drama	5	
"Ein Heiratsantrag" and "Der zerbrochene Krug"	Chekhov Heinrich von Kleist	modern classic classical drama	6 6	double bill counted as two productions!
"Gespenster"	Henrik Ibsen	modern classic	5	one of those performances in the Studio
"Michael Kramer"	Gerhart Hauptmann	modern classic	2	
"Hanneles Himmelfahrt" UA 1893	Hauptmann	modern classic	1	first non-naturalistic play with a fairy-tale semi-religious character
"Helden"	Shaw	modern classic	3	
"Brülle China"	Sergej Tretiakow	contemporary drama	8	first performance in Moscow at Meyerhold's theatre in 1926, first German performance in Frankfurt 1929, left wing dramatist, play about a proletarian revolution in China, heavily criticised in Münster as "bolschewistisches Tendenzstück" (see *MA*, 25/5/1930)
"Die heilige Flamme" ("The Sacred Flame")	William Somerset Maugham	contemporary drama	4	most successful British playwright in Germany between 1929 and 1933
"Die andere Seite"	R. C. Sheriff	anti-war drama	8	left-wing drama
"Arm wie eine Kirchenmaus"	Fedor	comedy (Lustspiel)	8	

"Robert und Bertram"	Paulheinz Wantzen	comedy/farce	5 [1929/30]	„Posse mit Gesang und Tanz"
"Walzer von heute Nacht"	H. Ilgenstein, with music by Franz Lehár	comedy	1	first performed in Berlin in 1930
"Der Garten Eden"	Bernauer/Österreicher	comedy	6	subtitle: „Vier Kapitel aus dem Leben eines ‚unanständigen' Mädchens"
"Ein besserer Herr" UA 1927	Walter Hasenclever	comedy	6	Hasenclever „ist eine recht ulkige Verhohnepiepelung gelungen" (*MA*, 6/4/1930) „Gespielt wurde gleichfalls flott und nett und fast ganz ohne Versager." (ibid.) stage design according to "Neue Sachlichkeit"
"Spiel im Schloß"	Franz Molnar	comedy	14	many of those performances in the studio
"Gespensterzug"	Arnold Ridley	comedy	11	also played during the following season most of the performances in the studio
"Scampolo"	Dario Niccodemi	comedy	2	German adaptation by Karl Lerbs
"Wochenend im Paradies"	?	comedy (Schwank)	10	heavily criticised because of its farcial character
"Wiegenlied"	Ladislaus Fodor translated by Siegfried Geyer	comedy	3	heavily criticised because of farcial character ("glücklicherweise schnell abgesetzt" – *MA*, 25/5/1930)
"Entführung aus dem Serail"	Mozart	opera	3	
"Der Troubadour"	Guiseppe Verdi	opera	5	introduced in the last week of the season!?
"Aida"	Verdi	opera	5	
"Tosca"	Verdi	opera	4	
"Cavalleria Rusticana and "Der Bajazzo" ("Pagliacci")	Pietro Mascagni Ruggero Leoncavallo	operas	6	same combination as in York N.B. counted as one opera productions!

"Don Pasquale"	Gaetano Donizetti	opera	4 [1929/30]	first production 1843 in Paris
"Madame Butterfly"	Giacomo Puccini	opera	4	
"Die Walküre"	Wagner	opera	3	
"Die toten Augen"	Eugen d'Albert	opera	6	
"Tiefland"	Eugen d'Albert	opera	4	
"Zar und Zimmermann"	Albert Lortzing	opera	10	
"Margarete"	Charles Gounod	opera	6	original title: "Faust"
"Boris Godunow"	Modest Mussorgskij	opera	1	guest performance of the Russian opera of Paris
"Jenufa"	Janacek	opera	3	
"Sly/Big"	Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari lyrics by Giovacchino Forzano	opera	6	first production 1927 in Milan and in 1928 in Dresden (German by W. Dahms), set in England
"Die Dreigroschenoper"	Brecht/Weill	opera	2	obviously only performed because of its Berlin success
"Der Zigeunerbaron"	Johann Strauß	operetta	15	first performance in 1885 in Vienna
"Die Fledermaus"	Johann Strauß	operetta	12	
"Der Vogelhändler"	Carl Zeller	operetta	10	first production 1891 in Vienna
"Der Zarewitsch"	Franz Lehár	operetta	12	
"Friederike"	Franz Lehár	operetta	12	

"Die Bajadere"	Emmerich Kálmán	operetta	5 [1929/30]	
"Der Vetter aus Dingsda"	Eduard Künneke	operetta	7	
"Der fidele Bauer"	Leo Fall	operetta	5	
"Der liebe Augustin"	Leo Fall	operetta	11	title role sung by guest tenor Walter Jooss, last performance with Curt Hampe (another guest – obviously not enough first class singers at Münster's theatre to sing the part!)
"Schwarzmaldmädel"	Leon Iessel	operetta	11	
"In der Johannisnacht"	Jean Gilbert	operetta	4	may be based on J M Barrie's "Dear Brutus", which was translated as "Johannisnacht" in German, equally possible is a relation to Ibsen
"Dolly"		operetta	7	
"Schneewittchen"		fairy-tale	7	perhaps special children's production [*counted as comedy*]
"Frau Holle"	Grimm brothers	fairy-tale	14	performed from beginning of December 1929, obviously special Christmas production [*counted as comedy*]
"Baby in der Bar"		musical comedy	1	[*counted as comedy*]

Studio:

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Erdgeist"	Frank Wedekind	contemporary drama	10 [1929/30]	studio opened on 16 March 1930 with this play play caused a lot of criticism in Münster, characterised by the "verbissenen, freilich gründlich verkehrten Ethos Wedekinds" (review of the season in *MA*, 25/5/1930)
"Ostern"	August Strindberg	modern classic	3	
"Lottchens Geburtstag"	Ludwig Thoma	comedy	1	
"Geschäft mit Amerika" UA 1932 Berlin	Paul Frank and Ludwig Hirschfeld	comedy	18	Frank's plays immediately forbidden after take- over 1933
"Trio"	Leo Lenz	comedy	6	
"Lore"	?	comedy	1	

General Remarks:

- 360 performances altogether in both houses: 179 dramatic (49,7%), 72 operatic (20%) and 111 operetta (30,8%)
- share in productions (58 productions altogether): 30 plays = 51,7%, 16 operas = 27,6%, 12 operettas = 20,7%

- within drama: classical drama: 3 productions (10%), 13 performances (7,3% share in drama total); comedy: 17 productions (56,7%), 114 performances (63,7%); modern classics: 6 productions (20%), 20 performances (11,2%); contemporary drama: 3 productions (10%) and 22 performances (12,3%); left-wing drama: 1 production (3,3% with 8 performances (4,5%).
- special performances not counted: several dance productions, e.g. "Lieder und Tänze" (plus one in the town hall and one dance matinee in the main house) by the theatre's own ensemble, Max Adalbert and the Berliner Ensemble (one performance, play?), "Max und Moritzbühne" (two performances), the "Künstler- Marionetten- Theater" (four performances of puppet theatre), Mady Christians and Ernst Deutsch with "Hazard" (one performance), Alexander Moissi in "Zwölftausend" (Frank), "Feiglinge" (Lenormand), Sophokles' "König Ödipus" and Hofmannsthal's "Jedermann", an evening of song with Anton Imkamp (member of Münster's ensemble), Paul Wegener in "Die Raschoffs" (comedy by Hermann Sudermann), the "Tegernseer Bauernbühne" in "Die drei Dorfscheinheiligen", dance performance by the Folkwang College under Kurt Jooss, dance matinee with Heide Woog, the university's "Germanistischer Spielkreis" with "Fall und Buße der Maria" by Roswitha von Gandersheim and "Mariechen von Nymwegen" (an "old Flemish miracle play"), lecture by Julius Bab in the Studio
- "winter season" ends 18 May 1930, "summer season" starts 25 May 1930 (performances between the two seasons not counted, but they are listed in the press articles copied)
- four open air performances of the theatre in the Schloßpark on 7, 8, 9 and 10 June: Leoncavallo's opera "Der Bajazzo" (twice) and Leo Fall's operetta "Der fidele Bauer" (twice), more performances on 14 and 15 June ("Der Zigeunerbaron") – all included in above list
- last performance on 15 June 1930, after that only "Schloßgartenkonzerte", no announcement (*MA* checked between early April and end of June 1930)

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1930/31

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Grosses Welttheater"	Calderon, German adpatation by Eichendorff	drama	6	first performance as a special event in connection with the "Katholikentag" in MS more than two weeks before the official start of the season!
"Julius Cäsar"	Shakespeare	drama	4	„Alfred Bernau bot als Regisseur eine sehr beachtenswerte Inszenierung" und „eine tüchtige, anerkennenswerte Leistung" (*Volkswille* [*VW*], 18/4/1931)
"Nathan der Weise"	Lessing	drama	3	one performance with Ludwig Wüllner (a well-known actor especially in this role)
"Maria Stuart"	Schiller	drama	8	die „Tragödie [war] mit großem Fleiß einstudiert" und „die Darsteller [wurden] zumeist dem Sinn ihrer Rolle gerecht" (*VW*, 13/11/1930)
"Dantons Tod"	Büchner	drama	3	"Es wäre zu wünschen, dass die weiteren Aufführungen besser besucht werden. Dies Stück tüchtiger Regie- und darstellerischer Leistung ist es wert." (*VW*, 23/9/1930)
"Der eingebildete Kranke" and "Die Gezierten"	Moliere	drama	10	two one- act plays two performances of total in the Studio
"Rosmersholm"	Henrik Ibsen	modern classic	5	"Der gute Besuch zeigte, wie viele Freunde doch noch die Kunst der sogenannten Moderne zwischen 1890 und 1910 auch in Münster hat." (*VW*, 25/11/1930); one performance in the Studio
„Das Konzert" EA	Hermann Bahr	modern classic/ comedy	8	play 20 years old but still successful ("heiteres Kunstwerk" – *VW*, 16/4/1931) all performances in the Studio

"Anatol"	Arthur Schnitzler	modern classic	1 [1930/31]	only one performance in the Studio "Einakterzyklus"
"Karl und Anna" UA 1927 EA	Leonhard Frank	drama/ homecoming drama	12	left-wing drama about a soldier returning home after the end of WWI four performances of total in the Studio
"Voruntersuchung" UA 1930 Berlin	Max Alsberg and Otto Ernst Hesse	left-wing drama (Justizdrama)	22	Alsberg was a solictor who was forced to leave Germany in 1933; Hesse worked as a theatre critic; 10 performances of total in the Studio
"Besetztes Gebiet" UA 1930 Erfurt/Mannheim	Franz Theodor Csokor	left- wing "historical play" drama	7	Csokor was Austrian and anti- Nazi, emigrated in 1938 (plays forbidden after 1933); West German first production with the author in attendance
"Broadway" EA	George Dunning and Phil Abboff, German adaptation by Otto Klement	left- wing drama („Amerikanisches Zeitbild")	19	realistic, documentary play about gang crimes set in New York – left- wing in character; "wird ein großer Kassenerfolg für die Kammerspiele werden" (*VW*, 12/ 12/1930); only in the Studio
"Flieg, roter Adler von Tirol"	Fred Angermeyer	dialect play ("Volksstück")	5	strong political & nationalistic tendencies (anti-Italian but obviously also anti- Fascist), set in the Brenner region [counted as right-wing!]
"Im Schatten des Bösen"	H. R. Lenormand, German adaptation by Hedwig von Gerlach	drama	5	set in a French colony in Africa more about a personal tragedy than about a general criticism of colonialism!
"Der Geisterzug"	Arnold Ridley	detective drama/comedy	6	"fast volles Haus und ein dankbares Publikum", insgesamt bisher "das Programm der Kammerspiele recht anziehend" (*VW*, 17/11/1930) all performances in the Studio
"Charleys Tante"	Brandon Thomas	comedy	39	„Es ist merkwürdig, welch eine Lebensdauer ein solch alter Schwank hat, der [...] keine Anstalten macht, vom Theater zu weichen." (*VW*, 27/1/ 1931); 18 performances of total in the Studio
"Vater sein dagegen sehr" EA	Edward Childs Carpenter, German adaptation by Sil-Vara	comedy (Lustspiel)	15	"amüsante Komödie […] mit großem Beifall aufgenommen" (*VW*, 27/10/1930) author English; all performances in the Studio

"Finden Sie, dass Constanze sich richtig verhält?"	W. S. Maugham	comedy	1 [1930/31]	production also shown during next season
"Luise, Kronprinzessin von Preußen"	Ludwig Berger	drama/comedy	4	about the wife of King Friedrich Wilhelm III. (~1830), play a "Versuch, die Hohenzollerngeschichte im Sinne der Vorkriegslegende zu gestalten"; "dürfte sich aber eher für sogenannte 'vaterländische Vereine' im Sinne des Herrn Hugenberg eignen als für eine öffentliche Vorstellung" (*VW*, 4/4/1931) Berger was Jewish and emigrated in 1933
"Hauptmann von Köpenick"	Carl Zuckmayer	drama/comedy	4	"Insbesondere die jüngeren Zeitgenossen, die jene Zeiten nicht miterlebten, würde ein Besuch zu Vergleichen mit der Gegenwart reizen. Das könnte außerordentlich fruchtbar sein." (*VW*, 4/5/1931); Zuckmayer immediately after the take-over forbidden, left Germany and wrote film scripts for Alexander Korda (-1937)
"Conto X"	Rudolf Bernauer/Rudolf Oesterreicher	comedy (Lustspiel)	10	"famos inszeniert" (*VW*, 14/11/1930) both authors Jewish, immediately forbidden after Nazi take- over; two performances in the Studio
"Hulla di Bulla"	Franz Arnold/Ernst Bach	comedy (Schwank) ~ political satire (but no direct political message!)	7	"Flach ist das Ganze, aber äußerst unterhaltsam." (*VW*, 1/12/1930) Arnold Jewish, Bach „Aryan", plays were still performed in 1934/35
"Die spanische Fliege"	Bach/Arnold	comedy (Lustspiel)	6	production also shown during following season (and the one after that!)
„Der Gardeoffizier"	Franz Molnar	comedy	6	opens the season in the Studio on 21/9/1930
„Die Fee" EA	Franz Molnar	comedy (Lustspiel)	15	„Uns gefällt dieser sehr krampfhaft gemachte ‚Molnar' nicht, der es auch seiner ‚Fee' [...] schwer macht, sich [...] Sympathien zu sichern." (*VW*, 9/2/1931); all performances in the Studio

„Das hässliche Mädchen“ EA	Felix Joachimson	comedy	8 [1930/31]	play around the idea of “Kleider machen Leute”; all performances in the Studio Joachimson Jewish, emigrated to US after 1933
“Die Frau, die jeder sucht“ EA	Ludwig Hirschfeld	comedy (Lustspiel)	27	das “sehr gut besetzte Haus war sehr beifallsfreudig” (*VW*, 29/9/1930) all performances in the Studio Hirschfeld Jewish, forbidden after 1933
„Sturm im Wasserglas“	Bruno Frank	comedy	4	„Eine Hunde- und Kommunalkomödie“ (*VW*, 11/5/1931); all performances in the Studio; production also shown during following season; Frank Jewish, plays forbidden after 1933, Frank emigrated
“Gruß aus Salzburg“ UA	Alexander Farago and Aladar Lazlo, German adaptation by Siegfried Geyer	comedy (Lustspiel)	6	first production, authors Hungarian (?), Geyer Jewish and forbidden after 1933 „Die Kammerspiele bringen einen Schlager nach dem anderen heraus.“ (*VW*, 27/12/1930), all performances in the Studio
“Das große ABC”	Marcel Pagnol	comedy	6	Pagnol was one the most successful modern French dramatists in Germany
“Herr Lamberthier“	Louis Verneuil	comedy	5	author obviously French
“Das dumme Englein”	Vicki Baum	fairy-tale (for children)	10	“Empfehlen wird sich aber, besser zu heizen, damit man sich keinen Weihnachtsschnupfen holt.” (*VW*, 19/12/1930) Vicki Baum was Jewish and performances of her oeuvre were prohibited after 1933
“Max und Moritz”	Wilhelm Busch, adpated by P. Hansen	fairy-tale (for children)	8	
“Der fliegende Holländer”	Wagner	opera	7	a production, “die sich sehen lassen konnte”, house “gut besetzt, zollte tüchtig Beifall” (*VW*, 3/10/1930)
“Lohengrin”	Wagner	opera	7	

"Rigoletto"	Verdi	opera	2 [1930/31]	"Zu rügen ist nur, dass während der Ouvertüre noch Störenfriede eingelassen wurden." (*VW*, 15/5/1931)
"Carmen"	Bizet	opera	6	
"Manon Lescaut"	Giacomo Puccini	opera	6	"recht gute Leistungen"; "Der starke Beifall war durchaus ehrlich verdient." (*VW*, 26/11/1930)
"Der Mantel"	Giacomo Puccini	opera	4	
"Gianni Scicchi"	Giacomo Puccini	opera	4	„Der Beifall des gutbesetzten Hauses fehlte auch hier nicht. Auch gab es zahlreiche Blumenspenden." (*VW*, 12/3/1931)
"Der Waffenschmied"	Albert Lortzing	opera	6	
"Tiefland"	Eugen d'Albert"	opera	6	
"Hoffmanns Erzählungen"	Jacques Offenbach	opera	6	"Zweifellos auch ein eindrucksvoller Appell für die Beibehaltung der Oper, die man in Münster abbauen will." (*VW*, 7/4/1931)
"Mignon"	Ambroise Thomas	opera	10	French composer (1811-1896)
"Mona Lisa"	Max Schillings	opera	2	„Der eindrucksvollen Erstaufführung wurde lebhafter Beifall gezollt." (*VW*, 6/5/1931)
"Die Fledermaus"	Johann Strauss	operetta	7	
"Dreimäderlhaus"	Heinrich Berté	operetta	7	Berté: 1857-1924
"Der Bettelstudent"	Millöcker	operetta	15	"hier und da noch kleine Unstimmigkeiten zwischen Orchester und Bühne" (*VW*, 10/11/1930)
"Land des Lächelns"	Franz Lehar	operetta	26	„Beifall und auch Blumen gab es reichlich. Und das ganz gut besetzte Haus folgte mit großem Interesse der gelungenen Aufführung." (*VW*, 13/10/1930)

"Der letzte Walzer"	Oscar Straus	operetta	13 [1930/31]	„Fast hätten wir vergessen, dass ein ganzer Blumenladen den Mitwirkenden beschert wurde. Sie ernteten großen Beifall." (*VW*, 22/9/1930)
"Der fidele Bauer"	Leo Fall	operetta	8	
"Viktoria und ihr Husar"	Paul Abraham	operetta	31	„ein äußerst starker Publikumserfolg"; Publikum forderte Zugaben „mit unermüdlicher Begeisterung" (*VW*, 22/12/1930)
"Katja, die Tänzerin"	Jacobsohn/Oessterreicher music: Jean Gilbert	operetta	8	for Jean Gilbert see programmes 1931/32 "Das Publikum war begeistert von den Tänzen, es war hingerissen vom abgerissenen Strumpfband und den beinahe abgeknöpften Hosenträgern, es raste, als ein intimes Bekleidungsstück über die Bühne flüchtete und lachte sich beinahe kaputt infolge von unvorhergesehenen Witzen. Ein großer Erfolg – ohne Zweifel!" (*VW*, 20/1/1931)
"Drei Musketiere"	Ralph Benatzky text after Dumas	operetta	16	„ein richtiges buntes Spektakelstück" (*VW*, 24/3/1931) Benatzky: 1887-1954
"Im weissen Rössl"	Ralph Benatzky adapted from comedy by Blumenthal/Kadelburg	operetta	13	"Es gibt beim Sonntagspublikum allerdings viele Menschen, die nie genug kriegen können. Und die kamen ganz bestimmt auf ihre Rechnung." (*VW*, 27/4/1931)
"Lustige Abende"/ "Bunte Abende"	various, e.g. Chekhov and songs by Christian Morgenstern	variety programme with comedy, dance, cabaret, songs, one- act plays	22	"sehr nett und unterhaltend und stand teilweise sogar auf beachtlichem künstlerischen Niveau." (*VW*, 4/12/1930) produced in a series of 5 subsequent programmes, e.g. one special night during "Karneval" [counted towards comedy]

General Remarks:

- 537 performances altogether in the main house: 327 dramatic (61%), 66 operatic (12%) and 144 operetta (27%)
- share in productions (57 productions altogether): 35 plays = 61%, 12 operas = 21%, 10 operettas = 18%
- within drama: classical drama: 6 productions (17%), 34 performances (11% share drama total); comedy: 20 productions (57%), 209 performances (64%); modern classics: 3 productions (9%), 14 performances (4%); left-wing drama and "Zeitstücke": 4 productions (11%), 60 performances (18%); right-wing drama: 1 production (3%) with 5 performances (1,5%); contemporary drama: 1 production (3%) with 5 performances (1,5%)
- dates of the season: 20 September 1930 start, 17 May 1931 end (interesting: 15 works/pieces "new" and not mentioned in the season's preview!)
- guest performances of Ludwig Wüllner, Paul Wegener (with own company in Hebbel's "Maria Magdalena"), Harry Liedtke in Oscar Wilde's drama/satire „Ein idealer Gatte" (Liedtke was a well- known film star; end of the play characterises the hypocrisy of the English society, "die, wie man sieht, nur äußerlich manchmal ganz sauber ist" (*VW*, 25/10/1930)), ? in Ludwig Schmitz' „Lohengelb oder Gottfried von Bouillon mit Ei" (an operatic revue/variety/parody on Wagner's „Lohengrin", "Es war wirklich zum Kranklachen und passte in die Karnevalszeit." (*VW*, 17/2/1931)), ? in Vollmoeller's and Benatzky's comedy „Cocktail" (with Jazz music but no ideas –"Sensationsmacherei" (*VW*, 21/3/1931))
- special events: left- wing dramatist Csokor visits Münster and reads out of his works ("Morgenfeier" on 12/10/1930)
- <u>interesting</u>: the style of the press reviews (*Volkswille*) is similar to their English counterparts: general remarks about the production, occasionally also remarks about the play or its history, detailed critical remarks of the actors and their roles, and a final judgement – especially the detailed remarks to each single actor and not known today and very similar to contemporary reviews in York!!!
- <u>more interesting parallels to York</u>:
  1. during 1930/31 season two performances on Sunday!! One at 3.15pm and the second at 7.30pm!! Performances every day, no day rest!
  2. many guest performances of single actors, who join Münster's company, or who bring their own companies over
  3. theatre is cold in Winter and patrons and press people alike criticise the danger of catching a cold! (see production of "Das dumme Englein")
- source: StAMS Oberpräsident Nr. 5501, Theaterplanwirtschaft S.26 AND: Nachlass Vernekohl, Mappe 97 (e.g. all *Volkswille* [*VW*] quotes)

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1931/32

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Iphigenie auf Tauris"	Goethe	drama	5	all performances in the City Hall
"Die Geschwister"	Goethe	drama	2	obviously only a little play performed as part of the "Goethe- Feier" in celebration of the poet, performed in the Studio
"Wallensteins Lager"/ "Die Piccolomini"	Schiller	drama	5	"Das leider nicht volle Haus zollte herzlichen verdienten Beifall"; aber Probleme durch Gegebenheiten der Bühne und schwierige Rollen (Volkswille [*VW*], 18/9/1931)
"Wallensteins Tod"	Schiller	drama	5	„Leider beeinträchtigten die Mängel unserer Bühnenverhältnisse außerordent-lich durch die vielen Pausen den Gesamteindruck. Das mäßig besetzte Haus zollte ehrlichen und starken Beifall." (*VW*, 16/11/1931)
"Nora"	Henrik Ibsen	drama/modern classic	12	eight performances (of the total) in the Studio
"Gabriel Schillings Flucht" UA 1906	Gerhart Hauptmann	drama/modern classic	6	„Der Beifall des gutbesetzten Hauses war stark, ehrlich und verdient." (*VW*, 30/1/1932)
"Der Strom" UA 1903	Max Halbe	drama/modern classic	7	six performances (of the total) in the Studio – play from naturalistic phase!
"Der Raub der Sabinerinnen"	Franz and Paul Schönthan	modern classic/ comedy	2	all performances in the Studio
"Moral"	Ludwig Thoma	modern classic/ comedy	14	Gesellschaftssatire über die "Spießermoral mit doppeltem Boden"; Thoma: 1867-1921, Redakteur des "Simplizissimus" 11 performances (out of 14) in the Studio

"Alt- Heidelberg"	Wilhelm Meyer- Förster	modern classic/ comedy	2 [1931/32]	Förster "non- Aryan", no performances after 1934/35 season
"Der Herr Senator"	Franz and Paul Schönthan/ Gustav Kadelburg	modern classic/ comedy	12	"Das Publikum amüsierte sich köstlich und kargte nicht mit ehrlich verdientem Beifall für die in jeder Hinsicht vorzügliche Aufführung." (*VW*, 31/3/1932); 10 (out of 12) performances in the Studio; Kadelburg was Jewish and performances of this play forbidden (from '33 or '35?)
"Warbeck" EA	Hermann Burte	right-wing drama	3	originally fragment by Schiller Hermann Burte wrote an adaptation in 1920 which was revised in 1936
"Flieger" UA 1931 Wiesbaden	Hermann Roßmann	drama (nationalistic play about fighter pilots in WWI – but no völkisch drama)	7	all performances in the Studio performances were prohibited from late 1934 after an intervention of the air ministry (obviously because it dealt with the pilot's death without emphasizing that he happily died for his fatherland); [see Rischbieter, p.558]
"Amerika sucht Helden" UA	Hermann Heinz Ortner	"tragic comedy"/ satiric drama/ "Zeitstück"	3	set in America, first performance! slight anti-capitalistic undertone all performances in the Studio
"Der Hauptmann von Köpenick"	Zuckmayer	comedy/	5	Zuckmayer's plays immediately forbidden after 1933
"Finden Sie, daß Constanze sich richtig verhält?" ("The Constant Wife")	William Somerset Maugham	comedy (Gesellschaftskomödie)	10	"Der flotte, nicht immer allzu geistreiche, aber drollige Dialog führ sehr hübsch in die Situation ein." (*VW*, 6/10/1931) Maugham the most successful British dramatist between 1929 and 1933
"Mrs. Cheneys Ende"	Frederick Lonsdale	comedy	4	
"Charleys Tante"	Brandon Thomas	comedy	1	performance in the Studio "Travestie- Komödie"
"Intimitäten"	Noel Coward	comedy	9	all performances in the Studio

"Liebling adieu"	May Bertuch/Lothar Sachs	comedy (musikal. Lustspiel)	8 [1931/32]	set in New York in the film milieu all performances in the Studio
"Im Hafen von Marseille"	Marcel Pagnol	comedy	9	all performances in the Studio Pagnol was one the most successful modern French dramatists in Germany
"Sturm im Wasserglas" UA 1930 Dresden	Bruno Frank	comedy	11	ten performances (of the total) in the Studio
"Nina" UA 1931 Dresden	Bruno Frank	comedy	14	"Man könnte auch schreiben 'Die Doppelgängerin' [oder] 'Die vertauschte Filmdiva'" (VW, 17/10/1931) all performances in the Studio Frank Jewish, emigrated in 1933, in 1937 reached US where he died in 1945
"Olympia" UA 1928	Ferenc (Franz) Molnar	comedy	7	"Das Publikum – der Besuch war befriedigend – amüsierte sich köstlich und zollte tüchtig Beifall." (VW, 24/10/1931) 2 performances (out of 7) in the Studio born in Hungary, later emigration to US
"Die spanische Fliege"	Franz Arnold/Ernst Bach	comedy (Schwank)	1	performance in the Studio Arnold Jewish, Bach "Aryan", plays were still performed in 1934/35, last performance of this comedy in Germany in Münster (12/1934)
"Der wahre Jakob"	Franz Arnold/Ernst Bach	comedy (Schwank)	5	Aufführung machte "dem gut besetzten Hause viel Spaß" (*VW*, 16/4/1932); four performances in the Studio, one in the City Hall
"Das öffentliche Ärgernis" [original title (?): "Dodo, das öffentliche Ärgernis"]	Franz Arnold	comedy (Schwank)	11	z.T. "recht eindeutige Anzüglichkeiten" (*VW*, 28/9/1931); all performances in the Studio
"Hokuspokus"	Curt Götz	comedy (Lustspiel)	8	all performances in the Studio
"Schneider Wibbel"	Hans Müller- Schlösser	comedy (Rheinische Komödie)	9	"Düsseldorfer Lokalposse", set during the French occupation (~1810) 7 performances (out of 9) in the Studio

"Die 3 Zwillinge"	Impekoven/Mathern	comedy (Schwank)	7 [1931/32]	fand "beifallsfreudige Aufnahme durch das gut besetzte Haus" (*VW*, 19/12/1931) set in a German aristocratic family
"Juwelenraub am Kurfürstendamm"	Laszlo (Ladislaus) Fodor	comedy	10	all performances in the Studio West German first production most successful Hungarian dramatist in Germany between 1929 and 1933
"Der Mann ohne Privatleben"	Otto Fürth	comedy	6	"Kino- Rührstück- Abklatsch" „Wir werden den Gedanken nicht ganz lost, als ob man damit gewissen münsterisch-moralinsaueren Kritiken erwidern wollte: Bitte, wünschen Sie vielleicht diese gangbare Ware?" (*VW*, 4/4/1932); all performances in the Studio
"Der Juxbaron"	Walter Kollo	comedy (Posse mit Musik)	3	"Jedenfalls wurde aus dem Ding gemacht, was daraus zu machen ist. Die Tänze mussten natürlich wiederholt werden. Alles klappte famos." (*VW*, 29/4/1932)
"Aschenbrödel"	E. A. Görner (based on the Grimm brothers)	comedy/ Christmas fairy- tale	4	advice for the children: "Da müsst ihr selbst mal hingehen." (*VW*, 23/12/1931)
"Die Entführung aus dem Serail"	Mozart	opera	6	„stilecht inszeniert", Beifall „lebhaft und ehrlich" (*VW*, 19/9/1931)
"Fidelio"	Beethoven	opera	3	ging "in diesem Jahre erstmalig in recht annehmbarer Besetzung in Münster über die Bretter" (*VW*, 26/4/1932); all performances in City Hall
"La Traviata"	Verdi	opera	6	all performances in the City Hall
"Rigoletto"	Verdi	opera	4	
"Die Jüdin" UA 1835 Paris	Jacques Fromental Halévy based on a text by Scribe	opera	7	French Jewish composer (1799-1862) original title "La Juive", perhaps is most successful "Grand Opéra"
"Tannhäuser"	Wagner	opera	5	

"Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg"	Wagner	opera	7 [1931/32]	"Beifall und Blumen gab's in Menge." „Leider hatte man wieder einmal um 7.30Uhr anstatt um 7.45Uhr begonnen, ohne genügend darauf hinzuweisen. Und die Folge war eine dauernde Störung." (*VW*, 24/3/1932) all performances in the City Hall
"Der Wildschütz"	Albert Lortzing	opera	7	„Eine ganze Masse Blumen gab's zum Schluss und noch viel mehr Beifall, sogar of auf offener Szene, was nicht of vorkommt." (*VW*, 29/1/32)
"Der Freischütz"	Carl Maria von Weber	opera	8	"An ehrlichem und reichlich verdientem Beifall mangelte es nicht, auch nicht an Blumen. Hoffentlich kann noch manche so gute Aufführung der Oper steigen." (*VW*, 9/11/1931)
"Lustige Weiber von Windsor"	Otto Nicolai	opera	1	
"Königskinder"	Engelbert Humperdinck	opera	4	based on a fairy-tale by Ernst Rosmer "Das Parkett war nur schwach besetzt." (*VW*, 28/12/1931)
"Die Tradödie von Arezzo"	Richard Hagemann based on a novel by the English Robert Browning	opera	3	"zweifellos ein großer Erfolg" (*VW*, 8/3/1932), first performance in the presence of the composer; first production in West Germany
"Die lustige Witwe"	Franz Léhar	operetta	13	text by Leon and Leo Stein
"Schön ist die Welt"	Léhar	operetta	4	
"Die Dubarry"	Millöcker	operetta	5	„Das Ganze ist eine kraftlose Nachahmung der ‚Madame Pompadour'" und eine „ziemlich verunglückte Mischung von Murger, Paul de Kock und Balzac mit einem Schuss Operettensauce" (*VW*, 2/3/1932)
"Ein Walzertraum"	Oscar Straus	operetta	10	„Die Aufführung fand großen Beifall. Das Haus war einigermaßen, wenn auch nicht ausreichend besetzt." (*VW*, 27/10/1931)

"Madame Pompadour"	Leo Fall	operetta	18 [1931/32]	„Musikalisch interessiert die Operette zweifellos mehr als die Handlung. Leo Fall erhebt sich hier oft über das übliche Operettenniveau [...]. Gerade diese Musik macht manche Plattheit und Seichtheit der Handlung erst genießbar" (*VW*, 9/11/1931)
"Die Csardasfürstin"	Emmerich Kalman	operetta	15	"Das leider nicht besonders gut besetzte Haus erzwang mehrfach Wiederholungen beliebter Tanzszenen." (*VW*, 30/9/1931)
"Viktoria und ihr Husar"	Paul Abraham	operetta	3	
"Die Blume von Hawaii"	Paul Abraham	operetta	26	
"Im weißen Rößl"	Ralph Benatzky	operetta	16	
"Meine Schwester und ich"	Benatzky	operetta	33	"ein bisschen Lustspiel, ein bisschen Schwank, ein bisschen Jazz" (*VW*, 24/10/1931); 28 performances (of the total) in the Studio
"Morgen geht's uns gut"	Benatzky	operetta	8	
"Drei Musketiere"	Benatzky text after Dumas	operetta	2	Benatzky: 1887-1954 production taken over from last season!
"Die keusche Susanne"	Jean Gilbert	operetta	7	Jean Gilbert's real German name was Max Winterfeld, a typical composer of "Berliner Operette". Greatest successes between 1910 and 1920. During the 1920s successful with „Katja die Tänzerin". Gilbert emigrated after 1933 (obviously he was Jewish).
"Die Frau im Hermelin"	Jean Gilbert	operetta	7	"Es ist aber nicht zu verkennen, dass die Unsicherheit der Verhältnisse auf allen lastet." (*VW*, 5/4/1932), i.e. probably the proposed closure of the opera (and indeed: Osnabrück's opera company served Münster in 1932/33)

General Remarks:

- 455 performances altogether in both houses: 227 dramatic (50%), 61 operatic (13%) and 167 operetta (37%)
- share in productions (60 productions altogether): 34 plays = 57%, 12 operas = 20%, 14 operettas = 23%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (12%), 17 performances (8% share in drama total); comedy: 20 productions (59%), 142 performances (63%); modern classics: 7 productions (20%), 55 performances (24%); left-wing drama/"Zeitstück": 1 production (3%), 3 performances (1%); right-wing drama: 2 productions (6%) with 10 performances (4% share in drama total)
- four comedies from Britain: plays by Somerset, Coward, Thomas and Maugham
- start of season: ~17 September 1931, end of season: 12 May 1932 (?)
- N.B. clear shift from left-wing to right-wing drama from 1930/31 to 1931/32 season!!
- not included in list: guest performances by Eugen Klöpfer with "Der Kapitalist" (comedy by Jules Romain) in January 1932 (only one week), by Harry Liedtke with "Der Mann mit den grauen Schläfen" (comedy by Leo Lenz) in February 1932, by Henny Porten and the Berlin "Rotter-Bühne" with "Madame Sans Gene" (a comedy by Sardou in a German adaptation by Oskar Blumenthal) in April 1932, by Erika Graf with "Schneeweißchen und Rosenrot" in February 1932

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1932/33

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Der Richter von Zalamea"	Calderon	drama	8	translation by E. Gürster
"Zweierlei Maß" ("Measure for Measure")	Shakespeare	drama	4	Aufführung litt an der "noch nicht ausgeglichene[n] Stilverschiedenheit des [...] jungen Ensembles" (*Volkswille* [*VW*], 19/12/1932); in the translation of Hans Rothe!
"Egmont"	Goethe	drama	8	"eine zum Teil überragend schöne Inszenierung" (*VW*, 3/10/1932) with music by Beethoven
"Minna von Barnhelm"	Lessing	drama/ classic comedy	15	all performances in the Studio during the „Nachspielzeit"
"Le Malade Imaginaire"	Molière	drama	4	all performances in the Studio
"Das Glas Wasser"	Scribe	drama	8	translation by Stockhausen all performances in the Studio
"Schluck und Jau"	G. Hauptmann	modern classic/ comedy	6	Münster's first production of the play
"Der Scheiterhaufen" EA	Strindberg	modern classic/ drama	4	all performances in the Studio Münster's first production of the play
"Der Raub der Sabinerinnen"	Schönthan brothers	modern classic/ comedy	7	all performances in the Studio during the "Nachspielzeit"
"Der Wettlauf mit dem Schatten" UA ~1920	Wilhelm von Scholz	contemporary drama	6	about a psychological experiment, suggestion and autosuggestion Scholz after 1933 famous propaganda dramatist – all performances in the Studio
"Gaukler – Mimen – Literaten"	Arthur Schnitzler and Stefan Zweig	set one- act plays	5	„sehr nett inszeniert" (*VW*, 11/2/1933) left-wing in character

"Die Brücke" EA	Kolbenheyer	nationalistic drama	11 [1932/33]	six performances (of the total) in the Studio (all of which between January and March 1933); Kolbenheyer in attendance on 22/1/1933
"Die Marneschlacht"	Paul Joseph Cremers	nationalistic drama	9	first performance 8 March 1933 So: 9 shows within only four weeks! play about the "tragedy" on the Marne
"Der 18. Oktober" EA	Walter Erich Schaefer	nationalistic drama set during the Napoleonic wars in 1815	16	"an der Grenze eines Tendenzstückes, wenn man den Dialog nicht au f jenen einmaligen Zustand, sondern auf unsere [...] Zeit bezieht [...]. Diese Möglichkeiten können selbst-verständlich durch die Art der Inszenierung und Darstellung verstärkt [...] werden. Die Aufführung [...] ist diesen Klippen im wesentlichen ausgewichen und konnte [...] gefallen. Auch die Darsteller und Sprecher vermieden durchweg – bis auf eine Ausnahme – das Sprechen ins Publikum hinein." (*VW*, 22/10/1932); last performance 6/12/1932
„Ostmark"	Berthold Withalm	nationalistic drama	4	only performed during the "Nachspielzeit" in the Studio in April 1933 first production in West Germany
"Die erste Frau Selby" EA	St. J. Ervine	comedy	10	"Der etwas trockene englische Humor basiert hier auf guter Beobachtung [...] menschlicher Schwächen & menschlichem Verstehen" (*VW*, 8/10/1932); all performances in the Studio
"Kopf in der Schlinge" EA	John Bradley	comedy ("Abenteuer")	6	all performances in the Studio author British
"Fräulein Frau" EA	Ludwig Fulda	comedy (Lustspiel)	7	"unzureichende Rollenbesetzung", "Mängel im Schauspiel" (*VW*, 1/11/1932) other papers criticise in a similar way! all performances in the Studio

"Die Brücke" EA	Kolbenheyer	nationalistic drama	11 [1932/33]	six performances (of the total) in the Studio (all of which between January and March 1933); Kolbenheyer in attendance on 22/1/1933
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„Ostmark"	Berthold Withalm	nationalistic drama	4	only performed during the "Nachspielzeit" in the Studio in April 1933 first production in West Germany
"Die erste Frau Selby" EA	St. J. Ervine	comedy	10	"Der etwas trockene englische Humor basiert hier auf guter Beobachtung [...] menschlicher Schwächen & menschlichem Verstehen" (*VW*, 8/10/1932); all performances in the Studio
"Kopf in der Schlinge" EA	John Bradley	comedy ("Abenteuer")	6	all performances in the Studio author British
"Fräulein Frau" EA	Ludwig Fulda	comedy (Lustspiel)	7	"unzureichende Rollenbesetzung", "Mängel im Schauspiel" (*VW*, 1/11/1932) other papers criticise in a similar way! all performances in the Studio

"Der kleine Muck" EA	W. Burggraf	comedy/fairy-tale	14 [1932/33]	author: Walfried Burggraf, later as Friedrich Forster famous right-wing dramatist with career during Third Reich
"Freie Bahn dem Tüchtigen" EA	Hinrichs	comedy	8	SPD press published several of Hinrichs' novels during the Weimar Republic Hinrichs ist "ein lebendes Beispiel dafür, dass der hier ironisch gemeinte Titel doch nach dem Kriege – im Volksstaat – einige Berechtigung erlangt hat, denn August Hinrichs ist von Beruf Arbeiter" (*VW*, 2/1/1933)
"Der Tiefstapler" EA	Franz Cammerlohr	comedy (Kriminalgroteske)	4	"verwickelte Einbrecherkomödie" (*VW*, 8/10/1932) Münster's first production of the play
"Hasenklein kann nichts dafür"	Hans Mahner- Mons	comedy	12	content: "Verhöhnung des Parlamentarismus und der Demokratie, insbesondere aber ein Lächerlichmachen des Kleinbürgers, des Handwerkes als Politiker" manche Anspielungen hingegen passen „wie die Faust aufs Auge auf gewisse augenblickliche Zeitverhältnisse", sind also durchaus anti- Nazi zu verstehen „Es ist nicht ohne Reiz, zu sehen, wie gerade ein offenbarer Nationalsozialist den Handwerker als Abgeordneten und Regierungsoberhaupt verhöhnt." (*VW*, 4/2/1933); first performance 2/2/1933
"Ist das nicht nett von Colette?"	Max Bertuch- Rosen	comedy (musikalisches Lustspiel)	18	all performances in the Studio Münster's first production of the play Bertuch emigrated in 1933
"Marguerite: 3"	Fritz Schwiefert	comedy	10	all performances in the Studio
"Die zärtlichen Verwandten"	Roderich Benedix	comedy ("Lustspiel")	10	Benedix died in 1873 all performances in the Studio, seven of which during the "Nachspielzeit"

"Frauen haben das gern"	Arnold, Bach, Kollo	comedy	9 [1932/33]	all performances in the Studio
„Das Apostelspiel"	?	comedy (?)	7	only performance in the Studio during the "Nachspielzeit" in April 1933
"Iphigenie in Aulis"	Gluck	opera	5	in the adaptation by Richard Wagner
"Die Bohème"	Puccini	opera	2	obviously in a German translation
"Angelina"	Rossigni	(comic) opera	4	adaptation by Hugo Röhr "Da die Oper wenig oder gar nicht bekannt ist, waren im Theater und bei den Buchhändlern alle Textbücher ausverkauft." (*VW*, 6/2/1933)
"Die Walküre"	Wagner	opera	4	"Der verdiente Beifall wollte kein Ende nehmen." (*VW*, 14/11/1932)
"Undine"	Lortzing	opera	8	Münster sah „schon bessere ‚Undine'-Aufführungen (*VW*, 27/12/1932)
"Der Barbier von Bagdad" UA 1858	Peter Cornelius	opera („heitere deutsche Oper")	4	„Bis jetzt lässt das Ensemble eine vorzügliche Eignung zur komischen Oper erkennen" (*VW*, 14/10/1932)
"Die schalkhafte Witwe" EA	Ermanno Wolf- Ferrari	opera ("Buffo"- opera)	5	Inszenierung "sauber und nett" (*VW*, 11/10/1932) Wolf- Ferrari *1876
"Tiefland"	Eugen d'Albert	opera	3	
"Das Glöckchen des Eremiten" UA 1856	Aimé Maillart	opera	3	French composer (1817-1871) original title: „Les dragons de Villars"
"Der Graf von Luxemburg"	Léhar	operetta	10	„Die erste Operette der Saison und kein volles Haus!", obwohl der Abend doch „ein ganz annehmbarer Auftakt" war (*VW*, 5/10/1932)
"Tanz ins Glück" EA	Robert Stolz	operetta	7	"das nicht übermäßig stark vertretene Publikum [war] recht beifallsfreudig" (*VW*, 9/1/1933)

"Wenn die kleinen Veilchen blühn"	R. Stolz	operetta (Singspiel)	10 [1932/33]	hier wird "Rührstück mit krampfhafter Modernität verrührt serviert"; „Haus schlecht besetzt" (*VW*, 25/10/1932) Münster's first production of the piece Stolz emigrated after 1933
"Der lustige Krieg" UA 1881	Johann Strauß	operetta	10	interesting comment in the press: "Wenn auf der Bühne etwas weniger auffällig gegenseitige Kritik geübt würde, würde der Eindruck sicher nicht schlechter." (*VW*, 12/11/1932)
"Liselott" EA	Eduard Künneke	operetta	14	Münster's first production of the piece
"Glückliche Reise" UA 1932	Künneke – Bertuch	operetta	12	his most successful piece Künneke married to a "non- Aryan", which, however, did not cause problems all performances after 12 February
"Gasparone"	Karl Millöcker	operetta	9	Aufführung "vor sehr schwach besetztem Hause"; adaptation by P. Steffan
"Für eine schöne Frau"	Walter W. Goetze	operetta	4	contemporary piece (most probably)

General Remarks:

- 344 performances altogether in both houses: 230 dramatic (67%), 38 operatic (11%) and 76 operetta (22%)
- share in productions (44 productions altogether): 27 plays = 61%, 9 operas = 21%, 8 operettas = 18%

- within drama: classical drama: 6 productions (22%), 47 performances (21% share in drama total); comedy: 12 productions (44%) and 115 performances (50%); right-wing drama: 4 productions (15%) and 40 performances (17%); modern classics: 3 productions (11%) and 17 performances (7%); left-wing drama: 1 production (4%) with 5 performances (2%); and one contemporary drama (4%) with 6 performances (3%)
- closed performances: for "Bühnenvolksbund" (6), "Kampfbundbühne" (2), pupils (5), military personnel (2), children of unemployed parents (1) [numbers only for the period September to December 1932]. Many further closed performances during the "Nachspielzeit" for Reichsbahn workers, Kampfbundbühne etc.
- season opened on 1 October 1932 and closed on 31 March 1933 (211 "Spieltage") – HOWEVER: "Nachspielzeit" between 5 April and 5 May 1933 only in the Studio and with special "season tickets"!
- opera performances provided by Osnabrück's opera company; Münster during 1932/33 without own opera company!
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday!! One at 3.15pm and the second at 7.30pm!! Performances every day, no day rest!
- not included in list: guest performance of Henny Porten with play/comedy "Morgen um 5" in February 1933, a production of the comedy (probably) „Die Südpolexpedition des Kapitäns Scott" by R. Goering (played only once by the Osnabrück company), a production of Hans Kyser's nationalistic drama „Es brennt an der Grenze" by the "Kampfbund- Gastspielbühne" (obviously only performed once during the "Nachspielzeit" in early April 1933 – play is set on the German- Polish border after WWI), two matinees ("Morgenfeiern"): one for Richard Wagner and another one before Christmas (both received only one performance each).
- concert of the "Comedian Harmonists" in the Stadthalle on 13 January 1933
- sources: Programme Notes, press reviews and especially the final review of the season found in NL Vernekohl, Mappe 99 (interesting: press reviews in the "Volkswille" only until 11 February 1933, paper's publication after that date prohibited!)
- vol. 18 of the Programmes announces the first production of Josef Bergenthal's comedy "Bomberg, der tolle Baron" for 22 February 1933, a comedy of local interest about three famous Münster originals (Baron Bombeg, Landois and Essink) – the play, however, was never produced! A short note issued by Berend in vol. 20 states: "Die auf den 23. Februar angesetzte Uraufführung von Jos. Bergenthals ‚Bomberg, der tolle Baron' muß vorerst unterbleiben."

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1933/34

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Prinz von Homburg"	Kleist	drama	12	
"Viel Lärm um nichts"	Shakespeare	drama	11	in the translation of? original title: "Much Ado About Nothing"
"Komödie der Irrungen"	Shakespeare	drama	7	"Comedy of Errors" in the translation/ adaptation of Hans Rothe (!) first production of this version in Western Germany ("WE"), all performances in Studio
"Tartuffe"	Molière	drama	7	all performances in the Studio
"Das Prinzip"	Hermann Bahr	modern classic/ comedy	20	all performances in the Studio Münster's first production of the play interesting as Bahr not loved by Nazis, this play one of the lesser produced plays, apart from this Bahr extremely successful during 3. Reich despite Rosenberg et. al. criticism
"Der Verrat von Novara"	Cäsar von Arx	nationalistic drama	4	author Swiss
"Yorck" "Die Torgauer Heide"	Paul Ernst D. Ludwig	nationalistic drama	4 4	first production of "Yorck", double bill [counted as two separate plays!]
"Alle gegen Einen, Einer für Alle" EA	Friedrich Förster	nationalistic drama	14	about the "fight for freedom" of the Swede Gustav Erichson Wasa in 1523 against the Danish authorities (parallel to present struggle in Germany) interesting press release by Deutsche Bühne!
"Ostmark"	B. Withalm ?	nationalistic drama	6	first production in Western Germany (WE) all performances in the Studio

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"Ostmark"	B. Withalm ?	nationalistic drama	6	first production in Western Germany (WE) all performances in the Studio

"Die Heimkehr des Matthias Bruck"	Sigmund Graff (plus Lorenz?)	nationalistic drama	7 [1933/34]	homecoming drama of the last front soldier in combination with "Blood and Soil" ideology Münster's first production of the play one performance in the main house, rest studio
"Das Gesetz in Dir!"	E. G. Kolbenheyer	nationalistic drama	5	völkisch drama about biological laws of life – those who don't abide to these laws are not worthy of life at all Münster's first production of the play all performances in the Studio
"Krach um Jolanthe"	August Hinrichs	comedy	16	Münster's first production of the play
"Wenn der Hahn kräht"	August Hinrichs	comedy	23	first production in Western Germany (WE) one performance in the main house
"Rembrandt vor Gericht"	Hans Kyser	comedy	4	first production in Western Germany (WE) Kyser well-known nationalistic writer
"Am Himmel Europas"	Per Schwenzen- Malina	comedy	14	play centres around reconciliation between France and Germany, not performed after 1936 (see Rischbieter, p. 513) first production in Western Germany (WE)
"Prinzessin Huschewind"	H. P. Buch ?	comedy	11	author Fritz Peter Buch?
"Grotesken" (Lohengrin, Hund im Hirn, Minna Magdalena)	Curt Goetz	comedy	4	all performances in the Studio Münster's first production of the play
"Heimliche Brautfahrt"	Leo Lenz	comedy	5	all performances in the Studio
"Die große Chance"	A. Möller, H. Lorenz	comedy	13	all performances in the Studio
"Der treue Musikmeister" "La Serva Padrona"	Pergolesi	opera	5	Münster's first production of the opera
"Cosi fan Tutte"	Mozart	opera	12	

"Madame Butterfly"	Puccini	opera	13 [1933/34]	
"Simone Boccanegra"	Verdi	opera	10	first production in Western Germany (WE)
"Tristan und Isolde"	Wagner	opera	1	
"Der Waffenschmied"	Lortzing	opera	8	
"Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor" UA 1849 Berlin	Otto Nicolai	opera	9	
"Friedemann Bach"	Paul Graener	opera	10	Paul Graener one of the celebrated composers of the "new opera" first production in Western Germany (WE)
"Arabella"	Richard Strauß	opera	10	Münster's first production of the opera
"Der Zigeunerbaron"	Johann Strauß	operetta	19	
"Wiener Blut"	Johann Strauß	operetta	12	
"Der Vizeadmiral"	Karl Millöcker	operetta	7	first production of the new version by H. Schnepf and G. Witt
"Die Försterchristl" UA 1907	Georg Jarno	operetta	21	composer Austro- Hungarian
"Das Land des Lächelns"	Franz Léhar	operetta	11	
"Frühlingsfee"	V. Corzilius	operetta	6	Münster's first production of the piece
"Venus in Seide"	Robert Stolz	operetta	8	Münster's first production of the piece Stolz emigrated after 1933 (when?)

General Remarks:

- 354 performances altogether in both houses: 192 dramatic (54%), 78 operatic (22%) and 84 operetta (24%)
- share in productions (36 productions altogether): 20 plays = 56%, 9 operas = 25%, 7 operettas = 19%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (20%), 37 performances (19% share in drama total); comedy: 8 productions (40%), 91 performances (47%); modern classics: one production (5%), 20 performances (11%); right-wing drama: 7 productions (35%) and 44 performances (only 23% share in drama total); no left-wing drama anymore (of course)
- 22 closed performances, three of which for the unemployed (rest not specified!)
- season opened 3 October 1933 and ended 30 April 1934 (208 "Spieltage")
- not included in list: guest performance of Mary Wigman with dance production
- not counted: two "Sonderveranstaltungen" with one performance each: "Luzifer" by Karl Wagenfeld with extracts from Wagenfeld's dramatic writing and a special show in remembrance of Max von Schillings
- many new actors in the company (therefore difficult to say who was dismissed on racial grounds

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1934 – 1938

1934/35

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Penthesilea"	Kleist	drama	8	
"Der Sturm" EA of Rothe's version	Shakespeare	drama	12	in the translation/adaptation of Hans Rothe (!) original title: "The Tempest"
"Die Räuber"	Schiller	drama	17	
"Agnes Bernauer"	Hebbel	drama	11	interesting commentary in the programme notes about interpretation!
"Scherz, Satire, Ironie und tiefere Bedeutung"	Grabbe	drama	7	adapted by E. Ziegel, music by E. v.d. Meden all performances in the Studio
"Coeur gewinnt"	Scribe adapted by Barbara Bosch	drama	7	set in the France of Louis XVIII. all performances in the Studio
"Die Stützen der Gesellschaft"	Ibsen	drama (modern classic)	6	adapted by B. Hattesen, Münster's first production of this adaptation all performances in the Studio
"Geographie und Liebe"	Björnstjerne Björnson	drama (modern classic)	10	Münster's first production of the play all performances in the Studio
"Richelieu"	Paul Joseph Cremers	nationalistic drama	14	Münster's first production of the play Richeliau as "Führer" figure
"Wiedertaufe 1535"	Prosper Heyl	nationalistic drama	11	first production of the play first performance big civic occasion
"Das lebenslängliche Kind"	R. Neuner	comedy	10	Münster's first production of the play
"Hau-ruck"	R. A. Roberts and Paul Vulpius (!)	comedy	23	Münster's first production of the play (WE) one performance in the main house, rest studio

"Die spanische Fliege"	Franz Arnold and Ernst Bach [Arnold Jewish, Bach "Aryan"]	comedy	18 [1934/35]	last performance of this play in Germany at the Städtische Bühnen Münster on 8/12/1934! 16 performances of total in the Studio
"Schneeweißchen und Rosenrot"	H. Stelter	comedy/fairy-tale	9	Münster's first production of the play
"Husarenfieber"	Gustav Kadelburg and K. R. Skowronnek	comedy	15	
"Krach im Hinterhaus"	M. Böttcher	comedy	11	Münster's first production of the play
"Mariana"	L. Berstl	comedy	8	all performances in the Studio Münster's first production of the play
"Ein Kerl, der spekuliert"	Dietrich Eckart	comedy	13	"the" Dietrich Eckart (*1903) all performances in the Studio
"Konsul Michael"	Axel Ivers	comedy	4	Münster's first production of the play all performances in the Studio
"Christa, ich erwarte dich"	A. Möller, H. Lorenz	comedy	16	Münster's first production of the play all performances in the Studio
"Bargeld lacht"	Cammerlohr, Ebermayer	comedy	9	Münster's first production of the play all performances in the Studio
"Für Liebe gesperrt" UA	Leo Lenz and Ralph Arthur Roberts	comedy	4	Lenz one of the most successful dramatists in the Third Reich, held official posts all performances in the Studio
"Regen und Wind" EA	Merton Hodge adapted by Detlef Sierck	comedy	7	Merton Hodge English, play set in Scotland all performance in the Studio (see below)
"Hatt giegen Hatt"	Karl Wagenfeld	comedy	8	dialect comedy in low German as guest performance by the "Low German Stage" all performances in the Studio
"De Hochtied in de Pickbaige" (EA)	A. Scharrelmann	dialect comedy (in Low German)	5	guest performance by the "Low German Stage", all performances in the Studio
"Die Maienkönigin" "Der betrogene Kadi"	Gluck	opera	7	double bill all performances in the Studio
"Der Troubadour"	Verdi	opera	14	first production of the new text version by F. Berend and W. Rube (both Münster)

"Die sizilianische Vesper"	Verdi	opera	7 [1934/35]	Münster's first production of the opera
"Figaros Hochzeit"	Mozart	opera	11	produced in the translation of Siegfried Anheißer
"Fidelio"	Beethoven	opera	11	
"Der fliegende Holländer"	Wagner	opera	14	
"Zar und Zimmermann"	Lortzing	opera	8	
"Der arme Heinrich"	Hans Pfitzner	opera	13	Pfitzner well supported by Nazis conducts Münster's first production of the opera on 16 September 1934 (!)
"Die Kaffeekantate" "Der Schauspieldirektor"	Bach Mozart	operas	5	all performances in the Studio; first production of the new text of Mozart's opera by F Geßner
"Liebe und Trompetenblasen"	Marc Roland text: Sturm, Bachwitz	operetta	10	Münster's first production of the piece
"Anneliese von Dessau	Robert Winterberg	operetta	12	obviously quite a weak piece containing many different styles of music without a connection (e.g. see *MZ*, 20/2/1935; *WK*, 20/2/1935)
"Der Vogelhändler" UA 1898	Carl Zeller	operetta	33	Münster's first production of the new adaptation by Quedenfeldt, Brüggmann, Bauckner
"Polenblut" UA 1913 Vienna	Oskar Nedbal text by Leo Rosenstein (who was Jewish!)	operetta	25	piece rejected by Rosenberg office contemporary piece (see Drewniak, p.343) composer born in Bohemia, text supports the idea of a life full of work in contrast to the negative power of fun and lust
"Der alte Schachteln" UA 1917 Berlin	Walter Kollo	operetta	27	"Bei dem Mangel an guten neuen Operetten greift man mit Recht zu älteren (auch zweitrangigen) Operetten zurück." (*WK*, 1/2/1935) composer rejected by Rosenberg office
"Frau ohne Kuß" UA 1924 Berlin	Walter Kollo	operetta	4	all performances in the Studio contemporary piece

"Die Tanzgräfin"	Robert Stolz	operetta	12 [1934/35]	contemporary piece Stolz emigrated after 1938
"Spiel nicht mit der Liebe" EA	Walter Bromme	operetta	13	"Gewiß: verwöhnteren und höheren Ansprüchen genügt dieses Musik- Lustspiel nicht."(*WK*, 29/3/1935); all performances in the Studio
"Terpsichore"	Händel	dance performance	2	new adaptation by Frida Holst and Hans Müller- Kray (obviously did not take place!)
"Tanzsuite in h-moll" "Der anonyme Liebesbrief" („Les petits riens")	Bach Mozart	dance performance	?	new adaptation by Frida Holst and Hans Müller- Kray all performances in the Studio
"Das Lambertusspiel" UA 1934 in Bremerhaven	text by Prosper Heyl, music by Franz Ludwig	nationalistic drama/oratorio	2	"Sonderveranstaltung" in the town hall Münster's first production, author and composer from Münster
variety entertainment: "Bunte Abende"	various	special performance (comedy)	2	"Sonderveranstaltung" in the Studio

General Remarks:

- 495 performances altogether in both houses: 267 dramatic (54%), 90 operatic (18%) and 136 operetta (27%)
- share in productions (46 productions altogether): 27 plays = 59%, 9 operas = 20%, 8 operettas = 17%, 2 dance = 4%
- within drama: classical drama: 6 productions (22%), 62 performances (23% share in drama total); comedy: 16 productions (59%) and 162 performances (61%); right-wing drama: 3 productions (11%) and 27 performances (10%); 2 modern classics (7%) and 16 performances (6%)
- 29 closed performances, but not specified to whom they were played
- season started 15 September 1934 and ended 31 May 1935 (257 "Spieltage")
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday!! One at 3.15pm and the second at 7.30pm!! Performances every day, no day rest!
- not included in list: guest productions with 10 performances, e.g. Lil Dagover, Käthe Dorsch and Harry Liedtke, Rosalind von Schirach
- in the programme notes a lot of discussion about the "new" operetta
- Merton Hodge (see his comedy above) interesting case as he replaced Coward et. al.. in programmes after 1933 (Rischbieter, p. 447)

1935/36

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"König Lear"	Shakespeare	drama	13	in the translation/adaptation of ? original title: "King Lear"
"Der Geizige"	Molière	drama	12	two performances in the main house, rest in the Studio
"Kabale und Liebe"	Schiller	drama	11	
"Peer Gynt"	Ibsen	drama (modern classic)	17	Münster's first production of this "free" translation/adaptation by Dietrich Eckart
"Lady Windermeres Fächer"	Oscar Wilde completely new adaptation by Karl Lerbs Lerbs hat "'durch eine sinngemäße Weiterführung, Ausdehnung und Entlastung des Textes' diesen dem Stand des heutigen deutschen Theaters pietätvoll aber entschieden anzugleichen" versucht (*MA*, 19/9/1935)	drama (modern classic)	12	"Einen Vorzug des Stückes macht es aus, dass hier durchaus nicht, nach liberalistischer Literaten- Unart, die Kritik an dem konventionellen Moralismus einer in ihren sittlichen Grundlagen bereits recht erschütterten Gesellschaft zur Gelegenheit genommen wird, um nunmehr die ‚Freiheit' von moralischer Bindung als wahre Tugend hinzustellen. Vielmehr siegen hier Gerechtigkeit und echte Moral über einen unwirklichen und darum ungerechten Moralismus." (*MA*, 19/9/1935) Lerbs version replaced the former translation by Isidore Leo Pavia who was Jewish made into a film in1935 (see Drewniak, p.255)
"Der Biberpelz" EA	G. Hauptmann	drama (modern classic)	19	interesting: if Hauptmann then comedies! Hauptmann present (on first night obviously) all performances in the Studio
"Johannisfeuer"	H. Sudermann	drama (modern classic)	9	interesting: no naturalistic play! all performances in the Studio
"Der Bauernkanzler"	Walter Stanietz	nationalistic drama	11	first production of the play nationalistic drama about the peasant's war

"Der Vertrag von Karakat"	Fritz Peter Buch	nationalistic drama	8 [1935/36]	Buch had been a left-wing director before he turned around in 1933 to become pro Nazi, not much liked with officials although play a success; Münster's first production of the play
"Jugend" EA	Max Halbe	nationalistic drama	4	Halbe much supported and close to the regime drama closed to blood and soil ideology Münster's first production of the play
"Die Pfingstorgel"	Alois Johannes Lippl	comedy	17	Münster's first production of the play see commentary in programme notes
"Straßenmusik"	P. Schurek	comedy	15	Münster's first production of the play
"Verlobung im Fasching"	Leo Lenz	comedy	9	Lenz one of the most successful dramatists during 3. Reich, officially endorsed
"Großreinemachen" EA	Lawrence Emmet Huxley German adaptation by Hanns Merck	comedy	10	British playwright who – like Merton Hodge – replaced Coward, Lonsdale etc. in programme all performances in the Studio "Die Tatsache, dass ein so ideenarmes, offensichtlich krampfhaft konstruiertes, mit einigen dummen Zweideutigkeiten 'garniertes' Lustspielchen [wie dieses A.H.] sich auf deutschen Bühnen behaupten kann und dazu noch aus dem Ausland importiert werden musste, sollte eigentlich alle erfolgsuchenden und berufenen jungen und jüngsten Vertreter der leichten, heiteren Federführung zu vielversprechender Konkurrenz auf den Plan rufen." (MZ, 23/9/1935)
"Der Sprung aus dem Alltag" EA	Heinrich Zerkaulen	comedy	22	right- wing author, supported by Nazis, but only success with this comedy (see 1936/37!) all performances in the Studio
"Ehe in Dosen" EA	Leo Lenz Ralph Arthur Roberts	comedy	16	Roberts comedian and director of the Berlin "Theater in der Behrenstraße" (1928-1940), real name Robert A. Schönherr (died 1940)

"Irrgarten der Liebe"	Hans Sturm	comedy	9 [1935/36]	all performances in the Studio Münster's first production of the play
"Der alte Wrangel"	Otto Brues	comedy	15	about the Prussian general all performances in the Studio first production of the play!
"Am Teetisch"	K. (arel?) Svoboda	comedy	6	all performances in the Studio
"Meine Tochter, deine Tochter"	Leo Lenz Ralph Arthur Roberts	comedy	14	Münster's first production of the play all performances in the Studio
"Der Meisterboxer"	Schwartz Mathern	comedy	9	all performances in the Studio
"Ingeborg"	Curt Goetz	comedy	9	all performances in the Studio
"Smuggler" EA	W. Looschen	comedy	9	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Kramer Kray" EA	H. Boßdorf	comedy	12	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Snieder Nörig" EA	P. Schurek	comedy	3	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Orpheus und Euridike"	Gluck	opera	5	"Heroischer Stil der Oper" (MZ, ~9/4/1936) Münster's first production of the opera
"Falstaff"	Verdi	opera	9	Münster's first production of the opera
"Tosca"	Puccini	opera	6	
"Carmen"	Bizet	opera	21	
"Die Entführung aus dem Serail"	Mozart	opera	4	Münster's first production of the opera (or first production of this version/adaptation?) all performances in the Studio

"Die Zauberflöte"	Mozart	opera	14 [1935/36]	"das unglückliche Libretto dieser Oper mit seiner Vermischung von Märchenwelt und freimaurerischen Übungen ist heute nur noch schwer tragbar, und ‚man bedauert noch nachträglich den Komponisten, der an einen solchen Unsinn seine Musik verschwenden musste" – aber Mozarts Kunst „adelt" die Handlung (MA, 23/9/1935)
"Doktor und Apotheker" EA	Dittersdorf	opera	6	production used the text by F. Geßner from 1925; all performances in the Studio
"Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg"	Wagner	opera	13	
"Der Wildschütz"	Lortzing	opera	6	
"Martha"	Flotow	opera	15	opera criticised by G. Schumann because of "süßer Rührseligkeit" (Drewniak, p. 326f.)
"Die weiße Dame" UA 1825 in Paris	Francois Adrien Boieldieu	opera	11	main representative of the Opéra Comique (*1775 Rouen +1834 Paris)
"Der Rosenkavalier"	Richard Strauß	opera	10	
"Spiel oder Ernst?" EA	Nikolaus von Reznicek	opera ("Kurz- Oper")	3	composer favoured by Nazis, received Goethe medal and "Ehrensold" from Hitler from 1940, presented himself a convinced Nazi (overture "Befreites Deutschland" 1933)
"Der Bettelstudent"	Karl Millöcker	operetta	22	
"Venezia"	Arno Vetterling text by H. Hermecke	operetta	9	Münster's first production of the opera contemporary piece, composer quite promoted by Nazi officials – without success though
"Die Vielgeliebte" UA 1934	Nico Dostal	operetta	12	Münster's first production of the operetta contemporary piece and a hit in Nazi Germany
"Die Fledermaus"	Johann Strauß	operetta	25	

"Ihre Hoheit die Tänzerin" UA 1919 in Stettin	Walter W. Goetze	operetta	15 [1935/36]	contemporary piece
"Lauf ins Glück" EA	Fred Raymond	operetta	13	Münster's first production of the operetta contemporary piece
"Schwarzwälder Kirsch"	R. Valentin	operetta	3	Münster's first production of the operetta
"Wie einst im Mai"	R. Bernauer R. Schanzer	operetta	5	
"Frischer Wind aus Kanada"	Müller Walter	operetta	24	Münster's first production of the operetta all performances in the Studio
"Klein, aber oho!"	Marc Roland	operetta	13	first production of the operetta
"Ach, wenn doch jemand käme und mich mitnähme"	Deller, F.J. Frida Holst	dance performance	4	first performance

General Remarks:

- 559 performances altogether in both houses: 291 dramatic (52%), 123 operatic (22%) and 141 operetta (26%)
- share in productions (50 productions altogether): 25 plays = 50%, 13 operas = 26%, 10 operettas = 20%, 2 dance = 4%
- within drama: classical drama: 3 productions (12%), 36 performances (12% share in drama total); comedy: 15 productions (60%) and 175 performances (60%); right-wing drama: 3 productions (12%) and 23 performances (8%); 4 modern classics (16%) and 57 performances (20%)
- 31 closed performances, but not specified to whom they were played
- season started 14 September 1935 and ended 30 June 1936 (291 "Spieltage")
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday (one at 3.15pm and one at 7.30pm)!! But not as a general rule, some Sundays only have evening shows. Performances every day, no day rest!
- not included in list: three introductory talks (probably preceding plays) as "Sonderveranstaltungen" in the Studio, seven guest productions in the Main House with one performance each by Gret Palucca (dance), Mary Wigman, English Players (with Shaw's "Candida" in English in 2/1936), Menaka, Otto Gebühr, H. Porten, and one guest production with 35 performances by "Rulffs Künstlerpuppenspiele" in the Studio (puppet theatre)

1936/37

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Der Widerspenstigen Zähmung"	Shakespeare	drama	14	in the translation of Wolf Graf Baudissin N.B. away from Rothe, traditional translation! original title: "The Taming of the Shrew"
"Was ihr wollt"	Shakespeare	drama	4	in the translation/adaptation of ? original title: "As You Like It" all performances in the Studio part of the cycle of "European Comedy"
"Leonce und Lena"	Büchner	drama	5	all performances in the Studio part of the cycle of "European Comedy"
"Der zerbrochene Krug"	Kleist	drama	5	all performances in the Studio part of the cycle of "European Comedy"
"Dieses Wasser trink ich nicht"	Lope de Vega	drama	6	all performances in the Studio part of the cycle of "European Comedy" interesting revival of Spanish classics
"Wilhelm Tell"	Schiller	drama	13	performances of the play during war-time prohibited
"Faust"	Goethe	drama	15	
"Marius und Sulla"	Grabbe	drama	15	produced in a double bill with Johst's "Der Einsame" (see below); first performance (!) → number of performances for double bill! BUT: counted towards nationalistic drama!!
"Der Raub der Sabinerinnen"	Schönthan brothers	modern classic	9	only one performance in the Main House rest played in the Studio
"Der Einsame"	Hanns Johst	nationalistic drama	15	play about a human destruction produced in a double bill with Grabbe's "Marius und Sulla" (see above) → number of performances for double bill!

"Der Reiter"	Heinrich Zerkaulen	nationalistic drama	8 [1936/37]	right- wing author, supported by Nazis, but had only success with his comedies
"Gustav Kilian"	Harald Bratt	comedy	11	one of the most successful plays of 1936/37! Münster's first production of the play
"Das Sonntagskind" UA 1935 Braunschweig	Hans Reimann music by Gutheim	comedy/ "Lustspieloperette"	10	only one performance in the Main House rest played in the Studio
"Die vier Gesellen"	Jochen Huth	comedy	10	one of the most successful plays of 1936/37! first production of the play
"Der Froschkönig"	Grimm brothers?	comedy/fairy-tale	15	only two performances in the Main House rest played in the Studio
"Das ist Herr Marinucci"	Hugo Hartung, with music by Bernhard Eichhorn	comedy	12	first production of the play
"Charleys Tante"	Brandon Thomas	comedy	11	only two performances in the Main House rest played in the Studio
"Der Kampf mit dem Tatzelwurm" (original title: "Für Liebe gesperrt")	Leo Lenz and Ralph Arthur Roberts	comedy/ "Lustspieloperette"	10	all performances in the Studio, play originally premiered in Münster in 1935, first production of the "new" version in Berlin in 1936
"Kinder auf Zeit"	Kurt Bortfeldt	comedy (Lustspiel)	10	all performances in the Studio
"Towarisch" UA 1935 Berlin	Jacques Duval, German adaptation by Curt Goetz	comedy	29	see Rischbieter, p.449f., as in York in 1937 all performances in the Studio
"Mein Sohn der Herr Minister"	André Birabeau (original title: "Fiston")	comedy	10	original French, adaptation by Hermann Kind all performances in the Studio
"Spiel an Bord"	Axel Ivers	comedy	5	successful author of comedies in Third Reich all performances in the Studio
"Die beiden Gregorius" UA 1936 Bremen	Stefan Kamares	comedy	6	West German first production all performances in the Studio
"Snieder Nörig"	P. Schurek	comedy	10	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Bahnmeester Dod"	?	comedy	2	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio

"Fuer"	Hans Ehrke	comedy	9 [1936/37]	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Wenn de Hahn kreiht"	August Hinrichs	comedy	11	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Die listigen Mädchen" "Spott und Eifersucht"	Gluck Pergolesi	opera	5	entitled: old masters of the comic opera – so probably set of smaller pieces/works all performances in the Studio
"Die Entführung aus dem Serail"	Mozart	opera	9	all performances in the Studio
"Don Juan" (= "Don Giovanni")	Mozart	opera	9	Münster's first production of the new German version by Siegfried Anheisser (see notes!) all performances in the Studio Bearbeitung eigentlich schon von Mozart herbeigesehnt, denn "die an deutschen Theatern verbreitet Ausändermanie erbitterte Mozart" (*MZ*, 27/12/1937)
"Aida"	Verdi	opera	17	
"Rigoletto"	Verdi	opera	9	
"Tosca"	Puccini	opera	7	
"La Bohème"	Puccini	opera	1	
"Lohengrin"	Wagner	opera	12	
"Der Freischütz"	Carl Maria von Weber	opera	15	
"Der Bajazzo" ("I Pagliacci") and "Cavalleria Rusticana"	Pietro Mascagni Ruggero Leoncavallo	operas	6	double bill same combination as in York

"Fra Diavolo" UA 1830	Daniel- Francois- Esprit Auber	opera	10 [1936/37]	text von Eugène Scribe typical French Opéra Comique
"Madame Liselotte" EA UA 1933 Essen	Ottmar Gerster text by Franz Clemens	opera	11	open to Nazi interpretation as opera propagates ideas such as industriousness, love of the fatherland and the importance of the nation in contrast to personal interests; Gerster obviously quite pro-Nazi (*1897 +1969)
"Die lustige Witwe"	Franz Léhar text by Leo (Rosen)Stein	operetta	27	
"Dichter und Bauer"	Franz von Suppé	operetta	19	one of the first operettas written around 1850, based on a comedy by Elmar (same title) Münster's first production of the operetta
"Glück am Ziel" EA	Ralph Maria Siegel	operetta	11	set in a "big German city" in "the present"
"Clivia" EA UA 1933 Berlin	Nico Dostal	operetta	14	set in an imaginative South American country Dostal one of the few successful living operetta composers of the 3. Reich
"Primaballerina"	Heinemann Helger	operetta	11	first production
"Wenn die Liebe erwacht"	?	operetta	2	*no further information about the piece found*
"Der Vetter aus Dingsda" UA 1921 Berlin	Eduard Künnecke	operetta	15	all performances in the Studio
"Die Frau im Spiegel"	?	operetta	8	*no further information about the piece found* all performances in the Studio
"Zwei Herzen im ¾ Takt" UA 1933 in Zürich	Robert Stolz	operetta	17	all performances in the Studio
"Lilofee"	Manfred Hausmann	contemporary fairy-tale/"dramatische Ballade" [=play]	11	Hausmann hailed by the Nazis as "Blood and Soil" poet, but oeuvre quite obviously not political

General Remarks:

- 511 performances altogether in both houses: 276 dramatic (54%), 111 operatic (22%) and 124 operetta (24%)
- share in productions (47 productions altogether): 26 plays = 55%, 12 operas = 26%, 9 operettas = 19%
- within drama: classical drama: 6 productions (23%), 62 performances (23% share in drama total); comedy: 17 productions (65%) and 182 performances (66%); right-wing drama: 2 productions (8%) and 23 performances (8%); 1 modern classic (4%) and 9 performances (3%)
- many closed performances: but no detailed information
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday (one at 3.15pm and one at 7.30pm)!! But not as a general rule, some Sundays only have evening shows. Performances every day, no day rest!
- length of season: start on 12 September 1936 (first performance in the Main House: Grabbe- Feier, double bill with Johst's "Der Einsame") and on 16 September 1936 in the Studio (with classic double bill "Leonce und Lena" and "Der zerbrochene Krug"); end of season: 27 June 1937
- guest performances: dance: Palucca (2/1937), Tanzgruppe Günther (3/1937), opera: "Stagione l'Opera Italiana" (3/1937), drama: Georges Baklanoff in "Don Juan" (3/1937), performance in English of Sutton Vane's "Outward Bound" by the Drama Society of the University of Cambridge in June 1937
- interesting: visitors' organisations ("Besuchssysteme des Stadttheaters"): season's ticket of the municipal theatre, season's ticket KdF for low income groups ("Minderbemittelte"), season's ticket NSKG for members (excludes operetta) – NO: German Stage anymore (see NL Vernekohl)!!
- *Münsterischer Anzeiger* from early September to late November 1936 quite thoroughly checked as regards the last remaining questions above

1937/38

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Hamlet"	Shakespeare	drama	12	in the translation of Hamlet interpreted as a hero according to Nazi ideology
"Maria Stuart"	Schiller	drama	9	
"Don Juan und Faust"	Grabbe	drama	12	
"Die Liebesfahrt der Scholaren" EA	Joseph von Eichendorff adapted by Walter Kordt music by Lutz Helger	drama – comedy	5	all performances in the Studio
"Moral"	Ludwig Thoma	modern classic	10	set in a Bavarian peasant village all performances in the Studio
"Uta von Naumburg"	Felix Dühnen	nationalistic drama	7	
"Wolken am Horizont"	Hans Kyser	nationalistic drama	10	first performance, author in attendance
"Thomas Paine"	Hanns Johst	nationalistic drama	13	
"Katte"	Hermann Burte	nationalistic drama	9	two closed performances for Hitler Youth, some others for the "Reichsarbeitsdienst" four performances of the total in the Studio
"Die Primanerin"	Sigmund Graff	comedy	16	Graff leading Nazi functionary in the "Reichsdramaturgie"
"Afrikanische Hochzeit"	Erich Paetzmann	comedy	4	play performed at colonial society event
"Dr. med. Hiob Prätorius" UA 1932 Berlin	Curt Goetz	comedy	9	Goetz constantly criticised by the Rosenberg circle

"Eine Frau wie Jutta" UA 1937 Hamburg	Alfred Möller and Hans Lorenz	comedy	16 [1937/38]	only three performances in the Main House rest played in the Studio
"Parkstraße 13"	Axel Ivers	comedy/crime play	31	successful author of comedies in Third Reich all performances in the Studio
"Das tapfere Schneiderlein"	?	comedy/fairy- tale	21	all performances in the Studio
"Der Hakim weiß es"	Rolf Lauckner	comedy	11	Lauckner eminent right- wing author all performances in the Studio
"Die drei Eisbären"	Maximilian Vitus	comedy	14	set in Bavaria, comedy about three bachelors all performances in the Studio
"Ein ganzer Kerl" EA	Fritz Peter Buch	comedy	21	Buch sacked in Frankfurt in 1933, but soon new contract in Berlin (see Rischbieter, p. 509f.); all performances in the Studio
"Ein Frau ohne Kuß"	Richard Kessler music by Walter Kollo	musical comedy	22	all performances in the Studio
"Hans und Hanna"	?	comedy	10	*author not found* all performances in the Studio
"Der müde Theodor"	Max Neal, Max Ferner	comedy (Schwank)	9	Neal Bavarian, his only big success all performances in the Studio
"Die heilige Flamme"	W. Somerset Maugham, new German adaptation by Karl Lerbs (!)	comedy	10	original title: "The Sacred Flame" all performances in the Studio
"Junge Spatzen" UA	Erhard Siedel with music by Henri Iversen	musical comedy (Lustspiel)	14	all performances in the Studio
"Spiel an Bord"	Axel Ivers	comedy	2	all performances in the Studio
"Man tut, was man kann"	Hans Laube and Blacky Hübner	comedy (Lustspiel)	11	all performances in the Studio
"Die Schnitzeljagd" UA Berlin 1934	Hans Pflanzer, with music by Charlie Miller	musical comedy (Lustspiel)	10	all performances in the Studio
"Dat Goap- Pulver"	?	comedy	5	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio

"Kunzert in Dippelshagen"	Jep Andersen	comedy	8 [1937/38]	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Tulipantjes"	?	comedy	5	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Bahnmeester Dod"	?	comedy	3	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio taken over from last season
"Wenn de Hahn kreiht"	August Hinrichs	comedy	5	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio taken over from last season
"Bachkantate" and "Dorfbabier"	J.S. Bach and Johann Schenk	operas (Kurzopern)	6	entitled: old masters of the comic opera all performances in the Studio
"Xerxes"	Händel	opera	12	obviously produced to establish a continuity to Niedecken- Gebhardt's celebrated productions Münster's first production of the opera
"Der bekehrte Trunkenbold"	Gluck	opera	3	all performances in the Studio
"Othello"	Verdi	opera	17	
"Turandot"	Puccini	opera	9	
"La Bohème"	Puccini	opera	5	quite obviously taken over from last season
"Tannhäuser"	Wagner	opera	15	
"Tiefland"	Eugen d'Albert	opera	16	one of Hitler's favorite operas (?)

"Die verkaufte Braut"	Smetana	opera	9 [1937/38]	„Wenn heute ein deutsches Theater Smetanas ‚Verkaufte Braut' einstudiert, so hat man darin vor allem ein Bekenntnis zu blut- und artgebundener Musik zu sehen, ein Bekenntnis also zu der Anschauung, die all wahren Kunstäußerungen nicht in verwaschenem Kosmopolitentum, sondern nationalem Volkstum begründet sieht." – also spiegelt sich hier „das slawische Volkstum [...] wider (WK, 10/5/1938)
"Die neugierigen Frauen"	Ermanno Wolf- Ferrari	opera	10	opera after Goldoni; Wolf-Ferrari: 1876-1948 German version by Hermann Treibler
"Schwarzer Peter"	Norbert Schultze	opera ("Märchenoper")	11	successful piece based on the low German fairy-tale "Erika" by Heinrich Traulsen, Schultze born 1911, composer of "Lili Marleen", obviously pro- Nazi
"Leichte Kavallerie"	Franz von Suppé	operetta	26	
"Eine Nacht in Venedig"	Johann Strauß	operetta	21	
"Der Zarewitsch"	Franz Léhar	operetta	30	
"Die Geisha"	Sidney Jones	operetta	19	Jones (1861-1946) British, "The Geisha" his most successful piece, UA London 1896
"Das kleine Hofkonzert" UA 1935 München	Edmund Nick based on comedy by Paul Verhoeven and Toni Impekoven	operetta set in a small German state ~1840	11	„musikalisches Lustspiel in 10 Bildern aus der Welt Carl Spitzwegs", Nick (1891-1974) was German and worked 1933-1945 in Berlin
"Liebe in der Lerchengasse"	Arno Vetterling text: Hermann Hermecke	operetta	8	
"Wenn die Liebe erwacht"	Eduard Künnecke	operetta	3	
"Der Vetter aus Dingsda" UA 1921 Berlin	Eduard Künnecke	operetta	1	taken over from last season all performances in the Studio

General Remarks:

- 576 performances altogether in both houses: 344 dramatic (60%), 113 operatic (20%) and 119 operetta (20%)
- share in productions (50 productions altogether): 31 plays = 62%, 11 operas = 22%, 8 operettas = 16%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (12,9%), 38 performances (11% share in drama total); modern classics: 1 production (3,2%), 10 performances (2,9%); comedy: 22 productions (70,9%) and 257 performances (74,7%); right-wing drama: 4 productions (12,9%) and 39 performances (11,3%)
- many closed performances: but no detailed information
- special performances: "Tanzabend"
- guest performances: "The Mollusc" ("Qualle" in German) by Hubert Henry Davies (1876-1919) performed by "The English Players", "Lanzelot und Sanderein" an "old Flemish play"
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday (one at 3.15pm and one at 7.30pm)!! But not as a general rule, some Sundays only have evening shows. Performances every day, no day rest!
- length of season: start on 11 September 1937; end of season: 18 June 1938
- *Münsterischer Anzeiger* from early September to early December 1937 quite thoroughly checked as regards the last remaining questions above (good source for information is the regular feature "Chronik vom Tage"!)

Programmes Städtische Bühnen Münster 1938 – 1944

1938/39

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Die Hohenstaufen" EA	Grabbe	drama	3	
"Die Verschwörung des Fiesko zu Genua"	Schiller	drama	10	
"Minna von Barnhelm"	Lessing	drama	14	12 performances of the total in the Studio
"Also gut! Lassen wir uns scheiden"	Sardou/Najac German adaptation by Heinz Hilpert	drama/ classic comedy	13	all performances in the Studio
"Ein idealer Gatte"	Oscar Wilde	modern classic	9	new German adaptation by Karl Lerbs (!)
"Mann kann nie wissen"	Shaw	modern classic	17	only rarely produced in Nazi Germany all performances in the Studio
"Pension Schöller"	Carl Laufs	modern classic/ comedy	6	all performances in the Studio
"Der Sturz des Ministers"	Eberhard Wolfgang Möller	nationalistic drama	9	set in Denmark 1770 to 1772
"Der Hochverräter"	Curt Langenbeck	nationalistic drama	1	set in New York in the 17th century, drama about Jakob Leisler why only one performance? much advertising for the play in the programmes!!
"Friedrich I."	Hans Rehberg	nationalistic drama	9	drama about the Prussian king
"Der Maulkorb" EA	Heinrich Spoerl	comedy	12	"heiteres Spiel in sieben Bildern"

"Ich bin kein Casanova"	Otto Bielen	comedy	5 [1938/39]	all performances in the Studio
"Schuß im Rampenlicht"	Paul van der Hurk	comedy/crime play	4	
"Aimée"	Heinz Coubier	comedy	15	all performances in the Studio
"Lauter Lügen"	Hans Schweikert	comedy	9	Schweikart during 3. Reich successful and officially endorsed dramatist and actor
"Der Maulkorb"	H. Spoerl	comedy	12	
"Der Birnbaum"	Juliana Kay	comedy	13	all performances in the Studio
"Flitterwochen"	P. Helling	comedy	19	all performances in the Studio
"Bezauberndes Fräulein"	Ralph Benatzky	musical comedy	26	all performances in the Studio
"Meine Schwester und ich"	Berr and Verneuil adapted by Robert Blum music by Ralph Benatzky	comedy (mus. Lustspiel)	6	obviously French piece! all performances in the Studio
"Ich suche meine Frau"	M. Hergeth with music by Herbert Walter	musical comedy (mus. Lustspiel)	6	all performances in the Studio
"Rotkäppchen" EA	Robert Bürkner	fairy- tale for children	18	"Kindermärchen- Lustspiel" first performed 10/12/1938 in time for X-Mas all performances in the Studio
"Flitterwochen" UA 1939 Braunschweig	Paul Helwig	comedy	19	all performances in the Studio
"Drei Akte mit Musik"	Fritz Schwiefert, music by Engel-Berger	comedy	7	all performances in the Studio
"Hatt giegen Hatt"	Wagenfeld	comedy	7	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' 6 performances of the total in the Studio

"De Etappenhas"	Karl Bünje	comedy	12 [1938/39]	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"De Uöwerleiper"	Hermann Homann	comedy	14	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' 12 performances of the total in the Studio
"För de Katt"	August Hinrichs	comedy	1	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Gomas und Zaide" and "Daphne"	Mozart, adapted by Willy Meckbach Richard Strauß	opera	8	double bill UA of "Daphne" 1938 in Dresden, opera set in ancient Greece – no intended political subtext
"Ein Maskenball"	Verdi	opera	6	
"Madame Butterfly"	Puccini	opera	11	
"Carmen"	Bizet	opera	12	
"Meistersinger von Nürnberg"	Wagner	opera	7	„machtvolle Kundgebung für den ewigen Genius Richard Wagner" (MZ, ?)
"Undine"	Lortzing	opera	13	
"Margarete"	Charles Gounod text Jules Barbier, Michel Corré, translated by J. Behr	opera	9	opera after Goethe
"Boris Godunow" UA 1872	M. P. Mussorgsky	opera	4	set in 1598 – 1605, the "definite Russian peoples' drama" (Reclam)
"Zaubergeige" UA 1935 Frankfurt EA	Werner Egk (1901-1983)	opera	2	contemporary romantic "Volksoper", hugely successful, but not in Münster: "nur schwach besuchte Premiere", ein "in sich zwiespältiges Werk" (WLZ, ?); Egk was a Hitler protégé but perhaps no Nazi himself

"Wiener Blut"	Johann Strauß	operetta	15 [1938/39]	"Neueinstudierung"
"Die Fledermaus"	Johann Strauß	operetta	8	
"Boccaccio"	Franz von Suppé text F. Zell, R. Genée	operetta	12	
"Frau Luna" EA UA 1899	Paul Lince text by Bolten- Baeckers	operetta	17	Paul Lincke still alive in the 1930s
"Die Kosakenbraut"	Eduard Czajanek, text by Kurt Reich, Eduard Rogati, Hanns Dekner	operetta	18	set in Hungary round 1918

General Remarks:

- 440 performances altogether in both houses: 296 dramatic (68%), 72 operatic (16%) and 70 operetta (16%)
- share in productions (42 productions altogether): 28 plays = 67%, 9 operas = 21%, 5 operettas = 12%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (14%), 40 performances (14% share in drama total); comedy: 18 productions (64%) and 205 performances (69%); right-wing drama: 3 productions (11%) and 19 performances (6%); 3 modern classics (11%) and 32 performances (11%)
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday (one at 3.15pm and one at 7.30pm)!! But not as a general rule, some Sundays only have evening shows. Performances every day, no day rest!
- guest performances: "Takarazuka" (jap. Märchenoper),
- special performance: "Tanzabend" (12/1938)
- not counted: "Ein heiterer Abend aus Oper und Operette", a special production with only one performance in the Studio
- source: Programme Notes and Press
- season starts on 11 September 1938 (in the Studio on 18/9)

1939/40

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Ein Sommernachtstraum"	Shakespeare	drama	17	music by Wolfgang Rössler in the translation of
"Iphigenie auf Tauris"	Goethe	drama	8	
"Amphitryon"	Kleist	drama	28	all performances in the Studio
"Prinz Friedrich von Homburg"	Kleist	drama	13	
"Die Hermannsschlacht"	Grabbe	drama	13	
"Kosziuszko" (Fragment) UA	Grabbe	drama	1	interesting: why only one performance?
"Perdü"	Annette von Droste-Hülshoff	drama	1	only performance in the Studio
"Die Frau vom Meere"	Ibsen	modern classic	10	
"Vor Sonnenaufgang"	Gerhart Hauptmann	modern classic	10	
"Ein toller Einfall"	Carl Laufs	modern classic/ comedy	7	
"Die Schlange" EA	Ernst Bacmeister	comedy	7	Bacmeister right- wing dramatist all performances in the Studio
"Schwarzbrot und Kipfel"	Werner von der Schulenburg	comedy	17	Schulenburg right- wing dramatist
"Der Hut" UA	Axel von Ambesser	comedy	2	during 3. Reich successful actor and dramatist
"Die gute Sieben"	Alexander Zinn	comedy	11	

"Peterchens Mondfahrt"	Gert von Bassewitz	comedy	14 [1939/40]	
"Drei mal Liebe" UA	Friedrich Wilhelm Hoboiken	comedy	14	all performances in the Studio
"Am hellichten Tag"	Paul Helwig	comedy	30	all performances in the Studio
"Der Mann mit den grauen Schläfen"	Leo Lenz	comedy	42	all performances in the Studio
"Versprich mir nichts"	Charlotte Rißmann	comedy	14	all performances in the Studio
"Großer Herr auf kleiner Insel"	Just Scheu and Peter Albert Stiller	comedy	12	all performances in the Studio
"Nette Pasteten"	Erich Hagemeister	comedy	10	all performances in the Studio
"De Etappenhas"	Karl Bunje	comedy	13	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"De Üöwerleiper"	Hermann Homann	comedy	2	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"De Brügge" UA	Franz Mehring	comedy	6	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Hochzeit des Figaro"	Mozart	opera	13	probably still in the Anheisser version – new version by Schünemann only from 1941
"La Traviata"	Verdi	opera	11	
"Zar und Zimmermann"	Lortzing	opera	18	
"Pique Dame"	P. I. Tschaikowsky	opera	9	
"Der fliegende Holländer"	Wagner	opera	15	

"Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg"	Wagner	opera	3 [1939/40]	one special performance in commemoration of 9/11/1923: "Wieder trug die Inszenierung den Charakter einer nationalen Kundgebung, wieder war sie eine wundersame Verklärung des nordisch germanischen Schönheitsideals" (Gerhard Kaschner in *MZ*, 11/1939)
"Der Holzdieb"	Heinrich Marschner	opera	2	Marschner: *1795 +1861
"Der Rosenkavalier"	Richard Strauß	opera	13	
"Der Evangelimann"	Wilhelm Kienzl	opera	7	contemporary opera, but already produced in Münster in 1928/29 see Drewniak, p.326
"Die pfiffige Magd" UA 1939	Julius Weismann	opera	8	contemporary opera Weismann: 1879-1950
"Paganini" UA 1925	Franz Léhar	operetta	28	contemporary piece
"Das Paradies der Frauen" UA 1938	Paul Burkhard	operetta	19	contemporary piece
"Maske in Blau" UA 1937	Fred Raymond	operetta	34	contemporary piece
"Himmelblaue Träume"	Robert Stolz	operetta	13	contemporary piece
"Liebe auf den ersten Blick"	Peter Igelhoff	operetta	21	contemporary piece (obviously) all performances in the Studio
"Die Landstreicher" UA 1899	Carl Michael Ziehrer	operetta	13	only non- contemporary operetta Ziehrer: *1843 +1922

General Remarks:

- 527 performances altogether in both houses: 300 dramatic (57%), 99 operatic (19%) and 128 operetta (24%)
- share in productions (40 productions altogether): 24 plays = 60%, 10 operas = 25%, 6 operettas = 15%
- within drama: classical drama: 7 productions (29%), 81 performances (27% share in drama total); comedy: 14 productions (58%) and 192 performances (64%); and 3 modern classics (13%) with 27 performances (9%)
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday (one at 3.15pm and one at 7.30pm)!! But not as a general rule, some Sundays only have evening shows. Performances every day, no day rest!
- not counted: three dance productions (pieces by Kodály, Müller- Kray, Weismann) with 27 performances, six special performances (two "Bunte Abende", two "Morgenfeiern", two "Dichterabende") – INTERESTING, however, are one "Bunter Abend" with army programme ("Was wir für die Truppen spielen") and one "Dichterabend" with the nationalist dramatist Ernst Bacmeister
- all but one operetta contemporary pieces!
- Programme Notes are now smaller with only 12 pages remaining, the paper quality is bad, too, and photos do not feature anymore

1940/41

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Faust" (Teil II)	Goethe	drama	12	see articles in Programme Notes about Faust the „Nordic man" (Heft 5)
"Torquato Tasso"	Goethe	drama	25	all performances in the Studio
"Don Carlos"	Schiller	drama	11	
"Gyges und sein Ring"	Hebbel	drama	7	
"Aschenbrödel"	Grabbe	drama/fairy- tale	9	
"Die Prinzen von Syrakus"	Karl Immermann	classical drama/ comedy	20	one of the favourites in the programmes notes as friend to Adolf von Vagedes Immermann lived in Münster 1819 – 1823 all performances in the Studio
"Ein toller Einfall"	Carl Laufs	modern classic/ comedy	10	
"Späte Liebe" EA	Alexej Nikolajewitsch Ostrowskij	comedy	9	German first production! (on 24/5/1941) one of the "Tendenzstücke" of the short period between autumn 1939 and summer 1941 Ostrowskij *1824 +1886 all performances in the Studio
"100 000 000 Dollars"	Heinz Coubier	comedy	21	one of the most successful comedy writers during the Third Reich (and after!) all performances in the Studio
"Kirschen für Rom" UA 1940	Hans Hömberg	comedy	4	
"Der Engel mit dem Saitenspiel"	Alois Johann Lippl	comedy	9	Lippl one of the most successful comedy writers in the Third Reich

"Ich habe einen Engel geheiratet"	Johann Vaszary	comedy	12 [1940/41]	author already successful on German stages before 1933
"Kleopatra die Zweite" UA 1940 Berlin	Cesare Meano, German by Herbert Waniek, Max Christian Feiler	comedy	12	Meano Italian all performances in the Studio
"Das neunzackige Mädchen"	Franz Gribitz	comedy	14	one special performance for the Wehrmacht in the Main House, apart from that all performances in the Studio
"Götter auf Urlaub"	Paul Hedwig	comedy	23	all performances in the Studio
"Besuch am Abend"	Willi Kollo	comedy	22	all performances in the Studio
"Die kleine Parfümerie"	Leo Lenz	comedy	27	all performances in the Studio
"Karl III. und Anne von Österreich"	Manfred Rösner	comedy	25	all performances in the Studio
"De Etappenhas"	Karl Bunje	comedy	7	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio taken over from last season
"Knubben" UA	Franz Mehring	comedy	51	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all but 10 performances in the Studio
"De Brügge"	Franz Mehring	comedy	4	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"De Diärksmaschin"	Bruno Peyn	comedy	21	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Don Juan"	Mozart	opera	7	
"Der Troubadour"	Verdi	opera	10	

"Tosca"	Puccini	opera	15 [1940/41]	
"Die Walküre"	Wagner	opera	8	
"Der Waffenschmied"	Lortzing	opera	8	
"Zar und Zimmermann"	Lortzing	opera	1	why only one performance? taken over into next season?? NO, but perhaps planned! Reason: destruction of the theatre in air-raid?!
"La dama boba" UA 1937	Ermanno Wolf- Ferrari	opera	10	
"Marie oder die Regimentstochter"	Donizetti	opera	10	
"Hänsel und Gretel"	Engelbert Humperdinck	opera	12	
"Die Witwe Grapin" "Der Holzdieb"	Friedrich von Flotow Heinrich Marschner (Heinrich Burkard)	operas	5	Flotow *1812 +1883 Marschner *1795 +1861 performed as double bill (and counted as two) all performances in the Studio
"Der Vogelhändler" UA 1891	Carl Zeller	operetta	25	Zeller *1842 +1898
"Der Graf von Luxemburg" UA 1909	Franz Léhar	operetta	24	Léhar +1948
"Die Frau ohne Kuß" UA 1924	Walter Kollo	operetta	6	Kollo *1878 +1940
"Auf der grünen Wiese"	Jara Benes	operetta	19	*no further information about composer found*
"Schäfchen zur Linken"	Karlheinz Gutheim	operetta	14	*no further information about composer found* contemporary piece

General Remarks:

- 529 performances altogether in both houses: 355 dramatic (67%), 86 operatic (16%) and 88 operetta (17%)
- share in productions (38 productions altogether): 22 plays = 58%, 11 operas = 29%, 5 operettas = 13%
- within drama: classical drama: 6 productions (27%), 84 performances (24% share in drama total); comedy: 15 productions (68%) and 261 performances (73%); and modern classics: one production (5%) with 10 performances (3%)
- interesting: parallel to York: two performances on Sunday (one at 3.15pm and one at 7.30pm)!! But not as a general rule, some Sundays only have evening shows. Performances every day, no day rest!
- not counted: one "Dichterabend" about Annette von Droste- Hülshoff and her circle, and a "Karl- Immermann- Gedenkfeier" with a talk by Heinz Kindermann
- many closed performances for the Wehrmacht!
- very successful season for the "Niederdeutsche Bühne", the lay theatre group which also takes part in the war effort (see *MA*, 15/6/1941)!
- concerning Programme Notes:
  1. strong emphasis on Münster's theatrical past with articles about Adolf von Vagedes and Karl Immermann, also many articles regarding the German classics (especially Goethe and Schiller) and ancient Greece
  2. emphasis on Verdi and a Verdi renaissance
  3. apart from some stress on Ermanno Wolf- Ferrari (mainly by his son who works at the Städtische Bühnen, see Heft 9) no importance attached to contemporary playwrights any longer
  4. interesting article about Pabst's 50. birthday in Heft 6
  5. size becomes less and less: at first 10, soon and for a quite a long time 8 pages, finally only 4 remaining!

1941/42

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Der Diener zweier Herren"	Goldoni	drama/ classic comedy	34	in the adaptation of Pabst first performance on 25/11/1941 all performances in the Studio
"Kabale und Liebe"	Schiller	drama	18	first performance on 21/3/1942 all performances in the Studio
"Der zerbrochene Krug"	Kleist	classical drama/ classic comedy	36	first performance on 4/10/1941 all performances in the Studio
„Die 47 Ronin" UA	Izumo adaptation by Eckard/ Eduard Reinacher	nationalistic drama ("altjapanisches Heldenspiel")	12	first production on 12/4/1942 in the presence of Gauleiter Dr. Meyer and the Japanese ambassador Kase all performances in the Studio
"Der Gigant"	Richard Billinger	nationalistic drama	14	first performance on 26/11/1941 all performances in the Studio
"Das unterschlug Homer"	Horst Lommer	comedy	18	first performance on 9/5/1942 all performances in the Studio
"Besuch aus Holland"	Heinrich Lilienfein	comedy	42	first production (on 28/1/1942) Lilienfein *1879 (see Fischli, p.150) all performances in the Studio
"Kollege kommt gleich"	Wilhelm Utermann	comedy (Lustspiel)	12	first performance on 23/5/1942 all performances in the Studio
"Wie führe ich eine Ehe"	Axel von Ambesser	comedy	52	Ambesser officially supported actor and dramatist; all performances in the Studio first performance on 5/10/1941
"Lüg nicht Baby"	Berndt Werner music by Hans Carste	comedy/ musikal. Lustspiel	13	first performance on 1/11/1941 all performances in the Studio

"Die Nacht in Siebenbürgen"	Nikolaus Asztalos adapted by Schreyvogel	comedy	28 [1941/42]	ungarische "Ausweichdramatik" (see Drewniak, p. 279); all performances in the Studio; first performance on 15/10/1941
"Sensation in Budapest"	Karl Georg Külb	comedy/crime play	17	first performance on 21/2/1942 all performances in the Studio
"Schneiweischen und Rosenrot"	?	fairy- tale for children	4	"Weihnachtsmärchen"
"Dat Nülleken" UA	Franz Rinsche	comedy	8	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' first production (on 26/3/1942) all performances in the Studio
"Cosi fan tutte"	Mozart	opera	6	in the new German translation by Georg Schünemann (not Anheisser any longer)
"Der Bajazzo"	Leoncavallo	opera	7	
"Die Italienerin in Algier"	Rossini	opera	3	
"Opernabende" with various pieces	Lortzing (with three different works), Nicolai	operas	3	two different programmes, but only small audiences (see review of the season)
"Salzburger Nockerln" ("Saison in Salzburg")	Fred Raymond	operetta	14	
"Der Vetter aus Dingsda"	Eduard Künnecke	operetta	7	
"Klassische Operettenmusik" with various pieces	Suppé, Johann Strauß, Millöcker	operettas	4	"Operettenabend"
"Ein Abend bei der lustigen Witwe"	various	operettas	7	"II. Operettenabend" with different popular pieces

General Remarks:

- 357 performances altogether in both houses: 306 dramatic (86%), 19 operatic (5%) and 32 operetta (9%)
- share in productions (22 productions altogether): 14 plays = 64%, 4 operas = 18%, 4 operettas = 18%
- within drama: classical drama: 3 productions (22%), 88 performances (29% share in drama total); comedy: 9 productions (64%) and 192 performances (63%); right-wing drama: 2 productions (14%) and 26 performances (8%)
- season under the influence of the devastating air-raid on Münster in early July 1941 with huge problems (see review of the season in NL Vernekohl bzw. in Stadtregistratur Z.B. Nr. 232, Bd.II, Fach 13, Nr. 556a), e.g. main house productions from the start of the 1941/42 season only in the city hall! Theatre not repaired during course of war!
- HOWEVER: the low number of productions is striking (only about half of last year's figure), but in view of this the overall number of performances is quite high (only 32% lower than last season)! Some plays reach fabulously high performance figures! BUT: This only holds true for plays, as the musical theatre suffers immensely from the difficult production situation in the city hall!
- season started on 4 October 1941 in the city hall and on 10 October 1941 in the Studio, end of season on 21 June 1942
- all opera performances on a temporary stage
- not counted: two "Tanzabende" which were performed eight times (together)
- 30 performances of a variety programme for the Wehrmacht, four "Werkpausenveranstaltungen" for DAF
- soloists collected money for WHW or sang at WHW concerts 25 times (for both pieces of information see Z.B. 232 – see above)
- concerning Programme Notes:
  1. strong emphasis on Münster's theatrical past, especially the time around 1800-1820
  2. size becomes less and less: at first 4, finally only 2 pages remaining!

1942/43

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Über allem Zauber Liebe"	Calderon	drama	20	all performances in the Studio
"Emilia Galotti"	Lessing	drama	25	many closed performances all performances in the Studio
"Kabale und Liebe"	Schiller	drama	21	last year's production, taken over in this season's programme due to enormous success! all performances in the Studio
"Der böse Geist Lumpazivagabundus"	Nestroy	drama/ „Zauberposse"	28	all performances in the Studio
"Die goldene Harfe" UA 1933	Hauptmann	modern classic	17	reason: Hauptmann's 80th birthday (see Drewniak, pp.195-210); this play more literary- romantic rather than naturalistic all performances in the Studio
"Das Dorf bei Odessa"	Herbert Reinecker	nationalistic drama set in Russia 1941	14	German first performance (on 16/1/1943 – so only a few weeks after Stalingrad! see also ProMi files!!) – see article in *MA*, 18/1/1943! all performances in the Studio
"Feuer im Herbst"	Gherardo Gherardi	comedy	5	author Italian, production obviously part of a politically minded renaissance of Italian drama all performances in the Studio
"13 Hufeisen"	Just Scheu/Nebhut	comedy	27	Scheu successful author of comedies all performances in the Studio
"Der blaue Strohhut"	Friedrich Michael	comedy	24	all performances in the Studio
"Johann"	Theo Lingen	comedy (Lustspiel)	33	all performances in the Studio

"Die weiße Dame"	Friedrich Schreyvogel	comedy	17 [1942/43]	Schreyvogel successful as dramatist but especially as author of adaptations of works by foreign dramatists/composers all performances in the Studio
"Rotkäppchen"	Robert Bürkner	fairy- tale for children	8	"Kindermärchen- Lustspiel" obviously performed for X-Mas
"Dat Nülleken"	Franz Rinsche	comedy	4	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' taken over from last season all performances in the Studio
"De letste Danz"	Friedrich Lange	comedy	16	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio
"Fidelio"	Beethoven	opera	8	
"Madame Butterfly"	Puccini	opera	14	
"Die verkaufte Braut"	Smetana	opera	9	
"Ariadne auf Naxos"	Richard Strauß	opera	4	
"Der Zigeunerbaron"	Johann Strauß	operetta	23	
"Land des Lächelns"	Franz Léhar	operetta	24	
"Monika" UA 1937	Nico Dostal	operetta	17	Dostal perhaps the most successful contemporary composer of operettas during the Third Reich

General Remarks:

- 358 performances altogether in both houses: 259 dramatic (72%), 35 operatic (10%) and 64 operetta (18%)
- share in productions (21 productions altogether): 14 plays = 67%, 4 operas = 19%, 3 operettas = 14%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (29%), 94 performances (36% share in drama total); comedy: 8 productions (57%) and 134 performances (52%); right-wing drama: 1 production (7%) with 14 performances (5%); and 1 modern classic (7%) with 17 performances (7%)
- not counted: "Der große Tanzabend" called "Sommerlicher Reigen" (performed three times), "Liederabend" with Albert Emmerlich (only one guest performance), matinee with the Nazi dramatist F. W. Hymnen reading his works, and another matinee in honour of G. Hauptmann
- start of season on 28 October 1942, season ends on 7 July 1943 – very late start! no explanations given!
- concerning Programme Notes:
  1. emphasis on Münster's theatrical past still remarkable but less so than during the previous years
  2. a lot about Schiller, also about Hauptmann
  3. size: only 2 pages remaining!

1943/44

Title	Author/Composer	Genre	Number of Performances	Remarks
"Die Mitschuldigen"	Goethe	classical drama/ comedy	12	all performances in the Studio
"Der Tod des Empedokles"	Hölderlin	drama	6	all performances in the Studio
"Der böse Geist Lumpazivagabundus"	Nestroy	drama	4	taken over from last season all performances in the Studio
"Die Freier"	Joseph von Eichendorff	drama	13	written 1833 all performances in the Studio
"Der Raub der Sabinerinnen"	Schönthan brothers	modern classic/ classic comedy	18	all performances in the Studio
"Das Konzert"	Hermann Bahr	modern classic/ comedy	22	Bahr not loved by the Nazis, this comedy, however, well supported (Rischbieter, p.400f.) all performances in the Studio
"Geographie und Liebe"	Björnsjerne Björnson	modern classic/ comedy	28	Björnson one of the dramatists favoured by the Nazis all performances in the Studio
"Mit meinen Augen"	C.H. Braun/Braum?	comedy	9	all performances in the Studio
"Ingeborg"	Curt Goetz	comedy	22	all performances in the Studio
"Der Pelikan"	Wilhelm Utermann	comedy	7	all performances in the Studio
"Feuer im Herbst"	Gherardo Gherardi	comedy	3	author Italian, production obviously part of a politically minded renaissance of Italian drama all performances in the Studio taken over from last season
"Komplexe"	Gudmundur Kamban	comedy	10	author Danish, collaborated with Nazis all performances in the Studio

"Spuren im Schnee"	Josef Nowak	comedy	15 [1943/44]	all performances in the Studio
"Titania"	Friedrich Schreyvogel	comedy	26	"märchenhafte Komödie" all performances in the Studio
"De letste Danz"	Friedrich Lange	comedy	3	dialect comedy in low German performed as a guest performance by the 'Low German Stage' all performances in the Studio taken over from last season
"Die Hochzeit des Figaro"	Mozart	opera	10	German adaptation by Georg Schünemann
"Der Wildschütz"	Lortzing	opera	6	
"Tosca"	Puccini	opera	8	
"Martha"	von Flotow	opera	6	
"Tiefland"	Eugen d'Albert	opera	6	
"Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor"	Otto Nicolai	opera	6	
"Monika"	Nico Dostal	operetta	3	taken over from last season!
"Frau Luna" UA 1899 Berlin	Paul Lince	operetta	17	
"Die lustige Witwe"	Franz Léhar	operetta	7	
"Die Fledermaus"	Johann Strauß	operetta	26	

General Remarks:

- 293 performances altogether in both houses: 198 dramatic (68%), 42 operatic (14%) and 53 operetta (18%)
- share in productions (25 productions altogether): 15 plays = 60%, 6 operas = 24%, 4 operettas = 16%
- within drama: classical drama: 4 productions (27%), 35 performances (18% share in drama total); comedy: 8 productions (53%) and 95 performances (48%); and 3 modern classics (20%) with 68 performances (34%)
- not counted: a "Bunter Abend" to introduce the new members of the company (given three times), a dance performance entitled "Die Puppenfee" – "Die Weibermühle" (performed four times; "Die Puppenfee" by Josef Bayer, "Die Weibermühle" by Alice Zickler and Friedrich Wilckens), and a special production for the Wehrmacht called "Für jeden etwas" (performed twice)
- programmes between 9 October 1943 and 5 November 1943 and between 29 May 1944 and 1 June 1944 missing!
- start of season on 18 September 1943, season ends on 25 June 1944
- performances in the Studio and the City Hall only as matinees at 3pm from 6 November 1943 (see MZ, 3/11/1943), no more evening performances any longer – possible reason: on 10 October 1943 heavy air-raid on Münster!
- concerning Programme Notes:
  1. similar concept as in 1942/43
  2. in the first issues a lot about Hölderlin
  3. size of letters so small that reading becomes difficult
  4. only 14 issues in total (reason for this might also be the air-raid on 10/10/1943)