

Großbritannien und Deutschland

Europäische Aspekte der politisch-kulturellen
Beziehungen beider Länder in Geschichte
und Gegenwart

Mit Beiträgen von Fachgelehrten und Wissenschaftlern aus England,
Schottland und Irland, Deutschland, Österreich, Holland und dem
Commonwealth zu

Ideologie

Literatur und Sprachwissenschaft

Geschichte und Kunstgeschichte

Soziologie, Philosophie, Psychologie und Theologie



WILHELM GOLDMANN VERLAG MÜNCHEN

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HANS WALTER GABLER

Tourism and Theatre: or, some links between Kassel and London in Jacobean times

A traveller's experience of England, as every German knows who has ever crossed the Channel, is the surest foundation of practical *Eng-landkunde*. All that books can teach about England, its history, its institutions, its cultural heritage, its people and their way of life, becomes fully intelligible only, it would seem, in the light of the impressions at first hand of a journey. Such a journey would take the visitor to London, of course, and perhaps to Canterbury, Cambridge, Oxford, and Windsor; and if he was particularly fortunate, he would have English friends to guide him. On his way from the coast to the capital, he might have stopped in Canterbury to see the cathedral. In London, he would do all the sights: the Tower, Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament, and Whitehall; the City, London Bridge, St. Paul's, and the Inns of Court. He would take a boat trip on the river, visit the markets, and go to the theatre. On a Sunday, his friends might urge him along to church to attend the service and hear the sermon, and then take him for a ride around the countryside, or boating, fishing, hunting, playing games, or to a neighbour's house or a garden party. Oxford and Cambridge would present themselves to him in the architectural splendour of their colleges as the country's ancient seats of learning; and at Windsor he might perhaps, at the right time of the year, catch a glimpse of the colourful ceremonies of a Garter solemnity at St. George's Chapel. All these things, even today, would count among the essential ingredients of a tourist's introduction to England. What they outline, in fact, is »des durchlauchtig und hochgeborenen fürsten und herrn Landtgraff Ottonis Reißē von Caßel auß in Engelandt anno 1611«. The Murhardsche Bibliothek und Landesbibliothek in Kassel possesses four itineraries documenting the young prince's remarkable journey in the summer of 1611¹. I came across them not out of any particular interest in early 17th-century travel or the state of *Englandkunde* in Jacobean times. It was the existence of a theatrical document in the same collection which led me to them, one as old (dated 1613), and equally as obscure: the play *Speculum Aestheticum* by Johannes Rhenanus, court physician and alchemist in Kassel since 1610. This, although ostensibly an original composition, has been found to be a

translation of Thomas Tomkis' *Lingua* (1607)². Even as a translation the German rendering would deserve attention, because it mixes blank verse and prose in the English manner which in the Preface is adumbrated as the stylistic ideal for the drama. How the ideal was fulfilled is admittedly uncertain: the Kassel manuscript has never been edited, the quality of its language remains yet untested. For Elizabethan and Jacobean drama and theatre studies its real interest lies in what its preface suggests about a collaboration of authors and actors in the English playhouses. This is the point to which I propose to return.

But how could the translation of an English play have come about at all at the court of a minor German principality in the early 17th century? By what climate of cultural exchange between Kassel and London was it favoured? and whence came Rhenanus' own familiarity with the state of the English drama as with the working conditions of the English theatre to which his preface and translation testify? His observations derive from first-hand experience («...wie ich in England in Acht genommen...»): did he accompany Landgraf Otto on his travels in 1611? Even on repeated scrutiny³, no proof can be derived from the itineraries of the journey that he did; furthermore, an incompatibility of dates between an extant letter of Rhenanus written in Kassel on August 7th, and the duration of the prince's journey from May 14th to September 4th, 1611, renders it most unlikely that it was as a member of Otto's entourage that Rhenanus visited London.

Yet those itineraries of 1611, once perused, begin to exert a fascination as documents in their own right. How did the young Landgraf's tour come about? What was its purpose? How did the German travellers experience England? And, again, of what nature were the links between Kassel and London which their journey and the reports that describe it bear witness of?

From 1592 to 1627, Landgraf Moritz der Gelehrte reigned in Hessen-Kassel. Politically, Hessen-Kassel did not play a leading part among the German principalities. But under Moritz, who built upon foundations which his father had laid before him, and who himself, as a patron of learning, of architecture, and of the performing arts, acquired a stature of true greatness, Kassel grew to be one of the foremost cultural centres in Germany. The Kasseler Hofkapelle, a significant inlet of Italian musical influence, was of high renown; Moritz's most famous musical protegee was Heinrich Schütz. During the years from 1603 to 1606, Kassel saw the raising of the first permanent court theatre building in Germany. Under the personal direction of Landgraf Moritz, classical, Italian and French influence was fused in its construction according to the best of Renaissance architectural theory and practice. The house was named Ottoneum in honour of several bearers of the name in the family line, of whom the young Landgraf Otto, Moritz's first-born, and favourite son, was the last⁴.

No doubt the institution as well as the building itself of the Kassel court theatre was the direct outcome of the fact that, in his day, Moritz was one of the two great protectors of the *Englische Komödianten* in Germany. Groups of English itinerant players were his court actors continuously over a period of about twenty years, from 1593 to around 1613. They performed in English; their troupe leaders were by contract even required to translate dramatic scripts from German – or rather, perhaps, they were given plot summaries in German which they expanded into full-length English dramatic dialogue for performance. In this manner, Moritz himself tried his hand occasionally at plays for his own theatre. Probably the court circles in Kassel gradually acquired a sufficient knowledge of English to be able tolerably well to follow the dialogue in the plays they saw acted. But it is also well testified that because English was not understood by German audiences at large, the performances of the *Englische Komödianten* came to rely on clowing, jesting, stage acrobatics, and on music to such an extent that their plays most properly may be said to have belonged to the Elizabethan theatrical genre of the »shew«. In an important sense, this agreed with Moritz's conception of the drama – itself perhaps shaped partly by what his players presented him with – as of an art-form not confined to the medium of language alone, but comprehending music, dance, and such forms of bodily exercise and expression as manifest themselves in tournaments, shews, and masques.

Court entertainments in Kassel with their attendant spectacles were not confined to the indoors theatre but were staged also in the adjoining tilt-yard, and they even on occasion made use of the whole valley of the river Fulda. The young Landgraf Otto – who was born in 1594 and died in an accident in 1617, and thus did not live to succeed his father in government – grew up in a tradition of Festivals, with »Ritterspiele«, theatrical shews and mythological *inventiones* of high splendour and style. In this respect his experience in early youth was akin to that of Prince Henry, King James' favourite son, who was born in 1593 and was Prince of Wales from 1610 until his untimely death in 1612. The comparison is not fortuitous: the two princes were of the same age, and they had both in their late teens mastered a universal Renaissance education well beyond their years. Moreover, they had been sustaining a regular correspondence over several years; the invitation to Otto to visit England resulted from it. For Prince Henry, *barriers*, and the masques which Inigo Jones designed for him (as for his mother), were a true means of self-expression. It is difficult to judge whether the customary court entertainments in Kassel, for all the artistic and allegorising reflection that went into them, ever attained the degree of sophistication which characterised those in London in the hey-day of the self-glorification of the court of James. But in 1610–11 (when, during the Christmas Revels, and six months before

Landgraf Otto's visit, Prince Henry embodied Oberon, »son of King Arthur and heir to the kingdom of Faery« in Ben Jonson's and Inigo Jones' masque *Oberon, The Fairy Prince*)⁵, there were eye-witnesses alive in London who would have remembered the significance and splendour of a Kassel festival at its best of fifteen years earlier on a momentous occasion which in their experience would have pre-dated by several years the vogue of court entertainment that in London had set in since the accession of King James, and Anne of Denmark, his Queen. On the birth of his first daughter, Elisabeth, in 1596, Landgraf Moritz had requested of Queen Elizabeth of England to be the child's godmother. The Queen had agreed and sent a large delegation, complete with players and all, and led by the Earl of Lincoln, to attend and participate in the christening celebrations of August, 1596. The Festival, with its tilts and mythological presentations (including one that culminated in fireworks from 60,000 rockets) extended over several days⁶.

Under the 16th of July we read in one of the extant itineraries of the journey of 1611 that the old Earl of Loncoln »so vor Zeiten von der Königin Elisabeht, naher Caßel auf F[räulein] Elisabeht Kindtauff gesandts weise abgefertiget, welcher sie in nahmen der Königin auch auß der tauffe gehoben« invited Otto to his house and regaled him in a stately manner. In his portrait gallery, we are told, the Earl also possessed a picture of Landgraf Moritz. This is the one link which the itineraries establish to the previous history of Kassel-London relations. Beyond that, the documents astonish us by their virtually total lack of a larger perspective on the dates, sights, and events which they record. But it is true, of course, that their view is that of the chronicler (or chroniclers) alone. As presented in the itineraries, the journey appears to have been nothing more than a tourists' pleasure trip. There is no conception whether – or else it is taken for granted that the 17-year-old Landgraf travelled in matters of state, or undertook the journey in fulfillment of a friendship. Indeed, it may be that Otto's journey – for whom otherwise the experience of a summer's travelling tour of Northern Germany, the Netherlands, England, and Northern France, added to the pleasure of a visit to the English royalty and nobility who liberally entertained him, was surely an educative end in itself – was not in all respects the same as that of his followers. There are repeated indications that, while the Landgraf was keeping private engagements, a separate sightseeing programme was put on for his retinue. It is this which is recorded. Into it, only the most spectacular events of the official visit are teichoscopically introduced.

However, the fact that the itineraries are so oddly unreflective does not detract from their appeal. We accompany the travellers by land and by water north down the Weser to Bremen, westward across to Holland and south through the cities and towns of Holland and Zealand

to Middelburg on a journey already full of events and sights recorded, and we share their sense of expectation mixed with unease when, after the fiercest of summer storms which raged for three days, they board the ship which will take them to England. Against adverse winds, they sail for several days down along the Flemish coast, until their captain, from about the height of Dunkirk, risks the jump across the Channel. They land in Deal and proceed to Sandwich where they are welcomed by a delegation of aldermen: »Alda ist zu Ihrer fürstlichen gnaden ein ehrbar Raht kommen, In langen habit, und talaren, mit 2 sceptern, so von den dienern vorgetragen, und de felici adventu gratuliret.«

Then to Canterbury, where the travelling party is taken on a full sight-seeing tour of the cathedral, the cathedral precincts, and the King's School. »Do not miss the site of Becket's murder, the Black Prince's Tomb, the Norman Crypt, the beautiful stained glass,« the *Shell Guide to Britain* of 1964 advises⁷. The German visitors in 1611 miss none of it. »Die Kirche . . . Ist mit schönen gemalten fenstern auß und auß besetzt . . . und ist kein fenster wie daß ander . . .,« states the report, and it goes on to specify that Edward IVth's Saints' Window is valued at £ 8000, which was also the sum that »the Spaniard« had (recently?) offered for it. Among the tombs noted and listed, that of the Black Prince receives a special mention. The account of that rather large chapel beneath the choir called *Templum Gallicum*, where at the times of service in the main church the sermons are given in French, obviously refers to the Norman Crypt. And a special attraction, needless to say, is the site of Thomas Becket's murder, complete with the hollows in the stone floor excavated by those who on their knees came to pray to him. The historical explanations given – then as now part and parcel of a well-guided tour – appear to have been not without tendentiousness. As the language switches to Latin in mid-sentence, the report comments on Thomas Becket »welcher vor Zeitten ein Episcopus alda gewesen, qui postea propter factiones ambitiosas, et scripta sua ambitiosa de gradu in foream praecipitatus . . .« Other details recorded are that there were tapestries around the choir below the marble columns, illustrating on the right »historiam Nativitatis et vitae Christi«, and on the left »Historiam passionis Christi«; and two books, namely *Biblia Anglicana* (was it a mint copy of the Authorised Version?) and *Liber Martyrum Anglicè in folio*, were special exhibits. That Kent can muster 60.000 soldiers is, finally, the note on which the travellers leave Canterbury for Rochester, and Gravesend, whence a boat takes them up the river to London. They take up lodgings at the inn of Johan (or Joan?) Dörper in Lombard Street where, as witnessed by the many coats-of-arms of German noblemen displayed, German visitors to London customarily dwelt.

The pattern of the travel journal is thus well established. A record of things seen, by no means invariably following a chronological order,

and on occasion condensed into lists such as that of the tombs in Canterbury Cathedral, is interspersed at random with topical or sketchily historical accounts, explanations, or anecdotes. It is the chronicler's manner of presentation which renders his report so »timeless« and reveals that the ways of showing England to touring foreigners have not greatly changed since 1611. This does of course not detract from the documentary value of the itineraries with regard to the matters they cover. Our store of information is much enriched in details about London life and English customs in the early 17th century. The reports tell us, for example, of ships recently returned from the East and the West Indies, or quote the exorbitant price of tobacco. There is a good description of London Bridge, we read that London has 122 parish churches, and that there are 308 steps up the steeple of St. Paul's. A list of the tombs in Westminster Abbey, with their inscriptions, and another of the prisoners in the Tower is given, which is headed by »Walter Rale, Equitus, Capitaneus satellitum Regis, [and] Baron Cobbam . . .« From the description of the visit to Cambridge, undertaken as a day trip from Audley End, a former Kingsman is pleased to learn that in King's College Chapel the visitors heard »über die maßen schön musiciren«; nor did the travellers miss Christ Church College in Oxford. Then, in spotlighting the plight of the Brandenburg ambassador Zacharias Köhrll at the outcome of his mission to present his Royal Majesty with 60 wild boars of whom only sixteen survived (»[Er hat] 60 wilde Schweine Kön: May: presentieren sollen, [sind] aber doch nicht mehr als 16 davon lebendig blieben«), the itineraries truly enter the realm of unforgettable anecdote.

It is thus not always easy to decide where the seemingly ephemeral detail becomes significant. What, for example, is one to make of the news that of two lions and three lionesses kept by the Tower, the young lion was named James, the young lioness Anne, because (and the reasoning seems a little obscure) they were the offspring of the old lion who had [long] been reigning as monarch but never before fathered cubs. Are we to take it that the old lion is England that had remained without issue until James and Anne arrived? If so, these animals had their part to play in that continuous and complex process of self-dramatisation of King James which was his life. It takes on a gory aspect in the fact that even in that summer of 1611 – that is, almost six years after the event – the severed heads of the leading conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot were still stuck high up on the Houses of Parliament. Catesby's head was fastened on the corner facing the house on the South Bank where he had lived, and Percy's on the opposite corner on the river front; his head was pitched higher because his estate in life had been higher (»doch stecket des Perse kopff etwas höher als des Gazabe (sic), die weill ehr höheres standes gewesen«). Of the twelve poles on London Bridge on which the heads of the other plotters were displayed,

one had fallen down, the remaining eleven were still standing. Altogether, the Gunpowder Plot is the most talked-of event throughout the itineraries, and this is not only so because by 1611 it had not yet receded back into history to take its place with such other sensational historical matter as Richard III's murder of the princes in the Tower, or Henry VIII's ending of the strife between the Houses of Lancaster and York. Rather, it is quite evident that it was official policy to keep the merciful delivery from that traitorous threat to King and Kingdom fresh in the memories of the people: every Tuesday still, services of thanksgiving and sermons were held in the churches throughout the realm, because it was on a Tuesday that the Gunpowder Plot had been discovered.

King James surrounded himself with significance as he acted the part of the King. This is very tangibly illustrated by long lists of the mottos of emblems which fill many pages in the itineraries. They are separately introduced in the course of the descriptions of the several royal palaces and hunting-lodges visited. More than anywhere else, emblems were in evidence in Whitehall Palace. A whole gallery – or, according to another version of the reports, many of the state rooms in the palace were lined with painted or embroidered emblem shields⁸. The King's and Queen's known predilection for emblematic art and thought, as well as the weight the German chronicler gives them by his very listings, would suggest that the function of the emblematic representations everywhere was by no means decorative only. For those who even in their daily errands passed by them (in so far as they still saw and contemplated what they were surrounded by), everyday life was thus moralised by moralised, and allegorically moralising, art. Art-in-life and life-in-art at court must have been thoroughly interchangeable. Of life-in-art as enacted on the stage of the court theatre the itineraries make no mention; but there is of course a strong element of self-representation even in the proliferation of emblems, and from the decorative display, for example, of the Stuart family tree »ab Adamo«, and *via* Arthur of Britain and Brutus to James, such as it was noted by the chronicler in prominent positions among the emblems in several of the royal palaces, there would seem to be but a short step to masques like *Oberon, the King of Faery*. Intensely, however, the accounts of Landgraf Otto's journey allow us to participate in the art-in-life spectacles with which Otto's visit was officially opened and concluded. King James' ceremonial appearances in these scenes constitute a form of highly significant theatre. The account of the welcoming reception at Greenwich may speak for itself⁹:

Den 30 Junii sind Ihre fürstliche gnaden zu königlicher Majestät nach Grünwiz zur Audienz gefordert worden, des Morgens umb 7 Uhr, sindt mit 5 kutschen bieß an die Themesie oder Thimß gefahren, da Ihre fürstliche gnaden in des Königs schiff, wier aber in die ander barquen geseßen, und bieß nach Grünwiz

geschieft. Alda wier in das schloß geführet, durch die Praesent Cammer, bieß in die secret audienz kammer, da nur fürsten zum Könige gelassen werden. Der König ist herauß kommen, seinen huht abgetan, und nach beschehener Reverenz haben Ihre Majestät Ihre fürstliche gnaden gehöhret, darauf Starschedel latinè geredet, und das Credentzschreiben eingeben, quibus literis lectis Rex conclave ingressus. Danach königliche Majestät Ihre fürstliche gnaden mit sich in die Capel genommen, da man eine hehrliche Music gehöhret, den König, die Königin, [den] Jungen Prinzen prechtig und hehrlich angetahn, gesehen. Concionatus est . . . Anglicè ex 1 Epist: Johan: c. 2. Vers: 15.16.17. quem nobilissimum textum de varietate [sic, for: vanitate] mundi agentem eleganter explicuit.

Finita concione processerunt [sic] regem ministri aulici, cum scipionibus albis, sigillum secretum ferebat unus, scepra duo maxima praeferebant, cum corona, Episcopus Cantuariensis et Eboracensis inter alios, so weiß begleitet gewesen, wie auch der Tresurir, so neben Ihrer fürstlichen gnaden gangen. || Der königliche Pracht wahr also angestellet, Es stunden durch zwey lange sähle viel städtlicher wackerer langer soldaten, so alle in seyden und sammet gekleidet, und alle vergülte Partisanen mit 7 zacken, ezliche in einem sahl aber helleparten gehalten, dardurch man gehen muste, und erstlich kahmen ezliche von Adell, denselben folgte ein ahnsehlicher altter wohlbekleiteter Man, welchen auch 2 alte Männer folgten, so weiß über den Ermeln gehabt, demselben das königliche Wappen, oder Crone, kunstreich und städtlich aus gearbeitet, denselben folgten ezliche Graven, und herrn, denselben zwey sehr große königliche scepra, denselben folgte königlich Majestät beneben Ihrer fürstlichen gnaden und dem Tresurir, so gar ein kleiner Man, Den selben folgte das königliche schwert, und negst diesem der ganze Adell, und gingen also durch ezliche gemach, in welchen eine städtliche königlich Guardi auf beyden seitten gestanden, und begleiteten königliche Majestät in ein gemach. Da sie als dan seiner königlichen Majestät die hende geküßet von dannen gefahren.

Nach verrichter audienz wieder nach London geschieffet, da die wagen wieder am waßer aufgewartet, und also umb 1 Uhr wieder ins Losament kommen. Die Graffen von Suffolck, so Ihre fürstliche gnaden begleitet, haben taffell mit gehalten.

The subject of the sermon on this occasion would appear as a stroke of superb irony.

A fitting counterpart to the ceremonial reception were the three-day celebrations at Windsor towards the end of Landgraf Otto's sojourn. At a state dinner, his Majesty discoursed on the bad English pronunciation of the Latin tongue («ei» for »i«), and himself gave an example of Latin well spoken by reciting verses from Horace. Also, he knighted the two ambassadors Starschedel and Widemarckter who accompanied Otto; and a solemnity of the Knights of the Garter was held at St. George's Chapel. However, to the German visitors the most stunning display of royal prerogative and power came when on the Tuesday, following the sermon in commemoration of the delivery from the Gunpowder Plot, His Majesty, with his eldest son and daughter as well as the Bishops of Coventry, Lichfield and Gloucester in atten-

dance, by a laying-on of hands healed eight or nine patients who suffered from struma:

Der Königk saß auf einem stuhle, der Prinz stundt zur rechten und hielt des Königes huht, dan stundt die Prinzeßin, dan rührete königliche Majestät die Patienten so vor Ihme knieten mit 2 fingern ahn, redete ezliche wortt auf Englisch, ohne gefehr also, der König rühret dich ahn, Gott heile dich, hing einem jeden einen Engelotten an einem weißen seidenen bande an den halß, Zwey Bischoffe mit langen weißen Chor röcken beteten kniende, und wardt mit dem gebet beschloßen. Ist geschehen in beysein des Bischoffs von Coventri, und Lizfeldt, Item des von Gloucester . . .

That same afternoon, Landgraf Otto left Windsor and spent almost every one of the days that remained until his departure in the company of Prince Henry: dining at Richmond, visiting Hampton Court, hunting, exercising horses, tilting, playing ball-games. Sometimes Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of York (Prince Charles) were called on to join in in the youthful merriments; often the two princes were together alone. July 26th: »Thaffell gehalten mit dem Prinzen gar allein.« A friendship that had its roots in a correspondence which the two young men who were still in their teens had sustained over several years now came to fruition. The thought is not without poignancy that neither of the young princes, who were each his father's as well as his country's especial hope and pride, long outlived the summer of their first and only encounter.

* * *

Zu London sindt 7 Theatra, da täglichen, die Sonttäge ausgenommen Comaedien gehalten werden, unter welchen das vornembste der Gilbus, so über dem Waßer lieget. Das Theatrum da die Kinder spielen ist auf dießseit des Waßers, spielen um 3 Uhr, aber nur von Michaelis bieß auf Ostern, hier kostet der eingang einen halben schilling nur, da an andern orten wohl eine halbe Cron, diese spielen nur bei lichtern, und ist die beste Compani in Lunden.

This, and, in an entry covering July 5–8, the all too brief remark »Auch diese tage eine schöne Englische Commedien gehöret,« – these are the only references in the itineraries of Landgraf Otto's journey of 1611 to the theatre in London. The statement about theatre conditions is tantalisingly elusive. What is expressed clearly, though it is not news, is that there were seven theatres in London, that performances were given regularly on weekdays throughout the year, that of the companies the Children alone had a limited season, playing from Michaelmas to Easter at 3 o'clock in the afternoons, and that their house was on »this side of the water«, and the Globe on the South Bank. Further information contained in the passage, however, is blurred by syntactical ambiguity. From what is generally known, sixpence in admission was charged at the Globe and half-a-crown at the Blackfriars theatre, and this would define the opposition of »hier/da an andern orten« as a syntactic parallel to the successive mention of the two theatres. But

what is the reference of the subsequent »diese«? Which of the companies was it that played by lights only and was the best in London? It is possible that the parallelism of construction is continued. To the initial affirmation of the superiority of the Globe as a theatre one would then naturally link the final praise of the best company as referring to the King's Men. But did they play by lights only? Did they do so in 1611? Artificial lighting is customarily associated with private theatres only, such as the Blackfriars. The syntax does indeed permit the alternative construction that the Children played by lights; at the same time, this would put them forward as the best company in London. Would they, in 1611, have merited such unqualified praise? Neither interpretation concurs fully with accepted notions, or contradicts them so unambiguously as to call for their revision. Moreover, there remains the possibility that the syntactical obscurity reflects genuine confusion due to a failure to grasp that the Globe company played also at the Blackfriars.

Thus, our knowledge of London theatrical conditions in 1611, and those in particular under which the King's Men worked at about the time of Shakespeare's last plays and eventual retirement, is not increased. Even less, of course, does Landgraf Otto's chronicler offer any kind of evaluation of the English drama. It may, however, not be without significance that the theatrical performance attended is recorded not as something seen, a spectacle, but as something heard. Whether unwittingly or not, his choice of expression emphasizes the importance of the medium of language in the theatre. This, precisely, is Johannes Rhenanus' concern. In his Preface to *Speculum Aestheticum*, he discusses drama in terms of the composition as well as the delivery of dramatic speech. According to his argument, the English drama is unsurpassed with regard to both »composition« and »action«. The art of the English playwrights and poets is that of employing verse and prose together. They use iambic pentameter for all matter weighty, stately and grave, thereby putting the »action«, or acting, of such matter into the hands, as it were, of the players. Simple speech in prose, on the other hand, is their vehicle for lowly matter. Things high and low are thus not thrown together, but the distinction of »ligatae [et] solutae orationis« is observed according to decorum. Yet both the distinction and the commingling of verse and prose (as Rhenanus explains in order to justify his own attempt at writing a German play in the English manner) is by the English poets deemed essential to the writing and to the presentation of plays, in so far as only together they provide scope for action suited to both character and matter. As for the actors – and here follows the one passage of Rhenanus' preface which has become known, but which, if quoted, is always quoted in isolation, so that this paraphrase of Rhenanus' whole argument should serve to put it again in its context¹⁰ – »as for the actors (as I have observed in England),

they are gathered [or: instructed? Rhenanus' term is »instituiret«] daily as if at school [in such a way] that even the foremost actors there must accept instruction from the poets, whereby life and grace are given and conferred upon a well-written play. It is no wonder, therefore, that English players (I speak of the skilled ones) are preferred to others and possess excellence.«

Clearly, Rhenanus' argument is an exposition of early Jacobean theatrical presentation of dramatic writing regarded as poetry for the stage. With respect to theatrical practices, it suggests remarkable facts – if facts they be, and if we can be sure of the evidential value and the implications of Rhenanus' words. One would be tempted to derive from them a statement that, in the English theatre around 1610, the poets rehearsed the players. However, although it may be taken for granted that Rhenanus actually attended theatre rehearsals in London (for only by visits to the workshop could he have gained the understanding he displays of the essential qualities of mature Elizabethan/Jacobean dramatic art), the reference itself to such rehearsals unfortunately remains both incidental and elusive. It gives valuable documentary support, it is true, to the notion of a close collaboration between poets and players. It suggests, indeed, that such collaboration was a normal and a regular, even a daily practice. At the same time, however, its validity as evidence in this respect would seem to be impaired by the fact that the reporter was, of course, only a temporary visitor to London. In actual detail, it does not say that poets rehearsed the players in the full sense of the word as we use it today. But it does inform us of sessions where the playwrights advised the players on how to speak their lines so as to give stage presence to the written language and make it expressive as dramatic speech; the excellence of English actors was due precisely to such training. We are taken back, it seems, to a situation we have seen before on the stage: Hamlet, the author of a speech to be inserted into a play about the Murder of Gonzago, gives advice and instruction to the First Player who is to deliver it: suit the action to the word, the word to the action. From Johannes Rhenanus the playwright's eyewitness report we learn that Hamlet's concern was in truth that of the Elizabethan and early Jacobean dramatists. They were not indifferent to the quality of the realisation of their dramatic poetry, as poetry for the stage, in the theatre. Where their poetry and their instruction sprang from the same imaginative sources, a just delivery of dramatic language and action by the players would have been a natural outcome. Nothing, then, could have accorded better with the poets' and the players' joint intentions than that the German tourists from Kassel who visited London in 1611 *heard* a fine English comedy.

Anmerkungen

- 1 MSS. hass. 66, 67, 68, and 6; all four were generously deposited on loan for my use at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München. MSS. hass. 66, 67 and 68 are bound quarto volumes. In MS hass. 66, the 1611 itinerary is one of several travel journals which together constitute »Oberst Caspar Widmarckters Reisetagebücher, 1602–1619«. Widmarckter was one of the two Kassel delegates who were knighted by James I on June 23, 1611. As one of the inner circle of Otto's entourage, he would have been in the best position not only to report, but to evaluate the events of the journey. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the account in his journals is not his at all, but (as bibliographic and textual evidence shows) merely a copy of MS hass. 68. This and MS hass. 67 are in the same hand, which is probably that of the main compiler who repeatedly refers to himself as »I«, and whose name has been interlined once each in the three mss. as Johanß Georg Dehn (Rechtaler). MSS. hass. 68 and 67 appear to be radiating faircopies of lost, and perhaps collaborative, »foul papers«, one quire of which may have been preserved as fols. 50–55 of MS hass. 68. MS hass. 67 is the fairer of the copies and shows signs of textual condensation plus, in part, a different arrangement of the material. MS hass. 6, a slim octavo volume, is the odd one out among the itineraries. Its text, though continuous, is inscribed in several hands and, while less detailed, differs from the Dehn text in wording but not in character. Whether it constitutes an alternative firsthand account of the journey or merely a later paraphrase of Dehn's report, I have not endeavoured to establish.
- 2 Ms. Theatr. 2. Philipp Losch, *Johannes Rhenanus, ein Casseler Poet des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts*, (Diss. Marburg, 1895) is a collection of material relevant to Rhenanus' life and writings.
- 3 Losch came to the same conclusions before me.
- 4 The building, approx. 35 m long, was on an essentially trapez-shaped ground-plan, with the stage backed against the narrow end. The depth of the stage cannot be determined with certainty; however, flying-machines could be accommodated on a floor level above it. In the auditorium, the curved public seating ascended as in an amphitheatre up towards the apsidially arched rear wall. The »state« seats for the Landgraf and the Court were apparently raised on stone pedestals opposite stage-centre in the middle of the auditorium. Altogether, the theatre held an audience of about 500. See: Hans Hartleb, *Deutschlands Erster Theaterbau*, (Berlin, 1936), on which, together with Christiane Engelbrecht et. al., *Theater in Kassel* (Kassel, 1959) and C. von Rommel, *Geschichte Hessens*, vol. VI (1837), my account of Kassel, its rulers and their festivals is based.
- 5 Cf. John Harris et al., *The King's Arcadia: Inigo Jones and the Stuart Court* (Catalogue of the Inigo Jones exhibition at the Banqueting House, Whitehall, 1973). (London, 1973) p. 45
- 6 There are contemporary accounts in English and in German: Edward Monings, *The Landgrave of Hessen his princelie receiuing of her Maiesties Embassador*. (London, 1596); and Wilhelm Dilich, *Beschreibung und Abriß dero Ritterspiel so... Herr Moritz Landgraff zu Hessen etc. auff die Fürstliche Kindtauffen Frewlein Elisabethen... angeordnet und halten lassen*. (Cassel, 1598); Wilhelm Dilich, *Das Ander Buch Von der Beschreibung dero Fürstlichen Kindtauff ... unnd von denen dazumals verbrachten und celebrirten Ritterspielen*. (Cassel, 1601).
- 7 My copy of the *Guide* is a present from Dr. John Bourke.
- 8 In MS. hass. 68 the list of the emblems in Whitehall is separated from the main text and fills no less than 34 quarto pages. Since under July 28 the chronicler notes that

he and a few others took a boat at four in the afternoon to Whitehall where they copied the mottos of about half the emblems, there is a good possibility that even the 34-page list does not exhaust the King's, or Queen's, store of emblematic wisdom. On the basis of the documentary evidence of the Kassel manuscripts, the whole question of the royal craze for emblems would probably bear closer investigation.

- 9 I give a conflated text from MSS. hass. 67 and 68. The German text as based on MS. 68 which follows the double-stroke division covers the same matter as the Latin text which precedes it in the paragraph.
- 10 See, for example, J. L. Styan, *Shakespeare's Stagecraft*. (Cambridge, 1967) p. 53. The full text of the Preface in German has been reprinted (with only minor inaccuracies of spelling and punctuation) in W. Creizenach, *Die Schauspiele der englischen Komödianten*, (Berlin, 1889) pp. 327 ff.

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