THE MODERN CATALYST:
GERMAN INFLUENCES ON THE BRITISH STAGE, 1890-1918

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the role of German culture – theatre, music, opera, politics, and philosophy – as a catalyst to the modernist transformations of London theatre between 1890 and 1918. It explores the ways British theatre engaged German culture, whether by emulation, adaptation, or resistance, and focuses on four major figures in the Edwardian Theatre: J. T. Grein, William Archer, Bernard Shaw, and Harley Granville Barker.

Impresario J. T. Grein (1862-1935) established German theatre companies in London to introduce British theatre to the works of great German writers, actors, and directors. Scottish critic William Archer (1856-1924) used Germany as a model for his campaign to translate and produce the plays of Henrik Ibsen in London. He also advocated the formation of England’s National Theatre, using German examples of state-funded repertory theatres. Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) introduced English audiences to Richard Wagner’s operas, ideas, and productions. Shaw’s plays also enjoyed a rich production history in Germany through his working relationship with his translator, Siegfried Trebitsch. Director Harley Granville Barker (1877-1946) closely followed the careers of German directors Max Behrend and Max Reinhardt. In 1912 and 1914, Barker produced three of Shakespeare’s plays, *The Winter’s Tale, Twelfth Night*, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, in which audiences and critics quickly noticed German
influences. As each chapter explores these figures, it will specify and evaluate how German theatre influenced them, and whether they emulated, adapted, or resisted it.

The final chapter returns to each of these figures in the context of World War I. During the four years of the war, 1914 to 1918, their relationship to German culture changed radically. Some, like Archer, turned against German culture and wrote pamphlets for the Secret War Propaganda Bureau. Shaw, meanwhile, wrote articles criticizing British leadership during the war. The war transformed the British theatre’s relationship with German culture, although Germany still affected the British theatre as it moved forward – sometimes in cautious steps, sometimes in violent leaps – towards the modern world.
For Beth
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INTRODUCTION

“We were inclined to borrow useful items from the plans of the many good German […] theatres.” –

Harley Granville Barker, The Exemplary Theatre, 1922

“My culture is very largely a German culture,” wrote Bernard Shaw in 1911, expressing his debt to German philosophy, music, playwrights, and translators. He explained what he owed to German culture in the preface to a German edition of his plays. Shaw was one person out of many in the Edwardian theatre who was directly affected by German culture. This dissertation will examine the influence of German theatre and culture on the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century London theatre. German culture arrived in London through a variety of sources, most frequently through visiting German theatre or opera companies, or the performance of German plays and operas in London. However, numerous theatre critics, scholars, directors, and writers traveled to and wrote about Germany and German theatre, and their work served as another conduit of German culture into London.

German culture was certainly not the only influence on London theatre at the turn of the century. For instance, adaptations of French dramas, farces, and musicals dominated the English stage. During the 1890’s and 1900’s, the popular actresses Sarah

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1 Harley Granville Barker, The Exemplary Theatre (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1922) viii.
Bernhardt and Eleanora Duse served as cultural ambassadors of sorts from France and Italy, respectively. Russian dance companies such as the Ballets Russes visited London in 1911. The Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen gained a loyal, if small, following in London. Chinese and Japanese theatre companies performed their native drama on the London stage. American musicals and comedies were a regular feature in West End theatres, and American melodramas continued the popularity of lavish spectacles on the stage. Irish playwrights also found success in London, including Dion Boucicault, Lady Gregory, W. B. Yeats, and, of course, Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde.

Yet German theatre, culture, and ideas contributed most significantly to the modernist transformations of London theatre between 1890 and 1918. Without question, Ibsen had an effect on English playwriting, but he was a single playwright. By contrast, the totality of German theatre and opera – plays, playwrights, acting styles, directing methods, theatre architecture, production management, criticism, scholarship, and musical composition – influenced the English theatre. Furthermore, modern English theatre practitioners acknowledged their indebtedness to German theatre much more than that of other countries. The late nineteenth/early twentieth century heralds the birth of modernism in Western culture. To stimulate the progress of their theatre, English practitioners turned to Europe for inspiration in visual art, literature, theatre production, and music. While much has been written about the rise of modernism in England, the influence of German culture has not been investigated.

Modernism is a difficult term to define, for it manifested itself differently in the categories of arts, politics, and society. Even within the theatre itself, modernism surfaced in different ways. In playwriting, modernism marked the introduction of realistic or
naturalistic plays of social concern, as well as symbolic plays that emphasized abstract ideas over realistic character development. In production it emphasized the acting ensemble, led by the controlling director. Modernism also focused on the development of state-funded theatres that hosted a regular acting ensemble and ran a variety of plays in repertory. In scenic design, modernism introduced symbolic designs that did not stress historic or pictorial accuracy; the scenic elements could instead evoke emotions, symbols, and ideas. It is difficult, if not impossible, to define theatrical modernism without setting it in opposition to its precedents, namely the Victorian or Romantic theatre. Yet modernism did not fully reject its past. The Irish playwright Bernard Shaw serves as a perfect example of the modern mindset: he adapted the format and characters of nineteenth century melodramas and drawing-room comedies, but used them instead for a theatre of ideas and social concern.

“Influence” is a very fluid term as well, and certainly the influence that German theatre exerted on the Edwardian English theatre was not simple or straightforward. In some of the cases treated here, influence works as emulation. For instance, when theatre manager J. T. Grein established the Independent Theatre Society in 1891, he emulated Otto Brahm’s Freie Bühne (Free Stage) in Berlin. Scottish critic William Archer and English director Harley Granville Barker, in composing their 1904 treatise on England’s national theatre, also emulated the state-funded theatres of Germany. “Influence” can also suggest adaptation. Sometimes this adaptation is literal: playwrights Arthur Wing Pinero and Henry Arthur Jones, for instance, adapted the social drama of Ibsen, Hauptmann, and

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3 For a helpful study on this topic, see Martin Meisel’s *Shaw and the Nineteenth-Century Theater* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).
other continental playwrights. Barker, the actor and playwright turned manager and
director, adapted the directing techniques of German directors Max Behrend and Max
Reinhardt for his English productions. In a similar fashion, Bernard Shaw adapted the
structure and character of Richard Wagner’s operas for his own plays; thusly, Shaw’s
plays should be understood, at least in some key ways, as musical compositions.

Finally, “influence” can signify resistance. The commercial theatre in Edwardian
London generally resisted any changes in their methods of producing and acting plays,
including those from Germany. The very system of actor-management, which focused on
a central figure (usually male) who adapted or commissioned the script, acted the main
role, cast the other actors, helped design scenery, and owned or leased the theatre,
remained the dominant mode of production in England through World War I. While
theatre practitioners such as Shaw, Grein, Archer, and Barker emulated or adapted
German culture, they did not always accept it wholeheartedly. Instead, they chose which
elements suited their aims best, and resisted those elements of German culture that were
not useful. For instance, as Archer and Barker composed their Scheme for the National
Theatre, they identified specific elements such as the German subscription system and
inter-act music that they would not use.4 Edwardian English theatre practitioners filtered
German innovations through their own perspectives, and sometimes they misunderstood
or misconstrued German theatre practices. Nevertheless, Germany’s influence on the
Edwardian theatre is significant, and quite pervasive in modern developments.

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4 William Archer and Harley Granville Barker, A National Theatre, Scheme and Estimates (London: Duckworth, 1907) 64, 85.
Technically, the Edwardian period lasted during King Edward VII’s reign from his mother’s death on January 22, 1901 to his death on May 6, 1910. However, the antecedents to Edwardian culture and the Edwardian frame of mind were in place well before Victoria’s passing, and its tenets certainly did not dissolve with Edward’s death. Simon Nowell-Smith uses 1901 to 1914 in his history *Edwardian England*, as does David Powell in *The Edwardian Crisis*. Samuel Hynes, in *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, ends the Edwardian period with England’s declaration of war on Germany on August 4, 1914, although he sets the genesis of the Edwardian mindset in the 1890’s. Much of the groundwork laid by theatre practitioners in the 1890’s (i.e. Shaw, Grein, Archer) contributed to the changes in the early 1900’s. Their innovations were transformed again by the war; it seems more appropriate, therefore, to frame the Edwardian period from the early 1890’s through 1918. My appendix, therefore, provides a timeline of German theatre and opera in London from 1889 to 1918.\(^5\) This dissertation, concerned with the effect of Germany on the Edwardian stage, will examine the changing perception of Germany throughout World War I as well. The shift in perception affected the stage profoundly. The popular theatre, for instance, dramatized both the fear of German invasion and the patriotic fervor in support of the war effort. Meanwhile, William Archer and Bernard Shaw turned their critical and theatrical energies toward the war effort. They wrote opposing treatises on the nature of the war and its causes, and attempted to affect public opinion about Germany.

\(^5\) See page 158.
During the Edwardian Era, England’s relationship with Germany and German culture was unique compared to other countries. Germany was newly unified in 1871, and during the Edwardian period became an industrial and military world power, and a potentially dangerous threat to England. By the turn of the century, Germany rivaled, and in some cases surpassed, England’s production capacity and military might. The same was true for the United States, but England did not fear a war with America; the two countries had been allies for some time. Italy, although not England’s ally, could not compete with Germany’s military and industrial capabilities. France, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden would quickly become England’s political and military friends around the turn of the century, all united with England against Germany. Two opposing processes occurred during the Edwardian period simultaneously: one process saw an increasing English thirst for German culture; the second process saw a declining English trust of Germany. This decline would eventually lead to war.

My thesis is that German theatre and culture – sometimes Germany’s very presence in the world – was a catalyst to English theatre becoming modern between 1890 and 1918. This dissertation focuses on four major figures in the Edwardian Theatre: J. T. Grein and William Archer are discussed in the first chapter; Bernard Shaw and Harley Granville Barker have chapters of their own. The theatrical endeavors of all four, along with other significant practitioners and bits of their stories, are revisited in the final chapter on World War I. The four figures’ relationships with German culture intensified during the war, although their particular connections shifted in very different directions.
Perhaps it is best to think of these figures as major points of intersection in an intricate web of influence. This dissertation explores the repeated intersections of these theatre practitioners with German theatre and culture, and how those intersections allowed German philosophy, music, and theatre to provide the nodes of the web. As each chapter engages these figures, I will specify and evaluate how German theatre influenced them, and whether they emulated, adapted, or resisted it.

The Edwardian English theatre drew upon Germany constantly for commercial and artistic purposes. For instance, Scottish critic William Archer (1856-1924) turned to Germany as a model for their state-funded repertory theatres. He wrote extensively about how England could copy German examples to create its own national theatre. He also envied German productions of the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen. Largely considered the father of modern European drama, Ibsen lived and wrote in Germany throughout much of his career. Archer translated Ibsen’s plays into English and produced them in order to motivate English playwrights to write realistic drama. He sought a serious theatre that would provide more than simple melodrama or drawing room comedies.

Producer J. T. Grein (1862-1935) dug deep into German culture for inspiration. Grein worked tirelessly to establish a German theatre in London for two purposes: first, to serve the German population living in London, and second, to introduce British culture to the works of great German writers, actors, and managers. Grein and his wife Alice wrote and translated many plays, and funded many productions.
George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) turned to Germany for its superior theatres, composers, and politicians. He traveled to Germany regularly and reviewed concerts and operas by German composers in London. With his famous tract, *The Perfect Wagnerite* (1898), he introduced English audiences to Richard Wagner’s music, ideas, and productions. Shaw even suggested building a theatre in England similar to Wagner’s Bayreuth Festspielhaus. As a prominent member of the Fabian Society, Shaw wrote and spoke about German politics and society. His plays also enjoyed a rich production history in Germany; the Viennese playwright Siegfried Trebitsch singled out Shaw for translation, and the two produced Shaw’s plays in Germany in the first half of the twentieth century. Finally, Shaw engaged German culture through his writings about World War I. He received damnation and praise from England and Germany for his voice – often alone – speaking against the war and its causes.

Actor, playwright, and director Harley Granville Barker (1877-1946) was in many ways an heir to Archer, Grein, and Shaw. Younger than all of them, Barker employed their ideas on writing, acting, directing, managing, and producing theatre. He began as an actor in William Poel’s Elizabethan Stage Society in 1899, then acted and managed Shaw’s plays (amongst many others) at the Court Theatre from 1904 to 1907. During that time, he also acted with the Stage Society, a company that produced new plays by English and European playwrights. The Society worked closely with members of Grein’s program for staging German Theatre in London. In addition, Barker developed many of his ideas on how to produce and manage a theatre while working closely with Archer; in 1904, the two penned a scheme for a National Theatre in England. Barker visited Germany himself, and closely followed the career of German director Max Reinhardt. In
1912 and 1914, Barker produced three of Shakespeare’s plays, *The Winter’s Tale*, *Twelfth Night*, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, in which audiences and critics quickly noticed the influence of Reinhardt’s theatre productions.

The final chapter will return to each of these figures in the context of World War I. During the four years of the war, 1914 to 1918, their relationship to German culture changed. Most importantly, British associations with or influence by German theatre practices took on a political dimension. For J. T. Grein, his German associations and his continuing push for the modern theatre in London almost ruined him. He produced Oscar Wilde’s *Salome*, a previously unlicensed play, at the Kennington Theatre in April 1918. The play’s performance aroused the ire of some ultra-patriotic elements of British society, namely right-wing MP Noel Pemberton-Billing. Billing and his followers believed *Salome* encouraged unmanly behavior. The resulting public lawsuit caused Grein to lose his job as critic for the *Sunday Special*, a job he held since 1897. During the war, William Archer turned his efforts away from theatre production to writing against Germany and German culture: he took a post with the British government’s Secret War Propaganda Bureau and began writing articles and pamphlets that criticized German culture. Bernard Shaw published articles, too, although he condemned both England and Germany for starting the war. Because of his criticism of governmental policy and leadership, he was unpopular during the war, and lost many friends in the theatre. During the early years of the war, Harley Granville Barker turned for his theatrical inspiration from Germany to America. In May 1915, he journeyed to the United States with his productions of Euripides’ *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *The Trojan Women*. However, by the end of 1916, he enlisted with the British Army Intelligence, then traveled to France to
report on the Red Cross. By the war’s end he had divorced his wife Lillah McCarthy, remarried, and all but retired from practical theatre work; however, in the few productions he directed later in life, he continued to use German models for the theatre director.

The relationship of the Edwardian London theatre to their German counterparts was a complex interplay of emulation, adaptation, and resistance. The results of that relationship had a profound effect on the British theatre, as it moved forward – sometimes in cautious steps, sometimes in violent leaps – towards the modern world. But whether the British theatre accepted or resisted the German theatre, it was undeniably “a German culture.”
CHAPTER 1

A GERMAN CULTURE IN LONDON

1.1 TWO FIGURES

At half past six on the evening of January 22, 1901, Queen Alexandrina Victoria of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, died. Amongst the family gathered at Victoria’s bedside stood two important figures. The first was her eldest son and heir to the throne, Alfred Edward, Prince of Wales, soon to be King Edward VII. He was fifty-nine at the time of his ascension, and very unlike his mother. While Victoria had secluded herself after the 1861 death of husband, the Prince Consort Alfred, Edward could be seen about town. He visited the theatre, he enjoyed sports, he smoked cigars and drank champagne. Most importantly, he traveled outside the United Kingdom. He made state visits to France, Italy, Germany, Russia, and Portugal. He spoke French and German. He officially re-connected England to the Continent. He became, as newspapers and periodicals dubbed him, a “Good European,” and England followed him.¹

¹ Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) 312. Edward was also called the “Uncle of Europe” for his familial ties with European royalty.
The second figure at the Queen’s bedside was her oldest grandson, Frederick William Albert Victor of Prussia, better known as Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany. His mother was Princess Victoria of England, eldest daughter and child of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. In 1888, at the age of twenty-nine, he had ascended as German Emperor, following the death of his father, Frederick III. The young Wilhelm’s foreign policies quickly came into conflict with those of German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck; in 1890, Wilhelm pressured Bismarck to resign, and he began expanding Germany as a military, industrial, and imperial power. Often regarded as impulsive and sentimental in his leadership, Wilhelm became well known in the British press in the late 1890’s and early 1900’s for a series of incidents that distanced Britain and Germany politically and socially. In 1896 he telegrammed President Paul Kruger of the southern Africa Transvaal Republic to congratulate him for repelling the Jameson Raid (led by English settlers) on the Republic. In 1906 and 1911, he sparked diplomatic skirmishes over German naval dominance in imperial territories in Tangier, Morocco. In 1908, his comments, published in the *Daily Telegraph* of London, about Anglo-German friendship and Germany’s right to build warships alienated much of the British public. For many Englishmen, Wilhelm served as an example of the increasing threat of Prussian militarism as the twentieth century dawned. This growing prejudice against Germans and Germany spread not only through the general public, but also segments of the popular theatre.

Nevertheless, the familial distance between Edward and Wilhelm was not far, for Edward himself came from rich German descent. His father, Prince Albert, was Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and amongst his godparents were the King of Prussia and the royal family of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. As Prince Albert’s son, Edward automatically held the
titles Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Duke of Saxony. Edward’s life itself embodied the political trials of Europe: his mother was English, his father was German, and his wife, Queen Alexandra, was Danish; at the time of their wedding in 1863, Germany and Denmark fought over the territories of Schleswig and Holstein. Edward counted nephews and nieces, brothers and sisters, amongst members of the royal families of Europe, including Wilhelm II.

So at Victoria’s bedside stood two figureheads for the coming decades: Edward, the Good European, leading England into a golden age marked by advocacy for and reactions against change, and Wilhelm, the German nationalist seeking to secure Germany’s rapidly expanding role in a changing world. They were inexplicably tied together, but somehow estranged. They visited each other, but they maintained their distance. Their countries interacted economically and culturally, but it was no secret that they did not trust each other; it was common knowledge that Edward had declared the younger Wilhelm was “no gentleman.”

While it is easy to read too much into the Queen’s passing at the dawn of the twentieth-century, the new century did experience many social, cultural, and political changes in rapid succession. Between 1890 and 1914, Britain had six different Prime Ministers from both the Conservative and Liberal Parties; the new Independent Labour Party and Unionist coalitions also gained followings. Britain’s Army, once a symbol of the proud British Empire, suffered an embarrassing series of defeats in the opening weeks of the Boer War (1899-1902). Motorized buses and cars replaced London’s hansom cabs and horse-drawn carriages. Britain’s industries mass-produced clothing, bicycles, ships,

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and armaments. The vast empire brought foreign cultures from the four corners of the earth into London’s museums and exhibitions. Most importantly, England slowly reconnected itself to Europe. In *The Edwardian Turn of Mind*, Samuel Hynes describes the range of elements that formed the Edwardian worldview, from transformations in artistic endeavors to technological developments. In his book, he observes the major shift that occurred in England:

England’s relation to Europe changed during the Edwardian years, and that change is probably the most important of all the transformations that took place in England before the war. It was a change that was vigorously resisted by the conservative forces of Edwardian society, for whom Europe was an infection and isolation was splendid. The liberating movement in this case was the sum of the efforts expended to persuade the English to become Europeans, or at least take seriously what Europeans were doing.³

Following King Edward’s example, British culture modernized itself through its relationship with continental Europe.

Nowhere is this changing relationship more evident than in the Edwardian theatre. The theatre of the nineteenth-century excelled in producing large-scale, pictorial melodramas and spectacular stagings of Shakespeare. It was synonymous with the actor-manager, great figures (mostly male) who selected and edited the script, played the lead role, hired the supporting cast, helped design scenery, and owned or leased the theatre.

These men dominated the Edwardian theatre, and their power grew until the war. Simultaneously, a coterie of British writers, managers, actors, and directors sought to challenge the actor-managers’ primacy. To do this, they drew on the work of their modern counterparts in continental Europe, and endeavored to reform British theatre by introducing modernism. One of their most significant – and largely unexplored – sources

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³ Hynes, *Edwardian* 311.
for theatrical modernism was Germany. As the British public increasingly suspected German *kultur*, represented by the Kaiser, the theatre simultaneously tapped into it as a vast resource for new ideas in theatre design, writing, acting styles, and directing.

At the beginning of the Edwardian Era, a definite German presence already existed in London. N. H. G. Schoonderwoerd, biographer of theatre manager J. T. Grein, estimated that there were roughly 150,000 Germans living in London in the 1890’s; of those, approximately 50,000 had become naturalized British subjects. British theatre practitioners were also fully aware of German theatre practices. In 1881 the Meiningen Ensemble, a professional theatre company from the court of Georg II, Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, visited London. Saxe-Meiningen, well-versed in art history and a gifted drawer, designed highly detailed, historically accurate costumes, scenery, and properties. With his wife, the actress Helene Freifrau von Heldburg, and the theatre producer Ludwig Chronegk, he choreographed large crowd scenes to complement his scenic designs. These crowd scenes and Saxe-Meiningen’s designs stunned London audiences and inspired actor-managers for decades to come.

The German theatre led the nineteenth-century trend towards unified productions in design and acting style. The unified production is typically associated with figures in the modern theatre, such as director Harley Granville Barker and designer Edward Gordon Craig, but the Victorian theatre has a legitimate claim to the concept as well. The Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, for instance, established a new method for producing plays; he synthesized every element under his guiding eye. The costumes, scenery, lighting, music, actors’ voices, and actors’ movement were manipulated to produce a unified effect.
German composer Richard Wagner explored this concept as well. He called this effect the *gesamtkunstwerk*, or “total art work.” For performances of his operas at the Bayreuth Festspielhaus, he covered the orchestra pit and dimmed the lights to focus the audience’s attention on the stage. In addition, the Festspielhaus’ egalitarian seating plan allowed every audience member an uninterrupted view of the stage. The Duke of Saxe-Meiningen’s and Wagner’s innovations inspired the theatre of England and continental Europe throughout the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries. English actor-managers such as Henry Irving, Herbert Beerbohm Tree, and George Alexander perfected the unified production, and established its precedence in the theatre well before Barker and Craig practiced it.

The theatre of England found a rich source in German drama. Marvin Carlson, writing about German theatre in the nineteenth-century, observes that Germany maintained a leading role in theatre reform: “The theatrical renaissance at the end of the nineteenth century was of course an international phenomenon, but Germany’s share in it was so great that it is hardly exaggerating to say that she had taken the lead from France in the theatre as she had done politically in 1870.”\(^5\) When the British theatre drew upon the German theatre, it drew upon a modern, innovative theatre.


1.2 GERMANY IN BRITISH POPULAR CULTURE

“A German was very different from an Englishman in those days,” wrote Rebecca West in her memoir and history *1900*. West described many of the differences between Englishmen and Germans at the turn of the century; her writing highlights the conscious disparities that many Englishmen saw between themselves and their German counterparts. In this particular case she wrote about the differences in dueling practices between the English and German militaries. England, she pointed out, passed a law in 1844 requiring military officers to prevent duels as best they could. Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, meanwhile, passed a law in 1897 only requiring potential duelers to obtain permission from an authority before their duel. Gilbert and Sullivan, famous composers of comic operas at the Savoy Theatre in London, satirized the German practice of dueling in their last collaboration, *The Grand Duke: or, The Statutory Duel* in 1896.

One of England’s abiding perceptions of Germany was a tendency toward militarism, and the most visible representation of it was the competition for naval supremacy. The Royal Navy had for decades been the dominant naval power in the world; it was one of the most important means of expanding and protecting the empire abroad. In 1900, the German Reichstag voted to construct up to twelve new warships for their Second Germany Navy. This same year, they produced the first Zeppelin and, along with the United States, surpassed British production of coal, iron, and steel. This tested British faith in the country’s naval and commercial power. Increasingly, many people, in and out of the British government, worried that Germany had little reason, with its lack of major ports and coastline, to build a large navy, other than to challenge English dominion.

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in Europe and abroad. From Germany’s point of view, observes Eric Hobsbawm in *The Age of Empire*, the navy symbolized a united Germany and its importance as an industrial and military power, whereas from England’s perspective, Germany had no right or reason to build such a large navy. “Britain stood for as much of the status quo as could be preserved,” writes Hobsbawm, “Germany for its change, inevitably, even if not intentionally, at Britain’s expense.” To balance Germany’s growing navy, the Royal Navy launched the H.M.S. *Dreadnought* in February 1906. This new warship, the largest that had ever been constructed, rendered the entirety of the British and German fleets obsolete and exacerbated the naval race. In 1907 and 1908, the conflict accelerated as Germany raced to match the *Dreadnought* in size and firepower. This further stirred public sentiment against Germany; the naval race would continue until the latter years of World War I.

Still, many people in Britain and Germany worked to rectify misconceptions of each other. In recognition of rising tensions between the two countries, a group of approximately eighty intellectuals, artists, and politicians from the two countries published two letters of mutual admiration. The letters appeared in *The Times* on January 12, 1906. Led by Count Harry Kessler, William Rothenstein, and Emery Walker, the letters were an attempt to demonstrate mutual esteem between German and British intellectuals. The German letter had forty signatures, including Richard Strauss, Siegfried Wagner, Gerhardt Hauptmann, and Kessler. The British letter had forty-one, including Thomas Hardy, Edward Elgar, George Darwin, and R. B. Cunninghame Graham. Bernard Shaw’s signature was absent, although he had drafted the British letter in 1905.

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He had inserted passages essentially stating that England considered a formidable German navy as a guarantee of civilization. The other signers requested he omit the offending passages, and Shaw, convinced that German and British militarists would only sign public statements “that would not embarrass them if they went to war the following day,” withdrew his signature. Nevertheless, the letters constituted a public expression of esteem between the two countries, regardless of political or military tensions.

1.2.1 INVASION NOVELS

The publication of “invasion novels” during this era reveals one of the leading exploitations of political and military tensions between Germany and England. The fear of invasion – usually from France, Germany, or Russia – had existed in British popular literature for several decades. But Sir George Chesney’s 1871 novel The Battle of Dorking introduced a new genre to British popular fiction. His book inspired a public demand for “invasion novels,” which continued unabated – bolstered by world strife and sensational journalism – until the opening of World War I. The enemy combatants and the moral lessons may have manifested themselves in different ways, but all the novels raised the specter of a European war reaching British soil.

The initial wave of invasion novels until the early 1900’s was provoked by the French annexation of Madagascar in 1894, and therefore centered on a French invasion.

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One of the most popular was William Le Queux’s *The Great War in England in 1897*, serialized in 1893 and published in 1894. In the novel, France and Russia invade Britain, which quickly descends into anarchy and destruction. Germany, Italy, and Ireland come to the rescue; by the end of the novel, the Royal Navy and Imperial German Army collaborate to protect themselves against other European invaders.

However, in 1904, France and England signed an *entente cordiale*, siding with each other against Germany. Invasion novels anticipated the *entente*. Headon Hill’s *Spies of the Wight* (1899) and Erskine Childers’ *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903) foreshadowed the alliance by portraying Germany as the enemy. Upon the actual signing of the *entente*, the tone of invasion novels turned decidedly against Germany. The following year, the First Moroccan Crisis gave authors additional material for their novels. In late March of 1905, the German Emperor visited Tangier, Morocco and made remarks in favor of Moroccan independence from France. His remarks were taken as aggressive toward France and England, and helped heighten international tensions.

The shift in attitude against Germany provoked more invasion novels that represented Germany and Germans in negative terms. German soldiers were portrayed as malicious and cruel: they impaled British babies in Roberts’ and Le Queux’s *The Invasion of 1910* (1906). Other works, including Walter Wood’s *The Enemy in Our Midst* (1906), A. J. Dawson’s *The Message* (1907), and Coulson Kernahan’s *The Red Peril* (1908) sensationalized the threat of German spies, subversion, and invasion. They earnestly appealed to the British sense of patriotism and imperialism (and the

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10 Karl Beckson, in *London in the 1890s,* records more than sixty pamphlets and books about an invasion on British soil published between *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) and the outbreak of World War I (365).
imaginations of nervous Britons), although some novels, such as P. G. Wodehouse’s *The Swoop! Or How Clarence Saved England* (1909) and G. K. Chesterton’s *The Flying Inn* (1914) took a more humorous tact. In Wodehouse’s *The Swoop!*, for instance, the Boy Scout Clarence Chugwater confounds invaders from Germany, China, Switzerland, and Russia, and rounds them up with his fellow Scouts using catapults and hockey sticks.

Whether these novels portrayed invasion in a comic or serious light, they helped perpetuate the fear of German spies, invasion, and political or moral subversion. They sensationalized the perceived German threat, and maintained portrayals of Germans in British popular culture. As I will explore in Chapter Four, these novels provided source material for the popular theatre during World War I.

1.2.2 RESISTANCE TO THE GERMAN THEATRE

When the British theatre came into contact with Germany, the reaction was not always emulation and adaptation. In some cases, particularly from the West End theatre managers, association with the modern German theatre resulted in resistance. Contrasted to British theatre reformers like Shaw, Archer, Barker, and Grein, many of the actor-managers resisted German theatre innovations. Some British theatre practitioners, such as Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Herbert Beerbohm Tree, visited Germany, but with the sole purpose of profiting from German markets. These visits provided opportunities for the British theatre to observe German theatres, directors, plays, and audiences in action. While Barker, Shaw, and Archer may have been impressed with the German theatres’ repertory systems, state-funded theatres, and dedicated acting ensembles, Campbell and Tree left Germany with negative impressions of its culture.
Playwright Arthur Wing Pinero hoped to exploit German markets for his plays. In 1889, he wrote theatre critic Clement Scott suggesting that his plays, such as *The Magistrate*, could be “the thin end of the wedge to open up some position for Englishmen on the German stage.”\(^{11}\) France, he observed, would not welcome English plays. And the English theatre community was “so busy in borrowing from the German that we forget to take our own wares to Berlin.”\(^{12}\) Some of his plays did receive productions in Germany; however, Pinero denied any debt to the German theatre. In the mid-1890’s, Scott accused Pinero of stealing the plot for his most popular success, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, from German dramatist Paul Lindau’s play *Der Schatten*. An indignant Pinero reminded Scott that he could even not read German, and enlisted the help of William Archer, who was familiar with German theatre, to defend *Mrs. Tanqueray*. Scott’s accusations did not result in any legal action, although Pinero’s insistence that the German theatre had no influence on him demonstrates his resistance to the German theatre and its playwrights.

Actors Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Johnston Forbes-Robertson embarked on a thirty-day tour of Germany in late February 1898, visiting Berlin, Hanover, and Hamburg. They enjoyed some success with their productions, but they left Germany with mostly negative impressions of the country and its inhabitants. They opened with *Hamlet* on March 3 at the Neues Opern-Theater in Berlin, and played *Macbeth* and Pinero’s *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*. The German Emperor attended the two Shakespeare productions but, having supposedly been warned by his grandmother, Queen Victoria, about *Mrs. Tanqueray*’s risqué content, he avoided the play. During a performance of *Macbeth*, he

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\(^{12}\) Pinero 99.
invited the actors to his box, where he presented them with gifts and compliments.

According to Campbell’s biographer Margot Peters, their audience with the Emperor did not improve the company’s overall impressions of Germany. They experienced “the petty tyrannies of imperial Germany,” such as “insolent Prussian officers” strutting up and down the streets.\(^\text{13}\) Campbell and Forbes-Robertson expressed surprise at the humble attitude average Germans adopted towards the officers. They certainly enjoyed the critical success and the Emperor’s awards they received, but overall the visit revealed a two-sided resistance: first, the company did not find German culture favorable, and second, the Emperor himself avoided one of Edwardian England’s most popular plays.

In April 1907, theatre impresario J. T. Grein organized a visit of Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s company to Hanover and Berlin. Tree, who was of partial German descent, regularly vacationed in Marienbad throughout his career, but in this case, his visit was a professional one. Grein used his connections with Graf von Hülsen-Häseler, General-Intendant of the Emperor’s theatres in Prussia, and the German Ambassador to England, Count Wolff Metternich, to secure an invitation from the Emperor himself. Their welcome was rather different than Campbell’s and Forbes-Robertson’s: upon the company’s arrival at the Hook of Holland, the Emperor’s train met them and transported them into Berlin. Tree’s company of nearly eighty acted for a week at the Royal Opera House, producing some of their biggest London successes: *Richard II*, *Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Trilby*. Tree produced the plays just as he did at His Majesty’s Theatre in London, with lavish scenery and

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costumes, an orchestra to provide music, and large, choreographed crowd scenes. He 
enlarged his crowd scenes with German supernumeraries, and German stagehands shifted 
the scenery during the long act breaks.

After a gala performance of *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Emperor invited members 
of Tree’s company to his box. During the reported twenty-minute ovation while they 
visited him, the Emperor gave gifts to the actresses Constance Collier and Viola Tree, 
and conferred the Imperial Order of the Red Eagle on Grein and Tree. The award was a 
significant honor, but seven years later, in August 1914, Tree revealed his true feelings 
for it. As war seemed increasingly likely, Tree was forced to return home prematurely 
from a vacation in Marienbad. He and his driver abandoned their car and most of their 
luggage, and traveled across Germany and Belgium by foot and by train. Upon arriving 
home, Tree told fellow actor Seymour Hicks that he planned to telegram the Emperor, 
saying, “You gave me a third-rate order for acting in Berlin – I’ve left you a fourth-rate 
motor-car for acting just as badly!”¹⁴

Interestingly enough, Grein and Tree also came into contact with some of 
Germany’s most innovative theatre practitioners during their visit. The German 
contingent of the Anglo-German Friendship Committee (the same group that would host 
Max Reinhardt in 1912) held a luncheon in their honor at the Hotel Kaiserhof, Berlin. 
Tree and Grein were joined by Graf von Hülsen-Häseler; Hofrat Barney, Director of the 
Schauspielhaus; directors Max Reinhardt, Viktor Barnowsky, and Hans Andresen; and 
playwrights Ludwig Fulda and Paul Lindau. Many of the Germans in attendance were 
well known by their English guests, as they worked regularly in London. The visit seems

to have been a social event for Tree, although Grein was much more involved with these German practitioners. Their skills, particularly Reinhardt’s and Andresen’s, would have a profound effect on the modern British theatre. Tree’s overall visit to Germany, however, demonstrates another example of resistance to German culture.

1.3 GERMANY IN THE BRITISH THEATRE

Nowhere was the intersection of German and English culture more prominent than in the theatre. Adaptations of French plays may have dominated the English theatre of the nineteenth century, but English theatre practitioners became increasingly aware of German theatre in the 1890’s and 1900’s. Both countries willingly traded ideas, plays, actors, writers, directors, and designers in the decades starting then and continuing up to the First World War. For instance, playwrights and managers such as Augustus Harris, Sydney Grundy, and Louis N. Parker frequently adapted German plays into popular farces, comedies, and musicals. They preferred the plays of Franz and Paul von Schönthan, Gustav von Moser, Richard Voss, Wilhelm Meyer-Förster, and Ludwig Fulda. They probably preferred these playwrights because they wrote easily-adaptable farces and comedies that had proven popular in Germany. *The Stage Yearbook*, an annual listing of plays and stage conditions in Europe and America that was first published in 1908, always included a chapter on the German theatre (except during World War I), in addition to chapters on French, Italian, Australian, and American theatre. This chapter listed successful plays performed in Germany, many of which were imported for the London stage. Managers and financiers such as Oswald Stoll, George Alexander, and Charles Cochran regularly traveled to Germany and bought the English rights to popular
plays, or imported full productions. Cochran and Stoll attended Max Reinhardt’s theatres in Berlin in the early 1900’s; Stoll paid for Reinhardt’s *Sumurûn* to come to the London Coliseum in 1911; Cochran paid for Reinhardt to produce *The Miracle* at the Olympia Exhibition Hall later that same year.

In the realm of British musical comedy, 1910 was a watershed year for the interaction between British and German theatre; managers such as George Edwardes turned to Germany and Austria for inspiration. Edwardes had already successfully produced *The Merry Widow* in June of 1907, which was based on the German operetta *Die Lustige Witwe* by Franz Lehar, Viktor Léon, and Leo Stein, and ran consistently during the following years. The rush of German-language adaptations prompted Kurt Gänzl to call 1910 “the year of the Viennese.” Without question, British musical comedy faced increasing competition from the Viennese musical beginning in 1910. The most popular Viennese musical from that year was Oscar Strauss’ *The Chocolate Soldier*. It opened in Berlin in 1909, and came to London in September of the following year. Audiences flocked to the musical, which was based on Bernard Shaw’s *Arms and Man*. When Shaw himself finally attended on November 10, he stood in the back of the theatre, as no seats were available.

The English theatre also reacted to Germany’s role in current events. In late December of 1895, for instance, Leander Starr Jameson led a raid on the Transvaal Republic in southern Africa to encourage British expatriate workers there (Uitlanders) to rebel against the government. The Raid was quelled and no rebellion occurred. The German Emperor telegrammed to congratulate Transvaal President Paul Kruger for
stopping the raid, a move that many Englishmen viewed as a direct affront to England. In reaction to the Emperor’s telegram, a new verse was added to the song “A Little Piece of String” in An Artist’s Model, currently playing at Edwardes’ Gaiety Theatre in London:

“Hands off Germany! Hands off all!  
Let Kruger boast and Kaiser brag; Britons hear the call!  
Back to back the world around, answer with a will –  
England for her own, my boys! It’s ‘Rule Britannia’ still.”

British musical comedies commonly employed popular music and topical numbers. The musical comedy format lent itself to the easy insertion of new songs, verses, characters, and situations, which made it a perfect medium to comment on current events, as I will explore in the chapter on theatre during World War I.

The relationship between the English and German theatre was not solely focused on distrust and deceit, however; theatre practitioners from both countries made sincere efforts at friendship as well. In January 1912, the Anglo-German Friendship Society hosted a luncheon for Max Reinhardt. The luncheon coincided with the opening of Reinhardt’s production of Oedipus Rex five days later. Attendees included Herbert Beerbohm Tree, John Martin Harvey, Comyns Carr, and Cyril Rhodes (chairman of the Society). On this same day, the Duke of Argyll presided over an Albert Committee luncheon to Reinhardt at the Carlton Hotel. Likewise, actor-manager John Martin Harvey (who starred in Reinhardt’s Oedipus) and his wife hosted a reception for the

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17 “Luncheon to Professor Max Reinhardt.” The Times 39792 (Jan 11, 1912): 9.
German director at the Prince’s Galleries, Piccadilly. Reinhardt, a regular visitor to London, received a rather warm welcome on this particular visit, only two years before the war.

1.3.1 THE GERMAN CHARACTER ON THE BRITISH STAGE

The British theatre performed many versions the German character, based usually on stereotypes. Many early characterizations used German names that doubled as jokes or puns. The 1897 farce *Never Again* at the Vaudeville Theatre, for instance, used a German character named Katzenjammer, or “hangover.” This character perpetuated the image of Germans who were usually drunk on German lager. In 1907 George Edwardes opened *The Girls of Gottenberg* at the Gaiety Theatre, featuring popular stars such as George Grossmith, Jr. Gertie Millar, and Teddy Payne as German characters. Grossmith, Jr. played Otto, the Prince of Saxe-Hildesheim, Millar portrayed Mitzi, Payne played Max Moddelkopf. Other characters included Colonel Finkhausen, Brittlbottl (a Sergeant in the Hussars), and Kannenbier. The light-hearted musical idealized the German countryside, poked fun of German militarism, and featured songs such as “Berlin on the Spree” and a parody of Wagner’s *Rhinegold*. The German character appeared so often on the

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19 The stereotype of Germans as beer-loving was persistent in Edwardian culture. Walter MacQueen-Pope, in *Twenty Shillings in the Pound*, nostalgically remembered the Café L’Europe in Leicester Square, with its German waiters carrying huge glasses of beer. Likewise, Bernard Shaw wrote in 1894: “If you wish to make an impression of the most unexampled singularity and eccentricity in Germany, you only have to reply to the universal inquiry ‘Pilsener or Münchener?’ with a statement that you do not drink beer at all.” In *Bernard Shaw: The Diaries 1885-1897*, vol. 2, Stanley Weintraub, ed. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986) 1040.
Edwardian stage that the Examiner of Plays declared, upon reviewing the script for Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Grand Duke* in 1896, that German roles were “a sort of character that has done duty in half the comic operas that were ever written.”

George Alexander, actor-manager of the St. James’s Theatre, scored a major success with *The Prisoner of Zenda*, which opened on January 7, 1896. Alexander portrayed Rudolph Rassendyll, a man from Ruritania, a fictional German-speaking country located between Germany and Austria. Considered one of Alexander’s greatest successes, Rassendyll is a man who must impersonate the King of Ruritania after he is abducted prior to his coronation. *Zenda* ran two hundred fifty-four performances in its original production, and was revived frequently throughout the following decades. *Zenda* was based on the 1894 novel of the same title by Anthony Hope. Hope was one of many writers who portrayed the pseudo-German culture of Ruritania as strictly monarchical, romantic, and adventurous. In addition to Prince Rassendyll, Alexander also played a German officer in Paul M. Potter’s *The Conquerors* in 1898 and the lead character in Rudolf Bleichmann’s *Old Heidelberg* in 1903.

Most often English plays portrayed Germans as militaristic, usually Prussian soldiers or aristocrats. The popular musical comedy *The Belle of Mayfair*, produced by American impresario Charles Frohman at the Vaudeville Theatre in 1906, included a character named H. S. H. Princess Carl of Ehrenbreitstein. She is married to a German noble, and acts as confidante to the main character Julia. She was portrayed as the typical aristocrat, with too much time on her hands and a meddlesome temperament. A 1912 naval drama called *For Love and the Navy* contained German characters such as Count

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20 Quoted in Davis 153.
von Drachsburg and Peter the German. Both of these characters were portrayed as Prussian soldiers who made military culture a way of life. When Britain declared war on Germany in 1914, portrayals of Germans as heartless soldiers abounded.

Representing German soldiers or servants was one issue; representing German royalty was another. In 1907 and 1908 the Examiner of Plays, G. A. Redford, issued a number of provisos for plays he licensed, with specific injunctions against representing Germans or the German Emperor negatively on the stage. The Examiner of Plays was a position in the office of the Lord Chamberlain, who was responsible for licensing plays for performance in England. Redford, no doubt aware of the connections between the English and German royal families, guarded against portraying Germans in a negative light. His pronounced concern was still evident at the beginning of the war, for he repeatedly warned managers to avoid naming Germany as a military enemy, and to avoid dressing soldiers or other characters to represent Germans.

Unfortunately for Redford, the trend of depicting Germans on stage did not slow, and no matter what instructions he issued, audiences and critics seemed infinitely capable of spotting Germans on the stage. During the war itself, the Lord Chamberlain’s office licensed over two hundred war plays. Many of them featured shifty German spies and the heroic Englishmen and women who thwarted their plans. Throughout the early years of the war, the Examiner of Plays doled out warnings to Honour Gains the Day, The Master Hun, The Glorious Day, Somewhere in France, and other plays that depicted the Kaiser and German soldiers in a bad light. Again, the driving concern seemed to be family relations between the Royal Families.
The situation changed in 1915 because of three important events. First, in February a publication titled *The Official Book of German Atrocities* appeared in England. This book provided examples – frequently embellished or inaccurate – of German violations of international laws. It appeared in answer to the *German White Book* of 1915, which listed alleged acts of violence committed by Belgian soldiers against German soldiers and citizens. Second, in May 1915, the Committee of Alleged German Outrages, chaired by Viscount Bryce, published an extensive report that reiterated the claims of the *Official Book of German Atrocities* and further painted German soldiers in a negative light. Third, on May 7, 1915, a German U-boat sunk the Cunard liner *Lusitania*, killing 1198 people, including impresario Charles Frohman. The sinking produced anti-German riots in England; troops had to be called into Liverpool to quell three days of rioting there. After the publications and the *Lustiania’s* sinking, the Examiner of Plays raised no further objections to portraying Germans as violent and worthy of annihilation.

1.4 J. T. GREIN AND GERMAN THEATRE COMPANIES IN LONDON

In May 1911, a crowd of 1,500 gathered at the Scala Theatre for the opening of the new German Volkstheater of West London. To inaugurate its season, the company performed German playwright Felix Philippi’s *Das Erbe*. The club president, Max Sylge, wrote a prologue for the occasion, which was translated partially into English by actress Alice Grein. The prologue starred Alice as Germania and Frances Dillon, an actor from Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s company, as Britannia. In the play, the two clasp hands and

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swear eternal friendship, “which all, save perhaps the manufacturers of armaments must ardently desire!” wrote the Morning Post.\textsuperscript{22} The performance was successful enough that Tree lent His Majesty’s Theatre for a second showing later that month.

The endeavor was managed by Alice’s husband, Jacob Thomas (J. T.) Grein, a theatre critic and impresario who focused his career on building a friendship between England and Germany by way of the theatre. He worked to reform the London theatre, and drew on the German theatre do so. By May 1911, Grein, a native of the Netherlands, was already well known for theatrical innovation in London. He began as a theatre critic for Life in 1888, and as early as 1889 he announced a German Theatre in London program in the Sunday Special. The project did not come to fruition until nearly a decade later, but Grein remained busy reforming the London theatre. In 1891, he founded the Independent Theatre Society with a production of Henrik Ibsen’s Ghosts. He modeled his theatre on the Théâtre Libre of France and the Freie Bühne of Germany (both the French and German names translate as “Free Theatre” or “Free Stage”).

The Society, the first of its kind in London, offered private, subscription-based performances of new plays that had been rejected by the censor or West End actor-managers. In addition to Ghosts and Shaw’s Widower’s Houses (the first production of a Shaw play in London or elsewhere), they produced plays by Emile Zola, George Moore, and Edward Brandes. From March 25 to 30, 1895, they hosted a series of performances by Aurelien Lugné-Poë’s Paris-based company Théâtre de l’Œuvre at the Opera Comique, which produced Ibsen’s Rosmersholm and The Master Builder, and Maurice

Maeterlinck’s *L’Intruse* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Shaw reviewed the company’s productions in the *Saturday Review*, and his excitement for them is immediately apparent: at the opening of *Rosmersholm*, he recognized “with something like excitement, the true atmosphere of this most enthralling of all Ibsen’s works rising like an enchanted mist for the first time on an English stage.”

Shaw concluded his review with high praise for the company and for Grein, both of which, he felt, showcased the modern theatre’s potential for the London theatre. “Mr. Grein,” Shaw wrote, “could have rendered no better service to English art.” Despite successful moments such as these, the Society folded in 1897, but Grein continued his pioneering work. In July 1897, he wrote in the Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad*:

> A German theatre is an absurdity in London, there is no help for it. The English public will not hear of it, either because they dislike anything ‘made in Germany,’ or because they cannot understand the language. As for the Germans in London, they stay away. They have already too often wasted their money on German troupes, scraped together in a haphazard way, who came with old plays, mostly *Schiere[n]* [one-act plays] only, and badly acted into the bargain. Moreover, the London prices are too high for them. In the *Vaterland* they can see good plays for half and less than half of what they have to pay here.

In this article, Grein articulated his early expectations for the German theatre in London. He had become readily familiar and deeply impressed with German theatre when he lived and worked on the continent, and now he hope to reform the English drama with its influence. Grein intended a theatre that would appeal to the German “colony” in London. The draw for German theatre in German would not support a full-time theatre, but a bi-weekly performance schedule that featured German classics and new writers,

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24 Shaw, *Dramatic Opinions*, vol. 1 63.
25 Schoonderwoerd 182.
26 Quoted in Schoonderwoerd 142. Most descriptions of Germans living in London referred to them as a “colony.”
carefully produced, “will afford plenty of amusement and a gradual acquaintance with the best playwrights and the foremost actors of modern Germany.” In addition to educating German audiences about their native drama, Grein hoped the program would influence the English stage as well: “its highest ambition would be realised if from time to time one of the plays produced would make such a lasting impression that a faithful translation should find its way into a first-rate London theatre.” While Grein appealed to Germans living in London, he always had an eye to reforming the mainstream London theatre.

Throughout the Edwardian period, German-speaking theatre and opera companies were a regular feature on the London stage, and Grein participated in a vast majority of them. There are a few referenced in this section with which he was not explicitly involved; however, they will still be discussed here, since the concern is the total effect that Grein and these visiting companies had on the London theatre. Besides, having been educated in Germany and the Netherlands, Grein was readily familiar with German-speaking playwrights, directors, and actors. In light of his mission to produce German theatre in London, and his persistent enthusiasm for all of his endeavors, he most likely took an interest in any German company or German plays performing in London.

In January 1895, a company called the Deutsches Theater (not to be confused with Otto Brahm’s theatre in Berlin) opened a series of twenty-two performances of German plays at St. George’s Hall, London. They were led by August Junkermann, a German actor and manager, and Grein organized the season. It is the first known

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27 Quoted in Schoonderwoerd 142.
28 Quoted in Schoonderwoerd 142.
collaboration in London between Grein and German theatre companies. The visit signaled the arrival over the coming years of a large number of German companies that came to London and performed German plays in German.

In June and July of 1895 the Ducal Court Company of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha presented a series of plays and operas at the Drury Lane and Savoy Theatres. Grein is not known to have been involved in their visit, but he certainly would not have ignored or discouraged it. The company must have been associated with King Edward VII, as he was Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and used the name as the family name of the British Royal Family. This company, performing in German, presented such plays as Heinrich Sudermann’s *Die Ehre* and *Heimat*, Adolf L’Arronge’s *Hasmann’s Tocher*, and Franz von Schönthan’s and Gustave Kadelburg’s *Berümtte Frau*. But the company did not limit itself to plays. They also performed operatic pieces such as Zeller’s and West’s comic opera *Der Vogelhandler*, Oscar Strauss’ *Die Fledermaus*, Engelbert Humperdinck’s *Hansel und Gretel*, and Beethoven’s *Fidelio*.

Two years later, a visiting company from the Vienna Volkstheater gave afternoon performances of various German-language plays at Daly’s Theatre. They performed for roughly two weeks in late June and early July, mostly comedies and farces such as *Untreu*, *Goldene Eva*, and *Renaissance*. Every production lasted two to four performances. Then, in 1899, August Junkermann accepted an invitation from Grein to return to London. Together, they opened their first subscription season of German theatre at St. George’s Hall on January 30, 1900 with L’Arronge’s farce *Mein Leopold*. Grein organized the season along with Junkermann, Junkermann’s son Carl, A. Schulz Curtius, and H. A. Hertz, a financier whose daughter Margaret Halstan was an actress. The first
season ran through May and included twenty-two plays by Gustav von Moser, Oscar Blumenthal, and Ludwig Fulda, in addition to Schnitzler’s *Liebelei*, Paul Lindau’s *Der Andere*, Max Halbe’s *Jungend*, and Sudermann’s *Heimat* and *Fritzchen*. The company visited regularly during the following six years. Unlike the West End managers, the company did not adapt the German farces, comedies, and dramas into English. Instead, they performed the plays in their original language. Popular writers such as Gustav von Moser and Franz von Schönthan were regularly featured by the companies, but plays by modern playwrights such as Arthur Schnitzler, Ludwig Fulda, and Heinrich Sudermann also appeared. These latter writers were frequently cited by Shaw, Archer, and Barker as superior examples of the new drama. Grein’s Deutsches Theater, therefore, gave English audiences examples of both the commercial theatre and the modern theatre in Germany.

By 1901, the Deutsches Theater had a guarantee fund of £5000, so it moved from St. George’s Hall to the more costly Comedy Theatre, and then to a regular home at the Great Queen Street Theatre. The next year, Curtius stepped down as an organizer, while Andresen and Behrend became the company managers. Eventually the enterprise moved from Grein’s control into their hands. With Grein’s influence, the Deutsches Theater enjoyed some success. In late 1902 the program received the royal stamp of approval when King Edward VII attended Franz von Schönthan’s and Freiherr von Schlicht’s *Im Bunten Rock* and “laughed heartily.”

He later brought his daughter Maud, the Princess of Wales, to Sudermann’s *Es Lebe Das Leben*. Edward’s presence at the German-language theatre, and his approval of it, is significant. He had been crowned King only

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29 Quoted in Alice Grein 176.
two months prior on August 9. Already early in his reign, he established his standing as the Good European by encouraging European drama in London. He did not hide his ability to speak German, or his enjoyment of German culture.

Despite King Edward’s patronage, audiences slowly dwindled until 1907, when the seasons (which had grown shorter and shorter) concluded. The Deutsches Theater held its farewell performance with Ibsen’s Nora at the Apollo Theatre, co-produced with Grein as a Sunday Special Matinee, on April 12, 1906 (although it still produced a handful of plays the following year). At the beginning of the sixth season of the German Theatre in 1905, the German Ambassador contributed a token gift of one hundred pounds to the guarantee fund that financed the seasons, while the German Emperor conferred the Order of the Crown on Grein and Andresen. These honors, however, did not do enough to support the company, and they reduced their 1906 and 1907 seasons to roughly ten productions. The Stage Year Book of 1908, looking back on the previous year, noted that the company offered only a mediocre half season.\(^{30}\) The Deutsches Theater’s last year of official production was 1907. Grein, who was familiar with short-lived but influential projects, offered a three-part explanation for the company’s collapse:

> Firstly, the well-to-do part of the German colony is limited; secondly, there are thousands of Germans in London who no longer elect to be connected with their fatherland or their language; thirdly, the German language, being less known among English people than the French, the drawing power on the general public is very restricted.”\(^{31}\)

Grein’s assessment of the program is decidedly negative, but he continued to write about and produce German theatre in London.

\(^{31}\) Quoted in Alice Grein 178.
In addition, other enterprising managers and impresarios quickly followed in the footsteps of Grein and Andresen, who often helped with productions. In April 1907, another collection of German performances took place at the Great Queen Street Theatre. The endeavor opened on April 5 with Rudolf Herzog’s *Die Condittieri*, directed by Hans Andresen. It continued with Franz von Schönthan’s and Franz Koppel-Ellfeld’s comedy *Die Goldene Eva*, Gerhardt Hauptmann’s *Die Biberpelz*, directed by Eugen Kilian, and Oscar Blumenthal’s and Gustav Kadelburg’s farce *Hans Huckbein*. Most of these plays, similar to previous German seasons, were performed two to four times. The visit ended with Franz and Paul von Schönthan’s *Der Raub Der Sabinerinnen* on April 28.

In 1908 three more German companies followed Grein’s lead and performed in London. Early that year, Gerald Weiss and Lena Worth founded the Deutsche Theater Gesellschaft to familiarize English audiences with quality German plays in their original language. That April, a visiting German company led by Andresen ran a short season at the Royalty Theatre featuring Gustav Kadelburg’s farce *Der Weg für Hölle*, Lessing’s *Minna von Barnhelm*, and Richard Skowronek’s farce *Panne*. After Andresen’s company left, a woman named Eleonora Driller organized a German Volkstheater in Cripplegate, London, which may have developed out of the German Amateur Dramatic Club on City Road, London.\[32\]

Using the impetus, however weak, of these companies, Grein made a second attempt to start a regular German theatre company in 1911. He set about collecting funds, hiring casts, and selecting a theatre. He helped to convert the company from the Deutscher Bühnen-Verein into the German Volkstheater of West London. In May of that

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\[32\] Schoonderwoerd 182.
year, the company opened its limited season with Philippi’s *Das Erbe* at the Scala Theatre, complete with the prologue in which Germania and Britannia clasp hands and swear eternal friendship. The German Volkstheater of West London concluded its program with a limited season at the Court Theatre from February to April of 1912. This season included Leo Treptow’s and Louis Hermann’s *Unser Doktor* on February 4, Oskar Walther’s and Leo Stein’s farcical comedy *Das Opferlam* on March 3, and Franz von Schönthan’s and Gustav Kadelburg’s comedy *Die Berümmte Frau* on April 28. The final performance starred Max Sylge and Alice Grein.

In 1912, another German theatre company called the Deutsche Theater continued the practice of offering German plays in London. They opened on February 3 Schönthan’s and Koppel Ellfeld’s comedy *Renaissance*, and performed intermittently throughout the year, first at Clavier Hall, then the Little Theatre, and finally the Cosmopolis Theatre. They produced a mixed season of one-act and full-length plays in matinee and evening performances. The season included Schnitzler’s *Liebelei* on March 9, von Wildenbruch’s *Die Haubenlerche* on June 8, and a German translation of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House (Nora)* on November 16 and December 7. Their season ended on December 14 with Meyer-Förster’s *Alt Heidelberg* at the Cosmopolis Theatre.

Unfortunately, Grein’s associations with Germany and certain elements of the theatre caused him difficulty during the war. In March of 1918, he resubmitted Oscar Wilde’s banned play *Salome* for performance at the Kennington Theatre with dancer Maud Allen in the title role. Although the production was approved by the Lord Chamberlain’s office, Noel Pemberton-Billing, right-wing Member of Parliament, self-proclaimed protector of British national identity, and editor of *The Vigilante*, declared
that the play’s subject matter supported the German war effort by weakening British morality. Billing led a crusade during the war against the “47,000 Britons” who were supposedly blackmailed by the Germans to further undermine British morals at home and abroad.\(^{33}\) Grein – already suspect because of his German associations – had seen Salome’s 1908 premiere in Berlin and hoped to produce it in London. One private production occurred on the afternoon of April 12, 1918 at the Royal Court Theatre. By this time, Billing had published an article by Harold Sherwood Spencer that accused Allen, amongst others, of lesbian practices. Grein and Allen sued Billing for libel, but lost the case. The results caused Grein to suffer a mental breakdown and eventually lose his job at the Sunday Times, which he had held since 1897.

Despite the trial’s outcome and his repeated discouragement in producing German theatre in London, Grein’s efforts in the 1890’s and 1900’s were not in vain: many important English theatre practitioners were now familiar with the plays and actors of the modern German theatre. When actor-manager George Alexander bought the English rights to Bleichmann’s Alt Heidelberg for the St. James’s Theatre in 1903, he also hired Max Behrend to advise the production. The Stage Society, a direct descendent of the Independent Theatre Society, continued to produce German plays, including Hauptmann’s The Sunken Bell in February 1903. In early 1905, Harley Granville Barker directed productions of Schnitzler’s In the Hospital and Hauptmann’s The Thieves Comedy. In addition, both Hans Andresen and Max Behrend directed for the Society. Behrend directed Hermann Heijerman’s The Good Hope for the Society in 1903, with

\(^{33}\) For a full account of the Salome trial, see Philip Hoare’s Oscar Wilde’s Last Stand (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1997).
Barker in the lead role. During those experiences, Behrend and Andresen taught Barker and Shaw new methods for directing their own plays, which they later implemented during the 1904-1907 Court seasons. The Vedrenne-Barker seasons at the Court Theatre also featured plays by Schnitzler and Hauptmann, and employed actors who worked with the visiting German companies. Barker continued to use Behrend’s directing model throughout the remainder of his career.

After 1912, the German theatre companies became scarce in London. Yet in the period between 1895 and 1912, each of these companies familiarized British audiences and playwrights with German drama. The companies exerted their influence by providing the British theatre more plays to adapt and emulate. Grein’s Independent Theatre Society, the short-lived New Century Theatre Company, and the Stage Society modeled their production schedules on these German groups. William Archer and Harley Granville Barker modeled their ideas for a National Theatre on this type of schedule as well. Most of these German companies aimed simply to bring German theatre to German audiences in London, yet through Grein’s efforts, they offered the British theatre a model for the modern theatre to emulate and adapt for decades to come.
1.5 WILLIAM ARCHER AND GERMANY

“The German drama has a peculiar interest for us,” wrote Scottish critic William Archer in 1897, “inasmuch as it is running a sort of race with our own.” In this September 8 review of two of Heinrich Sudermann’s plays, Archer articulated why the German theatre and German drama should be of interest to the British theatre. He continued:

The present movement began almost simultaneously in the two countries, and, although there is no deliberate competition between the two groups of playwrights, they may not unfairly or uninstructively be measured against each other. The Germans had some initial advantages not to be overlooked. In the first place, the drama had never fallen so low in Germany as in England. [...] The Germans were, individually and collectively, a far stronger set of men. In the second place, there is a much wider opening for artistic work in Germany and Austria, with all their subsidised and unsubsidised theatres, than in – I was going to say England, but for present purposes England means simply the West End of London.

This statement of Archer’s demonstrates his general view of German theatre: first, that English drama had fallen “low,” presumably meaning that it was of lower quality than German drama. His review of English plays in 1889 had left him in a “depressed and pessimistic mood,” and clearly his opinion had not changed radically by 1897. And second, German playwrights enjoyed a theatrical infrastructure that better supported their work. By contrast, England did not have the subsidized theatres that supported new writing. Instead, the West End of London, which privileged commercial success over artistic achievement or social significance, dictated which type of plays audiences would see. In effect, Archer believed that the British theatre should emulate German theatrical structures. He worked his entire career as a critic, translator, producer, and playwright to

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35 Archer, Theatrical World 97 241.
raise English drama up from the depths in which it had fallen, and to provide the infrastructure to do so. He did this in two particular ways: first, through championing the plays of Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen in London, and second, by laying the foundations for the National Theatre.

One of Archer’s most substantial contributions to modern British theatre was his translation of Ibsen’s plays into English, and their subsequent production in London. In 1889, he felt that England was years behind Germany in appreciating Ibsen’s plays: “We are at present bandying the very arguments [over Ibsen’s plays] which hurtled around it in Scandinavia and in Germany nine years ago.” He sought to correct this throughout his career, and he was well suited to the job. Archer had spent much of his childhood visiting relatives in Norway, and therefore grew up speaking Norwegian. His position as theatre critic in London gave him a regular voice to advocate productions of Ibsen’s plays. While much of his campaign for Ibsen was an uphill battle, Archer still achieved a lasting effect on British drama.

Having met Ibsen in Rome in late 1881 and studied his work, Archer championed his first productions in London. In 1880, Archer translated and adapted *Quicksands, or The Pillars of Society*, for one matinee on December 15 at the Gaiety Theatre. This was an inauspicious beginning, to be sure, but Archer continued his campaign, and consistently compared English and German productions of Ibsen. In an 1881 review of the Meiningen Ensemble’s visit, for instance, he suggested that they apply their theatrical reforms to Ibsen’s *Emperor and Galilean*. He later contributed translations of *Ghosts* and

Pillars of Society to Havelock Ellis’ 1888 edition of The Pillars of Society and Other plays. Productions of Ibsen in London were scarce until Archer co-directed his translation of A Doll’s House with Charles Charrington at the Novelty Theatre in June, 1889. The following July, two matinees of his translation of The Pillars of Society took place at the Opera Comique and the Avenue Theatre. Then, on March 12 and 13, 1891, J. T. Grein opened the Independent Theatre Society with Archer’s translation of Ghosts. Archer also co-directed the production, at the Royalty Theatre, with Cecil Raleigh. These performances of Ghosts became a cause célèbre, as theatre reformers praised Grein’s and Archer’s achievement, while anti-Ibsen critics, notably A. B. Walkley and Clement Scott, criticized the play’s lack of moral center.

Through the 1890’s and 1900’s Archer campaigned for translations, publications, and productions of Ibsen’s drama. Just as Grein cannot be separated from the visiting German theatre companies in London, Archer’s name is synonymous with Henrik Ibsen in London. And similar to Grein, Archer conducted his campaign using German models. Throughout the 1890’s, he tracked productions of Ibsen in Germany, and compared them to British productions. Some of his articles, such as his July 1893 review “The Mausoleum of Ibsen,” were translated into German and published in German periodicals.

Thomas Postlewait, in his study of Archer’s Ibsen campaign in London, quotes Archer’s introduction to a 1900 edition of Ghosts. In the introduction, Archer evaluated productions of Ibsen during the September 1897 to May 1898 season, and found a total of two hundred sixteen performances of Ibsen’s plays. The Pillars of Society and A Doll’s House led the way, with forty-one and thirty-three performances, respectively. By comparison, not one production of Ibsen had occurred in London during that same
Although productions of Ibsen in Germany far outnumbered those in England, Archer’s efforts had firmly planted Ibsen in the British theatre. Playwrights such as Henry Arthur Jones, John Galsworthy, Arthur Wing Pinero, and Harley Granville Barker were influenced by those plays and the high standards to which Archer held them. Actor-managers such as Herbert Beerbohm Tree took notice, too, and began producing afternoon matinees of Ibsen’s plays.

Like Grein, Shaw, and Barker, Archer also traveled to Germany and wrote about productions there. In August 1890, for instance, he journeyed to Oberammergau, Bavaria, to see the Passion Play. On his return to London, he stopped in Munich to see a production of Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People* at the Residenztheater on August 23, then visited Ibsen at his apartment in Maximilianstrasse, Munich. During that period in his life, Ibsen lived and wrote in Germany, where his plays enjoyed regular productions. In August 1896, Archer visited Germany to see Goethe’s *Faust* at the Frankfurt Schauspielhaus and Wagner’s complete *Ring* cycle at Bayreuth. In both cases, he found the productions “very remarkable. In several important details the utmost imaginable perfection is attained.”

Although Archer certainly had his qualms with German theatre (he criticized Germany in 1907 for treating Ibsen like a symbolist playwright), he usually envied its modern production values, its experimentation with new playwrights such as Ibsen, Hauptmann, and Sudermann, and its state funding. His travels to Germany usually produced articles and reviews that argued how England could emulate Germany’s modern theatre.

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Through his reviews and his Ibsen campaign, Archer’s career also mingled with
the independent theatre movement in England, and therefore with the other major
reformers of the British theatre: J. T. Grein, Bernard Shaw, Elizabeth Robins, and Harley
Granville Barker, for instance. The goal of these theatres – the Independent Theatre, the
New Century Theatre, and the Stage Society – was to infiltrate England’s mainstream
theatre with modern plays and staging practices. Archer participated in productions by all
three of these theatres, and he clearly did so with an eye toward Germany’s similar
achievements: the Freie Bühne of Berlin, he observed, had already established the
modern theatre in Germany and moved on. “The comparative shortness of its career was
due to the completeness of its success,” he wrote, “the leaders of the movement becoming
the managers of some of the first theaters in Germany and Austria, and carrying forward
their work on the regular stage.”\(^40\) In 1897, the year Grein’s Independent Theatre closed,
Archer and Elizabeth Robins founded the New Century Theatre Company. The company
started strong, and planned productions of Gerhardt Hauptmann’s *The Weavers*, Goethe’s
*Iphigenia*, and plays by Arthur Schnitzler. However, as financing the productions was
difficult, and as the participants became involved in other endeavors, the New Century
Theatre Company disbanded by 1899.

In addition to his Ibsen translations and his theatre criticism, Archer also
pioneered the formation of the National Theatre in England. The role of National Theatre
had been informally claimed by various theatres – especially those with a royal charter –
throughout the past centuries, but the work of William Archer, along with Harley

Granville Barker, contributed directly to its foundation in the twentieth century. Archer turned to Germany for examples of state-subsidized theatres that featured short runs of a wide range of plays, acted by a regular ensemble.

For example, Archer began his 1896 edition of *The Theatrical World* – his yearly collection of theatre reviews – with an essay “On the Need for an Endowed Theatre.” In the 1896 essay, he reflected upon an 1889 article he contributed to the *Fortnightly Review*. As early as 1889, Archer observed, he had compared the production schedules of the Schauspielhaus and the Deutsches Theater in Berlin to over thirty London theatres. “These two Berlin theatres had, within four months,” he wrote, “sampled the dramatic literature of the world in a catholic spirit such as no two or no twenty London playhouses, under existing conditions, could possibly emulate.” 41 The situation in 1896 had not improved; he suggested that, if he contrasted London’s theatres to those in Berlin again, he would discover “an even more crushing comparison” between two. 42

He echoed these same concerns in 1897 with published a conversation in *The World* between himself and Henry Kadelburg, a producer from the Vienna Volkstheater. Earlier that week, he had reviewed three of the Volkstheater’s productions at Daly’s Theatre in London. The dialogue consisted mostly of Kadelburg describing the theatre’s organization, finances, and production schedules, while Archer asked pointed questions. While the tone was friendly and informative, Archer’s envy of the German system seems clear: “They do as a matter of course in Vienna everything that we ought to do here and can’t,” he wrote. 43 Kadelburg described, essentially, how the German theatre excelled

41 Archer, *Theatrical World 96* xiii.
42 Archer, *Theatrical World 96* xiii.
43 Archer, *Theatrical World 97* 209.
beyond the British in all aspects. For instance, the Volkstheater was built on a site
donated by the Emperor and funded with public subscriptions. The theatre’s constitution,
Kadelburg went on to explain, stipulated low ticket prices and a repertory of European
classics, modern German plays, operettas, and farces. Each play could run for a
maximum of two nights before it would be removed from the schedule and replaced by
another production. The theatre maintained a company of roughly sixty actors who
specialized in all types of roles. In addition, the theatre employed a dramaturg to read
new plays and “to keep an eye on the French and Italian drama for plays likely to suit
us.”

“What I cannot understand,” Kadelburg concluded, “is why you have not here a
popular Shakespeare Theatre, where Shakespeare and the classical drama should be
regularly performed at moderate prices.” Archer, seemingly unable to reply properly to
Kadelburg’s question, left the interview “profoundly humiliated” and tempted to become
an Austrian citizen.

In 1904, however, Archer attempted to answer Kadelburg’s question with a book
titled A National Theatre: Scheme and Estimates. Archer penned it with Harley Granville
Barker; they published it privately that year, and then professionally in 1907. Their
detailed plan echoed many of Kadelburg’s ideas from Archer’s 1897 interview with him.
The plan suggested salaries, building plans, and performance schedules, all of which
mirrored the Volkstheater. Ticket prices, for instance, would be kept affordable, the
theatre would host a regular company of roughly sixty actors, and it would employ a

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Literary Manager (similar to the German dramaturg) to review new plays from around the world. In addition, the theatre would use a rotating production schedule, so no play would be performed more than two or three nights in a row.

Archer and Barker ultimately strove to provide a lively home for modern British drama, although they admitted that they would begin by drawing on European plays. “We must get vital drama from somewhere,” Barker wrote Archer in 1903, “and if we can’t create it we must import it first.” At the top of their list of possible imports were plays by Hauptmann, Sudermann, Schnitzler, Ibsen, and Shaw. In Archer’s and Barker’s minds, the type of theatre they imagined already flourished in Germany and France, not because of their superior organization, but simply because the theatre was held to a higher standard there. This higher standard allowed German and French national theatres to succeed, they argued, not because they were inherently more theatrical races, but because of their dedication to a vital national drama. England, Archer argued, could surpass the German theatre easily. It had, after all, produced William Shakespeare, “the greatest dramatist of modern times” and David Garrick, an acknowledged “universal genius” in the field of acting. Archer and Barker saw the potential in British theatre, and sought to unlock it through a National Theatre, a home for the modern theatre. They desired that the National Theatre would be “visibly and unmistakably a popular

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49 Archer and Barker 175.
50 Archer and Barker 175.
institution, making a large appeal to the whole community.” They made this appeal by examining the ways in which British culture could be, to quote Shaw, “a German culture.”

Like J. T. Grein, William Archer reformed the Edwardian theatre significantly, and also like Grein, he used the German theatre as an example and a model. One of Archer’s greatest achievements was his translation and production of Ibsen’s plays. These plays, and productions of them, influenced an untold number of theatre directors, playwrights, actors, managers, and audiences all throughout the Edwardian Era. In addition, his and Barker’s *Scheme* was the seminal work on the National Theatre; it contributed directly to its foundation later in the twentieth century. Archer articulated his ideas for the National Theatre based on personal observations of the modern theatre in Germany.

1.6 CONCLUSIONS

The examples of J. T. Grein and William Archer demonstrate how the influence of Germans and Germany on the London theatre came in many forms. They served as bridges between English and German cultures, represented by King Edward VII and Kaiser Wilhelm II. These cultures sometimes suspected each other, sometimes admired each other. Regardless of their views, British and German culture enjoyed a fruitful exchange of ideas, plays, and theatrical personnel in the 1890’s and 1900’s. The visiting German theatre companies provided models for acting, directing, production, and

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51 Archer and Barker i.
52 Twenty-first century promotional materials (brochures, website, etc.) for the Royal National Theatre still cite Archer’s and Barker’s *Scheme and Estimates*. See http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk.
playwriting that British theatre practitioners emulated. The companies also raised the awareness of good German drama with British audiences; these performances were validated by King Edward VII’s attendance. J. T. Grein facilitated many of these interactions, including perhaps the most significant meeting between Bernard Shaw, Harley Granville Barker, and the German directors Max Behrend and Hans Andresen. How Behrend and Andresen, along with other German theatre figures, influenced Shaw and Barker will be explored in the next two chapters.

Archer likewise played a significant role in importing German theatre and culture to London. He influenced a generation of playwrights through his campaign to introduce Ibsen to London. By citing Germany’s superior productions of Ibsen, he encouraged managers and actors to produce Ibsen’s plays in London. His work towards establishing the National Theatre influenced Barker in particular. In 1910, Barker traveled to Berlin, just as Archer and Shaw before him, and observed German theatres. He returned to London with new ideas for producing plays, and his writings about the German theatre in 1910 paralleled Archer’s writings in the 1890’s.

Grein and Archer enacted substantial changes in the theatre during the Edwardian Era, and their work paved the way for others. Bernard Shaw’s and Harley Granville Barker’s lasting contributions to the British theatre, as well as the Edwardian theatre’s reaction to World War I, and outright aggression toward all things German, will be examined in the following chapters.
CHAPTER 2

“LARGELY A GERMAN CULTURE”: BERNARD SHAW AND GERMANY

“Trebitsch’s translations of Candida, Arms & The Man, & The Devil’s Disciple have made a sensation in Germany, where the English drama has hitherto been utterly despised… There is a Bernard Shaw boom on in the Kaiser’s realm and in Austria.” – Bernard Shaw to Reginald Golding Bright, February 23, 1903

“Given theatres of the German type in England and my difficulties would be over at once.” – Bernard Shaw to William Archer, January 12, 1903

2.1 INTRODUCTION: GERMANY COMES KNOCKING

On an afternoon in March of 1902, a young Viennese playwright named Siegfried Trebitsch let the door knocker fall on number 10 Adelphi Terrace in London, the home of Charlotte and Bernard Shaw. In his pocket he carried a letter of introduction from the Scottish critic William Archer; he had traveled all the way from Vienna to ask Shaw in person for permission to translate his plays into German. During his first visit to London in 1900, Trebitsch had approached Archer, knowing his reputation as a well-connected drama critic and translator of Ibsen. Archer gave Trebitsch, an amateur playwright

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himself, a copy of Shaw’s *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant* and sent him on his way.

When he began translating Shaw’s plays, Trebitsch quickly recognized that they would reach a welcoming audience in Germany and Austria. He obtained the letter from Archer, then traveled at his own expense to meet the playwright himself.

Shaw and Trebitsch gave varying accounts of their meeting in later years. Shaw initially recalled two visits from the young man, and then revised his memory to only one visit. Trebitsch claimed that Shaw and Charlotte pawned him off on one another, each forcing the other to do the sad duty of expelling him from their home. Nonetheless, he explained his case to both of them. Shaw explained copyright laws and business practices to Trebitsch, but the end result, said Shaw, in full ironic mode, “was that the young gentleman carried the citadel by storm as successfully as he had carried the outworks. I did what I could to dissuade him from what seemed a desperate undertaking; but his faith in my destiny was invincible. I surrendered at discretion.”

Charlotte invited Trebitsch to lunch on March 17, 1902, and the working relationship between Shaw and Trebitsch soon blossomed into a fruitful collaboration that lasted until Shaw’s death in 1950. Already by the early twentieth century, Shaw’s career made him a well known music critic, theatre reviewer, playwright, political spokesman, and letter writer who produced an astounding amount of work. He worked to spread his words around the globe, but in this particular case, Germany came knocking at his door.

Trebitsch’s visit was not the first time Germany came knocking at Shaw’s door. On June 11, 1894, Shaw wrote playwright Henry Arthur Jones about a visit from Sigmund Lautenberg, managing director of the Neues Theater in Berlin. “He had come to
London under the impression that the two great successes of the year in England are *Arms and The Man* and *The Lady Slavey,*” Shaw told Jones.⁴ He took it upon himself to explain the “wiles of London” to Lautenberg, and suggested plays and playwrights to contact for possible export to Germany. He encouraged Jones to be polite, should Lautenberg come calling. Teasingly, Shaw said he was touched by Lautenberg’s “complimenting me on my strong resemblance to Jesus Christ.”⁵ The incident was brief, given only a paragraph in Shaw’s letter, but it is significant that a major German manager approached Shaw about his plays as early 1894, eight years before Trebitsch knocked.

Bernard Shaw saw himself as an agent of change in the British theatre. When he took the job of drama critic for the *Saturday Review* in 1895, he immediately laid siege to the foundations of Victorian theatre and opera. With his pen, he declared, he would undermine the legacy of actor-managers such as Henry Irving and Herbert Beerbohm Tree, and replace them with new authors, structures, and ideas. One of his primary sources for his campaign was the German theatre and opera. He was readily familiar with them: he traveled to Bayreuth to view Wagner’s operas firsthand, and reported on them in London. He tracked German productions of Henrik Ibsen’s and August Strindberg’s plays in the 1890’s and early 1900’s. He familiarized himself with German philosophy, history, and economics, and lectured on them in the Fabian Society.

⁴ George Bernard Shaw, *Collected Letters*, ed. Dan H. Laurence, vol. 1 (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1965) 443-4. Shaw’s *Arms and the Man* opened on April 21, 1894 at the Playhouse Theatre; *The Lady Slavey*, by John Crook and George Dance, was a popular musical that opened that same year.
⁵ Shaw, *Collected Letters*, vol. 1 444.
Shaw’s familiarity with Germany and German culture permeates his entire body of work: in his music and theatre reviews, in his letters, in his political speeches and tracts, in his plays. He encouraged actors “to master all the modern languages – especially German.” Through his letters to such varied correspondents as Golding Bright, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Nancy Astor, Ellen Terry, and Beatrice and Sydney Webb, he used characters and situations from Wagner as illustrations. He frequently cited examples from German socialism throughout his political tracts. During his introduction to *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, he referenced German historians and physicists such as Ernst Heinrich Haeckel and Hermann von Helmholtz. In one letter, he coached playwright Henry Arthur Jones in playwriting by using Wagner as an example. The names of Goethe, Hegel, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, Schubert, and Wagner appeared with astounding regularity. The point is clear: the prolific Bernard Shaw brought a wealth of German culture to England.

More importantly, Shaw’s relationship with Germany formed a two-way street: he drew German opera and performance into London through his reviews and essays. At the same time, Germany drew his work from London. He turned to Germany for German translations of Strindberg’s plays. He based *Caesar and Cleopatra* largely on German historian and archaeologist Theodor Mommsen’s *Roman History*, published from 1854 to 1856. Shaw’s plays, translated by Trebitsch, were at first more successful in Germany.

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7 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 1 123.
than in England. *Candida, Man and Superman, Arms and the Man,* and *Major Barbara* were all enjoyed early success and publication in Germany. He also wrote numerous articles and essays about politics and art for German-language publications.

### 2.2 SHAW AND GERMAN IDEAS

Shaw had already familiarized himself with German culture extensively, well before Trebitsch arrived in London. His knowledge came from a number of different directions and sources. In 1885, he and Beatrice Webb, leader of the Fabian Society, began learning German in order to read Marx in his original language. Shaw bought his own copy of Heinrich Godefroy Ollendorff’s *German Method* on August 15, and in January of 1887 added a German dictionary to his library. Over the following years, he practiced German continually. His diaries record that he “did some German” nearly every day, either at home and in the British Museum. His studies in the German language lessened over the next few years, although he attempted a formal education again in 1892 under F. Gouin’s method of teaching languages. After another lapse, he picked up the study of German again in late 1893 with Drabig and continued for a few months.

Shaw’s reading of Karl Marx and his involvement with the Fabian Society deeply affected his political views. He first read Marx in 1882, along with the works of American economist Henry George, and in 1884 he helped found the Fabian Society. Eric Bentley reports that Shaw was not a traditional Marxist; in fact, Shaw only read Marx’s *Das Kapital* and *Communist Manifesto.* Still, Shaw applied Marx’s basic theories to his plays. *Widower’s Houses* (1892) and *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* (1893), for

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instance, deal with issues of property and value, and critique capitalist thought. Given his involvement with Fabian Society and early Labour Party, and his familiarity with Marx, Shaw must have also be familiar with the progress of socialism in Germany. As early as the late 1880’s, he lectured on German social and political history for the Fabian Society, and contributed to the collection *Fabian Essays* in 1889. The trend continued. In a 1919 lecture on politics, Shaw turned to the German Social-Democratic Party for a model. They enjoyed millions of votes, good representation in the Reichstag (at least, better than in England), established newspapers, and status as an established institution in Germany. Shaw clearly wished the same for socialism in England.

Shaw also drew upon the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, particularly his ideas of the Will and the Superman (Übermensch). Bentley argues that the Nietzschean Superman is implicit in Fabian ideas. Shaw argued that the goal of politics and socialism was to produce a democracy led by these Supermen. He seemed to idealize these figures, who are driven by the Nietzschean will, to change history. He represented these figures using characters in his plays, such as Caesar in *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898) and in John Tanner in *Man and Superman* (1903). In the latter play, Tanner is a bachelor who is pursued by Ann Whitefield; she hopes to marry him. Her role fits with Shaw’s idea of the “Life Force.” Ann is in fact referred to as the “Life Force” in the play; part of this theory states that it is women who are the primary mover in the evolutionary process. They

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assume a majority of the responsibility for biologically propagating the human race, which leaves men free for intellectual quests. Women, then, must lure men back by any means possible, including a “feigned interest in his intellectual and social pursuits.”

Finally, Shaw was influenced by the works of German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer. Shaw subscribed to Schopenhauer’s idea of the Will as the driving force of human existence; however, Shaw was optimistic about the results of the human will to action. Schopenhauer, on the other hand, took a negative stance. The will to action, he believed, caused humans to be tormented by desire. This was incompatible with Shaw’s view of Creative Evolution, which argued, essentially, that human beings would evolve into increasingly better states of being. Shaw’s understanding of Creative Evolution is discussed and portrayed in his 1921 play *Back to Methuselah*, which shows human history in a five-part sequence, starting with Adam and Eve, moving to 1920’s England, then traveling one hundred, then three thousand, and finally thirty thousand years into the future.

The well-read Shaw most certainly sought out political, social, and cultural writings from all across the globe to influence his work, although he did not always acknowledge the debt. He explained to Archibald Henderson in 1905 that he had written *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* before encountering Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. He asserted, in fact, that he did not notice the similarities until a “German lady… told me that she knew where I had got it all.” Given the dearth of English translations of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, Shaw maintained, he was unfamiliar with the work. He also

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10 Bentley 153.
11 Bentley 48-9.
12 Shaw, *Collected Letters*, vol. 2 553.
claimed to have written *Widower’s Houses* before he knew of Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen’s socially-minded plays; yet critics insisted that he imitated Ibsen. If anything, Shaw concluded, he was “an impostor as pundit.”\(^\text{13}\) While Shaw may be reporting accurately about his initial familiarity with these writers, their influence eventually seeped into his work: throughout his later writing, he consistently idealized Goethe, Wagner, and Ibsen, and he often referred to Schopenhauer and Marx.

### 2.3 SHAW’S MUSIC CRITICISM AND GERMANY

Shaw’s music criticism provides some of his most significant contributions to German performance in London. Using his job as a music critic, he sought to draw German music into London to stimulate English appetites for German composers. Throughout his whole career, Shaw seemed deeply interested in cross-pollination. His own plays, while influencing writers such as Harley Granville Barker, drew on nineteenth-century traditions. So none of Shaw’s work stands alone in a vacuum; he facilitated a constant exchange of ideas.

Shaw spoke the language of music fluently. He grew up in a musical household, with his mother and Vandeleur Lee reciting music and playing various instruments. Shaw himself could hum full works from Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and other composers by age fifteen. Later in life, he frequently sung operas and played the piano for guests, including various women he tried to impress, and occasionally seduce. In performance he could judge the conductor, the instrumentation, and the vocalists. He could compare differing interpretations of the composition. Shaw was able to recommend

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\(^{13}\) Shaw, *Collected Letters*, vol. 2 553.
the addition of more concert halls to London, or prescribe “How Handel Is Sung.” He also recognized “A Butchered Lohengrin,” or recommend “How Not to Teach Singing.” He ranked the opera singers from each year and reviewed scientific studies of vocal production, economics and music, and the lives of conductors.

Like the rest of his work, Shaw’s music criticism is saturated with Germans and Germany. He embellished his reviews and articles with references to German composers, singers, conductors, and writers. He listened to and wrote about Gustav Mahler, Richard Wagner, Johannes Brahms, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig von Beethoven, Franz Schubert, and Robert Schumann. He also knew various German conductors, bandleaders, musicians, and vocalists. He selected and praised his favorite pieces of German music; he idealized Wagner and his art of “absolute music,” while he frowned upon the “hopelessly commonplace and tedious homilist, Johannes Brahms,” though late in his career he acknowledged how unfair his attacks were on Brahms.

Shaw first became financially independent through his music criticism. He wrote under the pseudonym “Corno di Bassetto” (Basset Horn) for The Star until May 1890, then moved to The World, edited by Edmund Yates. There he wrote under his own name. Throughout his career, he defended and developed English tastes in music. According to Shaw’s diary and letters, he attended music performances constantly in London, often two recitals in one evening.

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As early as 1877, Shaw encouraged the “advanced German stamp” in contemporary English music.\textsuperscript{16} He used the Wagner Festivals at Albert Hall and his visits to Bayreuth to remedy the “retrogressive” English understanding of Wagner. He battled the English tendency to perform all operas in Italian. Italian, he believed, was merely a modern fashion, and forcing every other opera to conform to its nuances defeated the purpose of singing them. German opera such as Wagner should be sung in “German, in which the greatest operas have been written.”\textsuperscript{17} Shaw once suggested he would rather see actor-manager Henry Irving (to Shaw, one of the guilty parties in English theatre’s sorry state) perform a German \textit{Hamlet} than he would listen to any opera in Italian.\textsuperscript{18} Singing German operas in Italian did not suit the “German temperament” and neglected “the grand calm of the ideal Germany.”\textsuperscript{19}

At times, Shaw claimed a substantial amount for making English performance more modern. To Ellen Terry, he asserted to have bullied Jean de Reszke, the Polish tenor, to sing Wagner’s Siegfried: “He could not however be induced to sing them in public, until I, at the height of my vogue as a musical critic, stung him to the attempt by contemptuously refusing to sign an address to him on the ground that a tenor who had never sung Siegfried could not be regarded as a serious artist.”\textsuperscript{20} Whether Shaw actually motivated de Reszke to sing Siegfried is debatable; however, the sheer amount of his criticism must have exerted some effect on the music performers and English music-going public.

\textsuperscript{16} Shaw, \textit{Music}, vol. 1 79.
\textsuperscript{17} Shaw, \textit{Music}, vol. 1 79.
\textsuperscript{18} Shaw, \textit{Music}, vol. 1 172-3.
\textsuperscript{19} Shaw, \textit{Music}, vol. 1 648.
An 1889 article in *The Star* summarizes Shaw’s impression of German musicians. In the article, he describes various types of music teachers, including a Frenchman, an Alsatian, and an Englishman. The Englishman, Shaw says, learned music from church choirs and organs, was an “Irvingite,” has been to the opera only once, knows Mozart, Handel, and Goss, and “dislikes foreigners.”

Overall, the English musician, in Shaw’s mind, has only a surface knowledge of music. The German, meanwhile, is an:

Enthusiast. Thorough musician. Well read, well educated, fully up to the modern standard of musical culture. Despises the ignorant dolts and dastards who drag music through the mud in England. Tells them so whenever he meets them. … Has no sense of humor; cannot see anybody’s point of view but his own… and would infallibly ruin himself by mere incompatibility but for the indispensability of his professional skill, knowledge, and devotion.

While he criticized Germans for their inflated sense of superiority (and trenchant anti-Semitism), Shaw praised their superior musical ability above England’s. He later reviewed a study claiming fifty percent of Germans understood music while only two percent of Englishmen did, and readily agreed with the findings.

2.4 SHAW IN BAYREUTH

Shaw did not restrict his music criticism to London. Convinced by various friends to travel to Bayreuth, Germany, Shaw finally ventured there in late July 1889 to write for *The Star*. He explored Bayreuth with William Archer and Rimbault Dibdin, wandered the surrounding mountainside, and attended performances of *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger*, and *Parsifal* (twice). On their way back to London, they also explored

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Nuremberg, Cologne, and Mainz. They visited Goethe’s and Wagner’s homes, and sat in the Roman Baths, cathedrals, and castles. Shaw referred to this trip, and others to Bayreuth, as “Wagnerizing.”

Shaw wrote seven articles about the trip, five for The Star as Corno di Bassetto, one for The Hawk, as Reuter (the pun being a byline which read “By Reuter”), and one for the English Illustrated Magazine. These articles, while technical reviews of the performances themselves, featured many of Shaw’s early observations and comparisons of English and German performance. In his first article he described the entire journey to Bayreuth for his readers, and commended German audiences for their commitment to the experience. Audience members obligingly remove their large hats, they hush anyone who would distract from the concert with useless noise, and the lights dim over the audience, forcing them to concentrate on the music. “You at once recognize,” Shaw wrote, “that you are in the most perfect theatre in the world for comfort, effect, and concentration of attention.”

In his second article he commented on his travels around Germany, with harsh words to say about the town of Bayreuth. Bayreuth was a “desperately stupid little town,” comparable to Bath, England. Aside from the Festspielhaus, Shaw preferred wandering the hills and woods surrounding the city. Still, he noted the companionship of fellow Englishmen and Americans in Bayreuth.

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26 Shaw, Music, vol. 1 722.
His third article in *The Star* focused on the performance of *Tristan und Isolde*. Shaw found the concert “an ocean of sentiment, immensely German, and yet universal in its appeal to human sympathy.” He evaluated the performers themselves, and compared them to a similar production at Covent Garden, where he found the London production deeply lacking. In Bayreuth, Shaw noted, no details were forgotten, no words were slurred, and the scenic design complemented the orchestra’s musical interpretation.

The final two articles evaluated performances of *Die Meistersinger* and *Parsifal*. While Shaw assessed the performances themselves, his brief comparisons of German opera to English opera stand out. Clearly he valued German performance abilities over the English. He began his review of *Die Meistersinger*:

Perhaps the reason why these Bayreuth artists interest me so much less than they ought to, is that they make no mistakes, and I am consequently deprived of an irritant to which I have become accustomed in London. Whatever it is, I sighed more than once for ten minutes of Covent Garden. Not, of course, for the Covent Garden orchestra, or the conductor, or the cuts, or the stalls and boxes, or the late hours, or the superficialities, or the general cloudiness as the meaning of the stage business, or the pointless Italian verse.

Likewise, his review of *Parsifal* drew constant comparisons between London and German audiences. He observed, “nobody behaves [in Bayreuth] otherwise than they would in church.” Above all, Shaw mourned English audience’s lack of commitment to the art.

His one article in *The Hawk*, while written in a different voice, echoed the same concerns as *The Star* articles. However, in addition to its sentimental wanderings through the streets of Bayreuth and gentle philosophizing, the article posed a challenge to English

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28 Shaw, *Music*, vol. 1 726.
music. The orchestra and staging, Shaw wrote, could be improved upon in London. Once “we are wise enough to see that it is worth our while” to build a theatre in London similar to the Festspielhaus, it could and should be done. The ultimate goal was to bring the benefits of Bayreuth’s art to all of England. Many Englishmen, Shaw admitted, could not travel to Bayreuth – it being “as inaccessible as the North Pole” – but its high art and superior performance could be created in England, too. Shaw’s reviews from the weeks following his journey to Bayreuth repeated the need for accessible, affordable opera in London. He repeated these concerns again in his English Illustrated Magazine article that same year.

Shaw traveled to Bayreuth again in 1894 and 1896. For each visit, he published a series of short reviews in The Star, the Pall Mall Budget, and The World. In these he described his experience and reviewed the performances; nearly every article repeated the concerns he articulated after his first visit. Shaw attempted to saturate his reading audiences with information about Bayreuth and German music. He commented on German culture, posed questions such as “Is It Worth Going?” to readers, and introduced various singers and conductors.

He also traveled to Oberammergau, Bavaria with Sydney Webb in 1890 to see the Passion Play. They sat for over eight hours, watching the production in the pouring rain. Shaw recorded their travels in Munich and Strassburg as well; he spent much of his time exploring cathedrals. He enjoyed an impromptu concert in the Ulm Cathedral, by which

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30 Shaw, Music, vol. 1 745.
31 The Oberammergau Passion Play has been performed every ten years since 1634 by the citizens of Oberammergau, Bavaria. Shaw, Archer, Webb, and others traveled to see the 1890 incarnation of the play. For an in-depth study of its often controversial history, see James Shapiro, Oberammergau: The Troubling Story of the World’s Most Famous Passion Play (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000).
he seemed moved. He also climbed to the top of the Strassburg Cathedral, going higher and facing a terror “that no typewriter can describe.”32 One night in Munich he enjoyed a comic opera that drew peals of laughter from the audience. Shaw, unable to understand all the jokes, “at last went out and sentimentally gazed on the Iser […] for the rest of the evening.”33

Shaw clearly internalized his knowledge of German music and culture. In November 1894, when he ended his intimacy with actress Florence Farr, the entire day’s diary entry consists of one German word: Treuung – “parting.”34 Stanley Weintraub, editor of Shaw’s diaries, suggests that Shaw may have drawn the word from Brahms’ chamber pieces. Shaw applied his musical knowledge to his relationship with Farr. It is interesting that, while ending it, he should use German to express himself.

2.5 THE WAGNER CAMPAIGN IN LONDON

Shaw’s campaign to introduce Richard Wagner’s operas to London was one of his biggest contributions to the relationship of British and German theatre. Shaw imported Wagner to make the English theater as modern as Germany’s, and he achieved this using various tactics. For instance, he praised good performances of German opera in London while attacking ill-conceived English productions. In 1905 he wrote his early biographer, Archibald Henderson that, “A German would laugh at the notion that Wagner required any ‘championing’ in 1889-94, since the Bayreuth performances… began in 1876.”35

Shaw understood that Wagner was well established in Germany far earlier than in

33 Shaw, Diaries, vol. 1 640.
34 Shaw, Diaries, vol. 2 1048.
England. Overall, he believed that England not only deserved a theatre like Bayreuth, one dedicated to high artistic achievement, but he believed that British theatre could perform Wagner and German drama better than the German theatre. Shaw summarized the state of Wagner in England in an 1890 article in The Star, in which he compared the “prosperous Wagnerism of Germany” to the “languishing Wagnerism of Britain.”\textsuperscript{36} He hoped that the London County Councils would “do for music in England what the petty courts of Germany used to do for it, after a fashion, in Germany.”\textsuperscript{37}

Wagner’s influence over Shaw, however, was not total. Shaw emulated some elements of Wagner, but resisted (or misunderstood) others. For instance, Wagner believed in the gesamtkunstwerk, or total art work, a synthesis of all the production elements to create a total, immersive experience for the audience. Wagner used the gesamtkunstwerk to evoke what he believed to be the spirit of the German nation. The theatre, in Wagner’s mind, was a sacred space for the worship of ideas.

Shaw believed, too, in the theatre of ideas, but not the ideas of national identity. The theatre, in Shaw’s mind, was not a church. Instead, he focused his theatre on social ideas and political issues. Mrs. Warren’s Profession, written in 1893, used prostitution as a metaphor for capitalist behavior. Widower’s Houses, written a year earlier, criticized the business of slum housing. These types of plays are not similar to Wagner’s operas.

Shaw is most similar to Wagner in his method of composition. He created his plays as if they were music dramas like Wagner’s operas. To do this, he treated his script like a

\textsuperscript{35} Shaw, Collected Letters, vol. 2 537.
\textsuperscript{36} Shaw, Music, vol. 1 924.
\textsuperscript{37} Shaw, Music, vol. 1 936.
musical score, wrote each character with their tonal qualities and total composition in mind. He described German music’s, specifically Wagner’s, influence on him in an essay titled “What I Owe to German Culture:”

I know that music has superseded words for many dramatic purposes. When I find my colleagues trying to write sentimental love scenes I ask them whether they have ever heard Tristan und Isolde, and whether they seriously think people will listen to mere word-music after tone poetry – whether they think they can even touch Verdi and Gounod with their lame verbal descriptions of the indescribable, much less Wagner. Certainly I cannot. I knew quite well when I began writing for the stage that I must become either a composer or a librettist unless I could enlarge the spoken drama by a new sort of love scene.38

Shaw may not have agreed with Wagner’s philosophical ideas, but he did agree that he was more so a composer or librettist than a playwright. Rather than creating a church-like theatre experience for his audiences, Shaw communicated social and political ideas through a spoken performance that was composed like a piece of music.

This is not to undervalue, however, Shaw’s estimation of Wagner. He argued that Wagner should form a central part of the professional singer’s repertoire, just as all actors should know Shakespeare: “All ambitious actors play Shakespe[¥]… Singers of Bayreuth music-dramas must do likewise.”39 Wagner, in Shaw’s mind, was Germany’s great national poet. Since Shaw concluded that England was “immeasurably worse off than the Germans in musical matters,” he turned to Germany’s national poet as a way to make English theatre and opera more modern.40

Shaw suggested one way that England might succeed. In two separate essays from 1896 and 1897, he advocated the creation of a theatre in England like the Festival Playhouse in Bayreuth. He praised Bayreuth in the Saturday Review in March 1896 for

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its ideal location, inexpensive tickets, and its proximity to beautiful landscapes. “It is the
only theatre where you can wander from a pine forest into your stall, and wander out at
the end of the act into the terebinthine air again,” he wrote.\footnote{George Bernard Shaw, \textit{The Drama Observed}, ed. Bernard F. Dukore, vol. 2 (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993) 540.} Such a theatre could be built
in Middlesex, Surrey, Hampstead Heath, Battersea Park, or Richmond Hill, and could be
built better than the one at Bayreuth. London’s transportation system, Shaw observed,
could easily connect audiences from all around the country with the theatre, and make the
space pay homage to British drama, just as Bayreuth serves as a sacred place to Wagner.

Furthermore, Shaw blanched when others suggested that existing theatres in
London could serve as the British Bayreuth. In 1896 he observed Herbert Beerbohm
Tree’s construction of the new Her Majesty’s Theatre in Haymarket. It was to be
modeled on Bayreuth’s Wagner Theatre, which Shaw found “exasperating.”\footnote{Shaw, \textit{Drama Observed}, vol. 2 541.} The
accommodations of Her Majesty’s, he argued, did not resemble those at Bayreuth. The
Wagner Theatre there had no galleries, only comfortable stalls; it was large enough to
seat thirteen hundred, a feat no West End theatre could accomplish with its limited
ground space. Even Covent Garden and Drury Lane, two of the largest theatres in
London, could not compete with Bayreuth for its enormous, egalitarian seating. The
seating in the Bayreuth Festspielhaus was laid out in a gigantic fan. There were no box
seats or galleries; every seat offered an unbroken view of the stage. Even if a Bayreuth-
style theatre were built, Shaw argued, the average British theatre-going public was not
willing to travel so far outside central London for such a theatre.
Bayreuth attracted Shaw, not only for its dedication to a great composer, but for its superior staging conventions. Wagner, for instance, made wonderful use of the proscenium stage at Bayreuth. He maintained the pace of production by enveloping the stage with a “steam curtain.” This curtain – a clear forerunner of Max Reinhardt’s revolve and Harley Granville-Barker’s cloth curtains – obscured the audience’s view and allowed rapid scene changes. Thus, The Rhine Gold could be performed at Bayreuth without disruptive, fifteen-minute intervals.

The experience of Bayreuth was so complete for Shaw that he wrote, “He who has not been there knows nothing about theatres, no matter how often he may have been stuffed into a fabulously groundrented cockpit in the Strand, and regaled with the delights of the British drama.” For Shaw, Bayreuth perfectly encapsulated the potential of drama and music, and in future years, he would compliment English music performances that began with the “Bayreuth Hush,” the quieting of the audience in appreciation for the work.

2.6 THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

Nowhere was Shaw more pointed and poignant in his introduction of German culture to England than in his well-known tract The Perfect Wagnerite. Written in 1898 and reprinted in 1901, 1913, and 1922, the piece is primarily a commentary on Wagner’s four-opera cycle Der Ring des Nibelungen, with explanations of the story and its significance. “All I intend to do,” he wrote in the preface, “is to impart the ideas which

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44 Shaw, Drama Observed, vol. 2 540.
are most likely to be lacking in the conventional Englishman’s equipment.”

Shaw describes not only the story in minute detail, but the experience of hearing it in concert, too. He explains where he preferred to sit, when tourists usually try to walk out and why (the impulse toward which he attempted to rectify in his reader), and how the experience compared to opera at Covent Garden. He seemed to understand the complexities of learning Wagner, and how they might intimidate a first-time audience member: “To master Wagner’s music dramas is to learn a philosophy.”

In addition, he describes Wagner’s life and significance in the world of art. After narrating *The Rhine Gold*, Shaw tells of Wagner’s early career and exile into France. He attempts to counter arguments that his description of Wagner stems only from his socialist perspective, by showing how the allegory may be applied in any number of ways. After the synopsis of *Siegfried*, Shaw delves into an essay titled “Siegfried as Protestant,” in which he argues religion, drama, philosophy, art, and history. The intent, it seems, is not just to familiarize a reader with Wagner’s work, but also to invite the reader into the discussion.

Shaw then draws the discussion of Wagner further into English culture. Halfway through narrating *Die Götterdämmerung*, he pauses to discuss a contemporary debate over the opera in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Chronicle*. The debate centered on the actions of Siegfried, Brynhild, and Gunther, and which character held the moral high ground.

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45 Shaw, *Wagnerite* xx.
46 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 1 327.
He continues to expand his readers’ perception of Wagner with further explanations of Wagner’s life and Der Ring des Nibelungen’s application to history. He invokes Marx, Engels, and others in his elucidation, and draws the entire discussion together using Der Ring’s story and characters. Germany, he explains, waited after the revolutions of the 1840’s for a Siegfried, when “in fact, Siegfried did not arrive and Bismarck did.” Shaw uses his words and Wagner’s to explain the opera’s significance.

Shaw concludes with a little musical education for his reader. He explains terms such as “leitmotif” and “theme,” and demonstrates how a listener might pick them out in British and German music. He also explains how composers build operas like a piece of dramatic literature, such as Shakespeare, Shelley, or Mozart. He then fits Wagner into nineteenth century musical developments, and suggests what music might become after Wagner (he cites Brahms, Elgar, and Richard Strauss as Wagner’s descendents).

In the final pages of The Perfect Wagnerite, Shaw returns to his experiences at Bayreuth, and applies his observations again to the establishment of a Bayreuth-like theatre in England. Bayreuth’s success, he argues, comes from its surrounding landscape. This same setting could be replicated in England; Shaw suggests Richmond Hill, Hampton Court, or Margate pier. The beautiful surroundings, Shaw asserts, would draw large crowds, particularly during the summer. He expresses his disappointment that the “Wagnerist dream has not been best realized in England. … [The dream] means that the English soil should produce English music and English drama, and that English people should perform them in their own way.”

The total effect of The Perfect Wagnerite is the

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47 Shaw, Wagnerite 87.
48 Shaw, Wagnerite 87.
49 Shaw, Wagnerite 134.
stimulation of English drama and music. While the book acts as a practical introduction to Wagner’s largest work, Shaw’s true intention is to challenge his native drama. He sought to make Wagner “into a vehicle for enlightenment against the dark forces of London.”

His admonitions did not fall on deaf ears. “When jaded ill-treated, cheap-treated Italian opera was at its lowest and dullest,” Ellen Terry later wrote Shaw, “Wagner… made the air simmer with ravishing, expensive exhilaration.” Shaw converted at least one listener to the German composer.

2.7 CONFRONTING ENGLISH DRAMA

In addition to Wagner, Shaw looked elsewhere in German culture to challenge English drama. He cited, for instance, the need for more municipal theatres in London and England. Most London municipalities, he argued, go without a local theatre, despite the fact that many of them were larger than German towns that had their own theatres and opera houses. National, Court, and municipal theatres in Vienna, Paris, Scandinavia, and Germany, Shaw continued, had a far greater impact on their culture than the English theatre does on England.

Shaw was also concerned that English drama fell behind European drama in its development. In *The Quintessence of Ibsen*, he wrestled with the meaning and significance of Ibsen’s body of work. Although he and William Archer differed on their

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51 St. John 111.
52 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 2 433.
views of Ibsen – and who controlled him – they shared a similar goal: to stimulate native English drama to become as modern as European drama. In one of his many introductions to *Quintessence*, Shaw echoed Archer’s concern for the state of British drama: “By losing [Ibsen’s] vital contribution to modern thought we are losing ground relatively to the countries which, like Germany, have made his works familiar to their playgoers.” Shaw’s solution to modernize the English theatre, interestingly enough, relied on a German model: “What we need is a theatre devoted primarily to Ibsen as the Bayreuth Festspielhaus is devoted to Wagner.” Again, Shaw turns to Wagner’s legacy for metaphors and models.

The issue of German theatrical superiority surfaced again in Shaw’s opinions on stage censorship. He himself faced the Lord Chamberlain’s pen when *Widower’s Houses* and *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* were both denied a public license. He wrote against G. A. Redford, Examiner of Plays from 1893-1911, on behalf of his own plays, Granville Barker’s, and Ibsen’s. Redford’s double standards, Shaw argued, cheapened British drama with sentiment or titillation, while forbidding stories of genuine social concern to touch the stage. All of this, Shaw wrote, resulted in a frightening disparity between English drama and that of her fellow nations:

You may at this moment see on the stage of the Duke of York’s Theatre a man regaining the lost affection of his wife, and checkmating her lover, by taking her to a restaurant in the character of a cocotte and plying her with wine and aphrodisiacs; but if you want to see a play in which a woman tells the truth about a husband of that sort, and has to face the ultimate consequences of his conduct and her attitude towards it, you must go to Germany.\(^{56}\)

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54 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 3 1300.
55 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 3 1300.
56 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 3 1144.
These words are a strong condemnation of the popular British stage. What seemed to infuriate Shaw most was not the lack of new drama in London, but the large audience it received in Germany. In Shaw’s view, a play that was considered a “new work” in England was a play “that has been familiar in every second-rate German town for the last ten years.”

Simultaneously, he defended German drama from improper English productions. When Sydney Grundy adapted *Tristan und Isolde* as *Slaves of the Ring* in 1895, Shaw reviewed it for the *Saturday Review*, calling it “not a work of art at all: it is a mere contrivance for filling a theatre bill, and not, I am bound to say, a very apt contrivance at that.” Shaw criticized Grundy for diluting the poetic power of Wagner’s work. He argued particularly that the English character was unable to handle the German conception.

He also challenged opera producer and impresario Augustus Harris – even posthumously – with misunderstanding German opera. In an article about Harris following his death, Shaw pointed out that Harris worked against German conventions in favor of older, Italian designs. “He was not a great manager,” Shaw wrote, “and I am not convinced that he was even a very clever one.”

Although Shaw believed that Harris, who produced opera at Her Majesty’s and Covent Garden, was a strong advocate for Wagner in London, he reminded his readers on more than one occasion that Harris had once called Wagner’s *Rheingold* “a damned pantomime.” Shaw seemed unable to forgive Harris for his views on Wagner, and his mistreatment of Wagner through his

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57 Shaw, *Music*, vol. 2 634.
58 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 1 233.
59 Quoted in Shaw, *Collected Letters*, vol. 2 191.
60 Shaw, *Drama Observed*, vol. 2 635.
staging techniques (he uses Harris’ designs for Act 1 of Tannhäuser as an example). In Shaw’s eyes, Harris made German opera “a laughing-stock to every German who went to see it.”⁶¹ In the debate over Wagner, Shaw described himself as a “violent Wagnerite,” as the example of Harris demonstrates.⁶²

Despite Shaw’s criticism of English opera performance, he genuinely believed it could succeed in being as modern and high quality as German opera. For instance, while reviewing a production of Wagner in London, he noted, “To the Germans I would point out that their apparent devotion to the poetic and dramatic side of their art can claim no credit as long as it is forced upon them by the fact that they sing so badly that nobody would listen to them for their own sakes alone.” This particular performance, Shaw continued, demonstrated that the performers believe that distinguishing the correct pitch “does not matter. … What the Germans have to learn from us is that it does matter.”⁶³ Likewise, he earlier commented in The Perfect Wagnerite that performances at Bayreuth suffered from their ill-equipped native singers; they were, to Shaw, “‘robust and dray horses’ who reached ‘the prime of their shouting life’ at the age of sixty.”⁶⁴ Bayreuth’s reputation with Shaw improved, however, when they employed more singers from around Europe.

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⁶¹ Shaw, Music, vol. 2 413.
⁶² Shaw, Music, vol. 1 59.
⁶⁴ Quoted in Holroyd, vol. 1 239.
2.8 ENTER SIEGFRIED TREBITSCH

Shaw holds a place of prominence in the influence of Germany on the English theatre because of his music criticism, but also because of numerous plays. Martin Meisel has shown convincingly, in *Shaw and the Nineteenth Century*, that Shaw learned to appropriate nineteenth century dramatic forms and rework them for his own purposes. His innovative work, looking both forwards and backwards, would help establish the British theatre as a modern theatre of ideas and social concerns. Indeed, Shaw’s plays are some of the few (aside from Oscar Wilde and J. M. Barrie) that enjoy regular production beyond the Edwardian period.

Not only did Shaw welcome the works of German composers and playwrights to London, but he also sent his own work abroad. His plays found a rich soil in Germany, thanks mostly to the young Viennese playwright and translator Siegfried Trebitsch. This relationship was unique, in that Shaw did not have any other close relationships with his translators, and his plays proved particularly attractive to Germany directors and managers.

Shaw actively engaged his German producers; so actively, in fact, that they requested his plays be produced in Germany before they were in England. Rather than staging a Shaw play that had received poor reviews in England, German producers requested the rights to produce the plays first. Thus, *Pygmalion*, one of Shaw’s greatest successes in Germany, joined a long line of Shavian drama, such as *Caesar and
Cleopatra, produced first in Germany before it touched native soil. Shaw also felt that the German theatre system could handle his plays more successfully. Their repertory system could risk the short run of a new play, as opposed to the English system of long runs.  

Shaw managed the German translations, as all of his work, with a firm hand. And he had good reason to be firm: in October of 1905, on the death of Sir Henry Irving, Shaw published an obituary in the *Neue Freie Presse* in Vienna. The editor gave the translation assignment, not to Trebitsch as Shaw requested, but to a far less competent translator. This resulted in an article that sounded “malicious,” as Shaw told Ellen Terry. When the obituary was translated back into English, it appeared to be even more spiteful, to the point that Stephen Coleridge published a letter refuting Shaw’s supposed words in the London *Times* and the *Neue Freie Presse*. For several days a controversy raged; Shaw ended it by offering his original letter, free of charge, to the London press. Only the *Morning Star* took the offer in early December. Although the experience was short-lived, it highlights Shaw’s active role in translating his work into German.

Shaw also ran into difficulties with actual productions. In 1906, German director Max Reinhardt staged *Caesar and Cleopatra* in Berlin. Unfortunately for him, Harley Granville Barker and his new wife, actress Lillah McCarthy, visited the production on their honeymoon and reported to Shaw that scenes had been cut. “May the soul of Reinhardt scream through all eternity in boiling brimstone!” Shaw replied to Barker.

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66 St. John 304.
Shaw then composed a strongly worded letter to Trebitsch, instructing him to restore the scenes. Both Barker and Trebitsch sent letters and telegrams to Reinhardt, who, according to Shaw, ignored them.\(^6^8\)

Shaw feared that Reinhardt would butcher *Man and Superman* as he had *Caesar*, so, when Reinhardt contracted to produce it in 1906, Shaw asked Trebitsch to pay him £50 to surrender the contract and forego production. “The effect of that on Reinhardt will be worth £100 to me,” Shaw explained.\(^6^9\) He reasoned that Reinhardt could not follow the playwright’s instructions, thus convincing Shaw that “he has not the necessary grasp of theatrical conditions to handle my plays.”\(^7^0\) Apparently the issue with Reinhardt persisted, which lead Shaw to write, “Please tell Reinhardt to look for an intelligent sheep and exchange heads with him: it will be a good bargain for him, though a bad one for the sheep.”\(^7^1\) Reinhardt, the imminent German director, had brought the full force of Shaw’s anger upon himself. In 1911 Shaw again encouraged Trebitsch “to hurt [Reinhardt’s] feelings frightfully at least twice a year, and he will never be happy without a play from you.”\(^7^2\) Reinhardt was not the only director or acting troupe to anger Shaw. As German productions of his plays increased, Shaw contended with theatres such as the Berlin Freie Volksbühne giving unlicensed performances of his plays.

Shaw and Trebitsch collaborated on more than just play translations. Together they established a veritable production company and publishing house of Shaw in German. Trebitsch translated and published articles on socialism, anarchism, and militarism, as well as biographies of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry for German

\(^{68}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 101.
\(^{69}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 106.
\(^{70}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 106.
\(^{71}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 111.
periodicals. Beginning in the 1920’s, Shaw returned the favor to Trebitsch by translating and rewriting his play *Frau Gitta’s Sühne* (translated as *Jitta’s Atonement*) into English. The play is a set in contemporary Vienna and features Jitta, a married woman having an affair with a Professor. When the professor dies of a heart disease in her arms, she must work to conceal her identity from his family and her own husband. She succeeds in the end, and confesses her identity to her husband and the Professor’s daughter. She and her husband, who also had an affair, strike a deal with each other, and decide to live peaceably.\(^{73}\)

In 1908, the two partnered to write an attack on German literary critic Max Meyerfeld. Meyerfeld had been criticizing Trebitsch’s translations of Shaw for several years, and Shaw finally replied with a criticism of Meyerfeld’s own translation of Oscar Wilde’s *De Profundis*. Shaw and Trebitsch published their reply in the April 9 edition of *Die Schaubühne*. This public debate was yet another aspect of Shaw’s and Trebitsch’s total campaign to introduce Shaw to Germany.

Shaw’s letters to Trebitsch, published together in 1986, span their entire working relationship. The tone is friendly but businesslike. Shaw was as shrewd a businessman as he was a writer, and the correspondence with Trebitsch reveals as much. His early letters discussed royalties and payment; Shaw seems to have dealt fairly with Trebitsch, often splitting the profits in half.\(^{74}\) Throughout their correspondence, Shaw instructed Trebitsch on nuances of translation, upcoming productions, casting choices, and Trebitsch’s own

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\(^{72}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 158.


\(^{74}\) Trebitsch was independently wealthy, however, with an inheritance from a childless uncle.
writing. Shaw’s first recorded letter to him, dated June 26, 1902, begins “I am amazed at your industry. But why don’t [sic] you write plays of your own?” It seems that Shaw had discovered a kindred spirit in his translator.

Shaw, who knew German fairly well, did not hesitate to correct Trebitsch’s translations. In *The Devil’s Disciple* draft, for instance, he cited forty-eight “appalling errors & ruinous oversights.” Shaw edited each draft, correcting every nuance from English colloquial phrases, to noun cases, and verb tenses, and returned it to Trebitsch. He frequently warned Trebitsch against translating without hindsight or foresight; in other words, Trebitsch translated words literally but neglected their context. “When you finish the play,” Shaw admonished, “it goes out of your head just as your head vanishes from your mirror when you have finished shaving.” So Shaw educated Trebitsch on how to contextualize words; he cited examples from Shakespeare to show how words are repeated, embellished, or used in different ways.

The correspondence reveals further details of Shaw’s attitude toward Germany and its culture, heightened by the personal involvement of his plays. In some ways, he viewed the professional theatre in England and Germany as similar: “You tell me not to be anxious about my stage directions… all actors are idiots: all ‘directors’ are imposters.” Still, Shaw had a strange sense of the success he might achieve in Germany:

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75 Shaw, *Trebitsch* 17.
76 Shaw, *Trebitsch* 27.
77 Shaw, *Trebitsch* 32.
78 Shaw, *Trebitsch* 27.
“the Germans are as stupid as any people under the sun,” he wrote Trebitsch, “and are not a bit likely to treat me better than they treated Wagner – except that they adore foreigners & despise themselves.”

The first German production, *The Devil’s Disciple*, opened on February 25, 1903 at the Raimund Theater. Scheduled for ten performances, it closed after four. Critics renewed attacks on Trebitsch’s competence as a translator. The next production, *The Man of Destiny*, opened at Reinhardt’s Neues Theater in Berlin on February 10, 1904 and starred Reinhardt as Napoleon (in his only Shavian role). It received mixed reviews and closed after six performances. The next production, *Candida*, opened on March 4 of that same year and played to much better reviews. It was directed by Reinhardt and starred Agnes Sorma, the leading lady of the German stage, who had played opposite Reinhardt in *Man of Destiny*. Shaw, displeased by the descriptions he read in London, wrote “The theatre ought to be closed, and all the actors sent to a fortress for six months.”

Despite these setbacks, Shaw’s popularity advanced steadily in Germany, and Trebitsch and Shaw worked constantly to produce his plays. Trebitsch communicated with the directors and producers, so that major productions of Shaw occurred regularly in Berlin, Munich, Stuttgart, Vienna, Dresden, and Hamburg over the following years. With the opening of *Pygmalion* in October, 1913, the press claimed that Shaw had finally conquered the German-language stage. The play moved to Berlin and played over one hundred performances. Shaw had become, in roughly twelve years, a regular staple of the German theatrical diet. This caused him to tell several correspondents that:

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79 Shaw, *Trebitsch* 60.
80 Shaw, *Trebitsch* 68.
There is a Shaw boom in Germany, because four of my plays have been produced in Vienna, Leipzig, Dresden and Frankfurt; and they have all failed so violently, and been hounded from the stage the such furious execrations, that the advanced critics proclaim me the choice and master spirit of the age; and no manager respects himself until he has lost at least 200 marks by me.\textsuperscript{81}

Trebitsch carried Shaw’s legacy as far as he could into the German theatre. He interacted with German theatrical agents, actors, managers, and writers. He met director Max Reinhardt in Vienna and read him \emph{Candida} and \emph{Caesar and Cleopatra}. Reinhardt, interested in spectacle, contracted \emph{Caesar} for the Neues Theater, Berlin. Shaw went so far as to ask Trebitsch to inquire into theatres’ scenic capabilities and into actors’ resumes. He even composed a dialogue between Trebitsch and inquiring agents, in which he instructed Trebitsch to appear “as foolish… as possible” in order to frustrate the agent into accepting Shaw’s terms.\textsuperscript{82}

Shaw’s constant instruction to Trebitsch was not without purpose, for he clearly had lofty goals for his effect on German theatre:

I want the Germans to know me as a philosopher, as an English (or Irish) Nietzsche (only ten times cleverer), and not as a mere carpenter of farces like Helden [\emph{Arms and the Man}] and nursery plays like Candida. Besides, I want to complete your education. You must begin where I leave off & surpass me as far as I surpass Goethe & Schiller & Shakespear [sic] and Strindberg & Ibsen & Hauptman & Sudermann & Tolstoy \emph{et hoc genus omne} [and all of his kind].\textsuperscript{83}

Shaw desired to be more than just a playwright to Germany. Just as learning Wagner equaled learning a new philosophy, so Shaw hoped his plays would become a genre unto themselves.

\textsuperscript{81} Shaw, \textit{Collected Letters}, vol. 2 381.
\textsuperscript{82} Shaw, \textit{Trebitsch} 88-9.
\textsuperscript{83} Shaw, \textit{Trebitsch} 31.
Interestingly enough, Shaw’s plays returned to London in German translation. The German Theatre in London, financed by H. A. Hertz and chaired by J. T. Grein, sought out Trebitsch’s translations to perform them in London. With this act, Shaw completed the mutual exchange by himself: he exported his plays to Germany, thereby bringing English theatre there; a German company, then, imported them into London with German actors and directors, thereby bringing German theatre there. In essence, Shaw discovered another mode of introducing his plays into England: they would arrive as examples of the best of German culture.

The outbreak of World War I changed Shaw’s and Trebitsch’s correspondence. On August 4, 1914, the day England and Germany declared war on each other, Shaw telegrammed Trebitsch, “you and I at war [;] can absurdity go further [;] my friendliest wishes go with you under all circumstances.”

Trebitsch, an officer in the Austrian army, returned home from vacation with his wife to report for duty. While he and Shaw continued to correspond during the war (although with a much-depleted frequency), they no longer discussed theatrical productions. Instead, they wrote to each other of their countries’ reaction to the war. They were a small island of English-German friendship, still corresponding amiably, in a sea of conflict.

2.9 CONCLUSIONS: “IS SLOANE SQUARE BAYREUTH?”

Shaw suggested, on more than one occasion, that he drew German culture into England, whenever possible, because it may not have taken root in Germany as well as it could have. He argued that reform movements rarely took root because they were not

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84 Shaw, Trebitsch 175.
incorporated into a country’s education system. He pointed to Germany as an example of this failure. The “great liberal movement” in German culture represented by Goethe, Schiller, Kant, and Wagner had not affected German politics and militarism in the Germany of Wilhelm. The schools, country houses, the army, and the court took no notice of them, Shaw argued. Instead, the militarism of the Prussian Junkers dominated young Germans’ education. Perhaps Shaw worried that great works like Wagner’s would go to waste in contemporary civilizations. He could not abide this, and being invested in England as much as he was, felt compelled to import all he could from Germany.

German culture was not perfect, as he articulated on multiple occasions, but it often proved better than English culture. He once wrote that the principal performers in an opera “were so averagely German… that they might as well have been English, so powerfully mediocre were they.” While he disparaged English performance in lieu of German, Shaw could not leave it alone. Whenever possible, he used German models of theatres, playwrights, and composers to encourage the British theatre to become a good European itself.

“Is Sloane Square Bayreuth?” Shaw wrote an actress in 1904, referring to the current Vedrenne-Barker seasons at the Court Theatre. The three seasons there effectively established Shaw as a leading British playwright; of the nearly one thousand individual performances, Shaw could claim 788. The seasons, while brief, were a moment when the English drama seemed to shine with fresh organization, with new people, and with challenging ideas. “Is Sloane Square Bayreuth?” The question to the

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87 Shaw, *Granville Barker* 46.
actress is rhetorical, written in a moment of frustration, but it encapsulates everything that Shaw hoped English performance, through his influence, could become. German culture provided one important basis for Shaw’s art and thought.

Whenever that English art succeeded, he would also give credit to his countrymen where it was due. “I must add,” he wrote in the preface to the fourth edition of *Perfect Wagnerite*, “that nobody who knows the snobbish contempt in which most Englishmen hold one another will be surprised when I mention that in England the exploits of Poel, Granville-Barker, Bridges Adams, Atkins, and the English designers and painters who have worked for them, are modestly attributed to Herr Reinhardt, their eminent German contemporary.”

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88 Shaw, *Wagnerite* xi.
CHAPTER 3

CATALYST TO THE MODERN DIRECTOR:
HARLEY GRANVILLE BARKER AND MAX REINHARDT

“Theatre here so alive and interesting it makes me ashamed. But we have the potentialities I am sure – and of something even better than the Germans, something on a higher, serener plane. But it’s their vitality we want first. D’you think it comes from so much food and drink? The less good part of it, yes; but the better from their thoroughness. I do admire the brutes!” – Harley Granville Barker writing to Gilbert Murray from Berlin, October 1910¹

“Some day, perhaps an English Reinhart may be found…” – Harley Granville Barker, November 1910²

3.1 INTRODUCTION

“Granville Barker has been to Berlin,” wrote J. T. Grein in September 1912, “and, as some travelers who write a book on a country after a week in a boarding house, has, for our benefit, Reinhardtised Shakespeare.”³ Grein spoke about the opening of Harley Granville Barker’s The Winter’s Tale, the first of three significant Shakespeare

productions at London’s Savoy Theatre in 1912 and 1914. These three productions startled audiences with their symbolic scenery, rapid delivery, and close proximity between actors and spectators.4

Grein was not the only critic to notice the influence of German methods – particularly that of director Max Reinhardt’s – on Barker’s new work. A. B. Walkley observed similarities between the actors’ movements in The Winter’s Tale and Reinhardt’s Sumurûn in 1911: “squads of supers have symmetrical automaton-like movements which show the influence of Sumurûn.”5 By 1912, Reinhardt, the manager of the Deutches Theater in Berlin, was already a world-renowned director. In addition to tours in North America and Continental Europe, he visited London with six major productions prior to World War I: Taming of the Shrew in 1908, Sumurûn and The Miracle in 1911, Venetian Night and Oedipus in 1912, and Turandot in 1913. Within a span of five years, he impressed London with his massive crowd scenes, symbolic scenery, ensemble actors, ability to coordinate movement, light, and sound, and his directorial oversight of a production. How could Barker, as prominent as he already was in British theatre, not be affected by Reinhardt’s productions? Simon Nowell-Smith notes, “[Barker] caught the Reinhart tide, and whatever other tides were running his way, at the flood.”6

5 Quoted in Kennedy, Dream 134.
In the main, Barker downplayed Reinhardt’s influence on his own directing. In fact, in a letter to the Daily Mail dated September 26, 1912, he denied it: “I do protest that all this talk about Craig-ism or Reinhardt-ism... is futile.” He continued, “What I am trying to steal... from Mr. Craig and Mr. Poel, is a little of the freedom of spirit and fearlessness of purpose with which they have pioneered.” Barker’s defensive statement has some justification, for he never viewed himself as a direct disciple of Reinhardt, or a disciple of Reinhardt alone. Yet nonetheless the “spirit” and “purpose” gleaned from Craig and Poel allowed him to be swept up in this “Reinhardt tide.” Barker certainly had many opportunities to be influenced by Reinhardt. Besides seeing Reinhardt’s London productions, he and his wife, actress Lillah McCarthy, honeymooned on the Continent in early 1906, stopping at the Deutsches Theatre to see Shaw’s Caesar and Cleopatra and The Winter’s Tale. In 1910 he traveled to Berlin alone to attend productions at Reinhardt’s Großes Schauspielhaus and Kammerspielhaus. While visiting, he observed two rehearsals of Reinhardt’s Oedipus, and when the play came to London in 1912 at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, McCarthy took the role of Jocasta. While Reinhardt busied himself with choreographing crowd scenes and managing the visual effects, Barker personally coached McCarthy on playing her role. He gave her extensive lists of notes to direct her speech and movement.

Barker’s influences and contributions to British theatre, before and after Reinhardt’s appearance in London, demonstrate a profound shift in production methods. Reinhardt’s six London productions (Taming of the Shrew, Sumurûn, The Miracle, Oedipus, Venetian Night, and Turandot) and Barker’s major presentations during that

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7 Salmon 528.
same time (Iphigenia at Tauris, Philip the King, The Winter’s Tale, Twelfth Night, and A Midsummer Night’s Dream) reveal Barker’s “undisguised indebtedness” to the German director.\textsuperscript{8}

3.2 BARKER’S OTHER GOALS AND INFLUENCES

Nowell-Smith’s observation of “whatever other tides were running his way” is well taken, for Barker labored throughout the early 1900’s and 1910’s to establish a new, modern theatre in England. While creating this new theatre, he most openly acknowledged his debt to William Poel, although Kennedy has shown the limitations of that influence.\textsuperscript{9} Poel, the staunch Elizabethan, staged Shakespeare’s plays as he believed they were historically produced. He began in 1881 with a recital of the First Quarto text of Hamlet on a bare stage at St. George’s Hall, London, and throughout his career he researched, lectured, and advocated producing Renaissance plays by Renaissance methods.\textsuperscript{10} In 1894 he formed the Elizabethan Stage Society, and in the years following produced several of Shakespeare’s plays in modified performance spaces. He produced Twelfth Night in Burlington Hall and St. George’s Hall in 1895, and eventually Middle Temple Hall in 1897 (where it was staged during Shakespeare’s lifetime) on open stages, accompanied by Elizabethan instruments. In November 1893 he produced Measure for Measure at the Royalty Theatre. He modified the stage of the Royalty to resemble the

\textsuperscript{8} Nowell-Smith 406.
\textsuperscript{9} Kennedy, Dream 150-1.
\textsuperscript{10} For a good summary of Poel’s ideas, see Claris Glick, “William Poel: His Theories and Influence,” Shakespeare Quarterly 15.1 (Winter, 1964) 15-25.
Fortune, a Renaissance theatre. Elizabethan noblemen, placed on stools at the side of the stage, completed the picture. Poel continued to produce plays in this manner through the 1930’s.\footnote{Interesting enough, Poel found a kindred spirit in Jocza Savits, Director of the Royal Theatre in Munich. In the 1890’s, Savits, fearful of his inability to compete with the Meiningen Ensemble’s spectacle, suggested to the Intendant of the Theatre, Baron Perfall, that they return to the simplicity of the Elizabethan stage. Robert Speight, Poel’s biographer, suggests that “it is not fanciful to suppose that Poel’s own experiments had had some influence here” (218). Poel and Savits corresponded regularly. They visited each in 1908 and 1909, and attended British and German productions of Shakespeare together.}

At the young age of twenty-two, Barker began his professional career by playing Richard II for Poel in 1899. Despite the brief run, attended mostly by snickering schoolgirls, reviewers still noted his talent. Poel taught Barker several valuable lessons in their short collaboration (Barker played Edward II for Poel in 1903, and later directed Poel in \textit{John Bull’s Other Island} in 1906). Barker learned from him the value of fast-paced speech, how to coordinate actors’ voices like a choir, and an utmost respect for the text. In addition, Poel avoided the star system altogether; he trained actors to work as an ensemble. His staging, while purposefully antiquarian, showed Barker the potential of Shakespeare’s scripts when played on an open stage that placed actors in close proximity to the audience, lit as if by outdoor ambient light. Many of Poel’s techniques featured prominently in Barker’s \textit{Iphigenia} and the Shakespeare productions.

While Poel gave Barker some specific tools for revising stage production, there is a fundamental difference between the two. Poel’s research, lectures, and productions sought to reconstruct Elizabethan performance. Poel’s use of Elizabethan noblemen, seated in view of the audience at the Fortune, highlighted his aim to create the historically accurate illusion of Shakespeare’s stage. Lighting, voices, scenery, costumes – all of the elements were intended to recreate the experience of Shakespeare’s audiences. Barker,
however, believed differently: “I don’t go as far as Mr. Poel; I think his method is somewhat archaeological; there is somewhat too much of the Elizabethan letter, as contrasted with the Elizabethan spirit.” Barker recognized that Poel’s innovations had merit, but he concluded that they still did not best use Shakespeare’s means.

The “spirit,” and not the “letter.” There lies the difference between Poel and Barker. Instead of adhering strictly to a historical approach, Barker sought to achieve “Shakespeare’s effects by Shakespeare’s means.” This meant the text and the actors should be employed in an intimate relationship with the audience. Barker modified the stage at the Savoy in 1912 and 1914, extending it over the footlights and into the theatre itself. As in Shakespeare’s theatre, the actors delivered the text only a few feet away from the audience. Curtains partitioned the open stage and allowed quick scene changes while smaller scenes played out on the apron. Instead of recreating the Elizabethan stage literally, Barker married its open playing and actor-focus with modern stagecraft such as symbolic decoration, futuristic scenery, and electric lighting. Barker, however, did not completely discard nineteenth century theatre conventions. He married Poel’s open staging with Victorian scene changes; he compromised by minimizing the length of scene changes while still hiding scenery from his audience behind a curtain, which then opened to reveal the new setting to the audience.

Barker was also influenced by designer Edward Gordon Craig, although that relationship, too, had its limits. He most likely saw Craig’s production of Ibsen’s *The Vikings* at the Imperial Theatre in 1903. Yet much of Craig’s influence on Barker came through Max Reinhardt. In 1910, Reinhardt and Craig set out to produce *King Lear* at the

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Deutsches Theater in Berlin, but Reinhardt backed out of the arrangement after Craig demanded complete control of the production. Still, Reinhardt and his designers observed Craig’s methods and applied them to their own work. In addition, Craig’s theories of design, disseminated through his essays and his magazine *The Mask* (published from 1908 to 1929), gave Barker, Reinhardt, and their designers an alternative to realistic settings. Scenery did not have to create a complete illusion; instead, large, neutral set pieces could symbolically stand in for the whole. Craig, for instance, designed a series of tall, white stairs to represent Elsinore castle in *Hamlet*. While Barker employed many of Craig’s innovations in scenery and lighting, he did not agree with Craig’s use of the actor. Craig viewed the director as a grand master who exercised complete control over the production. He advocated the use of masks to reduce the effect of actors’ personalities on stage, which then heightened the visual effect of their bodies standing in front of the scenery. This style of directing and use of actors did not suit Barker, who preferred coaching his actors one by one; nor did it fit the swift pace and ensemble needs of Shakespeare, as Barker conceived them.

Reinhardt’s productions were not the first – nor certainly the last – German performances to influence London theatre. In the mid-nineteenth century in England and across the continent, a major reformation of Shakespearean staging was in motion. In the 1850’s English actor-manager Charles Kean developed a pictorial approach to Shakespeare’s plays, a tradition continued by Samuel Phelps at the Sadler’s Wells Theatre. In the 1880’s the Meiningen Ensemble toured Europe, including an 1881 stop in London. The tour showcased their historically “accurate” productions that featured

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13 Quoted in Kennedy, *Dream* 155.
massive crowd scenes in picturesque detail. The Duke of Saxe-Meiningen’s unified productions blended tableaux, historically accurate scenery and costumes, and stage movement into a cohesive whole. The Meiningen Ensemble’s lasting effect was evident in the detailed scenery and pictorial historicity of Henry Irving’s work at the Lyceum Theatre and Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s productions at Her Majesty’s in the 1890’s and early 1900’s. Barker inherited this tradition of unified Shakespeare productions and modified them using modern techniques in lighting, scenery, and acting.

In Germany the production of Shakespeare was changed by the Meiningen Ensemble and the work of directors such as Max Reinhardt, Otto Brahm, and Jocza Savits. Savits was a director at the Munich Theatre Royal. He created some of the first German productions of Shakespeare that used an open, uncluttered stage. In 1889, Savits divided his Munich stage into three parts that included an apron extending beyond the proscenium arch. The central acting area remained open and near the audience, while scene changes occurred swiftly by use of moveable curtains. Savits’ work is similar to William Poel’s in England; however, he did not reject modern lighting and stage mechanisms as Poel did. In fact, J. L. Styan dubs Barker the progenitor of Savits’ work, although he provides no evidence that they met, corresponded, or even knew of one another.14

But it seems likely that the German director Max Behrend influenced Barker. Early in his career, Barker worked with the Stage Society, an organization in London that produced new plays by English and continental playwrights, and consisted of members such as Bernard Shaw, William Archer, Elizabeth Robins, Lillah McCarthy, and Barker.

14 Styan 52.
In 1903 Barker acted in a Stage Society production of Herman Heijermans’ *The Good Hope*, directed by Behrend. Behrend was a lead actor and director with the Committee of German Theatre in London. In the late 1890’s and early 1900’s, the company visited London for months at a time, playing German plays in German at several West End theatres. These actors interacted with a number of London theatre folk, namely J. T. Grein, head of the Committee, but the exact audiences and influence remain sketchy. What is clear, though, is that Barker and Shaw began directing plays at the Court Theatre around the same time they worked with Behrend. He had demonstrated the value of ensemble acting and meticulous rehearsals. Christine Dymkowski describes the three-part system of rehearsal Behrend taught them: first the producer reads the play to the actors, then the actors and producer rehearse with scripts in hand, and finally the actors rehearse from memory while the producer takes notes in the auditorium. This basic model, also used by Constantin Stanislavsky at the Moscow Art Theatre, was becoming the norm for the emerging modern director.

Barker put all of these ideas, from Poel, Craig, Savits, Behrend, and Reinhardt, to work. He incorporated them into his productions, extending from his early career until his retirement from the theatre following World War I. He clearly valued evocative symbolism in the vein of Savits, Craig, and Reinhardt over the historical, pictorial stage illusion of Saxe-Meiningen, Irving, and Tree. In addition, he avoided the star system and long runs, and opted instead for ensemble-based work that played in limited runs.

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Barker’s decision to avoid stage illusion shows up early in his directing. For example, he demonstrated this commitment while directing John Galsworthy’s *Justice* at the Duke of York’s Theatre in February 1909. Written in a fairly realistic mode and based on the author’s research, the play tells the story of Falder, a young man convicted of forgery and sentenced to solitary confinement. Although he packed the play with realistic details, Galsworthy makes a symbolic point that Barker understood. From the opening of the play, Barker set the mood with atmospheric lighting. He coached the actors away from naturalistic representation and towards symbolic presentation of characters. In the famous trial scene, in which Falder is sentenced, Barker carefully orchestrated each element of the representation: every actor in the crowd, every element of speech and movement, even the lights dimming into evening. His goal, instead of stage realism, was to evoke Falder’s mindset. At every step, Barker clearly values breaking down the illusion on stage rather than upholding it.

Barker also preferred to produce plays with ensemble casts in short runs, as opposed to a long run that features a starring actor or actor-actress pair. He spoke highly of a German example of this system in two articles he wrote for the *Times* in 1910. He called these theatres (in the articles and in most of his writings) “repertory” theatres, although he misused the word somewhat. In a repertory theatre, a regular troupe of actors performs a wide range of plays, from classics to new works, on alternating matinees and evenings. The schedule shifts every week, and whenever a new play is ready, it is added to the program. However, Barker was not so concerned with a rotating play schedule but
the use of a well-rehearsed ensemble of actors in plays with short runs. This system allowed a director (also termed the stage manager or producer) and actors to quickly produce new plays without the pressure of making money over a long run.

In his two *Times* articles, dated November 19 and 21, 1910, Barker described his experience of attending plays at the Lessing Theater and the Deutsches Theater in Berlin. These descriptions encapsulate three of Barker’s most important ideals for the theatre: a large number of plays produced in short runs, a visionary leader such as a director, and a strong acting ensemble. He began by comparing English and German audiences; German audiences would think nothing of the wide range of plays and operas being performed. English audiences, on the other hand, would be amazed at the amount of performances.

Barker compared the October 25 through 31 listings in the *Theaterspielplan* and the *Times*: the German publication listed two opera houses performing nine operas, nine repertory theatres with thirty-one plays, and eight other theatres dedicated to long runs, “and this before we come to vaudeville and musical comedy at all.”16 By comparison, the *Times* listed only five operas and sixteen plays in London. In addition to these staggering comparisons between Berlin and London theatre production, Barker reviewed productions of Hauptmann’s *Einsame Menschen*, Björnson’s *Wenn der junge Wein Blüht*, Shakespeare’s *Comedy of Errors*, Goethe’s *Faust*, and Moliere’s *Le Mariage Forcé* at Reinhardt’s theatre.

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Barker certainly idealized Max Reinhardt as a director, the “Napoleon of German theatre, original, audacious, artistically belligerent, and withal the most interesting individual figure.”\footnote{Barker, “Theatre in Berlin I” 6.} While Barker described Reinhardt, he seemed to be articulating the very qualities he himself sought in the modern director: who was “as much a creator as an interpreter,” someone who “spends brains on his work instead of money,” and above all engenders a “dramatic creed which every member of the company could repeat and understand, wholeheartedly believed in,” that every element in production cooperated toward “expressing – and at its best illuminating – the meaning of the play to that end only.”\footnote{Barker, “Theatre in Berlin I” 6.} Barker continued to elaborate on Reinhardt’s methods for scene design, thematic treatment, and acting styles in the article. In his second article, dated November 21, 1910, he mused that “Some day, perhaps an English Reinhart may be found…”\footnote{Harley Granville Barker, “The Theatre in Berlin II,” The Times (November 21, 1910) 12.} Based on his career following his encounters with Reinhardt, it seems likely that Barker saw himself as the English Reinhardt.

Reinhardt’s acting ensemble also appealed to Barker. Every member of the production crew, “from Reinhart to the merest super,” worked to illuminate the play’s meaning for the audience.\footnote{Barker, “Theatre in Berlin II” 12.} The actors did this through their psychologically true acting style that did not stoop to melodramatic moments. “The German way is to be direct, real, vital,” he wrote. German actors, submitting themselves to the greater good of the production, had “the knack of being intellectually interesting, they have the power of
dramatically conveying ideas.”²¹ In many of his productions, Barker trained his actors to be intellectually interesting and to work together toward the common goal of elucidating the play.

In addition to his observations of Reinhardt and his ensemble, Barker also praised German audiences and their respect for the theatre. Audiences in Berlin, he noticed, paid close attention to the play, were not seduced by petty comedy, and appreciated all the actors equally. Women always checked their hats at the cloakroom (ladies headwear and the difficulty of seeing around it was a repeated complaint in the Edwardian theatre). Audiences never applauded an individual actor, and the curtain was never raised at the end of an act for more applause. German audiences had “learnt how to behave,” and collaborated, in a sense, with the actors and director to complete the production.²²

Barker echoed many of his earlier observations in a 1911 *Fortnightly Review* essay titled “Two German Theatres” in which he shared more of his personal observations on the system at Reinhardt’s theatres in Berlin, and the Schauspielhaus in Dusseldorf.²³ He listed a sample repertory schedule of plays and described them in detail because:

I have found, not merely amongst the general [English] public… but in people whose business it was to know these things, such astonishing ignorance, and in people whose business it was to write about them, such apparently wilful ignorance of the matter that I must be forgiven for once more writing down this A B C.²⁴

²³ Harley Granville Barker, “Two German Theatres,” *Fortnightly Review* 89 (January-June 1911) 60-70.
²⁴ Barker, “Two German Theatres” 62.
English audiences were very different from German ones, he noticed, because they did not understand the benefits of a repertory system, and required a detailed explanation of its workings.

Barker developed the idea of a repertory system with William Archer. Together they penned *National Theatre: Scheme and Estimates* and published it privately in 1904, then again publicly in 1907; Barker also published an updated version in 1930. Both volumes contained detailed plans for budgets, play seasons, staff lists, building blueprints, royalties, music, and touring companies. Archer and Barker framed the practical information with arguments for an English national theatre. They published the 1904 edition with a supporting flyleaf signed by theatre figures such as Henry Irving, J. M. Barrie, Arthur Wing Pinero, and others. The English national theatre, Barker argued, should emulate the German system. “Few who have studied the question [of a national theatre],” he wrote, “will deny that the German method of public recognition and endowment, and of private endowment, is the only way for us to attain it too.”

In the *Scheme and Estimates*, Barker and Archer questioned the British system of long runs with star actors; as a remedy, they continually found that the “answer again is a reference to Germany.” German playwrights, they argued, enjoyed the freedom to experiment because they were not pressured by the long run system. Instead of churning out star vehicles, they could craft new plays for capable ensembles of actors. Barker and Archer continued to argue that strong German provincial theatres supported a system of

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25 Barker, “Two German Theatres” 70.
high quality productions in short runs. This appealed to writers: “Germany, writing exclusively for repertory theatres, have certainly no reason, even from a pecuniary point of view, to envy our playwrights or to sigh for the long-run system.”

Barker’s 1930 version, titled A National Theatre, repeatedly cited German theatres such as Brahm’s Lessing Theatre, Reinhardt’s Deutsches, and the Schauspielhaus in Vienna, as primary examples of working endowment-funded, repertory theatres. His repeated appeals for a National Theatre continuously revealed the desire to secure England’s place in theatre production. “If the Saxe-Meiningen company could make a German translation of Julius Caesar a revelation to English playgoers fifty years ago, what might not an English company do – given the same chance, but it must have the same chance.” Barker’s goal, throughout his whole career, was to give the British theatre that chance; he would keep “England abreast of France and Germany in respect of theatrical organization.”

In 1904, Barker found an opportunity to attempt a modified version of the scheme. Partnering with J. E. Vedrenne, he ran a small repertory of plays at the Court Theatre, just west of the West End. The three seasons saw nearly 1000 performances of new plays by John Galsworthy, Barker, St. John Hankin, Elizabeth Robins, and Shaw, new translations of Euripides, and continental imports by Hauptmann, Sudermann, and Brieux. Of the roughly 1000 performances, over 700 were of Shavian drama. While acting, rehearsing, and producing a number of plays in short succession (not rotating, like

27 Archer and Barker 93.
28 Harley Granville Barker, A National Theatre (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd., 1930) 21. Ironically, when Barker published this second treatise in 1930, he dropped German plays from proposed production schedules. Although the 1930 schedule is noticeably shorter than the 1907 proposal, it focuses primarily on British and Irish plays.
29 Archer and Barker xv.
a true repertory theatre), Barker developed a system of staging the plays. He continued to act, primarily in Shaw’s plays, but Barker often practiced the rehearsal process he learned from Max Behrend. In this process, he frequently removed himself from the acting ensemble to sit in the auditorium and give notes to the actors.

Although the Court seasons only lasted through 1907, Barker kept the dream of a repertory theatre alive throughout his entire career. In addition to the two editions of the national theatre scheme, he participated in Charles Frohman’s repertory season at the Duke of York’s in 1910. Frohman advertised a season of plays by Barker, Galsworthy, Shaw, Barrie, Robins, and others. Barker served as stage manager and director for the venture, which was moderately successful until the theatre’s closing at the death of King Edward in May of that year. Barker again attempted the repertory system with his famous Shakespeare productions: after six weeks of playing, *The Winter’s Tale* was taken off the evening bill. Barker then moved it to matinees and within two weeks opened *Twelfth Night*. The two plays ran in repertory at the Savoy (*Winter’s Tale* finally closed at the end of November) using many of the same pool of actors. Despite financial loss, Barker had, for a time, his repertory system with classic plays at a commercial theatre.

Barker and Reinhardt were mutually beneficial for each other. Without question, Reinhardt gave Barker new tools for producing plays. Barker looked to the “Napoleon of the theatre” for inspiration. But as Kennedy argues, Barker also prepared London for Reinhardt’s arrival with his writings and style of directing. In addition, the Court productions of *Trojan Women, Electra, Hippolytus*, and *Medea*, directed by Barker, “prepared England for the famous Reinhardt production of *Oedipus* at Covent Garden in
A detailed comparison of Reinhardt’s London productions, and Barker’s productions after Reinhardt’s visits, reveals Reinhardt’s influence on Barker, who would become the first modern English director.

3.3 ENTER REINHARDT

Ensembles of actors, swift-spoken text, suggestive décor, a national theatre, a producer/manager who guided the production and provided an interpretive through-line: these were the goals of Barker’s theatre. Some of these he achieved, some were still developing when Max Reinhardt first arrived in London in 1908 with *The Taming of the Shrew* – a Shakespeare production to challenge the London theatre, dominated by the scenic spectacles of Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

Reinhardt embodied the modern theatre to many Londoners. His career was studded with the types of plays and performances that many English theatre practitioners desired: he experimented with Shakespeare and the classics, he produced many of Shaw’s plays (sometimes before they were done in England, as with *Caesar and Cleopatra* in 1906), he employed a working repertory scheme and dreamt of a national theatre, he directed banned plays such as Oscar Wilde’s *Salomé*, he collaborated with modern designers such as Edward Gordon Craig, Emil Orlick, and Ernst Stern, and he handled a vast range of modern European drama: from Ibsen, Strindberg, and Hauptmann to Maeterlinck, Yeats, and Gorky. He seemed to be the consummate European theatre craftsman. “In the 1900s, Reinhardt was an example to the world,” writes Styan. “Not

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30 Kennedy, *Dream* 49.
even the Moscow Art Theatre practised true repertory, and it was the continuing pursuit
and success of a regular repertory system in Berlin after 1902 that caused Granville-
Barker and others to see for themselves. ”

Born outside of Vienna in 1873 to an Austrian Jewish family, Reinhardt, like
Barker, began his career as an actor. He was born as Maximilian Goldmann, but in 1890
changed his name to Max Reinhardt. That same year, he was hired under Otto Brahm at
the Deutsches Theater in Berlin. Reinhardt’s early roles included parts in Ibsen,
Shakespeare, and Hauptmann; he was particularly adept at playing old men. In 1900,
around the time Barker acted under Poel, Reinhardt directed his first production: Ibsen’s
Love’s Comedy. Over the following years he would direct many productions and open his
cabaret Schall und Rauch (Sound and Smoke). He would also the purchase first the
Kleines, then the Neues, and finally the Deutsches Theaters. At the Deutsches, he opened
a school of acting and the smaller Kammerspiele next door. His first production at the
Kammerspiele was Ibsen’s Ghosts, just as Grein at the Independent Theatre Society in
1891 and Brahm at the Freie Bühne in 1889 had done. In 1905, with the opening of his
Midsummer Night’s Dream on the revolving stage at the Neues Theater, Reinhardt came
into international acclaim. Extensive touring in the early 1900’s established his reputation
as a modern theatre innovator.

Reinhardt embodied the developing role of theatre director, or regisseur. This role
descended in German theatre from the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen. Reinhardt outlined a
unified artistic vision for each play he directed – often his style was described as eclectic:
he suited his artistic choices to the play’s demands. Styan argues that Reinhardt was the

31 Styan 119-20. Styan, like Barker, uses the term “repertory” to describe endowment-funded theatres
only person to successfully demonstrate Edward Gordon Craig’s conception of the Übermarionette and Richard Wagner’s idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk (total art work). “It has been generally suggested,” writes Styan, that Reinhardt achieved this through “the nice combination of German discipline and Viennese sensitivity and humour which provided the right mixture for successful play production.”

Reinhardt incorporated the innovations of Craig and Wagner, but he seemed even better at applying them to production. Thus, he was able to influence directors and actors in Europe and the United States more so than Craig and Wagner.

Already parallels emerge between Reinhardt’s priorities and Barker’s in England. Reinhardt coached his ensemble of actors with one goal in mind: serving the play. Actors described him as firm yet kind (he gave them candy on opening nights). He coached them privately towards a collective unity. Most of all, he adjusted their voices as a music conductor leads an orchestra.

For each production, he created a detailed Regiebuch. These books, some five times the length of the play itself, contained detailed notes, sketches, and directions for the play, the designers, the actors, and his team of assistant directors and managers. Reinhardt directed a broad range of drama: realistic works from Strindberg and Ibsen, symbolic plays like Maeterlinck’s Pelleas and Melisande or Wedekind’s Spring Awakening, religious dramas such as Everyman and The Miracle, and classics by Shakespeare, Schiller, and Sophocles. He adapted the play to the space: city squares, churches, exhibition halls, large theatres like the Grosses Schauspielhaus and small venues such as the Kammerspiele.

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featuring short runs with ensemble casts.
3.4 REINHARDT IN LONDON

3.4.1 THE TAMING OF THE SHREW (1908)

In 1908 actor-manager John Martin-Harvey collaborated with William Poel to bring Reinhardt’s production of The Taming of the Shrew to London. This constituted Reinhardt’s first foray into the city, and immediately the exchange of ideas began. The result was a curious amalgamation of Reinhardt’s ideas and Poel’s staging. The Stage Year Book of 1914 called the production along the “mixed Poel-Reinhardt lines.”

Martin-Harvey covered the footlights of the Prince of Wales’ Theatre with a small apron. From each end of the apron, a short flight of steps led to a platform covering the orchestra. After the Induction scene – Reinhardt insisted it remain in the production – Christopher Sly and his imaginary wife descended to a large stone chair on the lower platform. From there they bemusedly watched the rest of the play. The Players, dressed as commedia dell’arte performers, entered drawing a yellow and scarlet wagon.

Martin-Harvey, credited with creating the scenery, employed Poel’s open staging. The stage, steps, Sly’s chair, and the curtains were painted a muted gray, while costumes and furniture provided color. The gray curtains reached to the roof and the front boxes to completely cover the proscenium arch. Martin-Harvey created levels on the stage by use of four black and gold arches receding in perspective to the rear of the stage. Up a flight of three steps was a terrace overlooking a painted landscape, flanked by two round trees festooned with gold. Curtains indicated scene changes: white satin for the Lord’s

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32 Styan 7.
chamber, Italian baroque designs for the alehouse, blue and black for the final banquet. The players themselves moved the curtains for the four major scene changes in full view of the audience.

_The Taming of the Shrew_ represented a short introduction of Reinhardt to London. The visual effects and smaller stage seemed similar to Poel’s conception of Shakespeare. Huntly Carter, who viewed the production, claimed that Poel had in fact directly influenced Reinhardt’s style of production, but he does specify how.\(^\text{34}\) However, even if Carter was correct, Barker seemed to have more direct contact with Reinhardt than Poel: a letter dated September 3, 1913 from Barker to Reinhardt introduces Poel to the German director.\(^\text{35}\)

### 3.4.2 _SUMURŪN_ (1911)

The arrival of _Sumurūn_ at the Coliseum of London in October 1911 more firmly established Reinhardt’s reputation in London theatre circles. The production opened at the Kammerspiele in April 1910, then traveled to Vienna in May. There the English financier Sir Oswald Stoll viewed it, and invited Reinhardt to London. After the first London engagement, Reinhardt took it to New York’s Casino Theatre, then returned to London with the same production in the winter of 1912 and summer of 1913.

_Sumurūn_ is a musical pantomime by Friedrich Freska based on _Tales of the Arabian Nights_, scored by Felix Holländer. It begins with Nur-al-Din, who speaks a brief prologue to the spectators, telling them that he fell in love with Sumurūn, the favorite wife of an old Sheik. When the Sheik steals a dancing girl from a hunchbacked juggler

\(^{34}\) Carter 259.
next to Nur-al-Din, they both arrange to be smuggled inside the Sheik’s house to find their respective loves. Nur-al-Din manages to find Sumurûn and woo her, while the hunchback finds his dancing girl, strangles her, and plunges a knife into the Sheik’s back.

Ernst Stern, Reinhardt’s designer, wound turbans around the men’s heads and draped layers of silk over the women. Actors entered on a long ramp, decorated with flowers, leading from the back of the house to the stage. Reinhardt’s famous revolving stage shifted scenes from the Eastern bazaar to the Sheik’s palace. When the production reached the Coliseum, Stoll thought to please Reinhardt by painting the stage with every color of the rainbow. Instead, Reinhardt preferred a solid background to highlight the characters’ costumes and movements, so twelve hours before production, he had it repainted white with a black floor.

The Coliseum was not the ideal setting for the play. With a stage measuring fifty-five by ninety-two feet deep, and able to seat over 3300, it was one of London’s largest theatres, and usually housed musicals and operas. Its stock scenery proved “scrappy,” its staff not nearly as organized as Reinhardt’s in Germany, and its auditorium far too large for the intimacy demanded by a movement piece. So when it returned in 1912, it moved to the Savoy Theatre. Reinhardt employed a larger cast, brighter and more varied lighting, and better scenery. He created most of his visual effects through lighting and costumes. Palace guards stood in bold reds and blues against the whitewashed walls. Dancing women moved in reds, yellows, and greens. Although the production was clearly popular, Carter notes that Reinhardt “was regarded as a purveyor of sensation, and he was taken by the nation on trial, so to speak, for a few weeks at one of its principal

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35 Salmon 482.
music halls.”37 Clearly Reinhardt’s visual style caused London audiences to take note. Barker noted the production, too; he viewed Sumurûn during his visit to Germany in 1910, and called it “a brilliant romp, remarkable… above all for the ingenuity and inventiveness of the production; quite one of Reinhardt’s triumphs.”38

3.4.3 THE MIRACLE (1911)

Reinhardt next visited London with The Miracle, a religious spectacle play with a large cast. His version, based on Maurice Maeterlinck’s Sister Beatrice, was prepared by Karl Vollmöller and scored by Engelbert Humperdinck. The story follows Sister Beatrice, a young nun who is wooed away from her convent by a Prince. When she leaves, the figure of the Virgin is reincarnated in her place, and the remaining sisters believe it designates Beatrice for a higher religious purpose. After years of worldly living and finally abandonment by the Prince, Beatrice returns to the convent. She takes the place of the Virgin and dies penitently.

The Miracle opened on December 23, 1911 at the Olympia exhibition hall. This hall was a series of large rooms with vaulted ceilings of glass and steel, usually used for exhibitions and shows; The Miracle closed early because a home and garden exhibition was scheduled to appear in January 1912. The Grand Hall of Olympia measured by 450 by 250 feet. During the scant three and a half weeks of rehearsal, Reinhardt’s designers turned the Olympia into a cathedral, complete with stained glass windows (including one which was fifty feet in diameter), six-foot-high gold lamps, and a massive gold canopy to

36 Carter 199.
37 Carter 198.
38 Barker, “Two German Theatres” 63.
cover the Madonna. The audience sat on both sides of the action, in imitation of a church congregation. The western doors to the hall opened to leave a seven hundred feet wide and one hundred feet high space in the walls. At the start of the play, the lights rose slowly to reveal worshippers on their knees before the Madonna. Through the doors a procession of nearly two thousand actors, singing and ringing bells, made its way to the center of the hall. Then, slowly, they drifted away and left the space nearly empty.

Exterior scenes were played on a grassy mound with three trees that was wheeled through the doors. Reinhardt also had crews excavate 40,000 tons of earth from the floor to create an enormous trap in the middle of the arena. It was lined with 500,000 bricks, and interior scenes played on sets raised up out of the trap.

The costumes for *The Miracle* were constructed with authentic materials: real metal, leather, silk, and fur. He sprayed the Madonna’s robes with concrete to give them the appearance of stone. Hats and sleeves were billowy and over-sized. Both men and women wore boots and shoes with long, pointed toes. The color scheme was laid out in precise detail in the production’s *Regiebuch*. Reinhardt unified the larger-than-life representation through his lighting. He required that the most up-to-date electric lighting system be employed in the hall. As Huntly Carter points out, the lighting effects defined the production: “it may be said that without light a greater part of the emotional language of his scenes would be lacking.”[^39] William Poel praised the production, saying it gave “practical shape on a large scale to the principle of Elizabethan staging.”[^40]

[^39]: Carter 231.
trap and the electric lighting allowed Reinhardt to change scenes swiftly without having to use blackouts. That way, he could shift from the cathedral to the Prince’s home to various indoor and outdoor scenes without delay.

*The Miracle*, one of Reinhardt’s few productions to originate in London, later toured Europe and the United States. It demonstrated Reinhardt’s commitment not simply to spectacular illusion, but to serve the message of the play. His *Regiebuch* for the production reveals a profound concern with precise detail and an emphasis on combining elements of stage realism with aspects of symbolism to recreate the mystical experience of Maeterlinck’s play.

3.4.4 *A VENETIAN NIGHT* (1912)

After the monumental production of *The Miracle*, Reinhardt visited London with a smaller production in the style of *Sumurûn*. It was a silent piece titled *A Venetian Night*, set in a dream-like Venice. It opened in 1912 at the Palace Theatre in London and ran for three weeks. It would have played longer, except, before he granted a license, the Lord Chamberlain required changes to a bedroom scene in which a married woman entertains a lover. This resulted in a truncated script that dissatisfied Reinhardt; he therefore cut the production short.

The play begins as a charming story about a young student in Venice in the 1880’s. He arrives with a rucksack on his back and a copy of Goethe in his hand. A gondola passes by on the canal carrying an elderly Englishman and his unhappy young wife. Attracted to an Austrian cavalry officer on the bank, she throws him a rose, which
lands in the student’s copy of Goethe. He is immediately smitten. Then, by means of Reinhardt’s revolving stage, the scene transforms into a hotel. One level shows the English couple retiring; above them, the student climbs into bed in the attic.

At this point the production departed from its quaint story on Venetian canals into a bizarre, almost absurd dream. A gauze screen dropped between the audience and the stage. In the story, the student wanders into the English couple’s room, where he finds the Austrian officer and promptly kills him. He and the young woman try to hide the body, but finding no place for it in the hotel room, he drags it through a maze of corridors and stairs down to the canal. The stage revolved throughout his search and gave the sense of seamless movement from one location to another. When the student finally throws the body into the canal, bells ring, and a porter runs out to retrieve it. Here the departure from the original tone becomes even more evident. The porter fishes not one, but six bodies from the canal, all dressed identically and smoking cigars. Bouncing to their feet, the officers chase the student through the hotel hallways and stairs and out again onto the bridge. In desperation the student hurls himself over the side and lands, sleeping, on his bed, which had come floating along the canal.

The revolve allowed fast and effective scene transitions, but Carter notes the structure of the Palace caused problems with the lighting. Reinhardt and his designer, Ernst Stern, could not implement their usual frontal and horizontal lighting (attached at the front of the dress circle, in view of the audience), and so the stage appeared ill lit. The Venetian canals and bridges faded in the background as if they were “falling to pieces. … All of this destroyed the one great thing for which Reinhardt always aims, viz.,
intimacy.\textsuperscript{41} Despite the difficulties at the Palace Theatre, Reinhardt continued to use color lighting projected from the dress circle in his productions; in fact, this type of lighting is one of his definitive marks as director, and Barker would later employ it himself.

Despite \textit{Venetian Night}'s short run, in 1912 it pre-dated some of the more well known contributions to symbolist and surrealist theatre like Marinetti’s Futurism, Tzara’s Dadaism, and Breton’s Surrealism. Reinhardt’s stage innovations, although hindered by the Lord Chamberlain’s cuts, introduced new advancements in stage illusion to London.

3.4.5 \textit{TURANDOT} (1913)

Reinhardt first produced Carlo Gozzi’s \textit{Turandot, Prince of China}, a \textit{commedia dell’arte} piece, in October 1911 in Berlin. Sir George Alexander, actor and manager of the St. James’s Theatre in London, was present at the Berlin production, and secured English rights for the play. He brought it to the St. James’s in January 1913, with costumes by English designer Jethro Bithell (who wrote the English version), music by Ferruccio Busoni, and scenery by Stern. It ran for twenty-seven performances through mid-February.

The story is a standard \textit{commedia} scenario about Turandot, a Princess of China who refuses to get married. At her request, her father the Emperor declares an edict that any would-be suitor must answer three riddles or be beheaded. Calaf, the Prince of Astrakan, sees her and immediately falls in love. He correctly answers her riddles without hesitation, at which point she still balks at the marriage. He challenges her with a riddle

\textsuperscript{41} Carter 244.
of his own: to guess his and his father’s real names. If she can answer the riddle the next day, he will be executed. If not, they will marry. Over the following night, she secretly learns his name by way of her cunning servants. However, when she reveals his name the next morning, his dismay at his impending death moves her to pity. She relents and decides to marry him.

Audiences were dazzled by processions of soldiers, slaves, dancing girls, and harems in bright Chinese costumes. Again, Reinhardt’s style of lighting was in full effect: colored lights of purple, red, and blue for Turandot’s harem, the Prince’s room in purple with a purple and green bed, lit by orange lamps hung over the room. The lamps were a response to the St. James’s inferior lighting system. The system in place included only illumination from the footlights and the proscenium above. Carter, witness to the production, praises the “kaleidoscopic splendour of effects” in Stern’s Chinese rococo designs, but echoes his complaint with the Palace over Venetian Night. Again, St. James’s lighting system was not sufficient to do justice to Stern’s curtains and costumes. This caused the rear of the stage to be ill-lit.

3.4.6 OEDIPUS (1912)

Despite some disappointments with A Venetian Night and Turandot, Reinhardt’s spectacles impressed most people. In 1912, his most significant production in London arrived: Sophocles’ Oedipus. This production was especially important for Harley Granville Barker, whose wife Lillah McCarthy played Jocasta. Also, Barker’s friend Professor Gilbert Murray adapted the script. The play opened at the Theatre Royal,
Covent Garden, although Reinhardt originally intended it for the Royal Albert Hall. He had produced it in Germany at Munich’s Musikfesthalle and Berlin’s Circus Schumann, and wanted a similar arena stage for its London premiere. The application to play at the Albert, however, was rejected by the Lord Chamberlain, who dubbed the space unsuitable for classical pieces. Barker, Murray, Shaw, and others seethed. “Reinhardt is undoubtedly keen and the Albert Hall miscarriage is a scandal,” Barker wrote to Murray.\(^{43}\)

John Martin-Harvey, who had witnessed the Circus Schumann production, played Oedipus. He was already familiar with Reinhardt, having managed *Taming of the Shrew* four years prior. Meanwhile, actor Louis Calvert played Creon. Barker was not intimately involved with the full production, although this was the closest he came to actually collaborating with Reinhardt. Not only did he attend rehearsals, but he also coached McCarthy on her character. Because Reinhardt spent most of his time organizing the spectacle chorus and scenery, he largely left the principals alone to do their own work on characterization. Barker and McCarthy rehearsed her part extensively. Some of Barker’s notes to her have survived; they range from “Don’t act.” or “Don’t gasp.” to “Don’t petition Oedipus; command him.” and “Don’t explain your story too much.”\(^{44}\) After the performance, Murray wrote her, “I never saw you so good.”\(^{45}\)

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\(^{43}\) Salmon 270-1.


\(^{45}\) Quoted in Purdom 131.
Critics praised first and foremost the recognizable Reinhardt crowd scenes. Reinhardt swelled their numbers with RADA students and Boy Scouts. They moved with the “well-schooled zeal of a Prussian regiment,” wrote the critic of *The Nation*.46 Dressed in white robes and bronze breastplates, they sobbed and cried and surged as one.

Similar to the audience-congregation in *The Miracle, Oedipus*’ setting involved the audience intimately. Reinhardt achieved intimacy using the method of “*Sprengung des Bühnenrahmens*, extending the action past the footlights.”47 A long gangway cut straight through the stalls, and the crowd in *Oedipus* was so large that it filled the stage; the definition between audience and actor was unclear. The gangway stretched from the rear of the theatre to the stage, as in *Sumurûn*. At the play’s opening, the mob petitioned Oedipus as he strolled down the long path; then, at the play’s conclusion Oedipus, blinded, slowly stumbled back up the gangway.

To represent the façade of the Theban palace, Stern covered the proscenium arch, as in *Taming of the Shrew*. Upstage center were a pair of huge copper doors, flanked by great black pillars. A set of stairs, as wide as the proscenium, led out onto the stage. The raked playing space was broken into several platforms – the largest for the principals and one on each side for altars. The raked stage extended beyond the proscenium and over the first three or four rows of the stalls. Low-angle horizontal lights, hung at the back of the stalls, illuminated the stage. Lime lights followed the main characters.

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46 *The Nation* (20 January, 1912).
47 Styan 82.
Critics noted the specific German touch to the production. The reviewer from the *Daily Telegraph* referred to the crowd movement and the projected stage as a “device from Berlin.” Barker, too, saw the production as characteristically German. He had watched Reinhardt’s *Oedipus* at the Circus Schumann and wrote Murray: “the Germans make it more violent again – though they make it big. … I want more philosophy.” Murray agreed, and commended Reinhardt on his ability to capture not Sophocles’ world, but the “pre-Hellenic” world of the Oedipus myth.

3.5 BARKER IN LONDON AFTER REINHARDT

At the time of Reinhardt’s first arrival in London in 1908, Granville Barker was exhausted and frustrated by moderate successes or complete failures of production. The successful thousand performances at the Court finished in 1907. A similar scheme was unsuccessfully revived at the Savoy in the West End in 1908. His play *Waste* was rejected by G. A. Redford, Examiner of Plays, which led to a failed challenge of the Lord Chamberlain in 1909, despite support from playwrights like Barrie, Shaw, and Galsworthy. Charles Frohman’s repertory system at the Duke of York’s theatre in 1910, in which Barker served as director, playwright, and actor, ended after only 128 performances. His play *The Madras House* opened to middling reviews in 1910. That same year, Barker and Archer traveled across the Atlantic to run the “Millionaire’s Theatre” in New York. A group of producers in the United States offered Barker and

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48 Quoted in Styan 82.
49 Salmon 265.
50 Quoted in Styan 84-5.
Archer the chance to implement their repertory scheme at a commercial theatre in New York. They sailed with the hope of finally establishing a subsidized repertory theatre, only to find a theatre physically too large to perform new plays and too costly to run.

In 1910 Barker traveled to Germany alone to witness German theatre first-hand. In addition to short letters or postcards to Murray and McCarthy, he wrote three published accounts of his trip, two in *The Times* and one for the *Fortnightly Review*. These accounts reveal a deep envy of Germany’s theatrical livelihood: “On thing above all, the German Theatre has vitality; and vitality covers a multitude of artistic sins.”

While watching Shaw’s *Doctor’s Dilemma* in Berlin, he noticed that German audiences “listen attentively; they seldom laugh.” Finally, he observed Reinhardt’s Deutsches Theater and Kammerspiele: “This one organization, with its two houses… giving us in one week a greater variety of good drama than any two London theatres will give in a year.”

His interest in the German theatre must have run deep: Eric Salmon, editor of Barker’s letters, reveals that Barker was apparently collaborating with editor Frank Sidgwick to write a book titled *Playgoing in Berlin*. It was never published, and if written, the manuscript has been lost.

While in Germany, Barker also visited Louise Dumont and Gustav Lindemann, who ran the Schauspielhaus in Düsseldorf. These theatres “impressed him deeply.”

Barker had traveled to Germany before to see Reinhardt’s work, on his honeymoon with Lillah McCarthy. They saw Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra*, and seethed because of a

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52 Barker, “Two German Theatres” 63.
53 Salmon 542.
54 Purdom 118.
major cut to the script; he wrote to Shaw: “May the soul of Reinhardt scream through all
eternity in boiling brimstone.” Shaw echoed their complaint in equally hyperbolic
language.

Barker’s essay in the *Fortnightly Review* describes the operation of Reinhardt’s,
Dumont’s, and Lindemann’s theatres for English readers. He uses his description in his
continuing argument for a publicly funded, repertory theatre in England, and lays out a
detailed description of Reinhardt’s repertory scheme, having found an “astonishing
ignorance” of repertory in England.

In addition to watching performances, he attended two rehearsals of Reinhardt’s
*Oedipus* at the Circus Schumann and called it “unnecessarily violent” to Gilbert Murray,
“Going to be quite interesting and for the direct dramatic – almost violence of the
Oedipus – suitable.” Murray, who had been considering production of his own
translation of *Oedipus*, replied, “I trust you… will be in [the inmost counsels] of
Reinhardt.” Barker had the opportunity to meet Reinhardt on this trip, and while he may
not have been in the “inmost counsels” of the German director, he certainly found much
to envy and emulate.

It is against this background of disappointment in London and his travels to
Germany that Barker and his wife formed the Barker-McCarthy management. Beginning
in late January 1911 they staged smaller productions initially at the Court Theatre, then at
the newly built Little Theatre in Adelphi. There they scored a success with Shaw’s

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55 Quoted in Purdom 57.
56 Barker, “Two German Theatres” 62.
57 Salmon 269.
58 Salmon 271.
When Gertrude Kingston, owner of the Little Theatre, raised the rents, the management took *Fanny* and leased the Kingsway Theatre under a 25-year contract from Lena Ashwell.

### 3.5.1 *IPHIGENIA AT TAURUS* (1911)

Upon returning from Berlin, Barker continued his usual pace of letter writing, editing, and producing. Then, in 1911, under the Barker-McCarthy management, he directed Murray’s translation of *Iphigenia in Tauris* at the Kingsway Theatre. McCarthy starred as Iphigenia and Norman Wilkinson designed the production. Immediately, critics noticed similarities between this production and Reinhardt’s. J. T. Grein wrote in the *Sunday Times*, “it is Reinhardt’s spirit that hovers over the whole picture.”

Some critics balked at the use of Reinhardt’s innovations, which Kennedy explains, “If the production appeared derivative to some commentators, it showed that the new staging ideas from Germany could be applied at home.” Whether audiences liked or disliked Reinhardt’s methods is a moot point, for they clearly recognized his stamp on Barker’s latest productions.

Barker built a forestage over the orchestra and front rows of the stalls like Reinhardt’s *The Taming of the Shrew*. He also connected it with a gangway to the back of the theatre as in *Oedipus* and *Sumurûn*. Upstage stood the temple to Artemis on a raised platform, flanked by two massive doors. Norman Wilkinson painted the altar, central playing area, walls, and steps a deep red. The doors were patterned in black and white. Because Barker used the smaller Kingsway Theatre, he achieved more intimacy between

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audience and performers than Reinhardt did in *Oedipus* at Covent Garden. Barker emphasized the red scenery with dull red lighting; he used stationary lamps – reminiscent of Reinhardt’s in *Turandot* – hung inside the temple portico, on the temple columns, and on the top of the proscenium arch.

The actors’ movement represented a barbaric, “almost comic,” crowd in Tauris.\(^6\) They ran through the house and on the gangway, barelegged and crouched low to the ground. McCarthy moved calmly and dignified amongst this, dressed in a white tunic and robe, dotted with gold and blood red. For the chorus, Barker hired S. P. Waddington to write music. Instead of employing Reinhardt’s seething mass that spoke as one, Barker alternated their actions: sometimes they chanted, sometimes one or two members would speak the lines, sometimes they spoke altogether in recitative. They played most of their action downstage, but could fade into the red background with their deep purple costumes.

*Iphigenia* opened on March 19 and played only nine matinees at the Kingsway, but its success made a greater name for Barker and earned it a larger audience in one matinee at Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s Shakespeare Festival at His Majesty’s on June 4. Later that month, Barker took the play to Bradfield College in Berkshire, southern England, for three afternoons. Alongside McCarthy, he played Orestes in the Greek theatre built in an old chalk pit at the college.

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\(^6\) Kennedy, *Dream* 121.
3.5.2 THE WINTER’S TALE (1912)

On September 21\textsuperscript{st}, 1912, Barker secured his place in English theatre history with the opening of *The Winter’s Tale* at the Savoy Theatre. This work, along with *Twelfth Night* and *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, provided the culmination of his efforts at re-inventing English stage production for Shakespeare. Like the staging of *Iphigenia* and *Oedipus* before it, *The Winter’s Tale* featured a modified proscenium broken into three sections. The rear section was a raised false proscenium arch that created the Elizabethan inner stage. The middle section lay four steps down and ran to the permanent proscenium arch. In front of the arch, and two more steps down, sat the curved apron that jutted out over the orchestra and front stalls. At its center it was twelve feet deep. Immediately the relationship between actor and audience was restored. Actors played small scenes, soliloquies, and asides only feet from the spectators.

Most of the set was painted gleaming white. In the background hung gold curtains; other scenes were created using one of nine curtains and silk drops that Norman Wilkinson painted with non-realistic designs. Barker used only two full-stage sets. The first was Leontes’ palace and the second a thatched college in Bohemia. The costumes, too, designed by Albert Rothenstein, were “suggestive only of the time, place, and mood of the action.”\textsuperscript{62} The actors’ movement and speech filled in the complete picture. Instead of relying on the decoration (he refused to call it scenery) to tell the story, Barker trusted Shakespeare’s text.

\textsuperscript{61} Quoted in Kennedy, *Dream* 121.
\textsuperscript{62} Quoted in Kennedy, *Dream* 126.
The actors performed the full text, and rested during one interval. The pacing was rapid and unbroken. Smaller scenes would take place out on the apron while larger set pieces could be moved upstage behind a curtain. Often the final lines of a scene would overlap with actors’ movement and curtains’ raising or lowering. McCarthy played Hermione, while Henry Ainley, an accomplished Shakespearean already, played Leontes opposite her. Both of them flourished under Barker’s direction. He encouraged them to translate the text into motion in order to achieve a rhythm and speed that enforced the vitality of the play. He coached all of his actors – large and small – toward this goal. While he did not give them candy, as Reinhardt was known for doing, Barker still managed to create an ensemble in which no one actor claimed star status. In this way, he emulated the German system as he had observed personally: “the genus actor-manager as we know it does not seem able to flourish in Germany.” Barker sought to create a similar culture in England.

The statue scene, in which Hermione comes alive again, demonstrates Barker’s continued goal of non-illusionism. Instead of placing the scene far upstage, he played it downstage as close to the audience as possible. He trusted in the art of theatre as Shakespeare conceived it. Likewise, the curtain drops and the three dimensional scenery were unrealistic and reminiscent of Reinhardt’s eclectic approach to his productions. Wilkinson created Leontes’ palace using white pilasters, moveable benches, and a white marble floor. Wilkinson’s designs, Barker’s choreographed movement, and Rothenstein’s costumes set the play an indefinable location, not a historical location or an archeological

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63 Barker, “Two German Theatres” 70.
recreation, instead the “world of fancy, fantasy, and romance.” Barker was most specific in likening Bohemia and the sheep shearing festival with “pure Warwickshire.”

The entire set was evenly and brightly lit with electric lamps. Some were set in funnels and focused onto the stage, most were grouped in a low, horizontal configuration hung in full-view of the audience from the dress circle. Barker used this setup at the Kingsway for *Iphigenia*, as had Reinhardt at Covent Garden and the Prince of Wale’s.

Barker’s final directions to his actors encouraged them all to “Be swift.” Above it all, his direction of *The Winter’s Tale* echoes his envy of the German theatre’s vitality: “The first thing I aimed at was to get the thing alive at any cost.”

3.5.3 *TWELFTH NIGHT* (1912)

Barker quickly followed up *The Winter’s Tale* with *Twelfth Night* in November of that same year. Audiences now knew what to expect of his playing of Shakespeare, and the experience seemed more rewarding all around. The production ran for 139 performances through early 1913. More familiar to audiences than *The Winter’s Tale*, *Twelfth Night* still lent itself to Barker’s continuing innovations. Scenically, much was the same as in *The Winter’s Tale*. Norman Wilkinson designed both the costumes and scenery, and again employed the three playing levels and six painted curtains. Critics noted Wilkinson’s ability to better integrate the scenic elements to the play’s dramatic action this time around. A giant yellow and black drop cloth with geometric designs framed Orsino’s palace. Olivia’s garden, the only full set, was colored with white, pink, pink,

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64 Kennedy, *Dream* 128.
66 Quoted in Kennedy, *Dream* 134.
and light green. Two boxy, patterned couches sat symmetrically in each downstage corner, while two futuristic space needles situated halfway up the stage represented the box trees of the script. Against these pale colors and geometric shapes, members of Olivia’s household wore black for mourning, while Orsino’s court contrasted them in carmine.

Barker turned much of his attention towards the acting in *Twelfth Night*. Lillah McCarthy again played his female lead, and the two spent considerable time deciding how to play Viola. In the end, the actress bowed to the director, who advocated creating Viola as Shakespeare wrote her: a boy playing a woman. Rather than overplaying the comic business of Viola’s impulses as a woman, McCarthy approached Viola as a young man. This, indeed, is how Shakespeare’s audiences would have seen her, as a physically immature boy imitating a woman. To complete the effect, Barker dressed her in plain clothes: a green doublet with short hair cropped far above her shoulders.

He also tackled the issue of Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, Feste, and Malvolio and their comic business. Again, he did away with what he believed to be unnecessary clutter and instead played to the dignity of the characters. Toby and Andrew were truly older gentlemen seeking relief from the boredom of mourning. Barker set their famous drinking scene at night downstage in a small, curtained room. Hayden Coffin, a musical comedy star, played Feste and accompanied himself on various instruments. Malvolio, played by Henry Ainley, was utterly self-assured and wore his yellow stockings, velvet tunic, and black cape bravely before Olivia. Barker’s treatment of this scene echoes his admiration for Reinhardt’s production of *The Comedy of Errors* at the Deutsches Theater.

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in 1910. The setting, he believed, should serve the characters and the action of the play. Reinhardt used a large, bow-shaped bridge to highlight the rapid clowning of The Comedy of Errors; likewise, Barker used the curtains to emphasize the close-quarters, late night drinking scene of Twelfth Night.

3.5.4 A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM (1914)

In between the close of Twelfth Night and the opening of Midsummer, Barker toyed with other experiments: a series of new plays, another repertory season, this time at the Kingsway, and a dramatization of Arnold Bennett’s novel Buried Alive. The success of Buried Alive – adapted as The Great Adventure – secured his next run at Shakespeare, and he chose Midsummer, if only for the challenge posed by the fantastical world it presented.

While audiences seemed more comfortable with Twelfth Night, a range of critical amazement to bewilderment met Midsummer’s February 6, 1914 opening. Some critics were finally converted to Barker’s style of production, while some long-standing supporters like John Palmer threw their hands up in despair. The lasting image for most spectators was the fairies, covered head to toe in gold leaf. Indeed, gold was the visual motif for the whole play: Oberon and Titania wore gold crowns and long trains with gold tinsel. Wigs and beards were of curled buckram, shoes were gold, as were properties such as books, scrolls, and scepters. Only Puck stood out in deep red.

The trains of fairies entered dancing and shimmering at the front of the stage in full illumination. The movements of the two fairy camps hearken back to Iphigenia and Sumurûn: choreographed, synchronized, and a step beyond reality. Barker made no
attempt to abide by prevalent conditions of Victorian fantasy; instead, he opted for the imaginative spirituality of *The Miracle* or *Venetian Night*. Barker cast Oberon’s camp as all men, and Titania’s as women and children (four children played Peaseblossom and company), using gender to further the conflict between the two camps. To create the audible world of the play, Barker hired composer Cecil Sharp to arrange old English folk tunes and choreograph the dances to them.

The settings continued the precedent established by *The Winter’s Tale* and *Twelfth Night*. Curtains of various colors and patterns created the courts, homes, and woods: gray for Theseus’ palace, pink for Quince’s home, a suggestive forest scene for outside Athens. These curtains hung relatively far downstage, which again forced the acting onto the apron and close to the audience. The only full sets were Titania’s bower and the steps outside Theseus’ palace. The first major set piece consisted of a green forest backdrop with tall strips of green for trees. A small mound rose in the center of the stage, over which hung a large wreath studded with tiny lights. From the wreath hung a cylinder of gauze that Titania slept behind. The second full set used the entire depth of the Savoy stage. At the top of a flight of steps stood seven tall, white pillars. On the steps Theseus gave his blessing to the young lovers (McCarthy played Helena in this production). For the Rude Mechanicals’ scene, the nobles reclined on couches with their backs to the audience while Bottom and his friends performed *Pyrmus and Thisbe* at the top of the steps.

To light this production, Barker again utilized low-angle, horizontal lighting from the dress circle. Over the forest scenes he cast direct illumination; many critics wondered why he would forego the opportunity to create the magical illusion with light, but Barker
again preferred to let the actors’ movement and the text create the fairy world for his audiences. Over the steps of Theseus’ palace, he projected a blanket of stars. The fairies and lovers danced at the play’s conclusion, one by one slipping out behind the columns. Puck delivered his final speech in front of the curtain, then disappeared through the center.

3.5.5 PHILIP THE KING (1914)

Midsummer closed in May of 1914, a mere three months from the start of World War I. During that time, the Barker-McCarthy management attempted different projects: a new play by John Galsworthy, new stagings of Barker’s and Shaw’s plays, and eventually Thomas Hardy’s The Dynasts. However, before The Dynasts opened, Barker created a little-discussed production of John Masefield’s verse drama Philip the King on November 5, 1914. He directed it at Covent Garden, where Reinhardt had earlier produced Oedipus, as the final offering in a benefit for the Arts Club Fund. While its lasting influence on British theatre may not have been that of the Shakespeares, the production was described accurately as “almost Reinhardt-style production.”

Philip the King is a simple story of Philip and his subjects waiting for news of the Spanish Armada. Barker’s settings used drop cloths and platforms much like his Shakespeare at the Savoy. Philip’s study stood on a platform ten feet above the characters below. Costumes and lighting employed solid blocks of color: red, gray, black, silver, and gold for Philip, his subjects, the Spaniards, and the Indians.

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68 Salmon 508.
For his leads, Barker again drew on Henry Ainley and Lillah McCarthy as Philip and the Infanta, respectively. The greatest similarity between Reinhardt’s productions and this one was the use of large crowds. Barker demonstrated a Reinhardt-like ability to organize them: he printed booklets for each extra with instructions in alphanumeric code. Each piece of code translated into a stage direction: two steps stage left, one down stage, wave arms, cry out, etc.

It seems very likely that Barker emulated Reinhardt directly by employing large crowds in at Covent Garden. Reinhardt had elicited strong responses by blurring the line between actors and audience. For this single production, Barker expended a vast amount of time and energy; Kennedy suggests this might be based on Barker’s feelings about the war. *Philip* is written in the spirit of *The Persians*, a play focusing on the destruction of war as felt at home.  

Similar to Reinhardt, Barker likened his stage crowd to the masses in the audience.

### 3.6 REINHARDT’S GENERAL EFFECT OVER BARKER

“As a result of contact with Reinhardt’s work,” writes Styan, “Piscator in Berlin was quick to pursue new ways of staging and mixing the arts of theatre, as [was] Harley Granville-Barker in London…” Barker did not follow Reinhardt’s school of production exactly, but there are definite similarities between their major London production between 1908 and 1914 in their treatment of the actor-audience relationship, swift pacing, attention to ensemble acting, décor and lighting, and stage illusion.

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69 Kennedy, *Dream* 175.
70 Styan 8.
First, both directors used any means necessary to connect the actors and audience. When on a proscenium stage, they preferred the use of a forestage or apron to bring the action forward. They covered the Prince of Wale’s, Covent Garden, Kingsway, and Savoy Theatre proscenium arches and blended their designs with the building itself. Both directors also used large set pieces, curtains, or a combination of the two to force the action further downstage. In *Sumurún*, *Oedipus*, and *Iphigenia at Tauris* they ran gangways through the audience and surrounded spectators with waving mobs of citizens or worshippers. Even in large productions that involved huge crowds, such as *The Miracle* and *Philip the King*, each director took special care to immerse their audience in the experience. Reinhardt turned his playgoers at *The Miracle* into a church congregation; Barker likened his audience in November 1914 with the nervous Spaniards awaiting news of the war abroad.

Barker and Reinhardt also favored a faster pace of production. Even when they employed large set pieces, complicated stage effects, or crowds of extras, they paid attention to the speed at which it moved. Reinhardt achieved this primarily through the use of the revolving stage. This allowed him to build bigger permanent sets for his famous *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (which came to England in 1934), or the extended dream sequence in *Venetian Night*. He was also willing to remove 40,000 tons of earth from the Olympia floor to facilitate the transition from interior to exterior settings. Barker, meanwhile, relied on curtains to hurry a play along. The fabric could be easily raised, lowered, or shifted from small indoor scenes to larger public ones. From *Iphigenia*
to the Shakespeares, he cut down the playing time of classic plays associated with drawn-out scene changes. He also coached his actors, particularly in his new conceptions of Shakespeare, to translate the text into action, rather than treating it like a lecture.

The two directors both favored symbolic décor and evocative lighting in their productions; this type of design is one of the central tenets of the modernist theatre. Nearly all of the plays compared above are classics, religious or historical plays, or pieces based on non-Western tales. These plays, along with Reinhardt’s decidedly unrealistic *Venetian Night*, offered vast opportunities for illusionist spectacle and grand storytelling. However, the two directors chose to reveal their stagecraft, to allow their audiences to revel in it by uniting the efforts of writer, actor, designer, and stage engineer. They also employed lighting to create colorful effects and set the atmosphere for the play. Both directors were noted for their ability to skillfully light the stage. In fact, critics of Reinhardt’s London productions note a distinct difference between his work in theatres with modern electric lighting – Olympia, Covent Garden, Prince of Wales’s, Savoy – and those without – St. James’s, the Coliseum. Reinhardt frequently used a large bank of lights, suspended from the ceiling of proscenium theatres to illuminate the forestage and stalls.

After returning from Berlin in 1910, Barker used Reinhardt’s style of lighting consistently. This meant removing the footlights (which were usually covered by the apron) and projecting light from the proscenium arch or the dress circle. In addition to using this *horizant* lighting for the Savoy Shakespeares, *Philip the King*, and *Iphigenia*, Barker also employed it in Arthur Schnitzler’s *Anatol* in March of 1911 at the Little
Theatre. His friend Dr. C. E. Wheeler translated the collection of stories from German literally, while Barker rewrote them in workable dialogue. “Not ten words of German do I know!” he later confessed to John Martin-Harvey.  

C. B. Purdom, however, argues that Barker and Reinhardt’s sense of design differed widely:

[Barker’s] method was much nearer the French than the German, though one of his early masters was a German [whether Purdom means Savits, Behrend, or Reinhardt is unclear], for he was more concerned with the dramatist and the actor than with stage decoration. He had little in common with Reinhardt, and gave relatively small attention to the décor of his productions.

What Purdom neglects, however, is the similarity between Barker’s and Reinhardt’s relationships to their designers. Barker frequently worked with Norman Wilkinson, while Ernst Stern served as Reinhardt’s resident designer. Both directors worked intimately with their designers; they seemed to value collaboration with the design team as much as that with their actors. The details and sketches of Reinhardt’s Regiebuchs and Barker’s account books reveal their concern with the visual aspect of their productions. The books record ideas for colors, tones, blends, and materials for costumes, scenery, and sound. Barker worked closely with Norman Wilkinson to create the golden palette for A Midsummer Night’s Dream in 1914. In fact, most reviewers’ comments focused on the uniformity of the design, claiming that Barker had learned how to marry his innovations with the skill of his scenic designers. To say that Barker cared little for design is misleading, as he and Wilkinson mutually re-designed the way England thought of Shakespeare. To say that Reinhardt ignored his principal actors is contrary to the reports of his private coaching sessions.

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71 Salmon 479.
In addition, both directors employed a non-illusionist style of production. They learned, as actors and directors, from a nineteenth-century system that valued detailed, romantic reproductions of Shakespeare, Schiller, and a vast repertory of melodrama. Each director laid aside the declamatory style of acting and picturesque, labor-intensive scenery. Instead, they employed modern lighting and scenic equipment to reveal the stagecraft to their audiences. In other words, they invited their audiences to become participants in the action. Actors stepped beyond the picture frame proscenium and whispered their secrets to the spectators. Electric lights illuminated the actors while they moved in and around the three dimensional scenery. Rather than beguiling their audiences with the illusion of another world, Reinhardt and Barker made them accomplices to its creation.

3.7 CONCLUSIONS: BECOMING THE MODERN DIRECTOR

For his contributions to British theatre, Barker usually receives most credit as the first modern director in the London theatre. Through his work as actor, then writer, and finally producer and director, he reshaped theatre production in Britain. The timeline of his career reveals how other practitioners, both in Britain and on the Continent, inspired him. In his early work as a director, particularly at the Court seasons of 1904 through 1907, Barker mainly abided by the formula of the actor-manager. During those years, he began coaching actors towards a cohesive ensemble, and developing a repertory system of production. However, his methods changed drastically between the end of the Court seasons in 1907 and the opening of *Iphigenia at Tauris* in 1911. This work was

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Purdom 268.
augmented by the decisive contributions of Shaw as the playwright-director. The intervening five years were marked by continued experimentation, financial difficulty, and most importantly, influence by Max Reinhardt.

While he never gave up acting altogether during this period before the war, Barker’s first step as a director was to remove himself from the acting ensemble. Critical commentary of his early productions such as the 1901 *Marrying of Anne Leete* and the Court seasons noted the high quality of the ensembles. He and his actors explored every role, no matter how big or small. For *The Winter’s Tale*, Barker hired the respected actor Nigel Playfair and paid him a full salary for five minutes of stage time. Every role, he believed, was crucial to the play, and Playfair as the Third Gentlemen proved equally important as McCarthy’s Hermione. Critics writing of the Court seasons noted that most of the actors performed better there than they did at other theatres.  

William Poel and Max Behrend were Barker’s initial influences as director. While Continental pioneers like Constantin Stanislavsky in Russia or André Antoine in France paralleled Barker’s innovations, he had no direct connection with them or their work. Behrend, who served as the director with the German Theatre in London and as a close collaborator with the Stage Society, taught Barker the value of ensemble acting and meticulous rehearsals. Poel, meanwhile, showed Barker how to develop a singular “interpretive line” for each production.

Barker put these ideas to use in the three chaotic seasons at the Court. There he was forced to balance new play development, actors’ schedules, and short rehearsal periods. His initial ideas of the director are commonplace now in Western theatre, but in

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73 Nowell-Smith 396.
1904 they were revolutionary for not only England and America, but the more experimental European theatre, too. He eventually concluded that directing a play while acting a role in it simultaneously was impossible, so beginning with the early Court seasons, he attempted to avoid the double assignment as much as possible. He confessed to Gilbert Murray, translator of the four Greek plays performed during the seasons, that he could no longer split his focus between the play and the part.

Like Reinhardt, Barker treated the script as a piece of music. Musical director Theodore Stier compared Barker to himself, and Barker’s language in rehearsal certainly supports that view: “I want a tremendous crescendo here… Now – down to pianissimo!” He treated the play text – to which he viewed himself subservient – like a musical score, and imagined how the actors, working together, created the full symphony. During the three years at the Court, he certainly had an opportunity to practice this technique with Shaw’s plays. Shaw, fluent in music and music criticism, wrote his plays like a musical score. He envisioned actor’s voices as sopranos, altos, tenors, and baritones, conversations and speeches as choruses and arias. Barker must have quickly learned how to produce this effect, especially with Shaw present to direct many of his own plays.

Playwright Laurence Housman relates a story in his autobiography The Unexpected Years of writing Prunella with Barker. Housman observes Barker as a developing director: “Barker was a wonderful; he knew exactly when to bully me, and when to let me alone.” As they mounted the first production in 1904, Barker worked

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74 Kennedy, Dream 35.
75 Quoted in Kennedy, Dream 37.
76 Lawrence Houseman, The Unexpected Years (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1936) 203.
continuously with the composer Moorat on the incidental music. They clearly differed on what role the music should play. Moorat believed, Housman says, that “stage and audience could be held entranced for as long as invention lasted.” In other words, if the composer could create a moving effect, it should be played out as long as possible. Barker, on the other hand, fit the music to the overall pace of the play. He and Moorat spent eight hours a day refining and cutting the music. Throughout the process, he coached Moorat as if was conducting the orchestra himself.

Not everyone agreed with Barker’s conception of the director. Carter unfairly calls Barker an “author-producer” who “leave[s] no scope for creation. … They dominate and tyrannise in all directions.” The spirit of these author-producers includes “doing everything, in fact, as though the theatre were a machine constructed to produce nothing – but themselves.” Salmon, on the other hand, argues that Barker himself invented the role of director and become famous worldwide for doing so. While Barker certainly knew how, as the director, to dominate the theatrical process when necessary, he did not tyrannize as Carter claims.

The crescendo of Harley Granville Barker’s theatrical career is a major moment in both British theatre history and in the introduction of modernism to England. It is significant that the “genesis of the twentieth-century English theatre” was influenced primarily by his German counterpart. Kennedy hinges the modern director on Reinhardt’s

77 Housman 193.
78 Carter 26.
79 Salmon 29.
and Barker’s productions combined: “It was not until after Max Reinhardt’s visit to London in 1911 and 1912, and after Barker’s work in the years just before the war, that the director began to be accepted as a regular part of the English theatrical scene.”\(^\text{80}\)

Some of Barker’s contemporaries convey the sense that his work as director re-established England’s theatrical standing worldwide. Palmer praised Barker for restoring the Elizabethan aside, spoken or whispered to the audience: “A very convincing book might be written, showing that the health of our national drama (as opposed to the naturalised French importation) was inextricably bound up with the stage aside and soliloquy. No wonder Shakespeare so affected them!”\(^\text{81}\) Shaw felt similarly optimistic:

> There are serious official leanings towards an attempt to convince the neutrals of Europe that we can outdo Reinhardt when it comes to high art by sending out a specimen of our best, and that it is understood for a wonder that this conviction cannot be carried out by the admirers of Reinhardt or by Sir [Herbert Beerbohm Tree].\(^\text{82}\)

He wrote that after World War I. He tried to persuade Barker to accept the position should he be asked. The opportunity never materialized, yet Barker demonstrated his profound desire to take what he learned from Germany and magnify it in the British theatre. During the War, H. M. Walbrook of the *Stage* believed that Barker had already beaten Germany theatrically:

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\(^{80}\) Kennedy, *Dream* 4, 36.


\(^{82}\) Quoted in Purdom 187.
Let us hope that, in spite of the immense events which are happening in the world, the Culture of England – which, be it plainly stated, is a far more genuine thing than the much-vaulted Culture of Germany, to which such a revival of *Twelfth Night*, as was seen at the Savoy, so sincere, so modest, so loyal to Shakespeare and so extraordinarily right, both in the letter and the spirit, has so far been an unattainability – will manifest itself in the playhouse in a large and adequate commemoration, not only of the greatest Englishman of all time, and of his writings, but of those other master-spirits who have combined to make the dramatic literature of these islands the most poetical and most genial in Europe.  

Barker agreed that England had the potential to outdo Germany. He wrote in his *Fortnightly Review* essay:

I think, no doubt, that when London has been ransacked for perfectly-fitting actors, and when three or four weeks of intent preparation have been given to the production of a play, there results a mechanical precision of detail, a trade finish, which no German theatre can equal.

Barker saw the potential in his country’s theatre, and did what he could to tap it. He retired from the theatre after World War I, frustrated by the constant pursuit of finances and resources. Still, he had made his mark, indelibly, on the theatre of Britain.

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84 Barker, “Two German Theatres” 65.
CHAPTER 4

“VILLIAN OF THE WORLD TRAGEDY”: EDWARDIAN THEATRE AND THE GREAT WAR

“At the present moment a great deal of literary and rhetorical art is being employed for the purpose of driving this country into war with Germany – one of the most damnable crimes that could possibly be imagined. The moral is that you have got to be carefully on your guard against all this.” – Bernard Shaw, in a lecture delivered at City Temple, London, October 8, 1908

BALSQUITH. After all, why should the Germans invade us?
MITCHENER. Why shouldn’t they? What else has their army to do? What else are they building a navy for?
BALSQUITH. Well, we never think of invading Germany.
MITCHENER: Yes, we do. I have thought of nothing else for the last ten years. – Shaw, Press Cuttings, 1909

“The German spirit, wielding the German weapons, and controlled only by a couple of gasconading Hohenzollerns, with their family tradition ever beckoning them to bloodshed, was a menace to civilization that only a miracle could have averted.” – William Archer, Colour-Blind Neutrality, 1916

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4.1 BRITISH THEATRE AND THE WAR

In late June of 1918, William Archer emerged from his study after secluding himself for several days. In his hand he carried a manuscript; the first play he had written in eighteen years, and the first he had ever written on his own, titled War is War. “Would it surprise you,” he wrote to Elizabeth Robins, his former theatre partner and close friend, “to hear that I have written a play?”\(^4\) As strange as it may seem, Archer had been driven to write his play by the disappearance of his son Tom Archer in France three days earlier. Tom, a second lieutenant with the King’s Own Scottish Borderers, had spent weeks defending Mont Kimmel from the German Army, only to be overrun in late April 1918. When the Scottish Borderers retreated, they did so without four hundred of their men, including Tom. His disappearance concerned his father, who was employed fervently writing propaganda for the war effort. William Archer’s reaction was to turn to the medium he knew best: the theatre. His strong reaction was understandable in the context of British theatre and the war. As Bernard Shaw wrote, it took this direct involvement of the British with the war to “knock a play out of him.”\(^5\)

The rich relationship and years of fruitful exchange between British theatre practitioners and Germany would be complicated by the onset of World War I. Although the official declaration of war would come on August 4, 1914, England and Germany had slowly grown to mistrust each other through a long naval race, industrial competition, and diplomatic skirmishes over imperial territories. In 1898 and 1900, German passed two laws to expand their navy. This was viewed as a direct affront to the British Royal Navy, the symbol of Britain’s industrial and imperial might across the world. In 1900,

\(^4\) Quoted in Peter Whitebrook, William Archer (London: Methuen, 1993) 324.
Germany and the United States also surpassed Britain in coal, iron, and steel production. British distrust of Germany grew in the early twentieth-century through a series of incidents such as the Tangier Crisis in 1905, the Kaiser’s anti-Anglo comments published in the Times in 1908, and then continued build-up of arms in both Germany and England.

As expected, the war affected the British theatre immediately. Its initial reaction was to distance itself from German plays and practitioners. Musical comedy producer extraordinaire, George Edwardes, recovering in Germany at a spa from a heart attack when Britain declared war, ordered that any musicals composed by Jean Gilbert, who was German, be pulled, including Püppchen and The Tango Princess. Edwardes also called off commissions to other German composers. Robert Courtneidge, another producer, sent his musical The Cinema Star, adapted from a German play, into the provinces where, according to Kurt Gänzl, “the thought of boycotting German-written music had not yet taken hold.”

During the war years themselves, musical comedies, patriotic revues, and simple amusements for weary soldiers dominated the London stage. “The intellectual drama,” Archer wrote, “which had been on the whole progressing before the war, was stricken dumb in August 1914.” Director Harley Granville Barker quit his experimentation with Shakespeare. The only offerings of Shaw to be staged during the war were Pygmalion (briefly) and Fanny’s First Play, revived in 1915. Otherwise, clever English spies, comedians, and dancing women owned the stage.

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5 Quoted in Whitebrook 324.
7 Quoted in Whitebrook 312.
The popular theatre of London became one of many tools of the government to recruit soldiers, stimulate volunteer efforts, and unite the country in a patriotic fervor. By July 1918, the National News declared that, “The West End just now is doing fine work in the way of war propaganda… No Englishman could witness any of these entertainments and fail to feel refreshed and invigorated and more determined than ever to bring about the defeat of Germany!”

L. J. Collins reports that the Lord Chamberlain licensed nearly two hundred war plays between 1914 and 1918. Most of them dealt with German spies and the clever Englishmen and women who repelled them. In many of these cases, the managers and government employees used theatre as an overt propaganda tool. In September 1914, actors Seymour Hicks and Edward Knoblock produced England Expects, a rousing patriotic drama. At the climax of the play, the main character Eustace gave a speech declaring, “We’re brothers fighting shoulder to shoulder, and we are going to come out top dog and smash Germany to hell if it takes us thirty years to do it.”

As the characters on stage raised their glasses to the King, a screen behind them flashed pictures of the soldiers drilling and members of the Royal Family. Recruiting officers stood ready in the theatre, and at the moment actors planted in the audience rushed up on stage to volunteer, and encouraged those around them to do likewise.

The year 1915 seemed to be a watershed year for the German character on the London stage. The Reader for the Lord Chamberlain’s office negotiated licenses on a large number of plays dealing with Germans. Early in the year, he restricted portrayals of

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10 Quoted in Nicholson 119.
German brutality and the Kaiser. However, in 1915 two publications changed the public’s view of Germans, and affected the Reader’s concern of anti-German or overly-violent portrayals. The first was *The Official Book of the German Atrocities*, which appeared in February of that year. The second was the full findings of the Committee of Alleged German Outrages, chaired by Viscount Bryce. After these publications, the British public seemed thirsty to know the evils committed by their opponent, and the Reader seemed to have no qualms about giving it to them. After these two publications, wrote Samuel Hynes, “it become quite acceptable to express a desire for the annihilation of the Germans, the bombing of German civilians, the gassing of German troops.”

Aside from productions aimed at recruiting soldiers, the theatre persons of England involved themselves in a variety of ways. In May 1915, after the sinking of the *S. S. Lusitania*, playwright Arthur Wing Pinero published a letter in *The Times* that encouraged all Germans who were naturalized British subjects to voice their disapproval of Germany’s war tactics. Their silence, he argued, laid them open to the supposition that they supported the Kaiser’s war. J. P. Wearing, editor of Pinero’s letters, reports that nearly two hundred German naturalized citizens responded to his letter in *The Times* during the following days. *The Stage* concluded that, “Never, in short, has the British Theatre shown itself so essential a factor in British life as since the outbreak of the present War.”

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Actress Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s son George was nearly captured when his division split in Belgium. He managed to escape to Denmark and eventually back to England, although not before rumors of his being shot could reach his mother back home. Her other son, Alan, died in the war, as did playwright J. M. Barrie’s godson George Llewellyn Davies. The son of Professor and translator Gilbert Murray, serving in the Royal Air Corps, was shot down, interned, and never fully recovered. Charles Frohman, the American impresario, died in the sinking of the *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915.

Elizabeth Robins volunteered at the Endell Street Hospital for Soldiers, and lectured on nutrition for the Ministry of Food. Pinero also chaired the United Arts Force. Barker enlisted in the Royal Horse Artillery in 1916, transferred to officers’ training corps, and ended up with Army Intelligence. He later went to France to report on the Red Cross for the government. Playwright John Masefield worked with a hospital unit in France. Murray also composed pamphlets about Britain’s sea policy and other topics. Actress and manager Lena Ashwell organized entertainment companies to visit the troops; she herself traveled to France to perform with some of the twenty-five theatre and musical companies that existed. Seymour Hicks and Ellaline Terriss did likewise. Playwright John Galsworthy and his wife Ada donated a house in London to the Red Cross for use as a Wounded Soldiers’ Club. Then together they traveled to France to work at a home for wounded soldiers. In 1918 he was offered a knighthood but declined.

“To be born a German had become a crime,” wrote playwright Laurence Housman of England’s cultural mindset at the beginning of the war. Housman told of hatred toward Germans, especially later in the war. For instance, a Belgian family he

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accommodated was later accused of being German spies. Reporters also believed
Housman housed a German child who had lost his hands (no child existed, but the
reporter claimed to have seen it anyway). Housman also referenced an Officers Training
Corps lecture that advocated killing wounded German soldiers. And he described the
difficulty of a naturalized Englishman of German origin who was sent to the war, but
allowed to stay off the front lines so he would not fight his own countrymen; he lost his
lease upon returning home because of his German surname.\footnote{15}

British theatre professionals protected each other, as well, from prosecution.
Harley Granville Barker wrote to Gilbert Murray about keeping German literature, such
as play translations, in incriminating places. “Please, sir,” he warned about the books,
“stuff you mustn’t leave about, because it is full of Germans, which are very
dangerous.”\footnote{16}

On September 18, 1914 there appeared in the London \textit{Times} and the \textit{New York
Times} an \textit{Author’s Declaration} from thirty-nine British writers expressing their support
of Britain. The \textit{Declaration}, a major concerted effort to align the British theatre with
British war aims, concluded that, “Britain could not without dishonour have refused to
take part in the present war.”\footnote{17} The letter declared their allegiance to England and their
belief that Germany initiated the aggression. England, they argued, simply responded to
her aggressor. Signers included most major figures in the British theatre: Archer, Barker,
Barrie, Chesterton, Galsworthy, Hardy, Murray, Pinero, and Wells. Many of these same
signers had railed against the Lord Chamberlain’s policies of censorship in previous

\footnote{15} Housman 254-8.\footnote{16} Quoted in Eric Salmon, \textit{Granville Barker: A Secret Life} (Exeter, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983) 286.\footnote{17} Quoted in Whitebrook 308.
years; they now willingly committed themselves to the war propaganda machine against Germany. Notably absent from the list of signatures, however, was Shaw’s. He became an isolated figure during the war because he condemned both Germany and Great Britain for starting the war.

4.2 IN DEFENSE OF SHAKESPEARE

Yet these authors took the battle much farther than simple declarations. The realm of the theatre became another battleground in the war. During the Battle of Verdun in 1916, British playwright Henry Arthur Jones composed a pamphlet titled “Shakespeare and Germany,” in which he reacted to German claims that Shakespeare was their playwright. Using speeches from Richard II, King John, Merchant of Venice, and Cymbeline, he cited Shakespeare’s devout dedication to England. All evidence, Jones argued, points to Shakespeare “confuting these latter-day German pretensions to him.”¹⁸

Jones’ language often reached hyperbole:

Shakespeare forsake England! Leave this blessed plot, this dear, dear land, to become the laureate of Louvain; to hang chaplets of song on the ruins of Rheims; to pipe to the German dance of lust and arson and blood; to chant paeans of victory over murdered babes; to shower canticles of benediction over the pirates that sunk the “Lusitania,” the vultures that tore out the entrails of Belgium, the bandits that have desolated Europe! Let not the fond Germans imagine it!¹⁹

Not only did Jones roundly reject German advances on England’s national poet, but he condemned any English pacifists, pleasure-seekers, or those of weak patriotic leanings. In this lineup of “greensick little aguecheeks” he used the word “impossibilists,” too.²⁰

Although he did not capitalize the term, this was still the word Bernard Shaw used in the

¹⁹ Jones 10-11.
1890’s to describe those writers, critics, and directors – like himself – who sought to bring modernism to the British stage.\textsuperscript{21} Whether Jones condemned Shaw and his cohort directly is unclear, but he clearly called for unwavering support of England in the war.

Jones next turned his attention to specific references to Germany in Shakespeare’s plays, in which he discovered only two. He found the first in \textit{The Merchant of Venice}, during a conversation between Portia and Nerissa. They refer to a “young German, the Duke of Saxony’s nephew.” Portia ridicules him for his drunken behavior. Since the line has no dramatic value, argued Jones, it must be Shakespeare speaking his mind about the German disposition. The second reference came from \textit{Cymbeline}. In the second act, Posthumus likens Iachimo to “a full acorned boar – a German one.” Again, Jones found no dramatic reason for the reference, except as a modifier to describe Shakespeare’s superlative dislike for Germany. Out of these two references, Jones concluded that Shakespeare himself held a negative view of Germany.

Jones finished his essay with an ultimatum to modern-day Germany. He wrote the essay in reaction to Germany’s celebration of Shakespeare’s birthday in April, 1916. The main event of the celebration was a series of productions of Shakespeare, so Jones focused on the opening production, \textit{Macbeth}, which he believed had special resonance for Germany, whether they knew it or not: “Let each member of the audience watch how cunningly Shakespeare has enfolded the story of Germany within the story of ‘Macbeth.”\textsuperscript{22} The apparition of Banquo and his inheritors, Jones claimed, represents England and her continuing might, made visible by the empire: Canada, Australia, Africa,

\footnotesize \textsuperscript{20} Jones 11-2.
\footnotesize \textsuperscript{21} In particular, Shaw meant the smaller experimental companies in London such as the Independent Theatre (1891-1897), the New Century Theatre (1897-1899), and the Incorporated Stage Society (1899-1939). These groups performed new British and European plays for smaller audiences.
Egypt, India. In the “parable” of the play, Macbeth’s designs on Banquo are foiled, just as Germany’s on England have been. “Ponder him deeply,” Jones concluded, “now that at last the slow, immitigable might of England has begun to encompass you.” This essay, clearly written in the heat of the moment, demonstrates the deep-seated, often blinding, patriotism felt in England during the war.

Jones certainly had reason to be concerned. Between 1900 and 1914, an estimated two hundred German theatre companies performed an average of twenty-four of Shakespeare’s plays a year. This totaled to 1,100 to 1,600 performances a Shakespeare a year. Not only were German theatre producers and audiences familiar with Shakespeare, they claimed him as their own. In 1914 the German playwright Gerhardt Hauptmann addressed the Shakespeare-Gesellschaft on the “cult of Shakespeare;” he boldly concluded,

There is no nation, not even the British, which is more entitled to call Shakespeare its own than Germany. Shakespeare’s characters have become part of our world, his soul has become one with ours: and though he was born and buried in England it is in Germany that he is truly alive.

Hauptmann articulates a spiritual claim on Shakespeare, and he was not the first. A 1907 article titled “Unser Shakespeare” appeared in the Berlin Tageblatt the month of Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s visit to Berlin. Tree and his company performed several of Shakespeare’s plays, and some German audiences felt the need to re-state their superior connection to him. Tree’s biographer Hesketh Pearson reported that students in the front

22 Jones 22.
23 Jones 25.
25 Quoted in Hortman 3.
row of *Antony and Cleopatra*, “taught to believe that Shakespeare could only be understood in German,” hissed and booed. Likewise, the critics, “convinced that Shakespeare as well as God were of German extraction,” panned the performances.²⁶

Jones’ denial of Germany’s claim on Shakespeare echoed the decades of tension between England and Germany over who best understood and produced Shakespeare. Just as military, economic, and political tension built between England and Germany prior to the war, so did English suspicion of German Shakespeare. The successes of Jocza Savits, Max Reinhardt, and other German directors weighed heavily on the English theatre.

For instance, in 1900 the English scholar Sydney Lee, who wrote a biography and other studies of Shakespeare, described his travels to Germany and Austria. He quickly noticed the disparity between English and German Shakespeare, and observed that:

> In all the chief towns of German-speaking Europe Shakespeare’s plays are produced constantly and in all their variety under conditions which are directly antithetical to those prevailing in the West-end theatres of London. Twenty-eight of Shakespeare’s thirty-seven plays figure in the repertoires of the most respected companies of German-speaking actors. … It cannot be flattering to our self-esteem that the Austrian people should show a greater and a wiser appreciation of the theatrical capacities of Shakespeare’s masterpieces than we who are Shakespeare’s countrymen and the most direct and rightful heirs of his glorious achievements.²⁷

At the Vienna Burgtheater he attended Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra* on a Sunday evening, and complimented the full audience, the competent acting, the simple and purposeful scenery, and the adherence to stage direction.

Lee prescribed, “Until Shakespeare is represented on the stage constantly and in his variety, Englishmen are liable to the imputation not merely of failing in the homage due to the greatest of their countrymen, but of falling short of their neighbours in Germany and Austria in the capacity of appreciating supremely great imaginative literature.”

When the war opened in August, Shakespeare was employed in the cultural fight against Germany. Herbert Beerbohm Tree revived his production of *Henry IV, Part 1* at His Majesty’s Theatre, although audiences found his Falstaff patriotic but far too bombastic. Frank Benson opened *Henry V*, with its rousing, pro-England speeches, at the Shaftesbury Theatre on Boxing Day. The production led the *Stage Year Book* to declare, “If Germans wish to understand our spirit, humour and all, they cannot do better than re-read this play.” At times the battle for Shakespeare actually took place on the stage. L. J. Collins describes a “One Act Extravaganza” titled *Shakespeare for Merrie England* by Mary Packington that was performed in April 1915 at the Theatre Royal, Worcester. In the play, a German professor decides to decorate a bust of Shakespeare with a wreath that reads “To the Divine Teuton Wilhelm the Third.” The professor then dreams of meeting Shakespeare’s heroines; however, instead of warm welcomes from Beatrice, Lady Macbeth, Rosalind, Portia, and Titania, the women berate him for claiming national kinship with Shakespeare.

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28 Lee 156. Even as far back as 1880, W. Beatty-Kingston compared British and German interpretations of Shakespeare and found British productions to be inferior. This was the same year the Meiningen Ensemble visited London and influenced production there. See “Shylock in Germany” in *The Theatre: A Monthly Review of the Drama, Music, and Fine Arts* 1 (January-June, 1880) 17-20, 86-90.

29 L. Carson, ed., *Stage Year Book 1915* 3.

These long-running accusations against Germany paralleled William Archer’s accounts of German Anglophobia. Of the theatre artists involved in the war effort, none were more prolific or pointed than William Archer and Bernard Shaw. The two produced an endless supply of writings on the war, regarding politics, history, and culture. And they often debated publicly. Their writings reveal opposing reactions to the war.

4.3 “WAR IS WAR”: WILLIAM ARCHER AND THE WAR EFFORT

In September 1914, William Archer attended a meeting of the Secret War Propaganda Bureau. Charles Masterman, head of the program, invited Archer to discuss the role of writers and journalists in the war effort. Archer soon joined the Bureau, and began using his established contacts to write letters and articles on various war-related topics. The Bureau, in an attempt to obscure overt propaganda, published its work under legitimate presses such as Methuen, T. Fisher Unwin, and Clarendon Press. Archer dedicated himself to the work fully, even though the Bureau later transferred him to Edinburgh to censor mail for the Post Office, an excruciatingly slow and boring job.

Archer published widely on the war. He wrote public letters about Germany’s culpability; he targeted neutrals Norway and America for entry into the war on the side of the Allied Powers. In addition, he wrote The Thirteen Days, a history of European political maneuvering from the Austrian Ultimatum of July 23, 1914 through the British
declaration of war on August 4. He structured *Thirteen Days* as a historical drama in five acts. With Gilbert Murray he composed *The Foreign Policy of Sir Edward Grey*, a detailed explanation of the policies of Britain’s Foreign Secretary.\(^{31}\)

His earlier pieces addressed neutrality and the war. The first, titled *Colour-Blind Neutrality*, was aimed at Dr. Georg Brandes, a Danish professor, who had published an appeal to the various aggressors in the war, calling upon them to negotiate a peace immediately.\(^{32}\) While Archer did not seem to disagree with the idea of peace, he disagreed with Brandes’ evaluation of England as an aggressor. This theme would repeat itself frequently in his war writings, and echoed the *Authors’ Declaration* of 1914: England prepared herself for war, and declared it on Germany, out of defense for herself, for France, for Belgium, and against the inherent militancy of German *kultur*. In *Colour-Blind Neutrality*, Archer even went so far as to blame Germany for English jingoism. It surely existed in England, “but their jingoism would have been absolutely impotent but for the German menace.”\(^{33}\) In other words, German culture drove British culture to its extremes.

“The history, in short, of the first fourteen years of the century is one long record of German menace and aggression,” Archer concluded.\(^{34}\) He used most of the letter to detail German atrocities, war mentality, and even to provide side-by-side comparisons of

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\(^{31}\) Central to Grey’s foreign policy was an alliance with France, which drew Britain into the war when Germany threatened France in 1914. Grey served as Foreign Secretary twice, once in 1892-5 under Gladstone, and then from 1905-1916 under Henry Campell-Bannerman and Herbert Henry Asquith.

\(^{32}\) Archer had also translated some of Brandes’ plays into English in earlier years.

\(^{33}\) Archer, *Colour* 12.

\(^{34}\) Archer, *Colour* 19.
British and German responsibilities in causing the war. He acknowledged the “lie-
factory” in every warring nation, but the German government engaged in the practice “as a matter of deliberate policy.”

Later that year he published To Neutral Peace-Lovers, another response to Brandes’ letter. Subtitled “A Plea for Patience,” Archer addressed the short letter to Brandes and the Allied nations. He reiterated his argument that Germany allowed itself to be worked into a military state geared only for war and espoused a philosophy that war is the greatest of all human endeavors. The Kaiser, that “despotic War-Lord,” irrationally led the German nation into war, and their burgeoning militarism required all nearby military powers to arm themselves. What the Allied nations forget, Archer argued, is that the war is both sane and mad; mad, because the violent upheaval of war never achieves anything, but sane, in that it lays bare the “hopeless lunacy of the German militarist creed.”

Although Archer accused the Prussian aristocracy and ineffective bureaucrats for Germany’s war-like behavior, he could not resist attacking the whole of German culture. For instance, in 1917 he wrote Shirking the Issue, yet another letter to Brandes, taking him to task for accusing the Allies of starting the war, and ignoring Germany’s power-hungry mindset as the aggressor. The political literature of Germany excited all classes to “war-worship” in order to spread their Kultur over the world. In Six of One and Half-a-

Dozen of the Other, Archer listed quotations by various German writers and politicians as

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35 Archer, Colour 38-9.  
36 Archer, Neutral 7.  
37 Archer, Neutral 12.  
38 Archer, Shirking 5.
examples of German desire for world domination; their efforts at imperialism were unjust and ill-conceived compared to Britain’s peaceful settlement of sparsely-populated lands in Africa.

Perhaps Archer’s largest and most pointed war piece was *Villain of the World-Tragedy*. Addressed to Professor Ulrich V. Wilamowitz Möllendorf, the extended letter reasserted Archer’s earlier points that German politicians exploited their country’s culture to push it toward a military build-up that it then unleashed on Europe. Using the pamphlet Archer sought to absolve Britain of culpability in war conduct and foist the accusation of inhuman conduct on Germany. As if to bolster this, the book contains a loose, one-page pamphlet titled “Murder Again!” The pamphlet details a German U-boat attack on a civilian craft in mid-winter. Many of the survivors perished from exposure. Archer’s booklet concluded that Germany, certainly not England, was the “villain of the world-tragedy,” both its origin and its continued conduct.

In 1917 Archer also published a pamphlet titled *Five Hundred and One Gems of German Thought*. The book is a collection of German wisdom, culled from contemporary writings from German professors, clergymen, politicians, and writers. Archer makes his intention clear by the chapter titles: “Deutschland Ueber [sic] Alles,” “German Ambitions,” “War-Worship,” “Ruthlessness,” Machiavelism,” and “England, France, and Belgium – Especially England.” He intended the book as a travelogue through the German mindset, as particularly related to the current war. The quotes ranged from observations on German character (“The German people must rise as a master-folk above the inferior peoples of Europe.”), to views of England (“Foreign Kulturs offer us things
of spiritual value… with the exception of England, which does not produce anything of
spiritual value.”), to German war mania (“War… will be the father of the new German
race of the future.”). Similar to a majority of his war-time writings, Archer’s pamphlet
was a piece of propaganda, aimed at exposing the true nature of the enemy.

Archer even brought his love of Ibsen into the cultural war. In March of 1916, he
published an article in the *Fortnightly Review* attacking the respective sons of
Scandinavian playwrights Henrik Ibsen and Björnstjerne Björnsen. The essay essentially
accused Dr. Sigurd Ibsen and Björn Björnson of neglecting their fathers’ legacy by
becoming “conspicuous… partisans of Germany.” Archer, of course, understood this
legacy to be anti-German, or at least perceptive of true German nature. He cited the elder
Ibsen’s ideals, as evidenced in *Rosmersholm*, and their incompatibility with Prussian
militarism. As in his other war-time essays, Archer believed Germany forced England,
out of her commitment to France, to join the war. Germany’s history since 1871 had
necessitated a war.

However, Archer’s most personal involvement in the war did not come until
roughly six months before Armistice. In April of 1918, a company of the King’s Own
Scottish Borderers fled Mont Kemmel, near Flanders, Belgium, after weeks of fighting.
On April 25, German soldiers finally took Mont Kemmel. The Scottish Borderers, in
defense and retreat, suffered over four hundred dead or missing. Tom, Archer’s only son,
was among them.

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39 At least, the copy owned by The Ohio State University Libraries contains this pamphlet. The publication
40 Quoted in William Archer, *Five Hundred and One Gems of German Thought* (London: T. Fisher Unwin,
Inc., 1917) 1, 98, 64.
41 William Archer, “Fathers and Sons: Ibsen, Björnson, and the War” in *Fortnightly Review* 99 (January-
June 1916) 461.
The news of Tom’s disappearance, and the subsequent weeks of waiting for confirmation of his death, shook the entire Archer family. William himself internalized Tom’s death to the degree that many close friends, aside from Elizabeth Robins and a few others, knew nothing of it until they inquired after Tom’s well-being in passing conversation.

Archer withdrew into himself after Tom’s disappearance. His emotional energy turned to the theatre as a means for expressing his reaction. In late June of that year he completed a new play, War is War. It was the first time in eighteen years that he had written a play, and his first ever written alone. Subtitled The Germans in Belgium: A Drama of 1914, the play dramatizes the rumors, stories, and reports Archer collected in his position at the Propaganda Bureau. In it, German soldiers occupy a fictional Belgian town based on Louvain (which Archer had already treated in a poem of that name). The peaceful townsfolk are harassed and eventually massacred by the Germans. The play’s protagonist, a German soldier named Karl Kessler, comes to question his actions (he had stayed in the town once before the war) and eventually commits suicide over his moral dilemma. Harley Granville Barker called the play a simple propaganda document, a justified critique in light of Archer’s thirty-five-page epilogue, condemning the German philosophy that “war is war.” The play was never performed, and only published in March 1919, but it highlights Archer’s abiding belief in the importance of theatre in cultural battles over the meaning and causes of World War I.
4.4 “NEVER SO POPULAR IN MY LIFE”: BERNARD SHAW AND THE WAR

While Archer and Bernard Shaw remained close friends during the war, their opinions of it serve as suitable examples of contrasting stances taken during the war. Archer readily signed the Authors’ Declaration in the Times, and worked tirelessly for the Propaganda Bureau. Shaw abstained from signing the Declaration, and instead churned out independent writings on the war, at least matching Archer’s output. As a response to the Authors’ Declaration, Shaw composed Common Sense about the War. He published it as a thirty-two-page supplement to the November 14, 1914 edition of New Statesman.

In the midst of Shaw’s growing theatrical success in England, Germany, and America, and his prolific writings, Common Sense caused an immediate sensation when it appeared. With the usual Shavian frankness, Shaw opened with the sentence, “The time has now come to pluck up courage and begin to talk and write soberly about the war.”

This definitive work was an attempt to soberly explain the causes of the war and dispel ill-conceived notions of German and English culture. He explored such detailed issues as theories of militarism, the etymology of the word Junker, English invasion novels, German philosophy, and important European political figures. The large pamphlet laid the blame on both British and German economic practices, foreign policies, and military build-up. It articulated his central belief before, during, and after the war: no one was without blame in the conflict.

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42 George Bernard Shaw, What I Really Wrote About the War (New York: Brentano’s, 1932) 19.
Shaw did not subscribe to Archer’s or Jones’ view of a righteous England versus a villainous Germany, and he did not see the theatre as another battleground in the war for supremacy. He viewed England and Germany as equally culpable in the war, although he wagged his finger more sternly at England, as he wrote Beatrice Webb at the opening of the war: “The truth is that though [Foreign Secretary Edward] Grey & the Kaiser belong to the same Impossibilist Anti-Democratic class, this war is the inevitable result of Grey’s diplomacy (as he doubtless calls his imbecility); and it is our business to see that he does not come out of it as the universally loved Angel of Peace, with the Kaiser as Pantomime Demon.”\(^{43}\) It is interesting that Shaw uses such theatrical language to describe the situation. England, he claimed, was lucky to have the “Belgium excuse” to declare war on Germany.

*Common Sense* summarized views that Shaw had held for some years. In 1908, the London *Daily Telegraph* published an unusual interview between an anonymous “ex-diplomatist” and Wilhelm II. The Kaiser’s candid remarks about the Boer War, North African politics, and Germany’s right to build a navy without oversight caused a controversy. Shaw published a reply a few weeks later in Vienna’s *Neue Freie Presse*, from “a really brave Englishman” to “a really brave German,” largely complimenting the Kaiser for his honest judgment. Popular opinion, Shaw wrote, claimed that Germany had no reason to foment war; the issue lay in a latent Prussian militarism, or the universal Germanic character. It assumed “that the building of the German fleet could have no other object than an insane war of conquest against England.” Shaw believed the Kaiser’s

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remarks refuted these ideas, and explained German attitudes toward England in rational
terms; it “rectified the popular conception of the real distribution of Anglophobia in
German Society.” Shaw’s reply was typically clever and pointed, and easily
misunderstood.44

Shaw could not envision England or Germany benefiting from a victory in the war. A victory, he argued, would benefit neither country: they would be economically and industrially spent, politically and socially in chaos, and morally and spiritually stagnant: “neither England nor Germany will change her ethics if she vanquishes the other.”45 England and Germany, in Shaw’s eyes, suffered equally from the “Will to Conquer” and the view of themselves as a “super-civilization.” He even suggested that some European nations might join together and become homogeneous in color, religion, tradition, and philosophy. “The war suggests strongly that a combination between the Germans and the English is inevitable, because they abuse one another in exactly the same terms, and hate one another in the same way.”46 Shaw recognized that the threat of Germany was temporary; instead he feared – quite presciently – the power of an organized Russia. Germany was more capable of democracy than Russia, which floundered in a post-Revolution world of “Tsardom” and “bureaucracy.”47 Shaw was also perceptive that the First World War solved nothing, as World War II proved in such ghastly terms.

45 Shaw, Platform 103.
46 Shaw, Platform 105.
47 Shaw, Platform 108.
Shaw saw another similarity between England and Germany: persecution of war objectors. He demonstrated a ready familiarity with German practices during World War I through his various lectures and essays. In an October 1914 speech titled “Redistribution of Income,” he described the Kaiser’s practice of outlawing *Majestätsbeleidigung*, or speaking out against the government’s actions. Although he relished that “attacks on the Kaiser in German papers are quite common,” he still had reason to be concerned: his friend, the philosopher Bertrand Russell, had been imprisoned for speaking out against English involvement in the war.

In a speech titled “Socialism and Culture,” given in the spring of 1918, Shaw described the dangers facing anti-war opinions, particularly those belonging to socialists. He cited examples in England, Germany, and America in which professors, clergymen, and others were imprisoned for anti-war beliefs. In the speech, Shaw included a typed paragraph that he later cancelled and presumably never delivered. The speech delves into further detail, and concludes that German, English, and American morality, as taught in schools and universities, did not differ. In fact, German, English, and American children “receive the same dangerous, obsolete, anti-Socialist, violent and vindictive education.”

The only solution, he proposed, is to teach the ideas of Socialism with as much dedication as “the German military monarchy is about Hohenzollernism.”

One of Shaw’s early biographers, Archibald Henderson, engaged Shaw in conversation in the mid-1920’s, and published their discussions as a series of dialogues titled *Table-Talk of G.B.S*. Shaw edited the dialogue with Henderson and reassembled it into a cohesive discussion (the two even added stage directions). The final conversation

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centers on Shaw’s position on the war. He wrote *Common Sense About the War*, he said, because, “I had to find some sort of answer to the question, What else could the Kaiser have done but what he did, hemmed in as he was?” Shaw repeated that he was alone in his objections, which Henderson echoed by pointing out that Henry Arthur Jones wanted stocks erected in Trafalgar Square for war objectors. Perhaps, indeed, Shaw was one of those “impossibilists” that Jones despised during the war.

Although the war complicated the busy correspondence between Shaw and his German translator Siegfried Trebitsch, the two continued their association. The extant letters from Shaw to Trebitsch are few but lengthy; a majority discuss the politics of the war and Shaw’s treatment by the press, and only occasionally their theatrical relationship. The two corresponded through F. L. Leipnik, a Dutchman and mutual friend. As a neutral, Leipnik could forward mail between England and Austria.

Their theatrical collaboration, however, did continue to a degree. Trebitsch successfully placed Shaw’s plays in the German-speaking theatre during the war. Between 1916 and 1918, seven productions of Shaw occurred, six in Vienna and one in Berlin. Aside from a single production of Maxim Gorky’s *Lower Depths*, Shaw was the only “enemy” playwright to be regularly produced in wartime Germany and Austria. Additionally, Trebitsch did what he could to promote Shaw the man in Germany; he published Shaw’s telegram from August 1914, and demonstrated how Shaw’s mistreatment by the British press revealed his sympathy to Germany’s involvement in the war.

49 Shaw, *Road* 325.
Still, Trebitsch knew that Shaw required some defending to the German people. While he and Trebitsch painted him as a sympathetic Englishman in the German press, Shaw criticized Prussian militarism in articles such as the August 1914 “The Peril of Potsdam.” Despite his suggestions that certain of his plays would please German audiences during the war, he met with criticism for some of his comments. Shaw frequently had stern words for Germany: “I sometimes feel tempted to write Common Sense for Germans about the War,” he told Trebitsch, although he doubted such an essay would please Berlin or Prussian Junkers.\textsuperscript{51}

Shaw also wrote a short play titled \textit{The Inca of Perusalem}, a spoof on the Kaiser. He willingly gave out rehearsal copies, including some to his publisher, to send on to Trebitsch. However, to protect his reputation in Germany, he billed the play as by “A Member of the Royal Society of Literature.”\textsuperscript{52} The play never made it to Trebitsch during the war; Shaw’s publisher Otto Kyllmann laid the manuscript aside until thirteen years later.

Shaw certainly required some defending from his fellow countrymen, too. Some of his writings could be considered direct support of German culture. In 1914 he recommended that Trebitsch stage \textit{Man of Destiny} in Germany, suggesting that Napoleon’s speech about English imperialism would interest German audiences. Whether Shaw was being ironic, or whether he was simply helping Trebitsch, or his own career, is

\textsuperscript{52} Shaw, \textit{Trebitsch} 195.
unclear. But his idea did not go unheeded: Vienna’s Theater in der Josefstadt produced *Man of Destiny* in October 1916, and two German newspapers cited Napoleon’s speech for its message about England.\(^{53}\)

In the letters themselves, Shaw continued his arguments about British and German culpability: “Berlin talks just the same nonsense as London.”\(^{54}\) He also assured Trebitsch of his own safety in London, despite his not hearing from Shaw for a few months. Trebitsch published an article in May 1915 in the *Vossiche Zeitung* stating that Shaw was “persecuted” for his beliefs in London, even staying indoors for fear of assassination.\(^{55}\) Yet Shaw assured him that he wrote freely, addressed agreeable audiences, and even received encouraging letters. “I was never so popular in my life,” he wrote.\(^{56}\) While the press frequently abused Shaw, very rarely did it translate into real action. For instance, when the Barker-McCarthy management revived *Fanny’s First Play* at the Kingsway, the *Daily Express* published a letter that encouraged audiences to avoid the “anti-British author.”\(^{57}\) Shaw, however, worried about no danger except “your confounded Zeppelins” and their indiscriminate bombing.\(^{58}\)

Above all, Shaw believed that every country involved in the war was equally guilty and equally a victim. He repeated this frequently in his letters to Trebitsch: “There are no longer Germans and Englishmen, Austrians and Russians,” he wrote, “there are only the men in a certain uniform who are trying to kill you.”\(^{59}\)

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\(^{53}\) The *Frankfurter Zeitung* on August 28, 1914 and the *Neue Freie Presse* on January 17, 1915.

\(^{54}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 182.

\(^{55}\) Quoted in Shaw, *Trebitsch* 188.

\(^{56}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 186.

\(^{57}\) Quoted in Shaw, *Trebitsch* 188.

\(^{58}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 187.

\(^{59}\) Shaw, *Trebitsch* 183.
Shaw expressed concern for Trebitsch’s welfare as well. As an officer in the Austrian army, Trebitsch was called home to Vienna in August 1914. While Austrian casualties mounted during the war, the army called his age bracket to duty, but upon a medical examination, the doctor found Trebitsch had an enlarged heart and therefore could not serve. “Gesegnet sie dieser Arzt! [Blessed be this doctor!]” Shaw wrote him.\textsuperscript{60} Later, Trebitsch was found to simply have a displaced diaphragm, so he served as a hospital orderly near his home.

Shaw’s letters reveal interesting details about London culture during the war, and its relationship to German culture. In early letter, Shaw related a story to Trebitsch about the nightly Promenade Concerts in London. In late August of 1914, he tells his translator, organizers announced that no German music would be performed. “Everybody applauded the announcement,” Shaw explained, “But nobody went to the concerts.”\textsuperscript{61} Within a week organizers filled the program with Beethoven, Wagner, and Strauss, and audiences returned. Shaw delighted in British audience’s desire for German music, despite the prevalent anti-German mindset. He must have claimed some responsibility for it, following his years of music criticism and advocacy of German music.

Shaw’s writings after the war continued his defensive stance and argumentative instinct. He drafted a follow-up to \textit{Common Sense} titled \textit{More Common Sense about the War}, but the \textit{New Statesman} rejected it, and it was never published in full. In 1931 he published a volume titled \textit{What I Really Wrote About the War}, a definitive edition of his World War I writings. The volume includes reprints of \textit{Common Sense}, his pamphlet \textit{Peace Conference Hints}, and a variety of articles and essays.

\textsuperscript{60} Shaw, Trebitsch 193.
Shaw ultimately turned to the theatre to express his feelings about the war. The result was one of his most mature plays, *Heartbreak House*. He began composing it on March 4, 1916, and completed it May 1917. First performed in New York and London in 1920, the story focuses on Captain Shotover, a retired British sea captain who lives with his eldest daughter Hesione. Disrupting their already chaotic household is Hesione’s friend Ellie Dunn, who has decided to marry the industrialist Boss Mangan. The rapidly expanding number of house visitors, including Hesione’s husband Hector and her sister Lady Utterword, all sound off on issues such as love versus money. Shotover rapidly loses control over his household.

The room in which the play is set resembles a ship; it has been built “so as to resemble the after part of an old-fashioned high-pooped ship with a stern gallery.” This ship, as countless scholars and critics have observed, symbolizes the old Europe, a way of life that is drifting into the rocks and will be forever changed by the impending crash. Everything about the old way of life – economics, religion, politics, and love – will be crushed against the rocks. In the end, the characters stand outside the house as bombs begin to fall around them. Some are terrified and hide, some run through the house turning on every light so it will be visible to the bombers overhead. Several loud explosions shake the stage, and then recede in the distance. In the end, the characters are left standing in a now “damnably dull” world. As they exit one by one, the final lines read:

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61 Shaw, *Trebitsch* 185.
MRS. HUSHABYE. But what a glorious experience! I hope theyll come again tomorrow night.
ELLIE. (radiant at the prospect) Oh, I hope so.63

In the Preface Shaw described the circumstances of the play’s writing. He acknowledged his indebtedness to Anton Chekhov’s tragicomedies, and wrote that *Heartbreak House* is “cultured, leisured Europe before the war.”64 The lengthy Preface described the causes of the war, its effect on the London theatres, and the theatre’s service to world culture after the war. The Europe that *Heartbreak House* represents drifted into World War I and was irrevocably changed by it. Shaw wrote that the play was composed from his ideas long before the war started, and it had to be saved until after the war’s conclusion:

Comedy… had to be loyally silent; for the art of the dramatic poet knows no patriotism; recognizes no obligation but truth to natural history; care not whether Germany or England perish… and thus becomes in time of war a greater military danger than poison, steel, or trinitrotoluene. That is why I had to withhold *Heartbreak House* from the footlights during the war; for the Germans might on any night have turned the last act from play into earnest, and even then might not have waited for their cues.65

*Heartbreak* was so vital to the war effort and so true to the heart of the war, Shaw believed, that it would have proved dangerous to present while the war still raged.

Whatever heartbreak Shaw felt over England and Germany during the war, he never completely forsook either country. His popularity would return to London, especially with the production of *Saint Joan* in 1924. Evidence of Shaw’s continued relationship with Germany surfaced in the German productions of his plays during the war. In March 1916 the Deutsches Volkstheater in Vienna revived *The Devil’s Disciple*

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63 Shaw, *Heartbreak* 160.
64 Shaw, *Heartbreak* 7.
for fourteen performances. Audiences were drawn to it, and the *Neue Freie Presse* welcomed Shaw’s reappearance in Austria, declaring, “Our relationship with Bernard Shaw has not changed even during the war.”

4.5 CONCLUSIONS: THE END OF THE EDWARDIAN THEATRE

The Great War was heartbreak indeed for the Edwardian theatre, and for the world. By November 1918 revolution had taken place in Russia, and soon would in Germany. Four empires disappeared in the war: German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian. The Allied Powers suffered nearly ten million dead or missing, and another thirteen million wounded; the Central Powers suffered approximately eight million dead or missing, and another eight million wounded. Britain alone had lost nearly a million of its young men, including some of its poets, playwrights, and actors.

The Edwardian theatre itself was changed forever through the war years. The age of the actor-manager was over, and the age of the new director would soon begin. Leading actor-managers such as George Edwardes, George Alexander, and Herbert Beerbohm Tree had died during the war; Charles Wyndham would die soon after. Harley Granville Barker had separated from Lillah McCarthy, married a wealthy American novelist, and essentially retired from theatre production. He also cut ties with Shaw and Archer: those great collaborations were over.

The Edwardian Age in England technically ended with Edward’s death in 1910, but its name and legacy continued through the war. After this time, the miniature golden age of the British theatre, Walter MacQueen-Pope’s age of “carriages at eleven,” had

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66 Quoted in Shaw, *Trebitsch* 196.
disappeared. But this was not the end of everything. Archer would live until 1924, Henry Arthur Jones until 1929, Barker until 1946, Shaw until 1950. Out of the destruction of the war, their work in the theatre would continue, and continue to be remade, as always, looking forward.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 THE GOOD EUROPEANS

When he took the throne in January 1901, King Edward VII quickly earned a reputation for connecting England with Europe. He demonstrated the relationship between England and Europe for which many of England’s theatre practitioners wished, because to be connected with Europe, to “take seriously what Europeans were doing,” meant the creation of the modern theatre in England. The efforts of J. T. Grein, William Poel, William Archer, Bernard Shaw, Harley Granville Barker, and many others laid the foundations for the modern British theatre, and they found inspiration in the German theatre.

Between 1890 and 1918, the British theatre was influenced by many countries, but none had a more profound effect than Germany. Plays, productions, and practitioners traveled, wrote, and observed each other’s work, and applied those ideas to their own innovations. Visiting German theatre companies and German dramatists influenced English playwrights to emulate or adapt the German work for the British stage. When British theatre folk traveled to Germany, they returned with impressions and observations on the German theatre. Shaw, for instance, wrote about Bayreuth, and argued how

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England could create a theatre much like Wagner’s. He also emulated Wagner’s music dramas, and infused them with German ideas to pioneer the modern English drama. He laid the foundations for many modern playwrights in the following decades. Barker described German repertory theatres in detail, so that English audiences would learn the value of them and emulate German productions. In his own production practices, he emulated the work of German directors Max Behrend and Max Reinhardt, and became England’s first modern director. After World War I, Barker’s model of the modern director became the dominant form for the British theatre, and this form still exists today.

Archer and Barker laid out a plan for a National Theatre, and based their scheme on German state-funded theatres. Their dream became a reality in the twentieth-century.

The Edwardian Age was an era of transition – sometimes peaceful, sometimes violent – between two radically different time periods. On one side, the Victorian era, with its peaceful sensibilities, strict delineation of classes and duties, love of leisure, and expanding empire. On the other side, the First World War, in which many modern ideas of progress came crashing down. Millions of lives were sacrificed to the horrible machine that developed out of technological advances. The war left many disillusioned, on both sides, with government, technology, religion, industry, and culture. The Edwardian theatre, too, was a transition between ages. Years of pictorial Shakespeare and spectacular melodramas performed by a male-dominated actor-manager system gave way to ensemble acting, realistic visuals, and symbolic designs. The modern replaced the Victorian. The voice of a new generation of playwrights, actors, and designers found its place amongst the theatres.
World War I decimated many of the connections made between the English and German theatre: influence turned to resistance. William Archer turned against Germany, and used his skill at writing plays and pamphlets to attack Germans and German wartime practices. Henry Arthur Jones used the theatre, specifically Shakespeare, as a battleground in the war. J. T. Grein continued his campaign to bring British theatre up to German standards, a move that in the end cost him his job and his standing in London society. Bernard Shaw continued writing and speaking during the war. He maintained his connections with Germany, and spoke often as a solo voice against the aggressors in the war. This move, too, cost him some of his popularity. Barker traveled to America to continue his work, although it ended in frustration. He retired from active theatre work and wrote essays on Shakespeare. But his work, in addition to Archer’s, Shaw’s, Poel’s, Grein’s, and others’, had an effect. The world had become modern, and would continue to change. World War I was not the last time England and Germany would come into conflict; but, fortunately, neither was it the last time they would trade ideas peacefully.
EDITORIAL NOTE: This calendar includes, amongst other details deemed important, productions of German plays, operas, and orchestral music (produced in English and German) in London; visits of German companies to London; significant English productions and travels to Germany; English plays with German characters, settings, or themes; related publications such as novels, newspaper articles, and speeches; and major political and social events in Germany and England. All events are listed with the goal of highlighting the dynamic presence of German culture in London during these years. The primary sources for these listings are L. Carson, ed., The Stage Year Book (multiple vols., 1908-1918), Kurt Gänzl, The British Musical Theatre (2 vols.), and J. P. Wearing, The London Stage: A Calendar of Plays and Players (multiple vols., 1890-1919).

This timeline begins in 1889, the year of Bernard Shaw’s first visit to Bayreuth, Otto Brahms’s inauguration of the Freie Bühne in Berlin, and J. T. Grein’s announcement of a German Theatre program in London. It ends in 1918, the last year of World War I, generally considered the time when the Edwardian period ended.

Every attempt was made for accuracy and specificity. Dates are listed when available; if only the year is known (because I could not find one), the event is listed at the beginning of the year. If only the month is known, the event is listed under the month solely. For theatre and opera, the first known production date is given, with the number of total performances and a closing date provided when available. Unless otherwise specified, all events occur in London. Any quotations are noted at the end of this section.

1889

Jocza Savits presents "uncluttered Shakespeare" with an open stage extended over the apron, retaining modern lighting, at Munich Theatre Royal.

Beginning in 1888, Jan de Reszke, a great Polish tenor, sings annually until 1900 at Covent Garden. He was unrivalled in the great parts of Siegfried Wagner: Walther, Tristan, Siegfried.
**January 28 & February 4** – Bernard Shaw goes to recitals of Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* at the Portman Rooms. He speaks afterwards with Alfred Forman, translator of Wagner’s libretti.

**July 25-August 4** – Shaw makes his first visit the Bayreuth Festival, to write four articles on Wagner for *The Star* (published August 1, 2, 6, and 7). He views and writes on *Parsifal, Tristan und Isolde*, and *Die Miestersinger*. Leaves Bayreuth on August 1 and returns to England on August 4. William Archer and Rimbault Dibdin travel to Bayreuth separately and meet up with Shaw there.

**October 8** – J. T. Grein announces a German Theatre program for London in *Sunday Special*.

**October 20** – Henry Brougham Farnie and Tito Mattei’s *The Grand Duke* opens at the Avenue Theatre. It features several German characters, mainly Princes and Dukes.

**September 29** – Otto Brahm opens the *Freie Bühne* (Free Stage) in Berlin with Ibsen’s *Ghosts* (*Gespenster*). J. T. Grein, founder of the Independent Theatre in London, would open his company with *Ghosts* at the Royalty Theatre in 1891. Both Grein and Brahm modeled their theatres on André Antoine’s Théâtre Libre in Paris.

**December 3** – Shaw attends a conversation at the Wagner Society meeting at the Royal Institute.

**1890**

Maximilian Goldmann first acts under the name Max Reinhardt in Germany.

Kaiser Wilhelm II, Emperor of Germany, secures Otto von Bismarck's resignation and begins German expansion.

The Freie Volksbühne (Free People’s Stage) is formed in Berlin as a private subscription theatre affiliated with the Social Democratic Party.

Jocza Savits produces *King Lear* at the Royal Theatre at Munich, using Elizabethan staging techniques. William Poel visits and writes favorably of it.

**March 20** – Shaw writes an article on the Berlin Labour Conference for the *New Review*.

**June 10** – Jan de Reszke sings *Lohengrin* at Covent Garden. Shaw is present and reviews it on June 18. He says de Reszke “ought not to be missed, as the chances are heavily against any of us hearing a better.”
July 29-August 10 – Shaw and Sidney Webb holiday on the continent. They see the Passion Play at Oberammergau, Bavaria on August 3 in the pouring rain. Shaw hikes up the mountains, leaving Webb down below to write a Fabian article. Shaw writes that the Fabian “is getting known in Germany.” They also travel to Brussels, Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, and Strasbourg.

August 17 – Archer travels to Oberammergau to see the Passion Play.

August 23 – Archer sees Henrik Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People* at the Residenztheater in Munich. He later visits Ibsen in his apartment in Maximilianstrasse.

August 25 – Archer sees Wagner’s *Siegfried* at the Opera House in Frankfurt. He returns to London the following day.

September 23 – *The Black Rover*, by W. Luscombe Searelle and Mr. Morley, opens at the Globe Theatre, managed by George Paget. It features Jacob, a German overseer played by John Le Hay (40 perf s).

1891


May 23 – Wagner’s *Die Miestersinger* at Covent Garden. Shaw is present.

June 18 – Mrs. Patrick Campbell produces *As You Like It* in London "under patronage of HRH Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein."

June – Henrik Ibsen’s *Hedda Gabler* premières in Munich.

August – Impresario Augustus Harris is knighted for his role as Sheriff in the visit of the German Emperor to London.

1892

Augustus Harris establishes Covent Garden as the Royal Opera House. He helps popularize Wagner in London, although the operas are still sung in Italian.

Wagner’s complete *Ring* cycle is performed in London for the first time in ten years, by a visiting German company.

February – Shaw reviews Ferdinand Praeger’s *Wagner as I Knew Him* and finds it “vivid and convincing.”
June 29 – Operatic program of Wagner at St. James’s Hall. Wagner’s Die Walküre performed at Covent Garden. Shaw present.

July 13 – Wagner’s Göttterdammerung at Covent Garden.

1893

During her London visit, Eleanora Duse plays Magda in H. Sudermann’s Die Heimat. Sarah Bernhardt stars in the same play during the same year.

The Great War in England in 1897, an invasion novel by William Le Queux, is published in serial in Answers, then published as a book in 1894. It goes through sixteen editions by 1899, and is endorsed by Lord Roberts. In the novel, the French attack England viciously (even bayoneting babies), while Germany and Italy come to the rescue.

Angel of the Revolution, an invasion novel by George Griffith, is published.

March 4-11 – Janet Achurch and Charles Charrington produce Alexandra at the Royalty Theatre, adapted from a German play by Richard Voss. Archer reviews on March 8 in The World.

April 6 – Clever Alice, an adaptation of Adolf Willebrandt’s Die Maler by Brandon Thomas opens at Royalty Theatre. With Janet Achurch and Charles Charrington, who also managed (14 perfs).

September 19-October 2 – Dollars and Sense, originally a German farce, adapted and produced by Augustin and Joseph Daly at Daly’s Theatre.

1894

Archer translates Gerhardt Hauptmann’s symbolist play Hannele into English.

January 19 – Ibsen’s The Master Builder premieres simultaneously at the Lessingtheater in Berlin and in Norway.

February – Second volume of Wagner’s works translated into English is published, including sections on Opera and Drama.

February 8 – Wagner Memorial Concert programmed by George Henschel at St. James’s Hall. Shaw in attendance.

April 17 – Wagner concert at Queen’s Hall, conducted by Felix Mottl. His first appearance in England; Shaw in attendance.

May 5 – Selections of Tannhäuser’s 3rd act and other Wagner pieces at Queen’s Hall. Shaw in attendance.
June 14 – Recitals of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms at Queen’s Hall. Shaw in attendance.

June 23 – Recital of Faust at Queen’s Hall. Performance of Siegfried at Drury Lane. Shaw attends both.

June 28 – Recitals of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms at Queen’s Hall. Shaw in attendance.

June 30 – Wagner’s Tristan und Isolde at Drury Lane. Shaw attends.

July 3 – Wagner’s Lohengrin at Drury Lane. Shaw attends.

July 12 – Recitals of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms at Queen’s Hall. Shaw in attendance.

July 15 – Shaw meets with P. Drabig, a tutor at the Institute of Languages, in Richmond about his German translation of Arms and the Man.


Summer – Herbert Beerbohm Tree vacations in Marienbad, Germany, for his health. He learns Hamlet in German while there. Tree visits Marienbad regularly throughout his life.

September 8 – The Queen of Brillants, adapted from a German comic opera (Die Brillanten-Königen) by Brandon Thomas, opens at the Lyceum Theatre (41 perfs).

December 29 – Sydney Grundy’s Slaves of the Ring, a retelling of Tristan und Isolde, opens at the Garrick Theatre. Shaw attends on January 1, 1895 and reviews in Saturday Review on January 5.

1895

Mam'selle Tralala, adapted from the German play Fraulein Tralala by Arthur Wimperis, opens at Lyric Theatre.

Max Nordau's Degeneration appears in English translation. A best seller, it attacked fin-de-siècle art. Bernard Shaw responded with one of his powerful essays, "A Degenerate's View of Nordau," later titled "The Sanity of Art."

January 1 – Strauss’ Die Fledermaus at Royalty Theatre (15 perfs).

January-May – Deutsche Theatre (led by August Junkermann) at St. George’s Hall, presenting 22 plays. J.T. Grein is “Intendant” for this subscription season.
February 12 – Arnold Dolmetsch holds concert at Queen’s Hall, playing fifteenth-century instruments. He plays 17th and 18th-century German music.

March – Committee for German Theatre in London visit to Lyceum Theatre. Die Heimat (Magda) by G. Hauptmann, starring Max Behrend.

April 13 – A Woman’s Caprice by H. M. Lewis opens (356 perfs) at Prince of Wales’s, adapted with Eric Thorne from Gott sei dank; der Tisch ist gedeckt.

April 25 – Concert at Queen’s Hall, conducted by Hermann Levi; his first appearance in England. He was a protégé of Wagner’s, and conducted at Bayreuth. He presided over the premiere of Parsifal. Shaw was in attendance and wrote an unsigned article on him for the April 29 Daily Chronicle.

May 3 – Wilhelm Leibknecht, editor of German Socialist newspaper Vorwärts, supposed to speak on “The Development of Social-Democracy in Germany” at the Fabian Meeting at Essex Hall. Shaw’s journal says the talk was changed at the last minute.

May 20 – Shaw meets Felix Mottl at the home of Max Hecht and writes “gemuthlicher Abend” in his journal.

May-July, October-November – Opera seasons at Covent Garden, including J. Strauss’ Die Fledermaus (4 perfs), Humperdinck’s Hansel und Gretel (3 perfs), Gluck’s Orfeo (2 perfs); Wagner’s Tannhäuser (2 perfs, Albert Alvarez as Tannhäuser, Emma Eames as Elizabeth, Ada Adini as Venus; then another production in October and November for 7 perfs.: Charles Hedmont, Alice Esty); Wagner’s Lohengrin (6 perfs, with Theodore Bertram as Lohengrin, Emma Albani as Elsa, then later in the year (4 more perfs.) with Charles Hedmont, Alice Esty); Wagner’s The Valkyrie (6 perfs with Charles Hedmont, Lilian Tree); Wagner’s The Flying Dutchman (2 perfs).

June 6 – Siegfried Wagner concert at Queen’s Hall. Second visit. Shaw attends and gives it a poor review.

June 10 – Sarah Bernhardt plays in H. Sudermann’s Magda (Heimat) at Daly’s Theatre in French (4 perfs). Shaw in attendance.

June 12 – Eleanora Duse plays Magda at Drury Lane in Italian (1 perf), returned to Savoy Theatre for 4 performances in June-July. Shaw attends and prefers her performance over Bernhardt’s. Archer reviews the play on June 19; he also prefers Duse.

June 17 – Der Vogelhandler, a comic opera by Karl Zeller (music) and M. West (libretto) at Drury Lane (5 perfs.). Presented by Ducal Court Company of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

June 18 – H. Sudermann’s Die Ehre at Drury Lane (2 perfs.). Presented by Ducal Court Co. Shaw attends.
**June 20** – Adolf L’Arronge’s *Hasmann’s Tocher* at Drury Lane (1 perf.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**June 25** – H. Sudermann’s *Heimat* at Drury Lane (1 perf.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**June 22** – Strauss’ *Die Fledermaus* at Drury Lane (4 perfs.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**June 24** – Humperdinck’s *Hansel und Gretel* at Drury Lane (4 perfs.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**June 26** – Bedrich Smetana’s *Die Verkaufte Braut* (*The Bartered Bride*) at Drury Lane (26 perfs). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**June 29** – Beethoven’s *Fidelio* (3 perfs.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**July** – Ducal Court Co. returns to Savoy Theatre. H. Sudermann’s *Die Ehre* (2 perfs); L’Arronge’s *Hasemann’s Tocher* (1 perf); L’Arronge’s *Dr. Klaus* (1 perf on July 2); H. Sudermann’s *Heimat* (1 perf on July 3).

**July 3** – Albert Lortzing’s *Der Wildschutz* at Drury Lane (2 perfs.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**July 6** – C. M. von Weber’s *Der Freischutz* at Drury Lane (2 perfs.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**July 8** – Franz von Schönthan’s and Gustave Kadelburg’s *Die berühmte Frau* at Drury Lane (1 perf.). Presented by Ducal Court Co.

**November 22** – At a meeting, Shaw moves “That the Fabian Society desires to assure Herr Wilhelm Liebknecht of its entire sympathy with him in his recent conflict with the Imperial power, and to express its astonishment that it should be possible nowadays in Germany to imprison a Member of Parliament for an expression of opinion which would be free to any English citizen.” Resolution was adopted unanimously.

**December 29-January 2, 1896** – Jameson Raid on the Transvaal Republic, to encourage British expatriate workers (Uitlanders) to rebel against the Afrikaner government. The Raid is quelled and no rebellion occurs. The German Emperor telegrams to congratulate Transvaal President Paul Kruger for stopping the raid, which stirs British public sentiment against Germany. At the Gaiety Theatre, a new verse is added to “A Little Piece of String” in *An Artist’s Model*: “Hands off Germany! Hands off all! / Let Kruger boast and Kaiser brag; Britons hear the call! / Back to back the world around, answer with a will - / England for her own, my boys! It’s ‘Rule Britannia’ still.”
Augustus Harris at the Avenue Theatre with an adaptation of Eugen von Taund’s *Der Wunderknabe* (*The Little Genius*).

George Edwardes produces a musical based on the Austrian play *Ein tolle Nacht*, adapted by Tanner.

**January 7** – *The Prisoner of Zenda*, adapted from Anthony Hope’s novel by Edward Rose, opens at the St. James’s Theatre, starring and produced by George Alexander. It is set in Ruritania, a fictional German-speaking country located between Germany and Austria and centers around Rudolph Rassendyll, who must impersonate the King. Considered one of Alexander’s greatest successes, *Zenda* runs 255 performances in its original production, and is revived frequently in the following decades.

**January 12** – Ibsen’s *Little Eyolf* premieres at the Deutsches Theater, Berlin.

**January-February** – The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company performs at Daly’s Theatre, including *Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, The Flying Dutchman*, and *Hansel und Gretel*.

**February 13, 20, 27, March 5, 12, 19** – Bertrand Russell lectures for the London School of Economics on German Social Democracy.

**February 14** – Bertrand Russell speaks at Fabian Meeting at Clifford’s Inn on “Lessons from Germany in Independent Labour Politics.” Shaw attends both of these lectures.

**February 15** – Eweretta Lawrence’s *On ‘Change*, adapted from Gustav von Moser’s *Ultimo*, opens at the Strand Theatre, closes on March 13 (27 perfs). Shaw in attendance; reviews on February 22.

**February 21** – Ashton Jonson lectures on Wagner at St. Ermyn’s Mansions. Shaw in attendance.

**March 7** – Gilbert and Sullivan’s last collaboration, the comic opera *The Grand Duke: or, The Statutory Duel*, opens at the Savoy Theatre (123 perfs). It involves many German characters. The Examiner of Plays, upon reviewing the script, notes that the German roles were “a sort of character that has done duty in half the comic operas that were ever written.”

**April 28** – Arthur Bourchier’s *The New Baby*, adapted from H. F. Fischer and J. Jarno’s *Der Rabensvater*, opens at the Royalty Theatre. Archer reviews May 6; Shaw on May 9.

**May-July** – The Covent Garden opera season includes *Die Meistersinger, Lohengrin, Tannhäuser*, and *Tristan und Isolde*.

**June** – Sarah Bernhardt plays at the Comedy Theatre for twelve nights, including H. Sudermann’s *Magda*.

June 5 – Wilhelm Liebknecht addresses the Fabian Meeting at Essex Hall.


July 19-22 – Shaw travels to Bayreuth again. Sees *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Die Götterdämmerung*.

August 13 – Archer leaves for Bayreuth. He sees *Faust* at the Frankfurt Schauspielhaus, then sees the entire Ring cycle over the following week. He reviews the Ring in the *Westminster Gazette* on August 28. He arrives back in London by the third week of August.

1897


Covent Garden opera season includes *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Die Walküre*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger*, and Wilhelm Kienzl's *Der Evangelimann*. Jean de Reszke sings in the Wagner operas.


January – Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company, performing in English at the Garrick Theatre, presents *Tannhäuser*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Die Walküre*, and *Lohengrin*.

May – Henry Irving considers performing Shaw’s *Man of Destiny* with a German play called *Schludig* by Richard Voss, adapted by Sydney Grundy.

June-July – Sarah Bernhardt returns to London at the Adelphi Theatre, performing, amongst other things, H. Sudermann’s *Magda*.

June 22 – Queen Victoria celebrates her Diamond Jubilee with a royal progress through the streets of London. She begins at St. Paul’s Cathedral for a short thanksgiving service (held outside the building, as she was unable to climb the steps) and continues past the Mansion House, across London Bridge, through South London, over Westminster Bridge, past the Houses of Parliament, to Buckingham Palace.
June 28-29 – The visiting Vienna Volkstheater Company plays afternoon performances of Otto Eisenschutz’s *Untreu* (from the Italian of Roberto Bracco) at Daly’s Theatre (2 perfs).

June 30-July 1 – The Vienna Volkstheater Company plays afternoon performances of Franz von Schönhans’s and Frantz Koppell-Ellfeld’s *Die Goldene Eva* at Daly’s Theatre (2 perfs).

July 1 – Revival of Edward Rose’s *The Prisoner of Zenda* at the St. James's Theatre, with George Alexander, C. Aubery Smith, Fay Davis, Julie Opp (8 perfs).

July 5-8 – The Vienna Volkstheater Company plays afternoon performances of Franz von Schönhans’s and Frantz Koppell-Ellfeld’s *Renaissance* (4 perfs).

September 8 – Archer reviews Sudermann’s *Die Schmetterlingschlacht* and *Die Versunkene Glocke* in *The World*.

September-October – Hedmondt's Opera Company at Her Majesty's, singing in English; repertory includes *Hansel und Gretel* by E. Humperdinck.

October – The Carl Rosa Opera Company at Covent Garden presents *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, and *Die Meistersinger*.

October 11 – Maurice Desvalliéres’ and Antony Mars’ *Never Again*, adapted from a French farce, opens at the Vaudeville Theatre. It includes a German musician character named Katzenjammer (“hangover”), played by Ferdinand Gottschalk.

October 13-30 – Ernest Rosmer’s *Die Königskinder* (*The Children of the King*), translated and adapted by Carl Armbruster and John Davidson, performed at the Court Theatre. Later reproduced in twelve afternoon performances between December 4 and January 1, 1898.


1898

Late February/early March – Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Johnston Forbes-Robertson tour Germany for thirty days, playing *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, and *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*. They open with *Hamlet* on March 3 at the Neues Opern-Theater in Berlin. The Emperor attends the two Shakespeares but, having supposedly been warned by his grandmother, Queen Victoria, he avoids *Mrs. Tanqueray*. During the performance of *Macbeth*, they meet the Emperor, who compliments them and gives them gifts. They continue to the Königliche Schauspiele in Hanover and open in Hamburg on March 22.

February 10 – Bertolt Brecht is born in Augsburg, Bavaria.
April 10 – The German Reichstag votes in Admiral Tirpitz’s first Navy Law to increase its Navy.

April 14 – *The Conquerors* by Paul M. Potter opens at the St. James’s Theatre by George Alexander. Runs through June 2. Story focuses on a German officer whose national pride is wounded by a French woman, whereupon he declares that he will rape her. William Robins, the musical director, incorporates music by Wagner, Fahrback, Eilenberg, and other German composers.

May–July – Covent Garden opera season includes *Lohengrin, Die Walküre, Tristan und Isolde*, Gluck’s *Orfeo*, Tannhäuser, *Das Rheingold*, Siegfried, Götterdämmerung, and *Fidelio*. Milka Ternina, the great Wagnerian soprano from Croatia, appeared in *Tristan und Isolde* and *Fidelio*, to great acclaim.


September – Elizabeth von Armin (nee Mary Annette Beauchamp) publishes her first “Elizabeth” novel, titled *Elizabeth and Her German Garden*, in which she chronicles her life in Pomerania. It is reprinted eleven times and earns her £10,000 by the end of the year.


December 9 – Royal College of Music presents *Der Fliefende Hollander* at the Lyceum Theatre for one matinee.

1899

Headon Hill publishes the invasion novel *Spies of the Wight*.

Elizabeth publishes *The Solitary Summer*, about her life in Germany.

August Junkermann, a German actor, accepts an invitation from a club in London to give a few performances at St. George’s Hall.

Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company performs at the Lyceum Theatre: *Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, Tristan und Isolde*.

May–July – Covent Garden opera season includes *Lohengrin, Tristan und Isolde, Tannhäuser, Die Walküre, Der Fliefende Holländer, Die Meistersinger*, and *Fidelio*.

June 10 – Stage Society produces G. Hauptmann’s *The Coming of Peace (Friedensfest)* at Vaudeville Theatre (1 perf). Translated by Janet Achurch and Dr. C. Wheeler. With Mrs. Theodore Wright, Charrington, H. Granville Barker. On Archer’s recommendation, Shaw attends to observe Barker, and immediately agrees to Barker as Marchbanks in *Candida*.
October 11 – Beginning of Boer War in South Africa.

December 10-15 – Black Week; British soldiers suffer a series of embarrassing defeats at the hands of Boer soldiers.

1900
General Election results in a win by the Unionist coalition. Lord Salisbury remains Prime Minister.

Maiden flight of the Zeppelin airship (rising to 1000 feet for a flight of 18 minutes).

The German Reichstag votes to build a Second German Navy (up to 12 new warships), a bid to challenge Britain for control of the seas. Germany also produces the first Zeppelin. Along with the United States, Germany surpasses Britain in production of coal, iron, and steel.


In its second season, the Stage Society produces G. Hauptmann’s *Lonely Lives*.

January 30 – The Deutsche Theater, or German Theatre in London, inaugurates its first season with the farce *Mein Leopold* at St. George’s Hall. J. T. Grein is organizing “Intendant” for subscription season, along with August Junkermann, his son Carl Junkermann, A. Schulz Curtius, and H. A. Hertz, a financier whose daughter Margaret Halstan pursued the stage. The first season runs through May and includes 22 plays by G. von Moser, Oscar Blumenthal, Ludwig Fulda, plus Schnitzler’s *Liebelei*, P. Lindau’s *Der Andere*, Max Halbe’s *Jungend*, H. Sudermann’s *Heimat* and *Fritzchen*. They visit regularly during next six years.

February 1 – Deutsche Theater produces the farce *Onkel Bräsig* at St. George’s Hall.


February 2 – Deutsche Theater produces H. Sudermann’s *Das Glück im Winkel* at St. George’s Hall.

February 7 – George Alexander revives Anthony Hope’s *The Prisoner of Zenda* at the St. James’s Theatre for 11 matinee performances, spread out between February and March 17. Many of the actors played similar roles in both plays.
February 19 – Mrs. Patrick Campbell opens *Magda* at Royalty to critical acclaim (154 perf.). Adapted by Louis N. Parker, managed by Campbell. With H. Granville Barker as Lt. Wendowski, Berte Thomas, Frank Mills, Winifred Fraser.

March – Deutsche Theater presents German production of G. Hauptmann’s *Heimat* at the Lyceum Theatre. Stars Max Behrend.

March – J. T. Grein visits the Deutsches Theater and the Freie Bühne in Berlin. Sees Ibsen’s *When We Awake From Death* and Hauptmann’s *Jobmaster Henschel*.

October 12 – Winter season, the second subscription season, of the Deutsches Theatre opens with Fulda’s *Jugendfreunde* at the Comedy Theatre, and runs through December. Presented Goethe’s prologue to *Faust* (3 perf); G. Hauptmann’s *Furhmann Heschel* (4 perf); Ludwig Fulda’s *Jugendfreunde* (3 perf); Oscar Blummenthal’s *Der Probedeckel* (4 perf); Franz von Schöthan & Gustav Kadelburg’s *Goldfische* (5 perf); Lessing’s *Nathan Der Weise* (4 perf); Alexandre Bisson’s *Madame Bonivard* (4 perf); Franz von Schöthan & Franz Koppel-Eilfeld’s *Renaissance* (5 perf); Otto Ernst’s *Jugend von Heute* (4 perf); G. Hauptmann’s *Der Biberpelz* (4 perf); Gustav von Moser’s *Das Stiftungsfest* (4 perf); Ludwig Held’s *Die Näherin* (5 perf). Continues for 6 seasons.

May – Eleanora Duse returns to London at the Lyceum Theatre. Amongst several plays, she presents Sudermann’s *Magda* (6 perf).

May, June, July – Covent Garden opera season includes *Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, Die Meistersinger* (usually 4-6 perf). Also does full production of Wagner’s *Ring* (*Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Siegfried, Die Götterdämmerung*) with Andreas Dippel, Leo Slezak, Milka Ternina, Ernst Kraus, Johanna Gadski, Anton Van Rooy.

June 10 – H. Granville Barker acts in Hauptmann’s *Das Friedensfest* for the Stage Society at the Vaudeville Theatre, directed by J. Achurch (1 perf). The play is translated by Achurch and Dr. C. E. Wheeler as *The Coming of Peace*.

August 7 – Wilhelm Liebknecht, founder with Karl Marx of the Social Democratic Labour Party in Germany in 1869, dies.

November – Siegfried Trebitsch calls on William Archer while in London. Archer gives him a copy of Shaw’s *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant*. 
Third season of the German Theatre in London. By this time, the company had a guarantee fund of £5000, so they moved from St. George’s Hall to the Comedy Theatre. Season includes Faust, Part One (Comedy, Jan. 4, 7 perfs); Sudermann's Die Schmetterlingsschlacht (Comedy, Feb. 15, 4 perfs); three one-acts by Kadelburg (Feb. 22, 4 perfs); Max Dreyer's In Behandlung (March 1, 4 perfs); Philippi's Der Dornenweg (Mar. 8, 6 perfs); Hartleben's Rosenmontag (March 19, 4 perfs); Sudermann's Die Ehre (Mar. 26, 4 perfs); Dreyer's Der Probekandidat (April 1, 3 perfs); Anzengruber's Das Vierte Gebot (April 9, 1 perf); Ibsen's Nora Oder Ein Puppenheim (April 12, 1 perf); Lessing's Emilia Galotti (Wyndham's, Dec. 12).

German bandmaster and conductor August Manns finishes leading the Saturday Concerts at the Crystal Palace. He had been doing so since 1855. He developed the work of German composers, most notably Schumann.

Elizabeth von Armin publishes The April Baby's Book of Tunes and The Benefactress, about life and society in Germany.

January 22 – Queen Victoria dies at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. She is attended by her son, the future King Edward VII and her oldest grandson, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany. She is the last British monarch of the House of Hanover, as her son belonged to the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

March 6 – Attempted assassination of Kaiser Wilhelm II in Bremen.

March 29 – Shaw’s The Man of Destiny at the Comedy Theatre, with H. Granville Barker and Margaret Halstan, daughter of H. A. Hertz, financier of the German Theatre in London.


May-July – Covent Garden opera season includes Hansel und Gretel, Tannhaüser, Tristan und Isolde, Siegfried, Lohengrin, Die Meistersinger.

June 25 – Alice and J. T. Grein produce a Sunday Special matinee of The Happy Nook, an English version of H. Sudermann’s Das Glück im Winkel. Stars Marion Terry and Charles Goodhart. Max Behrend coached Goodhart as the Baron.

October (late)-February 1902 – Third season of the Deutsches Theater, moved again to the cheaper St. George’s Hall. Produces Ernst von Wildenbruch’s Die Haubenlerche, Hauptmann’s Der Rote Hahn, Felix Philippi’s Das Grosse Licht, and Stinde and Engel’s Ihre Familie (in January 1902).
Fourth season of the German Theatre in London. Curtius resigned from the company management, and Andresen and Behrend step up as directors and managers, eventually taking it over from Grein. By the end of the year, they move to the Great Queen Street Theatre. Season includes: Wilhelm Meyer Förster’s *Alt Heidelberg* with Hans Andresen, Hans Ziegler, Greta Lorma (George Alexander later bought the English rights to the play); Franz von Schönhann’s and Freiherr von Schlicht’s military comedy *Im Bunten Rock* with Margaret Halstan in her first role; G. Hauptmann’s *Die Versunkene Gloche*; H. Sudermann’s *Es Lebe Das Leben* with Rosa Bertens, who originated the role in Berlin and traveled to London for the production. King Edward VII attended *Im Bunten Rock* and “laughed heartily,” and brought the Princess of Wales to *Es Lebe Das Leben*.¹


**April** – Leo Dietrichstein’s *All on Account of Eliza* at Shaftesbury Theatre, includes a comic character who speaks in English and German. Grein reviews on April 6.

**June** – Sarah Bernhardt performs during the month at the Garrick Theatre, including H. Sudermann’s *Magda*.

**July 28** – *Runaways*, a farce-comedy with music by F. Knight Pearce, opens at Artillery Theatre, Woolwich. It includes a “German coon song,” an example of the “latest song crazes.”²

**March** – Siegfried Trebitsch travels to London to meet Shaw. He carries with him a letter of introduction from William Archer.

**May 31** – The Boer War ends with the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging.

**August 9** – Coronation of Edward VII at Westminster Abbey. The newly-crowned King and Queen recess out of the Abbey to Wagner’s *Kaisermarch*. During his reign, Edward regularly traveled to Marienbad, Germany.

**November** – Grein sees Meyer-Förster’s *Alt Heidelberg* at Great Queen Street Theatre and reviews on November 23.

**December** – Grein sees F. Philippi’s *Das Grosse Licht*, produced by the German Theatre, and reviews on December 28.

**December** – *Drei Dramen von Bernard Shaw* is published by the firm Cotta in Stuttgart. The edition includes Trebitsch’s translations of *Candida*, *The Devil’s Disciple*, and *Arms and the Man*.³
1903

Season of the German Theatre in London. Produce A. Schnitzler’s *Liebelei* with Hans Andresen and Else Gademann, H. Sudermann’s *Glück im Winkel* with Max Behrend, Friedrich Taeger, and Cela Enrici.

Shaw prints a second edition of *The Perfect Wagnerite*.

Erskine Childers writes the invasion novel *Riddle of the Sands*.

**January** – German Theatre produces H. Sudermann’s *Fritzchen* (Grein reviews on January 4) and Otto Ernst’s *Die Revolver-Journalisten* (Grein reviews January 11), both at Great Queen Street Theatre. They also present Brieux’s *Robe Rouge* (Grein reviews January 17).

**February** – G. Hauptmann’s *The Sunken Bell* played in London (apparently not by the German Theatre). Grein reviews February 15.

**February** – German Theatre presents H. Sudermann’s *Es Lebe Das Leben* with Rose Bertens. Grein reviews March 1.

**February 25** – Shaw’s *The Devil’s Disciple*, translated by Trebitsch opens at the Raiemund Theatre with Wiene (Dick Dudgeon) and Thaller (Burgoyne). The first production of Shaw on the German-language stage. Scheduled for ten performances, it is withdrawn after four.

**March** – H. Sudermann’s *Sodom’s Ende* appears as a Sunday Special performance as *The Man and His Portrait* at the Great Queen Street Theatre, with O. B. Clarence and Gertrude Burnett. Grein reviews March 18.

**March 19** – George Alexander stars as Prince Karl Heinrich in *Old Heidelberg* at the St. James’s Theatre. English version by Rudolf Bleichmann, based on the German comedy *Alt Heidelberg* by Wilhelm Meyer-Förster. He hired Max Behrend, of the German Theatre in London, to supervise the production. Grein reviews March 19 and praises Behrend’s work.

**April 26-27** – The Stage Society produces Herman Heijerman’s *The Good Hope*, translated by Christopher St. John from *Op Hoop van Zegen*, at the Imperial Theatre. Cast includes Margaret Halstan, Edith Craig, and H. Granville Barker. Directed by Max Behrend.

**June** – Martin Harvey and Mrs. Patrick Campbell appear in H. Sudermann’s *Es Lebe das Leben*, translated by Edith Wharton as *The Joy of Living*, at the New Theatre.

**September 2** – William Archer publishes an article titled “Das moderne Drama in England” in *Die Zeit*, in which he blamed the commercial London theatre for the low level of English drama and the ignorance of Shaw’s plays.
November – German Theatre in London opens its season with H. Sudermann’s *Sokrates der Sturmgeselle* with Max Behrend, Hans Andresen, Richter, Carl Leisner, and Emma Frühling. Grein reviews November 1. They continue with G. Hauptmann’s *College Crampton* (Grein reviews November 15), L. Fulda’s *Zwillingschwester* (Grein reviews November 22), H. Sudermann’s *Magda* with Louise Haubrich-Willing, Max Behrend, Walter Horst (Grein reviews December 6).

**November 19** – Shaw’s *Candida*, translated by Trebitsch, premières at the Dresden Court Theatre, presented by Count Seeback, with Klara Salbach, Karl Wiene, and Paul Wiecke.


1904

Season of the German Theatre in London. A series of German plays were presented in January, February, and March at the Royalty Theatre, then in December at Great Queen Street Theatre. Max Behrend directed and acted in some of them. Hans Andresen acted, directed, and produced.

Exhibition of Edward Gordon Craig’s theatre designs at Friedmann and Weber's in Berlin.

Max Reinhardt takes over the Deutsches Theater from Otto Brahm.

August Mann, German bandmaster and conductor, leader of the Saturday Concerts at Crystal Palace, is knighted.

Elizabeth von Armin publishes *The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen*, about her life in Germany.

**February 10** – Shaw’s *Man of Destiny (Schlachtenlenker)* is performed at the Neues Theater with Agnes Sorma as the Strange Lady and Max Reinhardt as Napoleon (his only Shavian role), directed by Richard Vellentin (6 perfcs).

**March 4** – Shaw’s *Candida* is performed in Berlin, produced by Max Reinhardt and directed by Felix Holländer, with Agnes Sorma as the lead.

**April 8** – France and England sign the *Entente Cordiale.*
April 16 – Shaw’s *Arms and the Man (Helden)* opens at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Hamburg (3 perf). 

May–July – Covent Garden opera season includes *Tristan und Isolde, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, Die Meistersinger*.

June–July – The Moody-Manners Company at Drury Lane season includes *Lohengrin, Tannhäuser, and Der Fliegende Holländer*.

October–November – Covent Garden opera season includes *Lohengrin*.

October 8 – Shaw’s *Candida*, starring Lili Petri, opens at the Deutsches Volkstheater, Vienna (5 perf).

November 25 – Shaw’s *Devil’s Disciple (Teufelskerl)* opens at the Berliner Theater with Arthur Wherlin (21 perf).

1905

Gerhardt Hauptmann awarded honorary degree from Oxford. He visits Shaw when he travels to England to accept it.

Season of the German Theatre in London. Hans Andresen takes over as director and manager. That year, the German Ambassador contributed one hundred pounds to the guarantee fund that financed the seasons, and the German Emperor conferred the Order of the Crown upon J. T. Grein and H. A. Hertz.

Arthur Symons publishes his essay "The Ideas of Wagner."

Shaw composes, but never publishes, an article titled “The Fabian Society and the German Party.”

February 1 – Shaw’s *Arms and the Man (Helden)* opens at the Schauspielhaus in Munich (13 perf).

February 28 – H. G. Barker directs Arthur Schnitzler’s *In the Hospital* at the Court Theatre, translated by Christopher Horne. Performed in a triple bill with Yeats’ *The Pot of Broth* and Shaw’s *How He Lied to Her Husband*. Runs March 2-3, 7, 9 and matinees March 10, 14, 16-17 (9 perf).

March – Tangier Incident. Kaiser Wilhelm II, while visiting Morocco, makes comments in support of Moroccan independence, and thus against French control there. Amidst the rising tensions, Germany requests a pan-European conference, in which its only supporter is Austro-Hungary. This tested the entente between England and France especially; Germany and France even mobilized troops. A treaty resolving the issue is signed on May 31, 1906.

April 23 – Shaw publishes an article on Oscar Wilde, translated by Trebitsch, in the Neue Freie Presse.

May/June – Trebitsch visits London and sees Man and Superman at the Court Theatre.

October 25 – The German Theatre in London performs Franz A. Beylerlern’s Zuppenstuck as Lights Out at the Waldorf Theatre.

December 24 – Shaw publishes an article on Ellen Terry, translated by Trebitsch, in the Neue Freie Presse.

1906

General Election results in landslide win for the Liberal Party.

The Dreadnoughts Lusitania and Mauritia launched.

Final season of the German Theatre in London, performed between January and July at the Great Queen Street Theatre. The company visited Manchester as well. Produced Gorki’s Nachtasyl, Fillipi’s Das Erbe, Wolzogen’s Kinder der Excellenz, Schiller’s Maria Stuart, Gorki's The Lower Depths, Sudermann’s Die Ehre, Heimat, and Sodoms Ende, and Ibsen’s Pillars of Society and An Enemy of the People. Its finances are flagging by the end of the season.

J. T. Grein forms a committee with H. A. Hertz and Otho Stuart to bring the Court Theatre of Meiningen to the Adelphi Theatre.

Walter Woods writes the invasion novel The Enemy in Our Midst. Lord Roberts and William Le Queux write The Invasion of 1910, one of the most sensational invasion novels to portray Germany as an enemy to England. In the story, German soldiers bayonet English babies.

January 12 – Two letters are published in The Times. They are an attempt by Count Harry Kessler, William Rothenstein, and Emery Walker to publish letters of mutual esteem between German and British intellectuals. The German letter has 40 signatures, including Richard Strauss, Siegfried Wagner, Gerhardt Hauptmann, and Kessler. The British letter has 41 signatures, including Thomas Hardy, Edward Elgar, Sir George Darwin, and R. B. Cunninghame Graham. Shaw’s signature is absent, although he drafted the British letter in 1905, because the other signers requested two passages be omitted before they sign.
**February 4** – Grein writes in *The Sunday Times* about the failure of the German Theatre in London.

**February 10** – The Royal Navy launches the *H.M.S. Dreadnaught*, the first of a new class of warship. It is commissioned on December 2.

**March 17** – Shaw’s *You Never Can Tell* opens as *Der verlorene Vater* at the Burgtheater, Vienna. Translated by Trebitsch.


**April 11** – *The Belle of Mayfair*, a musical comedy by Basil Hood and Charles H. E. Brookfield, opens at the Vaudeville Theatre, produced by Charles Frohman (416 perf). Includes a German character named H. S. H. Princess Carl of Ehrenbreitstein, which was a typical portrayal of German aristocrats as haughty and uptight.

**April 12** – The farewell performance of the German Theatre in London is Ibsen’s *Nora* at the Apollo Theatre, presented also as a *Sunday Special* Matinee.

**Early May** – The Shaws and Trebitsch travel to Paris together.

**May** – The Stage Society produces H. Sudermann’s *Johannisfeuer* (*Midsummer Fires*), translated by J. T. and Alice Grein, directed by Hans Andresen.

**May-July** – Covent Garden opera season includes *Tristan und Isolde, Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Siegfried, Die Götterdämmerung, Die Barbier von Bagdad, Der Vagaund und die Prinzessin, Die Meistersinger, Tannhäuser, Der Fliegende Holländer*, and *Gluck's Armide*.

**May 24-25** – J. T. and Alice Grein’s translation of *Das Glück im Winkel* (*A Happy Nook*) in two Sunday Special Matinees at the Court Theatre, directed by Max Behrend.

**June 30** – Max Reinhardt passes the directorship of the Kleines Theater, Berlin, to Viktor Bornowsky.

**July 26** – Publication of a letter by Shaw in the *Berliner Tageblatt* under “Bernard Shaw Über die deutsche Sozialdemokratie.” The German Socialist paper *Vorwärts* reprinted it the next day as “Heitere und ernste Missverständnisse.”

**July-August** – Moody Manners Opera Company, Ltd. is performing at the Lyric Theatre. Their season includes *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser*. 
**September 4** – Comyns Carr’s version of *Tristram und Iseult* at the Adelphi Theatre (46 perfs). Features Oscar Asche as Mark, Matheson Lang as Sir Tristram, Lily Brayton as Iseult.

**September 24** – Victor Bornowsky produces Shaw’s *You Never Can Tell* (known as *Mann kann nie wissen* and *Der verlorene Vater*) at the Kleines Theater, Berlin (25 perfs).

**Mid-October** – Archer travels to Berlin. At the Deutsches Theater, he sees Reinhardt’s productions of Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra, The Winter’s Tale*, and Wedekind’s *Erdgeist* and *Die Biichse de Pandora*. The latter two plays star Wedekind himself and Gertrude Eysoldt.

**December 6** – Shaw’s *Man and Superman* (*Mensch und Übermensch*) opens at the Kammerspiele in Berlin, directed by Rudolf Bernauer, with a young cast (11 perfs).

**December 9-10** – The Stage Society produces G. Hauptmann’s *Die Weber* (*The Weavers*) at the Scala Theatre, directed by Hans Andresen (2 perfs). Translated by Mary Morison.

**December 30** – Shaw’s *Widower’s Houses* (*Die Häuser des Herrn Sartorius*) plays at the Berliner Theater by the Freie Volksbühne. The performances are unauthorized by Shaw. Aside from the Independent Theatre Society’s two performances in December 1892, *Widower’s Houses* is not performed publicly in London until June 7, 1909 at the Coronet Theatre, by Annie Hornimann’s company from the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester.

**1907**

Naval race begins between England and Germany, and continues through 1908. This helps to stir British public sentiment against Germany.

Hans Andresen returns to London in an attempt to start an eighth season of German theatre in London, but it fails. The 1908 *Stage Year Book* states: “The Germans were content with one season, instead of two, as in some former years, and the season ran only a few weeks. The new productions, including *Die Condottieri* (historico-romantic drama), *Die Goldene Eva* (comedy in rhyme), and *Die von Hochsattel* (comedy) were not of much moment.”

France, England, and Russia form Triple Entente to balance the Triple Alliance of Germany, Italy, and Austro-Hungary.

Barker and Archer publish *Scheme for a National Theatre*, modeled on, amongst other things, the repertory, state-subsidized theatres in Berlin and Düsseldorf.


S. Fischer publishes Trebitsch’s translation of Shaw’s *Man and Superman* in Germany.

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Elizabeth von Armin publishes *Fraulein Schmidt and Mr. Anstruther*, a satirical novel about German society.

The Kaiser and Kaiseralin visit England, landing at Portsmouth.

H. Sudermann’s *The Vale of Content* is performed as part of the Barker-Vedrenne seasons at the Court Theatre.

**January and February** – Ernest Van Dyck, the tenor, managed a full season of German operas at Covent Garden, which is a major accomplishment, including most of Wagner’s works, capped by a full Ring cycle. He sang Tristan and Tannhäuser. A number of leading Wagnerian singers joined him: Ernest Kraus, Anton Van Rooy, Freida Hempel, Aino Ackte (great Finnish soprano). During the summer season, King Edward VII sees *Der Fliegende Holländer, Die Götterdämmerung*, and *Hansel und Gretel*. The season includes: *Die Meistersinger* (Jan. 14, 5 perfs); *Tristan und Isolde* (Jan. 15, 4 perfs); *Lohengrin* (Jan. 16, 6 perfs); *Der Freischutz* (Jan. 16, 3 perfs); *Der Fliegende Holländer* (Jan. 17, 3 perfs); *Die Walküre* (Jan. 22, 4 perfs); *The Bartered Bride* (Jan. 24, 3 perfs); *Fidelio* (31 Jan., 3 perfs); *Tannhäuser* (Feb. 13, 2 perfs).

**January 14** – Opera season at Covent Garden begins with *Die Meistersinger*, Fritz Feinhals as Hans Sach, Hermine Bosett as Eva (5 perfs).

**January 15** – *Tristan und Isolde*, Ernest van Dyck as Tristan, Felia Litvinne or Martha Leffler-Burckhardt as Isolde at Covent Garden (4 perfs).

**January 16** – *Lohengrin*, Vilhelm Herold or Ernest Kraus as Lohengrin, Aino Ackte or Agnes Nicholls as Elsa at Covent Garden (6 perfs).

**January 16** – *Der Freischutz* with Ernst Kraus as Max at Covent Garden (3 perf's).

**January 17** – *Der Fliegende Holländer* with Theodor Bertam, Francis Naval, Ernst Kraus, and Aino Ackte at Covent Garden (3 perf's).

**January 22** – *Die Walküre* with Ernest Kraus, Fritz Feinhals, Felia Litvinne at Covent Garden (4 perf's).

**February 13** – *Tannhäuser* with Heinrich Zeller, Ernest van Dyck, Aino Ackte at Covent Garden (2 perf's).
April – J. T. Grein organizes a visit of Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s company to Hanover and Berlin. He uses connections with Graf von Hülken-Häseler, General-Intendant of the Emperor’s theatres in Prussia and the German Ambassador, Count Wolff Metternich. The Emperor gives gifts to Constance Collier and Viola Tree, and confers the Imperial Order of the Red Eagle on Grein and Tree. The company leaves London on April 7 and opens on April 12. Tree’s company acts for a week at the Royal Opera House, including a gala performance of Antony and Cleopatra for the Emperor. Other productions include Richard II, Hamlet, Twelfth Night, The Merry Wives of Windsor, and Trilby. As part of the visit, a luncheon is held by the Anglo-German Friendship Committee at the Hotel Kaiserkof. Grein and Tree were joined by Graf von Hülken-Häseler, Hofrat Barney, Director of the Schauspielhaus, Max Reinhardt, Barnowski, Ludwig Fulda, Paul Lindau, and Hans Andresen.

April – Coinciding with Tree’s visit to Berlin, the Berliner Tageblatt prints an article titled “Unser Shakespeare” (“Our Shakespeare”).

April 5 – The first of three German plays are performed as part of German season at the Great Queen Street Theatre: Die Condittieri, a play in four acts by Rudolf Herzong with Hans Andresen, August Wiegert, and Albert Heine.

April 9 – In Die Schaubühne, Shaw and Trebitsch publish an attack on German critic Max Meyerfeld and his translation of Wilde’s De Profundis. Meyerfeld had been attacking Trebitsch’s translations of Shaw.

April 11 - Die Goldene Eva, a three-act comedy by Franz von Schönthan and Franz Koppel-Ellfeld at the Great Queen Street Theatre, with Herta von Hagen, Ida Gersy, and Else Steele.

April 15 – G. Hauptmann’s Die Biberpelz at Great Queen Street Theatre, directed by Eugen Kilian (2 perfs).

April 17 – L. Stein and L. Heller’s Die Von Hochsattel at Great Queen Street Theatre (2 perfs).

April 17 – Offenbach’s opera The Tales of Hoffman (Erzählungen) plays in German at Adelphi Theatre. Part of the German season.


April 22 – Oscar Blumenthal and Gustav Kadelburg’s farce Hans Huckbein at Great Queen Street Theatre (4 perfs). Part of the German season.
April 26 – Franz and Paul von Schönthan’s Der Raub Der Sabinerinnen at Great Queen Street Theatre, starring and directed by Hermann Merz (3 perfs).

April 27 – Shaw’s Man and Superman in its Viennese premiere at the Deutsches Volkstheater, directed by Richard Vallentin.

April 30 – Das Rheingold with Clarence Whitehill, Anton van Rooy as Wotan at Covent Garden.

May 1 – Die Walküre with Ernest Kraus, Peter Cornelius as Sigmund, Ellen Gulbranson as Brunnhilde, Katharina Fleischer-Edel as Sieglinde, Edna Thornton as Siegrune at Covent Garden (3 perfs).

May 2 – Mozart’s Bastien und Bastienne (3 perfs), Hänsel und Gretel at Covent Garden (3 perfs).

May 3 – Siegfried with Ernest Kraus as Siegfried, Ellen Gibranson as Brunnhilde at Covent Garden (2 perfs).

May 6 – Die Götterdämmerung with Ernest Kraus as Siegfried, Ellen Gibranson as Brunnhilde at Covent Garden (2 perfs).

May 15 – Die Meistersinger with Anton van Rooy as Hans Sachs, Frieda Hampel as Eva at Covent Garden (4 perfs).


May 20 – Tannhäuser with Heinrich Knote at Covent Garden (3 perfs).

May 24 – Lohengrin with Peter Cornelius, Heinrich Knote, Freida Hempel at Covent Garden (2 perfs).

June 1 – Der Fliegende Holländer with Anton van Rooy, Emmy Destinn at Covent Garden (3 perfs).

June 5 – Herman Heijerman’s farce A Case of Arson, adapted by Howard Peacey, opens at Haymarket (87 perfs).
**June 8** – George Edwardes produces the operetta *The Merry Widow* at Daly’s Theatre, starring Lily Elsie and Joseph Coyne. It is based on the German operetta *Die lustige Witwe*, book by Viktor Léon and Leo Stein, music by Franz Lehar. It is adapted by Basil Hood, with lyrics by Adrian Ross.

**June 9 & 10** – Frank Wedekind’s *Der Kammersänger* at Imperial Theatre, presented by Incorporated Stage Society, produced by Frank Reicher. With Julian L’Estrange and Constance Collier (2 perfs).

**June 23** – Cicely Hamilton’s *The Sergeant of Hussars*, a one-act play about an incident in the Franco-German War, at the Bijou Theatre on Bedford Street, Bayswater. Stars Hamilton, Frederic Topham, Fewlass Llewellyn.

**July** – The Moody-Manners Opera Co. Ltd. is in residence at the Lyric Theatre throughout the month, led by husband and wife team Charles Manners and Fanny Moody. Amongst their selections are Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* (10 perfs), *Lohengrin* (8 perfs), and *Tristan und Isolde* (2 perfs).

**July 2** – *The Stratagem*, a one-act comedy by F. Kinsey Peile, adapted from the German by Emil Pohl, opens at the Court Theatre.

**October 7** – *Faust* with Amadeo Bassi, Miss Graham Lindsay.

**October 24** – Shaw’s *Captain Brassbound’s Conversion* (*Kapitän Brassbounds Bekehrung*) opens at the Kleines Theater, staged by Barnowsky (6 perfs).

**October 30** – In *Die Schaubühne*, Shaw and Trebitsch publish sections of *The Perfect Wagnerite* (*Ein Wagnerbrevier*) in Germany with a new chapter and preface. It is fully published in 1908.

**November 5** – The Neue Verein, Munich, gives an unauthorized performance of *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* at the Residenz Theater.

**November 13** – The opera *Germanya* is performed, in Italian, by an Italian company at Covent Garden.

**December** – The Lord Chamberlain licenses the play *Send Him Victorious* with the provisos: “No character in the piece to represent the German Emperor” and “No references to political conspiracy to promote a war between England and Germany.”

**December 12** – H. Sudermann’s *Magda*, translated anew by Claude Sykes, plays at the Devonshire Park Theatre, Eastbourne, with Octavia Kenmore as Magda.

**December 26** – *Tannhäuser* with Julius Walther at Covent Garden (3 perfs).

**December 28** – *Faust* at Covent Garden (4 perfs).
December 30 – Lohengrin at Covent Garden (1 perf).

1908
William Poel and Jocza Savits begin correspondence.

David Lloyd-George visits Germany to observe their social insurance scheme.

King Edward VII becomes the first English monarch to visit Russia.

John Martin-Harvey brings Max Reinhardt’s Taming of the Shrew to the Prince of Wales’s, starring himself as Petruchio.

George Edwardes’ The Girls of Gottenberg returns to Adelphi Theatre and runs approximately two weeks.

Guy du Maurier’s An Englishman’s Home, dealing with an invasion on English soil, opens at Wyndham’s Theatre. It is billed as being written by “A Patriot.” It is licensed with the proviso that the invading army have no recognizable national identity. Despite the Censor’s efforts at softening the blow, the press immediately recognizes the enemy as Germany.

The German Emperor and Empress visit England. King Edward requests Tom Taylor’s Still Waters Run Deep to be performed for them at Windsor. The performance stars Charles Wyndham, Mary Moore, Lewis Waller, and Marion Terry. Still Waters is a problem play, adapted from the Charles Bernard’s French novel Le Gendre in 1855, about an adulterer who dies in a duel in the end.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree produces Engelbert Humperdinck’s Hansel and Gretel as well as Goethe’s Faust, adapted by J. Comyns Carr and Stephen Phillips.

William Le Queux serializes the novel Spies of the Kaiser: Plotting the Downfall of England, in Cassell’s Magazine, in which two lawyers expose a network of German spies in England. Inspired by the novel, dozens of readers report supposed German spies to Le Queux, who passes the names on to the War Office. In the novel, the Germans plan to land in Norfolk; in real life, Captain Vernon Kell, the first head of MI5, vacations in that area to uncover any German activity. In addition, the invasion novels The Red Peril by Coulson Kernahan and The War in the Air by H. G. Wells are published.

The German Theatre Company, or Deutsche Theatre Gesellschafter, is founded in London by Gerald Weiss. Plays are produced by Weiss and Lena Wirth, to familiarize English audiences with good German works in their original language.

Edward Gordon Craig begins publication of his journal The Mask in Florence, Italy. The first edition includes articles about German and British theatre, amongst other articles and reviews.
January 27 – Hans Richter directs a cycle of Wagner's *Ring* at Covent Garden, from January 27 to February 8 (2 perfs for each opera). It was performed in English, and produced by the Grand Opera Syndicate, Inc. The singers included Clarence Whitehill as Wotan and the Wanderer, Borghild Brynh as Fricka and Brunnhilde, Agnes Nicholls as Brunnhilde, Perceval Allen as Brunnhilde, Thomas Meux as Alberich, Walter Hyde as Siegmund, Robert Radford as Fasolt, Hunding, Edna Thornton as Erda, Siegrune, Peter Cornelius as Siegfried, Hans Bechstein as Mime, Charles Knowled as Hagen, Edith Evans as Gutrune.

January 29 – The King and Queen attend Wagner’s *Siegfried* at Covent Garden.

February 1 – Queen Alexandra attends Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung* at Covent Garden.

February 11 – Engelbert Humperdinck’s *Hansel und Gretel* opens at His Majesty’s Theatre with Viola Tree as Hansel and Alice Moffat as Gretel (52 perfs).

March 7 – *A Waltz Dream*, originally performed as *Ein Waltztraum*, opens at Hicks Theatre (136 perfs). Oscar Strauss (music), Felix Doerman & Leopold Jacobson (book), Adrian Ross (lyrics), performed by George Grossmith, Jr., Arthur Wiliams, Gertie Millar.

March 27 – Shaw’s *Major Barbara* premieres at the Deutsches Volkstheater in Vienna (4 perfs). Until that time, it had only been performed in London for six matinees at the Royal Court Theatre, beginning November 28, 1905. It was produced in London by J. E. Vedrenne and H. G. Barker.


April 27 – The Olympics open in London by Edward VII. Rome, the original host of the games, dropped out of the duty because of a 1906 eruption of Mount Vesuvius; London, Milan, and Berlin were final contenders to host the Games. The games were held in White City, in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, alongside the Franco-British Exhibition.

April 27 – A visiting German company led by Hans Andresen opens their short season at the Royalty Theatre with Gustav Kadelburg’s farce *Der Weg für Hölle*. They play Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s comedy *Minna von Barnhelm* on May 2, and Richard Skowronnek’s farce *Panne* on May 4.

May-July – Covent Garden opera season includes: *Die Walküre* (May 1, 3 perfs); *Die Götterdämmerung* (May 5, 2 perfs); *Tannhäuser* (May 7, 2 perfs); *Die Meistersinger* (May 20, 3 perfs); *Der Fliegende Holländer* (June 3, 2 perfs); Gluck's *Armide* (June 6, 2 perfs).

May 9 – King Edward attends Wagner’s *Die Walküre* at Covent Garden.
May 16 – Queen Alexandra attends Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* at Covent Garden.

May 20 – Queen Alexandra attends Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger* at Covent Garden.

June 1 – A season of Offenbach begins at the Shaftesbury Theatre.

June 2 – King Edward attends Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger* at Covent Garden.

July – An article in the *Quarterly Review* announces that “what the Spanish danger was to the Elizabethans, what the Gallic danger was to their posterity, that and nothing less nor other is the German danger of this generation.”

July – Moody Manners Opera Co. Ltd. performs *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, and *Tristan und Isolde* in English at the Lyric Theatre.

July-September – The Shaws travel to Scandinavia and Germany, including stops in Hamburg, Hanover, Bayreuth (for the Festival), Munich, Heidelberg, Darmstadt, Bremen, and roughly a dozen more cities. In Bayreuth they attended *Das Rheingold* (July 25), *Siegfried* (July 27), *Lohengrin* (July 31) and *Parsifal* (August 1). They returned from Bremerhaven in the Krönprinz Wilhelm on September 1.

October 28 – An interview between an anonymous “ex-diplomatist” and Wilhelm II appears in the *Daily Telegraph*. The Kaiser’s candid remarks about the Boer War, North African politics, and Germany’s right to build a navy without any oversight, causes a controversy. The British press distrusted his remarks about Germans’ anti-Anglo sentiments, while much of the German press denied his claims and saw them as pro-English.

October 31 – The Olympics closing ceremonies are held.

November 5 – Shaw’s *Major Barbara* opens at Reinhardt’s Kammerspiele, directed by Felix Holländer (28 perfs).


November 19 – In the *Neue Freie Presse*, Shaw publishes a commentary, translated by Trebitsch, on the Kaiser’s October 28 remarks in the *Daily Telegraph*. In the article, Shaw largely commends the Kaiser for truthfully explaining the causes of “Anglophobia” in German society.

November 21 – Shaw’s *The Doctor’s Dilemma* opens as *Der Arzt am Scheideweg* at the Kammerspiele in Berlin, and runs for 245 performances through 1913.
1909

King Edward VII of England travels to Germany.

Growing fear in British public that the German navy will match Britain’s by 1912.

Oscar Strauss’ operetta *Arms and the Man*, based on Shaw’s play, opens in Berlin.

Jocza Savits visits England at the invitation of William Poel; they see productions of Shakespeare in London and Stratford together.

Covent Garden holds a season of German opera.

Elizabeth von Armin publishes *The Governess*, a satirical novel about German society.

March – The Examiner of Plays licenses *Mr. Turnbull’s Nightmare*, a play about an invasion in England. The invaders are aided by the aliens already working in Britain as waiters.

May 14 – The Afternoon Theatre at His Majesty’s produces Schnitzler’s *Liebele (Light o’ Love)*, translated by G. Valentine Williams. The Afternoon Theatre also produces a matinee of Hauptmann’s *Hannele*.

1910

In Berlin, Julius Bab, German theatre scholar, publishes one of the first scholarly studies of Shaw.

The Shaws finally meet Trebitsch’s wife Tina Keindl in London.

*The Girl on the Train*, adapted from Leo Fall’s operetta *Die Geschiedene Frau (The Divorcée)*, produced by George Edwardes, opens at Vaudeville Theatre (played for a year).

January – General Election in Britain; Liberal victory.

February 19 - Thomas Beecham presents and conducts the first English production of Richard Strauss’ *Elektra* at Covent Garden. The King, Queen, and Royal Family were among those in attendance. The case included Edyth Walker (Elektra), Hermann Weidemann (Orest), Anna Bahr-Mildenburg (Klytemnestra), and Francies Rose (Chrysothemis). The work created much controversy. A major public debate in *The Nation* occurs between the musicologist Ernest Newman and Bernard Shaw. Newman attacked the Strauss opera, Shaw defended.

April 9 – Shaw’s *Getting Married (Heiraten)* opens at the Lessing Theater, produced by Otto Brahm (his only Shavian production). Closes after 3 performances.

May 6 – King Edward VII of England dies.
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**July** – Britain enters into talks with Germany on naval fleet limitations.

**September 10** – Oscar Strauss’ operetta *The Chocolate Soldier*, based on Shaw’s *Arms and the Man*, opens at the Lyric in London. Shaw finally sees it on November 10, standing at the back of the pit, as there were no seats available.

**November** – Harley Granville Barker travels to Berlin to visit Max Reinhardt’s theatres and to Düsseldorf to visit the Schauspielhaus. He writes two letters in the *Daily Mail* (November 19 & 21) and an essay in the *Fortnightly Review* describing the experience.

**December** – Second General Election in Britain.

1911

Kaiser Wilhelm II visits London and, with his cousin King George V, unveils the statue of Queen Victoria in front of Buckingham Palace. Amidst the following celebrations, the royalty attends a Gala Performance at Drury Lane.

Hans Richter, German conductor, retires from conducting in London. He first appeared in England in 1877, and frequently conducted Wagner at his concerts at Albert Hall.

**January 30/October** – Max Reinhardt’s *Sumurûn*, a musical pantomime based on *Tales of the Arabian Nights*, written by Felix Holländer, opens at the Coliseum. Financed by Sir Oswald Stoll, who saw the production in Germany. Runs for six weeks.

**February 10** – Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra* revived at Munich’s Residenz Theater by Albert Steinrück (24 perfs).

**March** – Arthur Schnitzler’s *Anatol*, translated by Dr. C. E. Wheeler, adapted and directed by H. Granville Barker, at the Little Theatre.

**March** – Shaw writes a preface titled “What I Owe to German Culture” for the first volume of his *Dramatische Werke*, published in Berlin.

**May** – At the Scala Theatre, the first performance of the new German Volkstheater of West London takes place before a crowd of 1500. The play is Felix Philippi’s *Das Erbe*, with a special prologue written by Max Sylge, the club president, and translated partially into English by Alice Grein. The company grew out of the Deutscher Bühnen-Verein, under the leadership of J. T. Grein. Directed by Max Sylge, starring Frances Dillon (of Tree’s company) as Britannia and Alice Grein as Germania. In the play, the two claps hands and swear eternal friendship, “which all, save perhaps the manufacturers of armaments must ardently desire!” wrote the *Morning Post*. Tree lends His Majesty’s for their second performance; they performed 16 plays, including Sudermann’s *Johannisfeuer*. 
**May 17** – Bulwer Lytton’s *Money* is performed in a command performance at Drury Lane for Kaiser Wilhelm II and the Empress, starring George Alexander and Charles Wyndham.

**June 22** – Coronation of King George V.

**June 27** – A gala performance of Sheridan’s *The Critic* is held at His Majesty’s for King George V.

**July 1** – Second Tangier Incident. Germany deploys a gunship at a Moroccan port, viewed by Britain and France as an attempt to establish an Atlantic naval base. Negotiations are concluded on November 4.

**December 23** – Max Reinhardt’s production of *The Miracle* opens at the Olympia Hall. Written by Karl Völmöller, scored by Engelbert Humperdinck, based on Maeterlinck’s *Sister Beatrice*. Financed by C. B. Cochran.

**August** – The Shaws travel to Europe. They see Shaw’s *Caesar* and Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger* in Munich. On August 17-19, they meet up with Trebitsch and travel together.

**September** – Shaw’s *Press Cuttings* is banned from performance at the Theater in der Josefstadt, Vienna, because of its military satire. Shaw protested in the *Neue Freie Presse*.

**October 11** – Shaw’s *Fanny’s First Play* (*Fannys erstes Stück*) opens at the Kleines Theater, directed by Viktor Barnowsky.

1912

Gerhardt Hauptmann wins the Nobel Prize for Literature.

**January 7** – John Martin Harvey and his wife host a reception for Max Reinhardt at the Prince’s Galleries, Piccadilly.

**January 10** – The Anglo-German Friendship Society hosts a Luncheon for Max Reinhardt. The visit coincided with the opening of Reinhardt’s *Oedipus Rex* five days later. Attendees included Herbert Beerbohm Tree, John Martin Harvey, Comyns Carr, and Cyril Rhodes (who was also chairman of the Society).

**January 10** – A Luncheon to Professor Max Reinhardt is given by the Albert Committee at the Carlton Hotel. The Duke of Argyll presides over the luncheon.

**January 15** – Reinhardt’s *Oedipus* opens at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. Stars John Martin-Harvey as Oedipus, Lillah McCarthy as Jocasta, Louis Calvert as Creon. H. Granville Barker coaches McCarthy as Jocasta. Translated by Gilbert Murray, adapted by W. L. Courtney.
January 22 – *The Daring of Diane*, a one-scene comic operetta by Julius Wilhelm, plays at Tivoli Theatre. In English by Heinrich Reinhardt, libretto and lyrics by Arthur Anderson.


February 3 – Deutsche Theatre opens a small season with Schönthan’s and Koppel Ellfeld’s comedy *Renaissance* at Clavier Hall (1 perf). Their following productions take place in German, intended to educate English audiences about German drama in its native tongue.

February 4 – Leo Treptow’s and Louis Hermann’s *Unser Doktor* (*Our Doctor*), a Volksstück (People’s Play), produced by the Deutsches Volkstheater of West London, at the Court Theatre.

February 19 – *Susannen’s Geheimniss* (*Susanne’s Secret*), a one-act German intermezzo by Ermano Wolf-Ferrari, plays at the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester.

March 3 – Oskar Walther’s and Leo Stein’s farcical comedy *Das Opferlam* (*The Votive Lamb*) produced by the Deutsches Volkstheater, West London, in German.

March 9 – Deutsche Theatre produces Schnitzler’s *Liebelei* at Clavier Hall (1 perf).

March 10 – Hermann Bahr’s one-act play *The Fool and the Wise Man*, translated by F. E. Washburn Freund, produced by Stage Society at Prince’s Theatre (1 perf).

March 28 – Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra* opens at the Burgtheater, directed by Albert Heine, starring himself and Iphegenie Buchmann (28 perfs).

April 20 – Deutsche Theatre produces Meyer-Förster’s *Alt Heidelberg* in matinee and evening performances at Clavier Hall (1 perf).

Winter – Reinhardt’s *Sumurún* returns to London, this time at the Savoy Theatre.

April 20-August 1 – Covent Garden’s Grand Opera season, its longest, including two performances of Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* and two complete *Ring* cycles, comprising eight performances. The *Ring* cycles are conducted by Dr. Rottenberg and Paul Drach.

April 28 – *Die Berümte Frau* (*The Famous Wife*), a comedy by Franz von Schönthan and Gustav Kadelburg, produced at the Court Theatre by The Deutsches Volkstheater, West London (Deutscher Bühnen-Verein). With Max Sylge and Alice Grein (1 perf).

May 7 – *The Five Frankforters*, a comedy by Basil Hood, adapted from the German play by Carl Rössler, opens at the Lyric Theatre. With Henrietta Watson, Louis Calvert, Henry Ainley, Leon Quartermaine. Closes June 29 (56 perfs).

June 3 – *The Dancing Viennese*, a Viennese opera played in German, written by Julius Brammer and Alfred Grunweld, with music by Oscar Strauss, plays at London Coliseum with German actors.

June 8 – Deutsche Theatre produces E. von Wildenbruch’s *Die Haubenlerche* at Clavier Hall.

June 23 – Deutsche Theatre produces Bruno Koehler’s one-act play *Antje* at the Little Theatre.

September 3 – Arnold Schönberg’s *Five Orchestral Pieces* at Queen’s Hall Promenade Concert.

September 5 – Georg Okonkowski’s *The Girl in the Taxi*, adapted into English by Frederick Fenn and Arthur Wimperis, with music by German composer Jean Gilbert, plays at the Lyric Theatre.

September 7 – A. M. Willner’s and Julius Wilhelm’s *The Grass Widows*, a comic opera adapted by Arthur Anderson and Hartley Carrick, with music by Gustave Kerker, opens at the Apollo Theatre. Closes October 26 (50 perfs).

October 12 – Deutsche Theatre produces Schönthan’s and Ellfeld’s comedy *Komtesse Guckerl* at Cosmopolis Theatre in German.

October 14 – *For Love and the Navy*, a naval drama by “Max Allen,” plays in Middlesex. It contains German characters such as Count von Drachsburg and Peter the German.

October 17 – Eric Korngold’s *Schauspiel* overture at Queen’s Hall Promenade Concert.

October 27 – Deutsche Theatre produces triple bill of Halm’s one-act comedy *Jeptha’s Tochter*, Bergen’s one-act farce *Ein ungeschliffener Diamant*, and Koehler’s *Antje* at the Cosmopolis Theatre.

November 7 – G. Hauptmann’s *Einsame Menschen*, in an English version by Mary Morrison, at Court Theatre (1 perf).

November 11 – Reinhardt’s musical pantomime *A Venetian Night* opens at the Palace Theatre. Written by Carl Vollmöller, with music by Friedrich Bermann. With Paul Beinsfeldt, Maria Carmi, Joseph Klein. Runs for three weeks.
November 25 – Shaw’s *Androcles and the Lion*, translated by Trebitsch, premieres at the Kleines Theater, Berlin. It opens in London on September 1, 1913 at the St. James’s Theatre.

November 16 – Deutsche Theatre produces Ibsen’s *Nora (A Doll’s House)* at the Cosmopolis Theatre.

November 28 – Deutsche Theatre produces Schnitzler’s *Leibelei* at Cosmopolis Theatre.

December 7 – Deutsche Theatre produces Ibsen’s *Nora*, matinee and evening performances, at the Cosmopolis Theatre.

December 14 – Deutsche Theatre produces Meyer-Förster’s *Alt Heidelberg* at Cosmopolis Theatre.

1913

Continued naval race between England and Germany again stirs English public sentiment against Germany.

William Poel visits Jocza Savits in Stuttgart, as Savits’ wife is dying.


Saki (H. H. Munro) publishes the invasion novel *When the Kaiser Came*.

Centenary Year of Wagner’s birth brings numerous publications in English on his work.

January 18 – *Turandot, Princess of China*, written by Karl Vollmöller, English version by Jethro Bithell, music by Ferruccio Busoni opens at the St. James’s Theatre. Directed by Max Reinhardt, closes February 14 (27 perfs). Sir George Alexander had seen the production in October 1911 and bought the English rights.

January 29 – *Der Rosenkavalier*, book by Hugo von Hofmannstahl and music by Richard Strauss, opens in German at Covent Garden. The King and Queen attend on February 8.

March 9 – Stage Society produces A. Schnitzler’s one-act grotesque *The Green Cockatoo* (1 perf). Translated by Penelope Wheeler.

March 18 – Shaw proposes, in the *Daily Chronicle*, a collective security pact between England, France, and Germany.
April 5 – *The Girl in the Film*, adapted from the German musical farce of Rudolf Bernauer and Rudolf Schauzer, by James T. Tanner, lyrics by Adrian Ross, music by Walter Kollo, Willy Bredschneider, and Albert Sirmay. At Gaiety Theatre with George Grossmith. Closes December 5 (232 perfs).

May 5 – Reinhardt’s *Sumurûn* returns to London at the London Coliseum.

May 18 – The Pioneer Players produce H. Sudermann’s one-act *The Last Visit* at the Little Theatre.

May 27 – Richard Strauss’ opera *Ariadne in Naxos*, book by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, included in an adaptation of Molière’s *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* at His Majesty’s. The play cast includes Herbert Beerbohm Tree and Phyllis Neilson-Terry; the opera includes German singers (8 perfs).

June 23 – *War in the Air*, a “spectacular object lesson” in a prologue and four scenes by Frank Dupréé, at Palladium.

June 30 – July – Shaw and Barker visit the Jacques Delcroze Academy of Eurythmics at Hellerau, near Dresden. They also examine a “Salzmann Man” with a system of stage lighting and scenery. Barker wrote to Gilbert Murray: “But Salzmann – moaning and saying how good his lighting might have been if only he could have spent money on it but he had nothing – only a wretched 68,000 marks for the experiment. That’s Germany.”

September – German publisher Fischer prints Shaw’s *Pygmalion* and *Androcles and the Lion*, three years before their publication in England.

September 1 – Shaw’s *Androcles and the Lion* opens at the St. James’s Theatre, London. Shaw’s and Barker’s original intention was for Barker to tour Germany with an English company, performing the play in repertory with other English plays.

October 2 – Arthur Wimperis (book) and Edmund Eysler (music) adapt Julius Brammer’s and Alfred Grünward’s musical comedy *Der Lachende Ehemann* twice, first as *The Laughing Husband* at the New Theatre (closes December 12 after 78 perfs) and second as *The Girl Who Didn’t* at the Lyric Theatre. Both managed by Faraday, and are considered to have failed.

October 16 – Shaw’s *Pygmalion* premieres at the Burgtheater in Vienna, directed by Hugo Thimig (25 perfs). The press notes that Shaw has finally conquered Vienna. The play opens in London on April 11, 1914 at His Majesty’s Theatre.

October 23 – Schnitzler’s *The Green Cockatoo* produced at Vaudeville Theatre, closes November 15 (26 perfs).
November 1 – Shaw’s *Pygmalion* moves to the Lessing Theater in Berlin, directed by Viktor Barnowsky (100+ perfs).

November 20 – Max Halbe’s three-act play *The River*, translated by Christopher Sandemann, at Repertory Theatre, Birmingham.

November 25 – Shaw’s *Androcles and the Lion* (*Androklus und der Löwe*), directed by Richard Ordynski, opens at the Kammerspiele (18 perfs).

December 18 – H. Granville Barker writes to Rudolph Kommer, Max Reinhardt’s impresario, about a possible German translation of *The Voysey Inheritance*.

1914

A number of musicals adapted from German or Austrian pieces are produced in London: George Edwardes produces Jean Gilbert’s *Püppchen*, Robert Courtneidge produces *Die Kino-Königen* (*The Cinema Star*), and Durrant Swan produces *Autoliebchen* (as *The Joy-Ride Lady*) at the New Theatre. A majority of these are pulled when war is declared in August.

Max Pemberton’s spy novel *Two Women* is published. It concerns a British spy working in Germany.

Thomas Dott’s *A Daughter of England* plays at the Garrick Theatre, in which an English governess repels the advances of her Prussian employer, and steals secret documents from him.

January 15 – *Die Anna-Lise*, a five-act play by Hermann Hersch, performed by Foreign Theatre Society at Cosmopolis.


April 16 – Georg Okonkowski’s and Leo Leipziger’s *Mam’selle Tralala* adapted into English by Arthur Wimperis and Hartley Carrick, with music by Jean Gilbert, at Lyric Theatre. Closes July 24 (105 perfs).

May 1 – Germany issues a warning to English travelers intending to sail on the *Lusitania*.

May 12 – *The Blue Mouse*, adapted by Roy Horniman from the German by Alexander Engel and Julian Horst, opens at Criterion. Closes June 13 (34 perfs).

May 27 – Franz Arnold’s and Ernst Bach’s farce *The Little Lamb* adapted into English by Arthur Wimperis and Hartley Carrick at the Apollo Theatre. Closes May 30 (5 perfs).
**June 4** – The musical farcical comedy *The Cinema Star* opens at the Shaftesbury. Adapted from the German of Georg Okonkowski and Julius Freund by Jack Julbert, with music by Jean Gilbert. Closes September 19 because of its German connections (109 perfs).

**June 28** – Gavrilo Princip assassinates Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo.

**July** – Herbert Beerbohm Tree, vacationing in Marienbad, is forced to head home with his driver Sam Wordingham. They abandon their car and most of their luggage, and travel across Germany and Belgium by foot and by train. Upon arriving home, Tree tells Seymour Hicks that he will telegram the Kaiser, saying, “You gave me a third-rate order for acting in Berlin – I’ve left you a fourth-rate motor-car for acting just as badly!”

**July** – Arthur Conan Doyle’s story about unrestricted submarine warfare, *Danger*, is first published in serial form in the *Strand Magazine*.

**July 23** – Austro-Hungary issues the July Ultimatum to Serbia.

**July 28** – Austro-Hungary declares war on Serbia.

**August 2** – Prince Karl Lichnowsky, German ambassador to England, visits Prime Minister Herbert Asquith at breakfast and emotionally implores Asquith not to side with France against Germany. Asquith writes in his diary that Lichnowsky seemed “heart-broken” at his country’s actions.

**August 3** – Germany declares war on France.

**August 4** – Germany invades Belgium. England declares war on Germany.

**August** – When war is declared, manager George Edwardes is still in Bad Nauheim, Germany, receiving health care. He returns to London immediately. All of his productions by German composers and writers are closed or abandoned.

**August** – H. B. Tree produces *Drake*, and donates all proceeds to war charities. He follows it with *Henry IV Part One*. Before he leaves on a tour of America, he visits German nationals interned at Donnington Hall and offers his condolences. Meanwhile, Frank Benson produces a patriotic *Henry V* at the Shaftesbury Theatre. At the Haymarket Theatre, Godfrey Tearle plays the lead character, a naval officer, in a revival of *The Flag Lieutenant*.

**August** – The British government passes the Defence of the Realm Act, giving itself the power to silence any person or publication that might hinder the war effort.

**August 12** – Hedwig Sonntag, a German novelist and friend to the Shaws and Webbs, is arrested and deported to Exeter. Before his arrest, he writes Shaw, thanking him for being “the only honest man in England.”
August 30 – William Archer publishes a poem titled Louvain, named after a small Belgian town that was destroyed by German infantry, in the Observer.

September – At the invitation of Charles Masterman, William Archer attends a meeting of the Secret War Propaganda Bureau at Wellington House to discuss how writers can help the war effort. Soon after Archer joins the staff.

September 17 – Seymour Hicks and Edward Knoblock perform in England Expects at the London Opera House. Recruiting officers were placed around the theatre, and during the dramatic, musical climax to the play, planted actors in the audience went on stage to “volunteer,” encouraging others to follow suit. Played three times daily through September 26 (27 perfs).

September 5-12 – Britain and France stop Germany’s advance east of Paris in the First Battle of the Marne, thus beginning the war of attrition.

September 5 – Oscar Strauss’ opera The Chocolate Soldier revived at Lyric Theatre and plays through October 24 (56 perfs).

September 18 – Thirty-nine authors sign the Author’s Declaration printed in The Times and the New York Times, stating that “Britain could not without dishonour have refused to take part in the present war.” Signers included Archer, Barker, Barrie, Chesterton, Galsworthy, Hardy, Murray, Pinero, and Wells. Shaw abstains.

October – Oscar Asche opens Mameena, which instituted “a system of lighting which was copied in Germany, reintroduced to England some ten years later, and acclaimed in the press as a wonderful German invention.”

November – The Reader of Plays expresses concern over Honour Gains the Day, in which a female German spy overhears the naval plans of a captain in the Admiralty Intelligence Department. The objection was that it made the Intelligence Department look foolish.

November 14 – Shaw prints Common Sense About the War, a thirty-two-page supplement to the New Statesman that argues British and German culpability in the war. Many of his friends and colleagues desert him after its publication.

November 25 – Thomas Hardy’s epic The Dynasts opens at the Kingsway Theatre, directed by Harley Granville Barker. The play chronicles British military successes of years past. Stars Henry Ainley as the Reader.

December 2 – J. M. Barrie’s play Der Tag at the Coliseum. In the play, the personification of Culture informs the Kaiser that he has awakened degenerate English culture.

December 21 – Leonard F. Durell’s military “aqua-drama” *Kultur* at the Hippodrome, Manchester, includes German officers and characters.

December 29 – The first Zeppelin flies over Britain.

1915

John Buchan’s spy novel *The Thirty-Nine Steps* is published.

Shaw is asked to resign from the Dramatists’ Club over his attitudes to the war. H. A. Jones attacks him in a letter and later in *My Dear Wells: A Manual for the Haters of England*.

January – Archer publishes *Fighting a Philosophy*, a twenty-six-page response to Shaw’s *Common Sense*. “In a very real sense,” he writes, “it is the philosophy of Nietzsche we are fighting.”

January – *The Master Hun*, a spoof spy comedy. The main characters are Votkiskname and Von O’Clock, who steal secret documents for the Master Hun, which turn out to be plans for a cabdrivers’ shelter. The Examiner maintains the Master Hun must not resemble the Kaiser.

January – The Reader debates licensing *War and a Woman* because it depicts violent German soldiers.

January – A Belgian company presents Jean F. Fonson’s *La Kommandatur*, about the German occupation of Brussels.


February – The Examiner raises objections again about portraying the Emperor and Crown Prince in the final scenes of *The Glorious Day* as the German aristocracy.


February 2 – *Are You a Mason?*, based on a German farce, revived by Arthur Chudleigh at Comedy Theatre, closes March 27 (68 perfs).

February 15 – *The Glorious Day*, a patriotic music war revue, opens at Elephant and Castle. Title changes to *Don’t Be Silly*, and reproduced at Camberwell Empire Theatre in August.
March 11 – An English translation of German poet Ernst Lissauer’s poem “Hassgesang gegen England” appears in The Nation. Translated as the “Hymn of Hate,” it contains the phrase “Gott strafe England” (“God punish England”), which becomes a popular slogan for the German Army. Lissauer won a German imperial order for composing the poem.

April – The Examiner again warns about portraying a character in Somewhere in France as the German Emperor. He also recommends against depicting German brutality in The Nun and the Hun. The play’s violent scenes were softened and the play re-titled In the Hands of the Huns. He also requires rewriting on There Was a King in Flanders, in which an English nurse helps a Belgian soldier who has just killed a German. The Reader felt the wounds were depicted too graphically. He denies a license to Outraged Women because he felt it encouraged the destruction of infants born of women raped by German soldiers.

May – The Examiner worries about For England, Home and Beauty, in which a German general throws water in an injured British soldier’s face.

May – The Committee of Alleged German Outrages, chaired by Viscount Bryce, publishes an extensive report.

May 7 – A German U-boat torpedoes and sinks the Cunard liner Lusitania, killing 1198 people, including impresario Charles Frohman. The sinking produces anti-German riots in England; troops had to be called in to Liverpool to quell three days of rioting there. Shaw, returning from a trip to Ireland, sailed on a ship carrying survivors of the Lusitania. After this event, it becomes acceptable to portray Germans as violent and worthy of annihilation.

May 19 – George Alexander produces The Day Before the Day by Chester Bailey Fernald at the St. James’s Theatre. It makes use of the German toast “Der Tag!” It closes on June 5 after 19 performances.

May 22 – In Time of War, by C. Watson Mill, opens at Lyceum Theatre and runs through July 10. Features German characters such as Baron von Guggenheim, Prince Siegfried, the War Lord, and Corporal Fritz (58 perfs).

June 8 – E. Knoblauch’s Marie Odile opens at His Majesty’s, closes July 3 (30 perf’s). Before it opens, the Reader recommends changes to the play, set in the 1870’s, in which a woman in Alsace has the child of a German soldier. Although the author assured the Reader that the soldier’s nationality would be unspecific, the Foreign Office still received complaints about a positive portrayal of a German soldier.

June 1 – First German zeppelin attack on London.

June 1 – Stephen Phillipp’s war drama Armageddon at New Theatre, with John Martin Harvey, who later tours it in the provinces. Closes June 12 (14 perf’s).
August – *Gott Strafe England*, a short play for one actor, is performed. The play portrayed Sir Francis Drake, Lord Kitchener, and the Kaiser, who wakes from a dream to find Berlin captured by the Allies.

October 6 – Offenbach’s *Tales of Hoffman* at Shaftesbury Theatre, produced by Robert Courtneidge.

**1916**

David Lloyd George, backed by a Liberal and Conservative coalition, replaces Herbert Asquith as Prime Minister.

The 1916 Summer Olympics, scheduled to be held in Berlin, are cancelled due to the war.

Playwright Miles Malleson publishes two plays, *Black ‘Ell* and *D Company*, in which returning soldiers speak out against the war. The plays were banned under the Defence of the Realm Act and never performed during the War.


January 28 – F. R. Benson delivers a speech titled “Shakespeare and the War” at the Haymarket Theatre during a meeting of the British Empire Shakespeare Society.

February 21 – Hall Caine’s one-act play *The Iron Hand* plays at the London Coliseum. In the play, an Englishman sacrifices himself to keep military secrets from German soldiers.

March 11 – *Kultur at Home*, a four-act play by Rudolf Besier and Sybil Spottiswoode, opens at the Court Theatre, transfers to the Strand Theatre on May 11, and closes Jun 3 (109 perfs). It features many German characters.

May 31–June 1 – The Battle of Jutland, the largest and most decisive naval battle of the war, takes place in the North Sea off Jutland, Denmark. The battle was between the Kaiserliche Marine’s High Seas Fleet commanded by Vice Admiral Reinhard Scheer and the Royal Navy’s Grand Fleet commanded by Admiral Sir John Jellicoe. The German fleet retreated to port and did not venture out as a whole again.

June – Archer is recalled to London to write for the Propaganda Bureau. He writes *To Neutral Peace-Lovers: A Plea for Patience* and *Colour-Blind Neutrality*.

July 1 – The first day of the Battle of Somme. In this one day, the British Army suffered 57,470 casualties and 19,240 dead.

July 14 – *Kultur*, a short war sketch by Captain W. Graham Barnett, is performed by amateurs in a soldier’s home.

Summer – Britain dispatches the first of its Official War Artists to the continent, with the intent of painting the landscapes of Europe, free of carnage. However, many painters, such as C. R. W. Nevinson, develop a new and disturbing war art.

September – C. R. W. Nevinson’s Futurist art, painted at the war front, is displayed at the Leicester Galleries and creates a sensation. Many prominent politicians and writers attend. Archer is moved to tears.

October 27 – Shaw’s *Man of Destiny* is revived at Vienna’s Theater in Josefstadt (11 perfs).

1917

King George V issues a proclamation changing the British Royal Family’s official name from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha to The House of Windsor.

Archer publishes *Shirking the Issue, Six of One and Half-a-Dozen of the Other, Villain of the World Tragedy, Five Hundred and One Gems of German Thought*, and *The Pirates’ Progress: A Short History of the U-Boat*, all pamphlets about the war.

January 6 – *The Private Secretary*, Charles Hawtrey’s adaptation of von Moser’s *Der Bibliotheker*, opens at the Apollo Theatre. Closes February 3 (50 perfs).

January 21 and 22 – Shaw’s *Augustus Does His Bit*, a short play on war saving, is produced by the Stage Society at the Court Theatre.

February 3 – The United States declares war on Germany.

March 14 – George Tulley produces J E. Harold Terry’s light comedy *General Post* at the Haymarket Theatre (532 perfs).

May 3 – The Carl Rosa Company opens its season of opera with Offenbach’s *Tales of Hoffman*. Their season, which runs through July 7, includes a performance of *Tannhäuser*.

July 23 – John G. Brandon’s one-act play *The Woman of Louvain* presented at Collin’s Theatre, Islington. Includes German characters such as General Baron von Steinmetz.

December 16 – Shaw’s *The Inca of Perusalem* produced by the Pioneer Players at the Criterion Theatre. With Gertrude Kingston and Nigel Playfair.
December 22 – Charles Hawtrey’s *The Private Secretary* revived at Savoy Theatre.

1918

Charles Cuvillier’s German operetta *The Lilac Domino*, Americanized version by Harry and Robert Smith with three new songs by Howard Carr.

Sydney Valentine and Marion Lorne star in *The Freedom of the Seas*, by Walter Hackett, at the Haymarket Theatre.

_Beware Germans_, in which a German spy is the manager of a large company, a magistrate, and a knight, is performed.

February 21 – Friedrich von Flotow’s *Martha* at Old Vic, conducted by Charles Corri (2 perfs).

March 30 – Austin Page’s *By Pigeon Post* opens at Garrick Theatre. War melodrama featuring women as doctors. With Hubert Willis, Kate Phillips, Madge Titheradge (378 perfs).

April 12 – J. T. Grein produces Oscar Wilde’s _Salome_ in performance with dancer Maud Allen at the Royal Court Theatre. Although the production is approved by the Lord Chamberlain, Noel Pemberton-Billing, MP and editor of _The Vigilante_, accuses the play’s subject matter of aiding the German war effort by destabilizing British morality. Grein – already suspect because of his Dutch heritage and previous German associations – and Allen sue Billing for libel, but lose the case. Grein loses his job at the _Sunday Times_.

April 25 – William Archer’s son Tom dies fighting with the King’s Own Scottish Borderers at Mont Kemmel, near Flanders.

Spring – British offensive against the German army.

May/June – Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company at the Shaftesbury Theatre. Repertoire includes _Tannhäuser_.

May 14 – J. M. Barrie’s salute to the military _The Old Lady Shows Her Medals_ at Wyndham’s (1 perf). Also, amateur soldiers performed Kingston Stack’s _Kitty Breaks Loose_.

June – Archer finishes his play _War is War, The Germans in Belgium: A Drama of 1914_. The play details the German massacre of residents in a fictional Belgian town.

June – The Lord Chamberlain licenses _The Hidden Hand_, which portrays Germans infiltrating high levels of British institutions. The main character is a German Jew shown meeting with the Kaiser in the first act. The play raises serious questions in the press about Germans living in England.
June 8 – *Tannhäuser* at Drury Lane with Frank Mullings, Agnes Nicholls, Gladys Anerum (4 perfs).

June 11 – J. S. Bach’s *Der Streit Zwischen Phoebus und Pan* at Drury Lane (2 perfs).

June 14 – *Die Walküre* at Drury Lane with Walter Hude, Robert Parker, Agnes Nicholls, Edna Thornton (6 perfs). Shaw is present and reviews.

July 1 – *Tristan und Isolde* at Drury Lane with Frank Mullings, Perceval Allen (1 perf).

July 2 – Mozart’s *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Drury Lane with Robert Radford, Maurice D’Oisly, Agnes Nicholls, Desiree Ellinger (2 perfs).

July 4 – Laurence Cowen’s spy melodrama *The Hidden Hand* at Strand Theatre. With Stanley Drewitt, Molly Terraine (165 perfs).

July 28 – Lord Byron’s *Manfred* at Drury Lane with Courtenay Thorpe. Incidental music by Robert Schumann (2 matinee perfs).

August 5 – Mrs. Clifford Mills’ navy melodrama *The Luck of the Navy* at Queen’s Theatre (289 perfs).

August 8 – The Allies launch the Hundred Days Offensive.

September 2 – The German Army is pushed back to the Hindenburg Line, their starting point of the war. It is broken later in the autumn.

October – *The Pacifist*, by John Brandon, is licensed for the Empress Theatre, Brixton. Its alternative title is *The Peace-Monger*; in it, the pacifist in the play turns out to be in league with the Germans.

October 2 – Walter Melville’s war melodrama *The Female Hun* at Lyceum Theatre, featuring the wife of a British officer who is loyal to Germany. Produced by Walter and Frederick Melville. Starred Leslie Carter, Herbert Mansfield, Dorrie Eyre (88 perfs).

November – The Lord Chamberlain’s Reader suggests edits to *A Spy in the Ranks*, so that British officers would not be negatively portrayed.

November 9 – Germany is declared a republic; the Kaiser flees to the Netherlands the following day.

November 11 – Armistice Day. The Armistice goes into effect at 11 a.m.
November 29 – Seymour Hicks & Arthur Shirley (libretto), Herman Darewski (music), Davy Burnaby, John P. Harrington, & James Heard (lyrics) *Jolly Jack Tar* at Prince’s Theatre. Nautical musical drama with anti-German themes. Produced by C. B. Cochran. One character is called The Female Hun.

The last wartime play to raise the Lord Chamberlain’s objections, *Friendly Enemies*, is submitted for approval, to be performed in January 1919 at the Haymarket Theatre. It was already successful in New York; it portrays two Germans living in the United States, one who is a naturalized, patriotic American citizen, and the second a spy who later changes his mind. The Examiner refused it a license, on the grounds that it portrays a German who is “at bottom a very good fellow after all.”

3. Quoted in Davis 153.
15. Quoted in Nicholson 143.
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----. “Two German Theatres.” *Fortnightly Review* 89 (January 2, 1911): 60-70.


