

LSY



Lessing

Yearbook / Jahrbuch XLVII

Lessing Society 2020

Wallstein

Lessing Yearbook/Jahrbuch XLVII

2020

Lessing Yearbook/Jahrbuch XLVII, 2020

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Lessing Yearbook/Jahrbuch
XLVII
2020

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WALLSTEIN VERLAG

Gedruckt mit freundlicher Unterstützung des College of Liberal Arts and Sciences der University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign und des Departments of World Languages and Literatures der University of Memphis.



Englische Artikel sollten den Regeln des MLA Handbook, deutsche denen des Wallstein Verlags folgen.

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Wallstein Verlag, GW .negnittöG 37073-D ,11 eßartstsieeb Site: www.wallstein-verlag.de

Der Umschlag zeigt das von Johann Friedrich Bause nach einem Ölgemälde von Anton Graff gestochene PorH :2771 gizpiel(sgnisseL tärterzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, S.)37321 A rutangi

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www.wallstein-verlag.de

ISBN (Print) 978-3-8353-3823-4

ISBN (E-Book, pdf) 978-3-8353-4552-2

ISSN (Print) 0075-8833

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Richard E. Schade (12 March 1944 – 6 December 2019).
Ein Nachruf

It is with deep sorrow that we mourn the loss of long-time Lessing advocate, Richard Erich Schade, who died unexpectedly on 6 December 2019 at his home in Cincinnati, Ohio. Richard was indefatigable in his efforts to promote the G. E. Lessing Society (LS), having served in a major editorial capacity of the *Lessing Yearbook* (*LY*) for twenty-five years. As an avid conference organizer and participant in academic society meetings large and small he contributed to the general awareness of G. E. Lessing's significance as playwright, theater and literary critic, art historian, theologian, fabulist, connoisseur of the Ancients and Moderns, and progressive thinker regarding human rights, tolerance, and innovation. Richard's humor, vigor, and ingenuity in helping to steer both the *LY* and the LS through periods of growth and restriction will be missed. He was an inveterate optimist and a resourceful fund raiser who provided continuity in changes of LS leadership, thereby adding to his substantial legacy. While his career at the University of Cincinnati went far beyond his involvement with Lessing, this memorial focuses on Richard Schade's role as »Mr. Lessing« as he was known internally by colleagues and friends. Richard had a saying that guided his approach to his dedication to the Society and its yearbook that became hallmarks of the German program at the University of Cincinnati beginning in the late 1960s and lasting until after the turn of the century. His adage? »L e s s i n g is more.«

Richard Schade graduated from St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, in 1962, then attended the University of New Hampshire, where he earned his B.A. in 1966 (Phi Beta Kappa) and his M.A. in 1968, during which time he spent two years at the Philipps-Universität Marburg (1964-65, 1967-68). After taking his M.A. he served his country during the turbulent years of the Vietnam War as a US Army intelligence officer in Vietnam and in Germany. In 1973 he returned to graduate studies, now at Yale University, where he earned his PhD degree in 1976 in early modern German literature (1500-1750). Upon completion of his graduate studies Richard accepted a position at the University of Cincinnati. There he remained his entire career 1975-2013, rising through the ranks from Assistant Professor (1975-80) to Associate Professor (1980-87), and Full Professor (1987-2013). In 2013 he was awarded emeritus status and simultaneously named the McMicken Teaching Professor for a three-year term (August 2013-August 2016). A lauded teacher and scholar, Richard Schade was honored with the university-wide A. B. Cohen Award for Excel-

lence in Teaching in 1994, a Taft Research Fellowship 2006-07, and was a guest professor at the Universität Bielefeld (2013). He served as department head (1987-1992, acting 2003), as director of graduate and undergraduate studies and in many other administrative and advisory capacities at the University of Cincinnati. His many outreach activities, especially as Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany (1996-2012), earned him the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit from the Federal Republic of Germany. Other outreach activities included frequently directing undergraduate hands-on learning experiences in »Germany: National Work-Study Program« and the many summers he spent as Master Teacher at St. Paul's School Advanced Studies Program in Concord, New Hampshire, his birthplace. His family took every opportunity to be active residents of Hopkinton, a community where he and many relatives had well established roots. In recent years, Richard participated in and contributed to several programs sponsored by the Hopkinton Historical Society. A celebration of his life was held in Cincinnati in December 2019.

The author of some ninety peer-juried articles in highly respected journals, nigh 200 book reviews, and over thirty volumes of original and edited scholarship, Richard Schade remained productive throughout his career despite his many other obligations that included serving as director in residence for the UC-Berlin Program numerous times and introducing students to the Günter Grass Museum in Lübeck. He also lectured widely in Europe and in North America. Among his major publications are numbered *Ivlius Redivivus Comoedia* (Stuttgart 1983) and *Studies in Early German Comedy 1500-1650* (Columbia, SC 1988) along with essays, for instance, on the picaresque novel, Martin Böhme, Nicodemus Frischlin, Friedrich Logau, Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, and Goethe's *Faust*. He often employed a cross-disciplinary approach (visual + literary culture) that anticipated major shifts in German Studies more broadly. Later in his career, Richard turned a passing interest in Günter Grass, whom he interviewed in 2006, into a major research focus. In the process, he emerged as a sought-after voice, especially in discussions of the Nobel laureate's use of iconography and, of course, of the *Schelmenroman* with its roots in the Baroque era. He also served on the editorial board of *The German Quarterly* for nigh twenty years and was elected twice to the Executive Committee of the Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Forum German to 1700 of the Modern Language Association of America.

Yet Lessing dominated, of course, in numerous articles and conference presentations as well as with the edited or co-edited volumes of the *Lessing Yearbook*. From the first mention of Richard E. Schade on its title page in 1976 as Editorial Assistant, he was continuously involved in the *Lessing Yearbook*. In 1980 he appeared for the first time as Associate Editor and

then as Managing Editor in 1985 until 2008-09. Annually, Richard reviewed some fifty submissions to the *Jahrbuch*, shepherding them through the review process. Beginning in 1980-81, he also served for many years as Secretary-Treasurer of the Lessing Society.

His contributions to the Lessing Society also extended to collaboration with other institutions devoted to Lessing, in particular the Lessing Museum in the writer's home town of Kamenz in der Oberlausitz Sachsen. Richard's first visit in 1979 was followed by many more and a friendship with the Museum's director, Dieter Fratzke. A high point was the joint international conference sponsored by the Lessing Society and the Lessing Museum in 1991 to mark the Museum's sixtieth anniversary. Eventually, Richard was invited to join the Executive Committee of the »Bundesprojekt Lessing in Kamenz« centered in Dresden (1994-2000), and he then joined the Executive Committee of the Lessing Museum Kamenz (2000-2005). Visits to Wolfenbüttel with its Lessing Haus and the Lessing Akademie built upon the groundwork laid by Gottfried Merkel. From the earliest discussions between Merkel and Guy Stern, then Head of the German Department at Cincinnati, a major objective of the initiative to found a Lessing Society – initially called the American Lessing Society – and a yearbook was to establish international connections to the University and raise the profile of its German Department. Richard's own efforts in this regard met with considerable success. In his interactions with Wolfgang Milde (Wolfenbüttel) and Dieter Fratzke, he demonstrated his diplomatic talent long before becoming Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany. Richard also proved to be a valuable partner in negotiating a new publishing contract for the *LY* in the not unproblematic transition from Wayne State University Press to the Wallstein Verlag and in efforts to collaborate more closely with the Lessing Akademie in Wolfenbüttel, as I know from my own role in the negotiations as then President of the Lessing Society.

Moreover, Richard Schade helped to preserve the history of the Lessing Society in publications on its origins and development in such venues as »Lessing in Cincinnati,« in: *Das Obiotal – The Ohio Valley* (New York 1993), pp. 114-122; »Jahrhundertwenden: The Centenary of the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures, University of Cincinnati,« in: *The German Quarterly*, vol. 73 (2000), pp. 299-307, and »Lessing in Cincinnati. Zur Begründung der Lessing Society (1966). Eine Dokumentation,« in: Wolfgang Albrecht, Dieter Fratzke, and Richard E. Schade, eds., *Aufklärung nach Lessing* (Kamenz 1992), pp. 225-233. Additionally, he compiled bibliographies of recent publications on Lessing such as »A Cumulative List of Articles in *Lessing Yearbook I-X*,« in: *Lessing Yearbook X* (1978), pp. 345-350 numbering 150 bibliographical items and »Lessing 1979-1981: Veröffentlichungen in den Lessing Jubiläumsjahren,« in: *Les-*

ing *Yearbook XVII* (1986), pp. 285-319, which includes 624 items. In that writing, Richard described his own role as »living with Lessing« for some three decades, during which time he did his part in establishing Cincinnati's reputation as a *Lessingstadt*. Guy Stern delivered a keynote address on the founding of the Lessing Society at the Centenary Conference of German Studies at the University of Cincinnati in April 2000 to help mark that development.

In so many varied ways Richard E. Schade truly earned the epithet »Mr. Lessing«: through his interactions with a long series of presidents of the LS, as a resourceful fundraiser, as the prime mover behind eight major conferences here and in Germany and academic panels at the annual meetings of the Modern Language Association and American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, his responsibility for the Lessing Society Newsletter and annual business meetings, as well as via frequent outreach activities to the schools and communities in the Cincinnati and regional areas, including among others a celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 2014. He trained some twenty graduate students at UC over the years in the art of editing and preparing submissions to the *LY* for publication. He also provided models of academically fruitful writing. Rhetorically skillful and lucidly structured, Richard's introduction to *Practicing Progress: The Promise and Limitations of Enlightenment* (Amsterdam 2007) is one such representative example of his masterly writing ability. He demonstrated adeptness at succinctly identifying the import of individual contributions and organizing collected essays into a cohesive volume. His insightful comments proved to be a valuable guide for the reader in clearly understanding how the individually authored essays cohere as a unit. Hence, in numerous ways Richard E. Schade enriched the profession beyond Lessing, demonstrating that »Lessing is more.« Richard's legacy is genuinely noteworthy.

John A. McCarthy

Vanderbilt University

The *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* in Amsterdam and German-Dutch Theatrical Interaction around 1800

Francien Marx

»Nichts ist vor einem holländischen Übersetzer sicher,« Johann Georg Schlosser (1739-1799), Goethe's brother-in-law, wrote in his »Briefe aus Holland« in 1776.¹ He went on to warn his readers that the Dutch would translate any German text they could get hold of and that he wouldn't be surprised if even the journal in which he was publishing his current contribution would soon be next. The sheer number of translations from German into Dutch during the last decades of the eighteenth century is remarkable indeed: the two major Dutch review periodicals of the time, the *Vaderlandsche Letter-Oefeningen* and the *Nederlandsche Bibliotheek*, together reviewed over a thousand translations from German between 1760 and the end of the century. In other words, twenty percent of the total number of books reviewed were of German origin.² Such general review journals, however, largely excluded the increasing number of translations of German plays and operas, which had been introduced to the Dutch Republic by German theater companies.³

A pivotal role in this dissemination of German repertoire was played by the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* in Amsterdam, built in 1790; successful performances here would soon prompt Dutch translations and performances at other theaters in and beyond the city.⁴ Amsterdam could look back on a long and rich theater tradition. Its first permanent and public theater, the *Schouwburg*, had been inaugurated on 3 January 1638 with a performance of *Gysbreght van Aemstel* by the most prolific playwright of the time, Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679).⁵ The first of its kind in the entire country, the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* underlined the city's prestige as the cultural capital of the Dutch Republic. To appease the strong opposition of the church, its profits were designated for charity.⁶ New productions not only featured works by famous Dutch seventeenth-century playwrights such as Vondel, Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft, Gerbrand A. Bredero, and Samuel Coster, but increasingly also foreign, in particular Spanish plays.⁷ Towards the end of the seventeenth century, French became more and more the language of intellectual and cultural exchange as well as of commerce; French neo-classical drama began to conquer the stage and dominated the repertoire throughout most of the eighteenth century. Amsterdam's intellectual and cultural standing steadily declined, partly due to competition with other Dutch cities, such as Haarlem, Leiden, Rotterdam, Utrecht, and

The Hague, and partly in the wake of the political, economic, and military weakening of the Dutch Republic itself.⁸ Amsterdam would not regain much of its earlier cultural stature until the end of the eighteenth century. In what follows, I will outline some of the contributions of German theater in the city's cultural revival.

The dissemination of German theater in the Dutch Republic occurred along two different yet interconnected paths: on the stage and in print, whereby the building of the aforementioned *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* represents the institutionalization of this development. Thus far, efforts to reconstruct the history of German theater in the Dutch Republic have paid little attention to the broader cultural and political context in which the expansion of German drama on the Dutch stage ensued. While the introduction of German drama and German literary, theological, and philosophical texts to the Dutch Republic already occurred in the 1770s and was duly noted in intellectual circles,⁹ it was not until the 1780s and 1790s that the translation and staging of the German repertoire gained momentum. This coincided with three major political developments: first, rising tensions between the Patriots, who demanded more involvement in the government for larger segments of society, and the Orangists, who supported the stadtholder, the Prince of Orange; second, increased interventions in Dutch affairs by the great powers, France, Austria, England, and Prussia; and, third, the end of the Dutch Republic with the establishment of the Batavian Republic sponsored by revolutionary France (1795-1806). The theatrical developments discussed here, including key figures (such as actors, singers, financiers, and critics) and repertoire, have to be understood in these broader cultural and political contexts.

German theater was brought to the Dutch Republic in 1772 by Karl Friedrich Abt (1733/43-1783), who a few years earlier, at the recommendation of Christoph Martin Wieland, had joined the famous company of Konrad Ernst Ackermann in Hamburg. Abt had since moved on to Jena, Vienna, Bayreuth, and many other cities to eventually found his own theater company with Joseph Schröder.¹⁰ In 1772, Abt and Schröder came to The Hague, and on 16 October they performed Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* to great acclaim for the stadtholder William V (1748-1806) with the entire court in attendance. Abt and Schröder found a welcoming environment at the stadtholder's court. Already William's parents, William IV and Princess Anne, had maintained musical and theatrical institutions befitting a court; they had a small court chapel, invited musicians of international reputation, and generously supported The Hague's *Comédie Française*. After the deaths of William IV in 1751 and Princess Anne in 1759, Louis Ernest, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (1718-1788), became Prince William V's guardian; he would remain his closest advisor after

William's coming of age in 1766. William married Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia (1751-1820), a niece of the Duke of Brunswick and of the Prussian King, Frederick the Great, with whom she kept a lively correspondence. Abt would return to The Hague the following year, where he had a portable wooden theater built. Upon invitation of the Duke of Brunswick he went on to 's-Hertogenbosch,¹¹ and subsequently gave successful performances in several cities including Utrecht, The Hague, Haarlem, and finally, in May 1774, in Amsterdam.

However, Abt's company was professional and their competition was not welcome, especially as the Amsterdam theater landscape was in disarray after the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* had burnt down in 1772. An old law from 1683 was quickly revived to keep the foreign company out; banned from the city proper, Abt set up his wooden theater just outside the city limits, where it could easily be reached by boat or coach.¹² City dwellers, local farmers, and horticultural workers frequented the wooden theater. At first, Abt would perform three times a week, but due to great success the number of performances rose to four or even five times per week. Several factors may account for this popularity. Although precise numbers are hard to come by, in Holland, and particularly also in Amsterdam, the largest group of immigrants was of German origin.¹³ But not only German immigrants and their descendants flocked to Abt's theater. The repertoire was varied, and typically each performance would feature a play and an opera, often followed by a ballet. Even audience members who did not know German could enjoy these musical offerings. In his »Briefe aus Holland,« Schlosser mentioned that in fact it had become fashionable in Amsterdam to understand and read German, which he ascribed in part to Abt's German theater. He also praised the Amsterdam audience for its silence and attention during performances, clapping only at appropriate moments.¹⁴

While the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* was going through a difficult period and did not stage any operas until the 1780s, Abt's theater offered a welcome, high-quality alternative, and particularly Madame Abt received a lot of praise.¹⁵ Although performed in German, many of the approximately seventy plays and thirty-two operas were themselves translations: for example, Abt opened the stage at the Watergraafsmeer on 31 August 1774 with a performance of Diderot's *Der Hausvater*, followed by *Lukas und Hannchen* (Johann Joachim Eschenburg/Johann Friedrich Gottlieb Beckmann, 1768).¹⁶ Besides Diderot, other French authors in the repertoire were Molière, Louis-Sébastien Mercier, Voltaire, and Philippe Néricault Destouches. Most plays, however, were of German origin; Johann Christian Brandes topped the list, followed by Johann Jakob Engel, Gottlieb Stephanie, and Lessing.¹⁷ The musical works provide a different picture, as French *opéra comique* clearly dominated the stage: six operas by André-

Ernest-Modeste Grétry were performed 66 times, while operas by Pierre-Alexandre Mosigny were also quite popular. German *Singspiele* by Johann Adam Hiller and Christian Felix Weiße or those by Christian Gottlob Neefe took second place. From the contributions on behalf of the poor can be determined that in the first eight months, around 30,000 people visited Abt's theater.¹⁸ When a severe illness plagued all actors and brought the company close to financial ruin, a group of twenty well-to-do merchants came to the rescue. The fresh start in September 1775 under its new director, Frans Jacob van den Velden (with Abt staying on as artistic director), was, however, short-lived; in November all performances were cancelled, and Schröder and many actors were dismissed. With newly engaged members, the company resumed its performances in January 1776, but never regained its previous standing. The German enterprise came to an end with its last performances taking place in January 1777. The company was dissolved, the Abts returned to Germany, and the wooden theater including decorations and props was sold.¹⁹

In Abt's footsteps, several other German acting troupes toured the Dutch Republic and towards the end of the 1780s also gave performances in Amsterdam.²⁰ These last two decades were extremely turbulent times, in which the Dutch Republic was continuously weakened by forces from within and outside. While the commercial and banking sectors flourished, unemployment and economic inequality sharply increased. When the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war (1780-1784), a retaliation for Dutch arms sales to the American rebels, turned out disastrous for the Dutch, the House of Orange was blamed for this debacle as well as for the economic decline. Through demonstrations, pamphlets, petitions, and the setting up of militias (*vrijkorpzen*) the Patriots demanded political reforms, which stadtholder William V rejected. Too weak to quell the Patriot movement, he had to rely on foreign intervention. In September 1787, after it had become clear that France would not intervene, the stadtholder's brother-in-law, the new Prussian king, Frederick William II, sent an invasion force under the command of the Duke of Brunswick (nephew of William V's former guardian and advisor) to suppress the Patriot revolt. Local city councils (*vroedschappen*) were purged of Patriot members, and tens of thousands of Patriots fled the country. During this period of Orange restoration, the economic malaise and civic unrest continued. French revolutionary armies invaded the Southern (Austrian) Netherlands in 1792 and again in 1794 to finally annex it to France in 1795. When the French troops pushed further north and occupied the city of Utrecht in January 1795, William V and his family fled to England.

With the establishment of the Batavian Republic (1795-1806) it was the Orangists' turn to be purged from city councils and other government bodies. The Patriots themselves were, however, divided into opposing fed-

eralist and unitarist political factions, leading to a series of three *coups d'état* (January 1798, June 1798, September 1801, all backed by France). Seeking to profit from this political instability, in 1799, an Anglo-Russian-Orange force invaded the northern part of the North Holland peninsula in hopes of restoring the old order but was defeated by the Franco-Dutch army. Napoleon finally grew tired of the independently acting Republic and installed his younger brother, Louis Bonaparte, as new monarch of the Kingdom of Holland (1806), only to force him to abdicate four years later, when he too refused to follow the Emperor's orders. After Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig in 1813, former Orangist and Patriot politicians together formed a provisional government and invited William V's son to return as head of state (*Souverein Vorst*). In 1815, William I (1772-1843) would officially become King of the Netherlands and the once proud Dutch Republic would definitively become a monarchy.²¹

Amidst all this political turmoil, Amsterdam saw a burst of cultural, mostly private, initiatives; already in 1777, the society *Felix Meritis* was founded to promote the arts and sciences, comprising the divisions of Music, Drawing, Physics, Commerce, and Literature. Increasing membership prompted the society to acquire its own venue and in 1788, a new building in neo-classical style was erected at the Keizersgracht. By the end of the century, *Felix Meritis* had become Amsterdam's most important cultural institution, featuring the largest concert hall in the city.²² Small-scale private initiatives to foster theatrical life manifested themselves, for example, in the founding of amateur companies such as »Kunstmin spaart geen vlijt« (»Love of Art spares no diligence,« established 1773) and »Utile et Amusant« (established in the early 1780s), performing plays and operas at their own venues. The private nature of these initiatives made it possible to circumvent the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg's* monopoly position.

This must also have been the rationale for the »Collège dramatique et lyrique à Amsterdam,« which began to organize French theatrical performances in 1782. Their motto was »Delectat et Erudit« and they exclusively invited professional companies from France to perform operas and plays. With the support of influential citizens and bankers, the Collège commissioned Abraham van der Hart (1747-1820), Amsterdam's city architect (*stadtbouwmeester*), to build their own theater in 1784. The *Fransche Schouwburg* (or *Théâtre Français*) at the Erwtenmarkt finally opened in 1788. Some of the most prominent shareholders of the enterprise were the fervent Patriots Jean Alexandre Botereau and Balthasar Elias Abbema, a member of the *vroedschap*. Both had to step down as the Collège's commissioners when Prussian intervention restored the stadtholdership;²³ they were replaced by La Douespe and the merchant banker with Orangist sympathies Henry Hope, the theater's largest shareholder.²⁴ However, Hope

himself moved to London when the French revolutionary army approached in 1794. The French theater, receiving broad support across the religious and political spectrum of Amsterdam's cultural elite, would continue to stage performances of French operas and plays until the mid-nineteenth century.²⁵

In the late 1780s, a group of Amsterdam's wealthy bankers and merchants, keen on promoting German theater, invited Johann Albert Dietrich's German-language company to stage operas and plays at the venues of »Kunstmin spaart geen vlijt« and »Utile et Amusant,« among others, and at the Leidseplein during the summer months.²⁶ The repertoire had been updated since Abt's performances more than a decade earlier: while Brandes and Engel were still on the program, new additions included Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (in Friedrich Ludwig Schröder's translation), Schiller's *Die Räuber* and *Kabale und Liebe*, and works by Schröder, August Wilhelm Iffland, and August von Kotzebue. Hiller and Weiß's *Singspiele* were still being performed (particularly *Der Teufel ist los*), but *opéra comique* had been replaced by German and Italian repertoire: Johann André, Karl Ditter von Dittersdorf, Mozart (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), and *opere buffe* by Pasquale Anfossi, Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi, Giovanni Paisiello, and Niccolò Piccini.²⁷

As Dietrich's performances drew large audiences and the available venues proved to be too small, his influential sponsors, following the example of the French theater, founded the »Hoogduitsche Toneel Sociëteit,« choosing as their motto »Spectemur Agendo« (Let us be judged by our acts) and commissioned Abraham van der Hart to build a theater dedicated to German repertoire. Two of the commissioners, Sebastiaan van Nooten Jansz. and Nicolaas Warin Anthonisz., were members of the *vroedschap* and Orangists, while the third, Dr. med. Jan Rudolph Deiman, was of German origin.²⁸ As with the French theater, the largest shareholder was the Hope family, closely followed by the Prussian consul David Splitgerber. Their political affiliation and the timing of this undertaking following the suppression of the Patriots' revolt suggest political considerations in the theater's founding. If we are to believe a correspondent in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, which published regular reports on the state of music in Amsterdam, Dietrich himself had connections to the House of Orange as well:

[...] wenn Hr. D[ietrichs]. nicht ganz besondere Empfehlungen an den Hof gehabt hätte, so hätte er wieder abziehen müssen. Da sich dieser aber für ihn verwendete, und besonders die Gemahlin des Erbstatthalters sich, wie man sagt, für ihn interessirete: so erhielt er zwar die Bewilligung, Vorstellungen geben zu dürfen, jedoch unter der Einschränkung, nicht öffentlich, sondern nur privatim zu spielen.²⁹

It was Dietrichs who inaugurated the newly built *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* (Amstelstraat 21) on 19 January 1791 with *Der Triumph der Künste* (a Prologue by Dietrichs) followed by August von Kotzebue's *Das Kind der Liebe* (1790). The new building boasted 519 seats, an orchestra pit with room for twenty-four musicians, excellent acoustics, and modern machinery that required only a single person to move the sets.³⁰ Performances took place three times a week and were open to members only. Some new plays by, among others, Kotzebue, Iffland, and Schröder had been added to the repertoire; Lessing's *Die Juden* and *Emilia Galotti* returned to the stage.³¹

An affair between Dietrichs and the orchestra conductor's wife, Madame Meyer, escalated into a conflict that finally led to Dietrichs's departure in the summer of 1792.³² He and most members of his troupe went to The Hague to perform at the *Comédie Française*.³³ Further disruptions were caused by the French declaration of war on Britain and the Dutch Republic on 1 February 1793 and the occupation of some southern cities by General Demouriez. All theatrical and concert performances were now prohibited, and the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* remained closed from February to August 1793. With the engagement of Friedrich Wilhelm Hunnius (1762-1835) as director in October 1793, regular performances resumed.³⁴ Hunnius strengthened the cast by bringing Friedrich Eunike, his wife Johanna Eunike, and Therese Schwachhofer to Amsterdam.³⁵ Besides several *Singspiele* by Dittersdorf, Mozart's *Entführung*, and Vicente Martín y Soler's *Der Baum der Diana*, there were important additions to the repertoire: Antonio Salieri's *Axur, König von Ormus*, and three Mozart operas: *Die Zauberflöte*, *Don Juan*, and *Die Hochzeit des Figaro*.³⁶

An interesting weekly publication, *Die deutsche Thalia in Amsterdam*, extensively commented on performances at the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg*, including the singing and acting, costumes, stage design, and props.³⁷ The often candid reviews prompted several indignant letters to the journal's editor, among others by Hunnius d. J. and by a »Mitglied des Hochdeutschen Collegium, Spectemor [!] Agendo.« This Collegium member noted that the often harsh and unfair criticism would chase away the actors, rather than help improve their performance, and he invited the critic to put down his pen and join the Collegium.³⁸ However, not the *Thalia*'s criticism, but the aftermath of the French victory at the battle of Fleurus (26 June 1794) would chase away Hunnius and his troupe and force the theater to close.³⁹

Just one week after the proclamation of the Batavian Republic on 19 January 1795, Dietrichs returned to the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* to sign a contract, initially for three months. He had to share the stage with a French company though, which played there three times a week. And he soon had to share it with yet another company, the »Hoogduitsche Joodsche Tooneel Gezelschap« (High-German Jewish Theater Company), which used as its

motto »Industrie et Récréation« or »Amusement et Culture.« Founded in 1784 by Jacob Horst Dessauer (ca. 1764-1837), the company had performed at »Utile et Amusant« and at the Jodenhoutmarkt and was now looking for a more permanent location. While the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* refused to give Dessauer permission to use their stage, the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* offered him a contract to play twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Dessauer turned out to be the longest lasting tenant, performing there until 1807.⁴⁰

The repertoire of both Dietrichs and Dessauer showed many overlaps, as the two sets of surviving playbills for 1795/96, published by the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg*'s official publisher, reveal.⁴¹ During this time, Dietrichs staged thirty-eight plays and twenty-eight operas and *Singspiele*. Most popular were Kotzebue's dramas and comedies, an important new addition was his *Die Spanier in Peru, oder Rolla's Tod*, with music by C. Schmitt,⁴² as was Heinrich Zschokke's *Abällino der große Bandit*.⁴³ Among the operas and *Singspiele*, Dittersdorf proved to be very popular, as well as Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and *Don Juan*. A successful musical addition was Paul Wrانيتzky's *Oberon. König der Elfen*. Meanwhile, Dessauer performed about forty operas and *Singspiele* during the same period, of which Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Wrانيتzky's *Oberon* were most popular. Notable on his repertoire were also *opéras comiques* by French composers Nicolas Dalayrac, Marc-Antoine Desaugiers, and Nicolas Dezède.⁴⁴

Around the time of Dietrichs's departure, orchestra conductor Carl Joseph Schmidt undertook several efforts to improve musical performances at the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg*. In 1796, he was one of the co-founders and the conductor of a new orchestra, operating under the motto »Eruditio Musica,« which organized twenty Sunday concerts from October to April each year and would continue to do so until 1810/11.⁴⁵ Schmidt furthermore traveled to Germany in search of new singers. Although he was not very successful at first, in 1798 he attracted Luise Lange (ca. 1760-1839), also known as Aloysia Weber, Mozart's sister-in-law, to Amsterdam. This engagement marked the beginning of some of the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg*'s most glorious years, with Lange performing in Mozart's operas to great acclaim, particularly as Constanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.⁴⁶ Due to the Anglo-Russian invasion of Holland in 1799, Lange and part of the company temporarily fled to Bremen. After her return she would sing at the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* until 1801, the same year in which Schmidt also left to succeed Carl Cannabich as conductor at the Frankfurt theater.⁴⁷ French actors and an Italian opera company soon made the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* their home, and after Napoleon had installed his brother Louis Bonaparte as King of Holland (1806), Italian opera found a strong supporter in the new king, who moved his residency to Amsterdam in 1808.

The king also had his »Comédiens ordinaires du Roi« perform at the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg*.⁴⁸ Carl Conrad Casimir Döbbelin (1763-1821), son of the famous Carl Theophil Döbbelin, performed German operas and plays there in 1808 and 1809, introducing Lessing's *Nathan der Weise* to the Dutch stage, while Lange would return from Frankfurt for guest performances. The theater reached its low point in 1811, when The Kingdom of Holland had been dissolved and annexed by France and the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* became the venue of the French lottery.⁴⁹

It was the German-Jewish company, the »Hoogduitsche Joodsche Toneel Gezelschap,« still led by Dessauer, that officially reopened the German theater on 1 January 1814 after Napoleon's defeat at the battle of Leipzig.⁵⁰ Between 1816 and 1823, Friedrich Haberkorn brought the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* to new heights, attracting first class singers and staging new German, French, and Italian repertoire (e.g., operas by Rossini, and Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* [1821], which was performed twenty-nine times). Upon Haberkorn's departure, tenor Julius Miller assumed the directorship (performing Beethoven's *Fidelio* several times), and after he, too, left in 1825, many German theater companies would come and go.⁵¹ From 1839 to 1845, the theater primarily functioned as an Italian opera stage. Jan Eduard de Vries (1808-1875), decorator and theater director at the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* would begin staging performances at the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* in 1846, but when he established a German opera (*Hoogduitsche Opera*) at the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* in 1849, a second German theater became superfluous. In 1852 the »Hoogduitsche Toneel Sociëteit« was dissolved, and the building was sold the following year. The first Wagner opera ever premiered in the Netherlands, *Tannhäuser*, took place on 23 March 1858 in the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg*.⁵² In 1860, a German opera was established in Rotterdam, which would be responsible for premiering many other Wagner operas. With that, Amsterdam's role in pioneering German works came to an end.

This brief historical overview of German theater in Amsterdam shows that what had begun small and just outside of Amsterdam's city borders in the 1770s, had found its place at the heart of the cultural capital only a few decades later. At the turn of the century, Amsterdam boasted three main stages, dedicated to performances in Dutch, French, and German. In particular the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg*, however, functioned as catalyst for Dutch theatrical life. It was here that Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, *Don Juan*, and *Die Hochzeit des Figaro* were introduced to the Dutch public.⁵³ Soon after these performances, many operas and plays were translated into Dutch and then staged at the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg*. The attraction of German theater was in large part due to the many opera performances, which had forced the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* to begin staging operas as

well and also to engage professional singers in the 1790s. Among the plays most often performed at the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* were Kotzebue's *Menschenhaat en Berouw* and *De Spanjaarden in Peru of de dood van Rolla*, Zschokke's *Abällino*, and Iffland's *De Jagers*.⁵⁴ The works of Schiller and Goethe on the other hand were rarely performed, and while all but three of Lessing's dramas were translated, only *Emilia Galotti* was actually staged more frequently.⁵⁵

As the example of Lessing indicates, dissemination of German drama was not limited to the stage alone but accompanied by the publication of translations and critical and theoretical contributions. An influential voice spearheading the translation and popularization of German drama, and German domestic drama in particular, was that of Mennonite pastor Cornelis van Engelen (ca. 1722-1793). Van Engelen studied philosophy and theology and served as a pastor for many years, before bad health forced him to resign in 1769. Until his death, he devoted himself to the study of philosophy and literature and was editor of several scholarly and popular philosophical review journals such as *De Denker* (1765), *De Filosooph* (1766-1769), and *De Rhapsodist* (1771-1783).⁵⁶ In the 1770s, when strict Calvinist forces intensified their attack on the theater after a devastating fire had destroyed the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg*, van Engelen countered that the theater did not have a morally corrupting influence, as its adversaries stated, but quite to the contrary stimulated the mind and purified the emotions. He published an extensive defense of the theater as an introduction to the *Spectatoriaale Schouwburg*, a compendium of exemplary plays he edited; the first volume appeared in 1775.⁵⁷

In twenty volumes the *Spectatoriaale Schouwburg* presented about sixty plays, mostly translations of German and French domestic dramas, and a few original Dutch plays (at least two by his own pen). Engravings by the famous painter and engraver Reinier Vinkeles (1741-1816) were included in each volume. Lessing was well represented: volume three (1776) contained a translation of *Miss Sara Sampson*; volume five (1777) opened with *Emilia Galotti*; volume 6 (1778) included *Der Freigeist*, and volume nine (1780) *Minna von Barnhelm*. The collection also featured works by Brandes, Weiße, Engel, Goethe (*Clavigo* and *Egmont*), and Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter, among others.⁵⁸ The *Spectatoriaale Schouwburg* introduced and helped popularize domestic drama in the Dutch language. Van Engelen had chosen this genre as he felt that it would make it easier for the audience to identify with the characters and their world, which would only strengthen the edifying role of the theater. He saw intellectual and moral improvement of the individual and the whole nation as the ultimate goals of the theater, which was achieved through the evocation of feelings and emotions, particularly of »medelyden« (compassion).⁵⁹

Although van Engelen did not explicitly mention Lessing here, his special affinity for this author is evident from the fact that alongside the translation of *Emilia Galotti* he also published »Aanwyzing van eenige fraaiheden in Emilia Galotti,« a translation of Christian Heinrich Schmid's letter to Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter (*Ueber einige Schönheiten der Emilia Galotti*, Leipzig 1773), which introduces the reader to Lessing's dramatic principles and examines the drama's characters. It was the translation from the *Spectatoriaale Schouwburg* that was used for *Emilia Galotti*'s Dutch première in the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* on 2 March 1790 and subsequently for performances in Rotterdam and The Hague in 1792, followed by Ghent and Bruges in 1793.⁶⁰ Beginning in 1796, *Emilia Galotti* was performed each year at the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* for about a decade.⁶¹

Besides van Engelen, it was the prominent poet and philosopher Johannes Kinker (1764-1845) who advocated for Lessing and Schiller. In the preface to his translation of Schiller's *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* (1807), he explained that his German colleagues had inspired him to use blank verse instead of alexandrine, as this was often more fitting for subject and characters than strict verse, yet more forceful than prose.⁶² Kinker's own dramas – *Celia* (1792), which takes place in Jerusalem during the crusades, and *Almanzor en Zehra* (1804), ending with a revelation of family bonds between Zehra and one of the conspirators – were influenced by Lessing's *Nathan der Weise*.

Not everyone welcomed the newly imported plays and musical works from Germany. As their popularity increased, the resistance from Dutch playwrights and theater critics also grew. Among the most prominent critical voices were Jan Frederik Helmers, Johannes Nomsz, Pieter Gerardus Witsen Geysbeek, and Abraham Louis Barbaz, who let off steam in their (short-lived) review journals.⁶³ The *Tooneelmatige Roskam* (1799) talked about the »vuiligheid van Kotzebue« (filth of Kotzebue) in the »mesthoop« (dung heap) of dramatic products, and called *De Toverfluit* (*Die Zauberflöte*), after its Dutch première on 3 April 1799 a »Germanic artless and incomprehensible product« that offended »common sense and good taste.«⁶⁴ Most critics still adhered to the principles of French neoclassicism and disapproved of the mixing of tragic and comic genres and the use of prose on stage, which, in their view, was not at all more natural, as proponents said, but questioned the playwright's professional competence.

Another argument against the imported German dramas was the deliberation that translated works would not contribute to fostering Dutch taste and style. Some critics also put their finger on an aspect which in their view was largely responsible for the great influx of German literary products: commerce.⁶⁵ For theaters and publishers alike, it was much more profitable to have existing works translated than to invest in commissioning

new plays. Dutch playwrights had to produce translations in order to earn a living, while they could hardly get their own works staged. Education and experience seemed to become less relevant for this task, as the new dramas in prose were easier to translate than classical dramas in verse. Many also believed themselves qualified to translate German texts due to the apparent resemblance between German and Dutch. For example, one translator noted that he took five lessons of German, after which he translated Wieland's *Die Geschichte der Abderiten*.⁶⁶ Almost all journals warned against the seeming similarity between the two languages and bemoaned the many deplorable translations.⁶⁷ The author in the *Tooneelmatige Roskam* offered a case in point from *De Toverfluit*, where »Gegenstand« (here: matter or purpose) was translated as »tegenstand« (opposition), adding the barb »what a pity that he is no certified translator!«⁶⁸

No matter how fiercely critics argued against German drama, it did not at all dampen the enthusiasm of audiences, readers, translators, publishers, and theater directors for German literary and musical products. What van Engelen had begun in his efforts to introduce German domestic drama to a Dutch audience had turned into a flourishing commercial business within just two decades. The reasons for this success, however, appear to go beyond the merely commercial motives mentioned by the critics, or the novelty of the repertoire as a welcome alternative to predominantly French models. Using Zschokke's *Abällino* (1795) as an example, Klaartje Groot has argued that some plays may have struck a chord in the Netherlands for very specific reasons. The play was staged by Dietrichs in the early days of the Batavian Republic, and a year later in Dutch translation at the *Amsterdamsche Schouwburg* and would soon become one of the most favored pieces in the repertoire. It features the adventures of a group of robbers who are planning a revolution and a redistribution of wealth in the Republic of Venice. The Dutch, as citizens of a small republic with an equally corrupt class of aristocrats, had experienced a revolution not too long before themselves and could empathize with the revolutionary robbers in distinctively different ways than a German audience could. Subsequent adaptations of the play clearly revealed its political reception, featuring interpretations ranging from Patriot to Orangist viewpoints.⁶⁹

This example strongly suggests that the reasons for the popularity of certain repertoire cannot be translated one on one from a German to a Dutch context. And while the establishment of a German theater in Amsterdam may have served the political goals of the Orangist restoration after 1787, the enormous popularity in particular of German domestic drama among a broad audience in the following decades indicates that this genre fell on fertile ground: At the moment of greatest political upheavals and at the brink of economic collapse, civil society had sprung into action, initiating

a host of cultural activities and creating new venues for cultural and intellectual exchange. To what extent did German domestic drama shape such civil discourses? Did it reinforce or nuance long held notions of the role of the burghers in their private and social lives? And did it foster or impede the articulation of Dutch national self-consciousness? Such and many other questions await to be explored in future research on German-Dutch theatrical interactions in the late eighteenth century.

This introductory overview of the history of the German Theater in Amsterdam and the questions it raises would not be complete without mentioning the building's final fate: while the French Theater still functions as a mid-size stage under the name *De Kleine Komodie* to promote young promising actors, the former *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* was demolished in 1946, perhaps symbolic of the fact that the nation, after the traumatic events of World War Two, was moving on to new, this time Anglo-Saxon, models. With the demolition of the building the memory of the *Hoogduitsche Schouwburg* was erased. Although I studied German and Musicology in Amsterdam, I wasn't aware that such a theater had ever existed and had played such a central role in the city's music and theater history. A note added on a card in the library's catalogue awoke my curiosity and has finally led to this essay.

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- 1 Johann Georg Schlosser, Briefe aus Holland an Herrn B. in H., in: Deutsches Museum (August 1776), p. 696.
- 2 Joris van Eijnatten, Paratexts, Book Reviews, and Dutch Literary Publicity: Translations from German into Dutch, 1760-1796, in: Wolfenbütteler Notizen zur Buchgeschichte, vol. 25.1 (2000), pp. 95-127.
- 3 A search of the *Nederlandse Centrale Catalogus* and the *Short Title Catalogue Netherlands* yielded 600 plays that were translated from German and published between 1760 and 1840. See Klaartje Groot, *Geliefd en gevreesd. Duits toneel in Nederland rond 1800*, Hilversum 2010, p. 39.
- 4 Groot, p. 40.
- 5 For more on the Amsterdam City Theater see among others: George W. Brandt and Wiebe Hogendoorn, *German and Dutch Theatre*, Cambridge 1993; Heinz Kindermann, *Das niederländische Barocktheater*, in: *Theatergeschichte Europas*, vol. 3, *Das Theater der Barockzeit*, Salzburg 1959, pp. 244-267; J.A. Worp, *Geschiedenis van den Amsterdamschen Schouwburg 1496-1772*, Amsterdam 1920; E[rnst] F[erdinand] Kossmann, *Nieuwe bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche tooneel in de 17e en 18e eeuw*, The Hague 1915.
- 6 The theater was run by regents of the »godshuizen« (almshouses), namely the »weeshuis« (orphanage) and »oudemannahuis«, charitable housing for men over sixty. See Rudolf Rasch, *Muziek in de Republiek. Muziek en Maatschappij in de Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden 1572-1795*, Utrecht 2018, p. 139.