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**ALMANACS AS SOURCES FOR DOCUMENTING  
GERMAN-LANGUAGE THEATRE  
FROM 1752 TO 1918**

What possibilities and contradictions slumber in the German provinces. [...] One doesn't know Germany if he does not know the provinces with their restrictions and rich possibilities in their resignation and courage.<sup>1</sup>

Using contemporary terms to describe the German theatre prior to the First World War leads to a misunderstanding of the prevailing situations. With the exception of most court theatres, the theatres were predominantly private enterprises dependent on box-office income for survival; with town populations generally under 20,000 and venue seating capacities between 400 and 800, plays were seldom repeated during a season. The quality of the performances would most certainly be questionable for us today. The distinction between "serious" and "entertaining" theatre is not applicable, even though since the 20<sup>th</sup> century this distinction is often used to refer to a non-existent elevated cultural entity.<sup>2</sup> The theatre was very much what we today call the entertainment industry, i.e. what was performed was geared entirely on what would draw audiences, not what would "elevate" or be culturally enlightening for them.

Two terms crop up regularly when the German theatre is presented: mobility and provinces. Strangely, the full extent of what this means is seldom presented and their full impact is overlooked. This is not necessarily because the information is not available, but rather because the information is not available in forms which allow it to be conveniently used. Consequently, if we exclude the individual treatments of particular cities and towns, the German theatre which is presented is primarily what took place in a few (generally court) theatres in a few cities: in particular Berlin, Munich, Vienna, Dresden and Hamburg, and then for a short time in Meiningen, and where the opera is concerned, Bayreuth. The individual treatments of local theatres seldom receive more than passing (and often derogative) treatment in theatre histories, and hence our understanding of the structures and practices of the German theatre is lopsided, if not misleading.

Perhaps nowhere was there a greater number of theatres than in areas where a

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<sup>1</sup> IHERING 1961, 113f. [Translation PSU].

<sup>2</sup> The so-called "classical" plays were generally box-office poison. When they appeared in the repertory, they were generally the vehicles for visiting performers, or they were performed with reduced prices (generally Saturday matinees).

German-speaking populace was present. To a large extent this was because 1) there were many autonomous courts and dukedoms which competed with each other in having a theatre company present to relieve the boredom of court life, 2) in many regions the economic and administrative affairs were in the hands of German speakers, or 3) many travelling companies visited remote areas either regularly or irregularly.

The court-financed venues had anywhere from 400 to several thousand seats which were largely filled by members of the court and were not dependent on being box-office successes; the seats were primarily for members of the court and not for the populace, furthermore only a few of the towns had more than 20,000 inhabitants. Non-court venues had seating capacities from 400 to 900; like the cities where a court was located, these cities generally also had less than 20,000 inhabitants. This resulted in a system where plays were seldom performed more than two or three times in a season. To keep the relatively small potential audience happy, it was necessary not only to have a continuously changing repertory, but also to bring in new faces in the ensemble for guest performances.<sup>3</sup> In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the theatre performances in towns without a court were almost exclusively privately-operated enterprises and the venues were generally in restaurants, hotels, sport halls or other buildings with space to accommodate several hundred spectators.

This extensive network of venues developed a structure which founded the basis for present-day theatre. Some cities had a larger segment of the population willing to visit the theatre regularly, these cities were then able to support several venues; they were also able to offer greater financial incentives to attract “better” actors. This also made it possible for actors to play the various towns against each other and advance on the cultural ladder by continually moving about until they were able to reach the cultural pinnacle – generally the court theatres in Berlin, Vienna, Munich, etc.<sup>4</sup>

A major source for information about these venues can be found in almanacs which began to be published in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and continue to the present. The four most frequently encountered terms included in the titles are almanac, yearbook, calendar and journal.<sup>5</sup> As was noted in 1846: “no discipline has

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<sup>3</sup> See ULRICH 2015c for additional information about guest performances. A treatment of stars as guest performers is treated in BERNIS 1959.

<sup>4</sup> In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was an increase in the number of companies in the US, where many of the structures present in Europe remained in place, but with differences. There where German theatre took root, the size of the German-speaking population was considerably larger than most cities in Europe, but the social function of the theatre was somewhat different. Particularly in the US the number of large travelling companies was greater than in Europe, whereby these companies were a welcome source of great financial gains for both the big names in the court theatres and for the agents who arranged the tours.

<sup>5</sup> In German: Almanach, Jahrbuch, Kalendar und Journal.

as many almanacs as the theatre. Since the middle of the last century, scarcely a year has passed without the appearance of one or more almanacs for actors, particularly in Germany, where every respectable theatre has its own almanac”<sup>6</sup> The author of this article doesn't really elaborate on the various forms which existed and what the characteristics of the various forms are, thereby confusing the reception and use by theatre historians.

For the sake of clarity, it is necessary to define the types of publications, independent of the terms used in the titles:

1. **Almanacs, or universal almanacs.** These publications treat more than one company or theatre and were conceived as an annual publication, i.e. they are serial publications. As a rule, the editors obtained the information about the companies at the beginning of the season, and the almanacs appeared about Christmas. Since they were sold via the normal book distribution ways, the number of copies which were printed were large and consequently, many of them have been preserved.
2. **Journals or local journals.** These publications deal with only one company or theatre. With the exception of some of the court theatres, not many copies were printed, and they were only available in the town where the company performed. At best, only a few copies of these publications have been preserved. Within this category there are several subcategories:
  - a) **Prompter journals.** These publications, although they are generally treated as serial publications by libraries, are better treated as monographs, since the prompters were seldom longer than one season in a company and often produced more than one journal during a season [at the end of the calendar year – at New Year – and at the end of the season – either the regular season at Easter or the summer season]. The prompters used the proceeds from the journals as an auxiliary source of income.<sup>7</sup> They generally list the members of the company and also have a chronological list of the plays which were performed by the company.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> „Keine Kunst, keine Wissenschaft hat so viel ausschließlich für sie bestimmte Almanache aufzuweisen, als das Theater. Seit der Mitte des vorherigen Jahrhunderts ist fast kein Jahr ohne einen oder mehrere Almanache für Schauspieler und Schauspielere vergangen, besonders in Deutschland, wo jedes nur irgend bedeutende Theater einen Almanach gehabt hat.“ L.S. [i.e. Louis Schneider]: „Almanache für das Theater“, in: Robert Blum, Karl Herloßsohn u. Hermann Marggraff (Hrsg.): *Allgemeines Theater-Lexikon, oder: Encyclopädie alles Wissenswerthen für Bühnenkünstler, Dilettanten und Theaterfreunde*. Volume 1. Altenburg u. Leipzig 1839, p. 53. [Translation PSU].

<sup>7</sup> Other sources of auxiliary income were the sale of texts of songs and poems, which were peddled door-to-door, just like playbills.

<sup>8</sup> As such, this repertory is more accurate than collections of playbills, since the playbills were always

- b) **Statistical retrospectives.** These publications were published annually by the director and served as justification for the quality of his work.
  - c) **Publications with pictures of the actors.** These publications are a type of souvenir for the visitors of the theatre and were generally financed by advertisements from local businesses. They began appearing late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
3. **Biographical yearbooks.** There are only a few of these.<sup>9</sup> They almost always remained a single volume.<sup>10</sup>
  4. **Dramatic yearbooks.** These were anthologies of plays or operas and enjoyed a considerable popularity at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After 1868 they ceased to be published. Several of these publications had a long life.<sup>11</sup>

The number of almanacs is not very large; however, some of them had long runs, hence, the total number of volumes involved is more than 250. The number of towns where professional venues are documented as having taken place is over 4000. Geographically, the bulk of these towns were in an area North to South from Helsinki to Sarajevo, East to West from Moscow to San Francisco, although at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century numerous travelling companies are documented visiting South America, the Near and Far East, Africa and Australia. Initially the focus in the almanacs was on the so-called permanent or “stable” theatres, with only occasionally the travelling or “ambulant” companies being documented.

The first major almanac, the *Theater-Kalender auf das Jahr ...*, was published from 1775 to 1800 in Gotha by the writer, journalist, librarian and theatre director, Heinrich August Ottokar Reichard (1751–1828). In addition to literary texts and articles dealing with the theatre,<sup>12</sup> biographical articles and listings of actors and writers, illustrations and partial scores, the calendar contained listings of the members of the major companies, i.e. those which had been invited to perform at the major courts. The success was such that became the model for most of the almanacs which appeared in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Unfortunately, the almanacs which appeared at the

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published prior to the time of performance and do not reflect last minute changes in what was performed, i.e. they are records of intent, not verification of what transpired.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 2.

<sup>10</sup> The biographical information for roughly 30,000 persons in the biographical yearbooks and the almanacs was indexed in Ulrich 1985. A later publication (ULRICH 1997a) increased the number of persons indexed to roughly 90,000 by adding material from theatre biographical dictionaries.

<sup>11</sup> For a listing of the dramatic pocketbooks, see Appendix 3.

<sup>12</sup> With the publication of the various organizational rules for various theatres, the *Theater-Kalender* was instrumental in solidifying the theatre and establishing it as a serious organization. See: ULRICH 2018b, BELITSKA-SCHOLTZ-ULRICH 2004 and 2005 and ULRICH 2009.

beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were not as successful as Reichard's *Theater-Kalender*, most discontinued publication after a few years, so that the information on theatre companies during this period is scanty, and the large number of travelling companies which did not perform at major courts are not documented.

Beginning in 1836, the situation changed. Ludwig Wolff, who as prompter at the Royal Theatre in Berlin had published a journal for several seasons<sup>13</sup>, became a theatre agent.<sup>14</sup> In his new role, he incorporated the Berlin local journal into an almanac along the lines of Reichard's *Theater-Kalender*. This new almanac with the title *Almanach für Freunde der Schauspielkunst* was published until 1893 (after 1854 with the title: *Deutscher Bühnen-Almanach*). In the course of the 57 editions, the number of cities listed in the index grew from 52 to 490. This is deceiving, however, for only those cities where the companies had their main seat are listed; unlisted are all the cities which were visited by the companies. Initially there was always a play which was handled by the agent was published; also the almanac continued publishing the repertory of the Berlin Court Theatre. This ceased when the name was changed.

At the end of the 1850s the theatre director turned agent, Ferdinand Roeder (1807-1880) published his own almanac, *Ferdinand Roeders Theater-Kalender* (1858-1879); and following the founding of the Association of German Theatre Personal in 1871, a third almanac appeared as competition, *Almanach der Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger* (1871-1889). By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the last of these was able to establish itself as the most viable. The name of the almanac was changed to *Neuer Theater-Almanach*, and in 1915 a final change was made to *Deutsches Bühnen-Jahrbuch*, a title which it still has today. Then at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Although the three almanacs appear to be similar, there are extensive differences which make a comparison difficult. Only about 75% of the cities listed in the indexes are identical. These discrepancies arose because the city where the theatre director sent information about his company was not always the same, so that the same company might be listed under different cities in the various almanacs. Furthermore, not all theatre directors sent information about their company to all three of the editors. In addition, the names of the theatres are inconsistent.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Repertorium und Personalbestand der Königlichen Schauspiele zu Berlin* [after 1831 with the title: *Repertorium und Personalbestand der königl. deutschen und französischen Schauspiele zu Berlin*] from 1830 to 1836.

<sup>14</sup> For a discussion on theatre agents see: Hildebrand 1993, Hildebrand 2000 and Watzka 2006.

<sup>15</sup> Another problem not immediately apparent is that with the lack of a standardized orthography, it is not unusual for names to be spelled differently in the same listing of the companies (for example the name of the director under the heading director need not be identical to his appearance among the actors or singers). Another problem here is that the handwriting of the information sent to the editors

The primary places of publication of the almanacs were Berlin, Leipzig and Vienna, since these were the cities where the agents had their offices. The more distant a company was from these locations, the less likely regular information about theatre activity in the outlying regions made its way to the editors. Particularly the activity in Southeast Europe and in the United States is noticeably less documented than the activities in the direct vicinity of where the almanacs were published. Another reason for the under representation in these areas is that many of the companies did not have a permanent location where they could be reached and since they did not have a permanent location, they had a lower status on the topographical cultural ladder.

In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the almanacs, which were almost all published by people professionally engaged with the theatre focussed on the needs of practitioners, provided more and more information for the daily needs of the users. This closeness to the needs and practices of those working in the theatre is evident in the development in the content of the almanacs. Whereas the almanacs at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had large sections with articles relating to the theatre, the later volumes moved increasingly away from this and included chronologies of the events of the past year. The information about the individual venues included information which would assist the personal in deciding whether a certain venue was suitable for their needs.<sup>16</sup> Increasingly such information as: population, number of seats in the theatre, what days in the week plays were performed, whether visits to neighbouring villages were to be expected, what newspapers reported on the theatre (an also who the critics were and where their offices were located<sup>17</sup>), information about the heating and lighting in the theatre, whether historical costumes were provided and for whom. Likewise, for most of the companies the addresses of where

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was illegible and this often resulted in very strange spellings.

<sup>16</sup> Including such information was especially begun by Carl Albrecht SACHSE in his *Statistische Handbücher* from 1853 to 1874, whose intended audience was particularly theatre directors. Sachse includes information about costs for renting the venue, expected income, how many weeks were recommended, whether or not the population was receptive for theatre, whether the contracts with the city council were advantageous or not. Such information was also included in the *Deutsches Theater-Lexikon. Eine Encyklopedia alles Wissenwerthen der Schauspielkunst und Bühnentechnik*. Eds.: Adolf OPPENHEIM and Ernst GETTKE. Leipzig 1889, where treatment of towns with a population over 1000 are presented. The information from this encyclopedia as well as other theatre encyclopedias from the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been included in the introductory descriptions of the towns in the documentation.

<sup>17</sup> This was important, since particularly visiting actors would be expected to pay their respects to the local critics, otherwise the resulting reviews would not necessarily be good.

the members of the company<sup>18</sup> lived are included, what plays had been added to the repertory and which hotels and localities were recommended.

Understandably, the most towns are in the area of present-day Germany (over 1300). What is surprising is the distribution of the towns in other countries: the country with the next greatest number of cities is not Austria (with 312), which one would expect, but the Czech Republic (376), followed by Poland (320).<sup>19</sup> Thereafter the numbers drop rapidly: France<sup>20</sup> (118), Italy<sup>21</sup> (97), Switzerland and the USA<sup>22</sup> (each with 73), England<sup>23</sup> (50), Romania (39), Hungary (28), Belgium (23), Russia and the Netherlands (each with 22), Serbia (18), Slovenia (20), Croatia (17), Slovakia (16) and Denmark and Brazil<sup>24</sup> (each with 12).

All the extensive information in the almanacs has remained largely unused because the way it has been gathered and presented does not allow researchers to readily access it. Even more important relationships are difficult to discover and consequently the many aspects relating to the theatre have remained buried in all these volumes.

Together with the Don Juan Archive in Vienna, a project<sup>25</sup> is being undertaken to use the information in the first two types of publications (i.e. almanacs and journals) in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the theatrical activity of the professional theatre. The project is divided into two parts, since the nature of the two types of publications do not allow them being treated as an entity. The first part documents the material in the almanacs, which likewise has two sections:

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<sup>18</sup> It should be noted here, that not only the actors, singers, dancers and other performers of the company are listed, but also most of the other members of the company, often extending to the cleaning women and gardeners. Also listed are departures from the company (with indications to which town or company the actors were moving), who gave guest performances in the past season.

<sup>19</sup> The numbers for the Czech Republic and Poland are to a large extent a reflection of the presence of travelling companies at the end of the 19th century; the numbers would be much larger if the almanacs had included the travelling companies in the earlier volumes.

<sup>20</sup> Most of these towns are located in Alsace-Lothringen.

<sup>21</sup> The numbers here are deceptive, since many of the towns were listed in an almanac with international companies.

<sup>22</sup> In the USA the numbers do not reflect the number of permanent companies, but rather the extensive number of towns visited by travelling companies, some based in New York and other major cities and many coming from Germany.

<sup>23</sup> With the exception of London, which occasionally had companies based there, most of these towns were visited by travelling companies.

<sup>24</sup> Brazil was visited by travelling companies from Hamburg at the beginning of the 20th century. There is no indication in the almanacs that up to 1918 German-language companies were based in South America.

<sup>25</sup> More detailed descriptions of this project are to be found in the following articles: PERNERSTORFER-GRUBER 2015 and PERNERSTORFER 2018. An English version of the latter article is PERNERSTORFER 2019.

documenting the information about the venues, which will be described in more detail, and a bibliography of the non-venue related material.<sup>26</sup> The second part of the project will be a bibliography of the local journals.<sup>27</sup> Since local journals are continually being discovered and not all of the known journals have been examined, this bibliography will be published at the conclusion of the project.<sup>28</sup>

The documentation of the venues is being presented in the multi-volume *Topography and Repertory of German-Language Theater*, the first volume, *Wiener Theater (1752–1918)*<sup>29</sup> was published in 2018. Thereafter individual volumes devoted to the theatre in various regions will be published.<sup>30</sup> These regional volumes will provide not only extensive overviews of theatrical activity in the region but preview the mobility of companies, theatre directors and prompters which is not limited to a specific region, but which extend over the entire geographic area where the German-language theatre was active. In order for this aspect of the documentation more usable, a complete edition with the cumulated material from the regional volumes will complete the venue documentation.

The structure of the Vienna volume gives an indication of the variety of material available.

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<sup>26</sup> This will include information about the plays, poems, articles, biographical texts, pictures, reviews, and information about the professional organizations which precede the information about companies and venues.

<sup>27</sup> See ULRICH 1994.

<sup>28</sup> All the known journals have been catalogued and may be searched in the OPAC maintained by the Don Juan Archive ([www.theaterjournale.at](http://www.theaterjournale.at)). The locations of these journals are included in the OPAC and digital copies of the journals are located in the Archives and, when copyright matters have been cleared, will be made available for use.

<sup>29</sup> ULRICH 2018a.

<sup>30</sup> Prior to the final publication of the regional volumes, preprints will be prepared and be available for use in the Don Juan Archive in Vienna (Trautsonsgasse 6, 1080 Wien). Already there are preprints for Southeast Europe (covering the theatre in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey and the Ukraine), the Czech Republic, the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Jamaica, Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and the USA) and Northern Europe (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia, Sweden and Belarus). In the coming months additional preprints will be made for Poland, Western Europe (Belgium, England, France, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Switzerland, Scotland, Spain and Wales). Austria, Berlin and then the individual states in Germany. Like Vienna, Berlin is different from most of the cities where German theatre was performed; not only did it have many more venues (in the vicinity of 50 after 1871), but also many travelling companies housed in Berlin and then finally it was the city with the most newspapers. In contrast to Vienna, which is the city with the most journals, Berlin had very few.



1. **Venues in Vienna.** This is the largest section, with alphabetical listings of the venues in Vienna. There is then a yearly listing of the director and in which almanac it is listed. In most of the almanacs there is generally a listing of the entire company<sup>31</sup> (often with the addresses in Vienna) and frequently additional information such as which new plays were in the repertory. When specific information about the venue is found (for example, when the theatre was built or remodeled, number of seats, when performances were held, aspects relating to treatment of the actors or whether retirement or accident plans for the actors), this is included in footnotes.<sup>32</sup> Likewise included in the footnotes is information about visiting companies at the theatre.<sup>33</sup>
2. **Venues in villages adjacent to Vienna.** These villages have since been incorporated into present-day Vienna.
3. **Touring companies housed in Vienna.** Generally, these listings include the cities or regions where the companies visited.<sup>34</sup>
4. **Touring companies which performed in Vienna.** Listed here are names of companies which were known to have been in Vienna, but for which no venue was listed.<sup>35</sup>
5. **Itineraries of directors.** Listed here are all the directors of theatres in Vienna. In addition to their activity in Vienna, all the theatres from the entire documentation are also listed here. This section reveals how mobile not only the actors, but also directors were.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> The author has expanded the database which was used for his two biographical indexes (Ulrich 1985 and 1997a) with the members of the companies in the almanacs. Included in this database are not only all the members of the companies, but information when and to where they left the company and also all visiting performers. With this database it is possible to trace the professional careers of all the persons involved in the German theatre. The University Library in Frankfurt am Main is currently in the process of migrating this database (i.e. both the biographical directories but also the information about the members of the companies) to the internet. When this migration will be finalized is currently uncertain.

<sup>32</sup> There are 1119 footnotes in this section.

<sup>33</sup> Not included are visits of individual guest performers, since this information is included in the database which is to be migrated to the internet (see footnote 31).

<sup>34</sup> The information provided here is only what was listed for those companies under the Vienna headings of the almanacs. It does not include information about those companies which are listed under the venues of cities outside of Vienna, since at the time of publication not all of the information from all of these cities had been verified. It will be included in a later edition of the Viennese theatre and also in the final compiled documentation.

<sup>35</sup> The situation here is similar to that of the preceding section, i.e. more companies will be listed here in a later edition and in the compiled documentation.

<sup>36</sup> The full extent of this mobility is only partially seen in the Vienna volume, since Vienna was at the pinnacle of the theatre pyramid and as such directors tended to remain in Vienna for much longer

6. **Theatre journals without a repertory.** Not all the journals in Vienna contained a repertory. Listed here are both those journals which do not have a repertory and also the titles of those journals which have been bibliographically identified, but which had not examined at the time of the printing.
7. **Chronological repertories of Viennese theatres.** Listed here are the repertories of those theatres in Vienna which were printed in the journals with a reference to which of the journals has the repertory.<sup>37</sup>
8. **Prompters who produced Viennese journals.** This section lists the persons (generally it was the prompter) who compiled the journals with a listing of which journals they compiled.
9. **Viennese newspapers listed in the almanacs.** Particularly after the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the almanacs began to include listings of the newspapers which covered the theatre. This section lists these newspapers alphabetically and then provides a chronological list of when it was mentioned in an almanac. Often there is also listed where the editorial offices were, who the editor and critics were, with information where the critic either lived or had his office.
10. **Editors and critics in Viennese newspapers.** This section lists the editors and critics with information for which newspaper(s) they worked and when.

Following publication of the Vienna theatre, during preparation of the preprints for Southeast Europe and the Czech Republic, it became clear that additional sections needed to be added to the documentation. These new sections are:

1. **Companies having concessions for a region.** In the main section, companies are listed as having performed in certain towns; it is difficult to readily identify which of them were really ambulant and in which geographical area they performed. By listing the area for which the companies had a concession, it should make it clear that the towns visited are probably only a fraction of the towns which were visited and that it would be advantageous if researchers would check other towns in this region as potential locations where they also performed.
2. **Itineraries of prompters in the almanacs.** This information is drawn from the database of the companies listed in the almanacs. For those prompters listed as having produced journals for the region, the presence of them in

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periods of time than in other theatres.

<sup>37</sup> The information from the journals is minimal. The full content of the journals will be available in the final bibliography of the local theatre journals.

the section of prompters who produced journals will be indicated. It is hoped that by providing this information that researchers who encounter publications from these prompters will inform the Don Juan Archive of their presence so that the bibliography of the local journals will be more complete.

3. **Directors of the companies with journals.** In addition to the year and title of the journals, the dates of the published repertories are also listed. Similar to the treatment of the prompters in the almanacs, the entries in the itineraries of the directors will also have an indication, that for these directors there exist journals.

The last part of the project is creating a bibliography of the local journals. As was mentioned earlier, these publications have a very special place in the documentation of the theatre. In contrast to the almanacs which indicate who the members of a company were at the beginning of a season, but only rarely provide extensive documentation of movement within the company in the course of a season,<sup>38</sup> the journals document what actually happened during a season, since they were published at the end of a season. In this respect almanacs are similar to playbills: they indicate what it intended, not what actually happened.<sup>39</sup> As such the journals have a much greater importance in documenting of what actually happened in the theatre.

Since this paper primarily treats almanacs and how are they being used to document the German theatre, the journals will only be treated quickly here; the author has published extensively on this topic and the reader is advised to consult these publications for more information about them. Likewise, the role of the prompter has received very little attention. This is interesting since not only did the prompter provide us with important documents about the theatre, some of them became theatre agents and as noted earlier, at least two of them were responsible for the publications of the almanacs which give us so much information about the theatre.

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<sup>38</sup> Although there are indications in the almanacs about what happened in the past season, this information is only sketchy at best. It must be remembered that there was extensive mobility in the companies, which also included mobility of directors. A new director of a company generally knew very little about specifics of what his predecessor's company did and even if he did know, he generally did not send this information to the editors of the almanacs.

<sup>39</sup> It should be noted here, that journals can serve many interesting purposes. Many libraries don't catalog journals, but rather put them together with their playbills so that they function as an index to the playbills. Conversely, playbill collections are seldom without gaps. The researcher Hans-Dieter Meyer in Berlin, who has cataloged the Königsberg playbills in the Academy of Arts collection in Berlin (see <http://kultur-in-ostpreussen.de/>) had many gaps in his documentation. Using the Königsberg journals he was able to close many of the gaps and also to verify or correct the information on the playbills.

Toward the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century prompters began to publish journals as an additional source of income. The journals would be delivered to the homes of patrons of the theatre<sup>40</sup> and the recipients would be asked to donate (tip) what they felt was appropriate – the proceeds from the sale of the journal was the prompter equivalent to the benefit performances<sup>41</sup> which many actors were allowed to give in order to augment their salaries.<sup>42</sup>

Almost all of these journals have a list of the performing members of the company and a chronological listing of the repertory. In addition, poems<sup>43</sup>, songs and collections of anecdotes were used as fill material. We do know that more than 4000 towns have been documented as being the location where theatre performances were held. The more than 6000 journals which have been identified come from somewhat more than 300 towns. This means that we have journal documentation for at least some of the theatre activity in only 8% of the 4000 towns. Based on the article on almanacs in the 1846 encyclopedia mentioned earlier and on the repeated statements of prompters in the journals, that the publication of a journal was the expected thing to do plus knowing how many towns had theatre productions, we can assume that more than 100,000 journals were probably published.

A major reason for the project which is being undertaken by the Don Juan Archive is to preserve and to document the journals as important sources for researchers. In order to accomplish this, the copies and originals which the author has collected over the past 40 years have been digitized. To make them accessible, an OPAC portal has been created ([www.theaterjournale.at](http://www.theaterjournale.at)), which can be consulted to determine which journals exist. The OPAC provides not only the bibliographic information about the journals, but also where an original copy can be found. Original journals in the possession of the author or the Don Juan Archive can be accessed directly from the OPAC. Links are made to digital copies on the internet, or to the digitized copies in the Don Juan Archive when the copyright questions have been cleared.

It is questionable whether we will ever know how many journals were published, likewise it is improbable that all those which still exist will be identified and fully documented. Research up to now has shown how difficult it is to locate journals. Regularly new journals are being discovered and occasionally they are discovered in forms which were previously unknown.<sup>44</sup> Partially the discovery of new titles occurs

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<sup>40</sup> This is similar to the treatment of playbills: the patrons of the theatre were given the opportunity to subscribe playbills, and the Zettelträger (playbill distributor) would deliver them to the subscribers. The Zettelträger also distributed poems to the subscribers in the hope of getting a tip for his services.

<sup>41</sup> This aspect is often noted at the top of the cover of the journals: "As a benefit for the prompter".

<sup>42</sup> An additional source of income was to sell songs from the plays.

<sup>43</sup> The prompter often used the poems to deplore how unacknowledged their responsibility was. For more on this see: ULRICH 2017 and the other articles on the prompter journals.

<sup>44</sup> In the Grassi-Museum in Leipzig and in the City Museum of Leipzig there are two sheets from 1837

because increasingly libraries, museums and archives are cataloging publications more precisely, in particular titles which were conveniently kept in boxes with vague titles such as “material on the city theatre 1820–1830”. Also, the presence of more catalogs being accessible on the internet facilitate locating journals. Some of the problems which have been encountered are:

1. They do not always have a recognizable title. Examples of some of the unusual titles which have been encountered are: *Abschied der Souffleuse, Souvenir zum neuen Jahr, Dramatisches Vergißmeinnicht, Theatralisches Andenken, Theatralische Vergißmeinnichte, Theatralische Miscellen, Vergiß mein nicht, Wiederhall aus Thaliens Heiligthum, Frühlings-Blumen, Ende Gut, alles Gut, Herbstblüthen, Der Souffleur als Börsenspekulant, Etwas über Menschendarstellung, Betriebsergebnisse, Kleines Neujahrs-Geschenk, Unsere herzlichen Wünsche zum Jahreswechsel, Kleines Andenken, Souvenir zum neuen Jahr, Demüthigster Neujahrswunsch, Denkmal der innigsten Verehrung, Unterthänigster Glückwunsch zum neuen Jahre, Blumenkranz am neuen Jahr, Wein-Lese-Kranz aus 600 Trauben bestehend, Treue Wünsche und Ahndungen, Herbstblumen, Die Kinder der Phantasie, Winterblumen, Ostergeschenk, Dramatisches Blumensträußchen zum Abschiede, Abonnement suspend, Abschiedswunsch des Souffleurs, Neujahrs-Pokal, Palmenblätter und Ostereier, Immortellen-Kränzchen, Kulissentreiben, Maiglöckchen und Pfingst-Rosen, Abschiedsblatt, Abschieds-Worte des Gedächtniss-Unterstützers von Thaliens Priester-Chor, Erinnerungs-Tafel, Frühlings-Blüthen.*
2. Because they generally only have a few pages, they are bound together with other publications which may or may not be journals and they are not necessarily cataloged.<sup>45</sup>
3. They are kept uncataloged in the playbill collection, where they are used as an index to the playbills.
4. They are in collections where no one would think of looking for them.<sup>46</sup>

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and 1838 with an illustration of a set design surrounded by writing. On closer examination the sheet is an unusual form of a journal. On the right and left side of the illustration is the repertory for the respective season and under the illustration is a listing of the members of the company. Whether more such forms of a journal exist is difficult to say, since the curators in the museums have focused on the illustration. There is no reference to the content in the catalog of the library and hence if these two sheets hadn't been encountered by chance. They would not be included in the collection of journals.

<sup>45</sup> Two examples: In the State Library in Berlin 17 journals from Gera are bound together in a volume with the title “Theater in Gera” and there is no reference to the individual journals in the volume. And in the city archives in Freiburg/Breisgau, the individual Freiburg journals which are bound together are individually cataloged, however, journals from neighboring towns in these bound volumes have not been cataloged.

<sup>46</sup> Examples: There is a journal from Dippoldiswalde in the Harvard University Library. In the Berlin

5. There are references to journals in card catalogs or in bibliographies with precise descriptions of where they were found, but they seem to no longer exist<sup>47</sup>
6. Unclear references in catalogs and bibliographies. When libraries treat the journals as a serial and only list the first and last year of holdings, then it is unclear whether or not a complete run is in the library or not.<sup>48</sup> Other problems are that year of publication and year of contents are often used interchangeably, so that again one is not clear if there is a journal for every year.<sup>49</sup>
7. In countries where German is no longer the primary language, German-language publications have either been destroyed or records of their presence have been removed from sources accessible to the public.<sup>50</sup>

The Don Juan Archive in Vienna and the author hope that with the publication of the documentation of the venues, a greater awareness of what German-language theatre was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, it can be expected that this documentation will inspire researchers to examine aspects of the theatre, which up to now have been ignored.

Having the OPAC on the internet means that search engines access the material and that more researchers will become aware of just how much material is already

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Central and Regional Library there are copies of journals from Milwaukee.

<sup>47</sup> With the increasing digitization of holdings, the old card catalogs with their records of what used to be in the collections are being replaced by OPACs and the cards are destroyed, together with all records of what used to be. And as a variant: an undated, newspaper clipping from an unknown newspaper in Bad Mergentheim has an exact description of a Mergentheim journal from 1796 which at the time of the writing was in the City Archives, but which can no longer be found. This is also the case for most of the journals in Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, which Hankiss (HANKISS-BERCZELI 1961) lists in his bibliography, but which repeated requests for confirmation remain unanswered.

<sup>48</sup> Variations in the titles are not always indicated, or even worse a generic title is used to represent the entire work. The problems which then arise are considerable, since if a similar work from the same location and year is found at another location with a different title, one cannot be sure if the holdings of both institutions are identical or not. A situation in Leipzig makes this problem even more clear: there are two journals with identical titles for the same year but they have different number of pages and were published by different prompters. Then there is the case of a journal in Brünn [Brno]: three different copies of the same journal were found, but they all had different paginations: two in Brno differed only because in one library the advertisements at the end of the journal had been removed, and in Cologne there was an obviously special copy with a more elaborate binding and additional pages preceding the main work.

<sup>49</sup> When the year of publication is ordered for a title and a journal is sent with the year of content, there is know way of knowing if this is the same journal or not.

<sup>50</sup> This is often compounded by having an interface only in the native language and no alternative is available for persons not knowing this language.

available for use. Both the author and the Don Juan Archive also hope that the documentation will encourage researchers who encounter undocumented journals in their research to inform us of the presence of these journals so that they can be included in the bibliography of theatre journals.

## Appendix 1 The major universal almanacs<sup>51</sup>

The interesting thing about these almanacs is that they were almost exclusively published by persons who were intimately connected with the theatre and as such were sensible to the needs of theatre directors, actors etc.

1775–1800	<i>Theater-Kalender auf das Jahr ..</i> <sup>52</sup> . Ed.: Heinrich August Ottokar Reichard: Gotha 1775–1800.
1807–1812	<i>Almanach fürs Theater</i> . Ed.: August Wilhelm Iffland <sup>53</sup> : Vol. 1–5. Berlin 1807–1812.
1821	<i>Allgemeiner deutscher Theater-Almanach für das Jahr 1822</i> . Ed.: August Klingemann: <sup>54</sup> Braunschweig 1821.
1836–1853	<i>Almanach für Freunde der Schauspielkunst</i> . Eds.: Ludwig Wolff (1845–1853: Alois Heinrich <sup>55</sup> ). Vol. 1–17. Berlin 1836–1853. Continued as:
1854–1893	<i>Deutscher Bühnen-Almanach</i> . Eds.: Alois Heinrich (1861–63: Ludwig Schneider <sup>56</sup> , 1864–84: Albert Entsch <sup>57</sup> , 1885–1893: Theodor Entsch <sup>58</sup> ). Vol. 18–57. Berlin 1854–1893
1853–1872	<i>Statistisches Handbuch für Bühnenvorstände, Bühnenkünstler und Bühnenfreunde</i> : <sup>59</sup> Carl Albrecht Sachse: <sup>60</sup> Hamburg 1853–1855; Wien 1865–1872.

<sup>51</sup> A complete list of the universal Almanacs is found in: ULRICH 1994, 37–39.

<sup>52</sup> This publication, which is often cited as the *Gotha-Kalender*, appeared with two different titles: *Theater-Kalender* and *Taschenbuch für die Schaubühne*. The difference between the two is that the publications with the second title did not have a calendar. This was because legal restrictions in many dukedoms restricted the sale of calendars.

<sup>53</sup> August Wilhelm Iffland (1759–1814) was an actor, theatre director and playwright.

<sup>54</sup> August Klingemann (1777–1831) was a writer and theatre director.

<sup>55</sup> Alois Heinrich (1812–1861) was theater agent.

<sup>56</sup> Louis Schneider (i.e. Ludwig Wilhelm Schneider; 1805–1878) was an actor and writer.

<sup>57</sup> Albert Entsch (1828–1882) was a theatre agent and play publisher.

<sup>58</sup> Theodor Entsch (1853–1913) was a theatre agent and play publisher.

<sup>59</sup> 5 editions were published at irregular intervals.

<sup>60</sup> Carl Albrecht Sachse (1823–1894) was a theatre director and agent.

1858–1879	<i>Ferdinand Roeder's Theater-Kalender</i> . Ed.: Ferdinand Roeder. Vol. 1–22. Berlin 1858–1879
1870	<i>Universal-Almanach für Theater, Théâtre-Variétés, Sing- und Liederspielhallen, Café-chantants, Concert-Etablissements, Arenen etc. des In- und Auslandes</i> . Hamburg 1870.
1871–1887	<i>Almanach der Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnenangehöriger</i> [ <i>Almanach der Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnenangehöriger</i> ]. Ed: Ernst Gettke. <sup>61</sup> Vol 1–15. Berlin 1873–1887. Continued as:
1888	<i>Ernst Gettke's Bühnen-Almanach</i> . Almanach der Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger. Ed.: Ernst Gettke. Vol. 16. Leipzig 1888. Continued as:
1889	<i>Gettke's Bühnen-Almanach</i> . Almanach der Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger. Ed.: Ernst Gettke. Vol. 17. Leipzig 1889. Continued as:
1890–1914	<i>Neuer Theater-Almanach</i> . Theatergeschichtliches Jahr- und Adressen-Buch. Ed.: Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger. Vol. 1–25. Berlin 1890-1914. Continued as:
1915ff.	<i>Deutsches Bühnen-Jahrbuch</i> . Ed.: Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger. Vol. 26ff. Berlin 1915ff. <sup>62</sup>
1901–1903	Georg Elsner: <sup>63</sup> <i>Deutscher Bühnenkalender</i> . Berlin 1901-1903.
1910–1914	<i>Theater-Kalender auf das Jahr</i> . Eds.: Hans Landsberg <sup>64</sup> and Arthur Rundt. <sup>65</sup> Berlin 1910–1914
1912–1919	<i>Deutsches Theater-Adreßbuch</i> . Ed.: Deutscher Bühnenverein <sup>66</sup> : Vol. 1–8. Berlin 1911–1918.

## Appendix 2 Biographical Pocketbooks

*Biographisches Taschenbuch deutscher Bühnen-Künstler und -Künstlerinnen*. Ed.: Ludwig von Alvensleben. Leipzig 1.1836–2.1837

<sup>61</sup> Ernst Gettke (1841–1912) was an actor, theatre director and functionary in the actors' union.

<sup>62</sup> The *Deutsches Bühnen-Jahrbuch* has continued to be printed up to the present.

<sup>63</sup> Georg Elsner (1874–1945) was a publisher in Berlin and treasurer of the Society for Theatre History (Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte). He is not to be confused with the politician of the same name.

<sup>64</sup> Hans Landsberg (1875–1920) was an author and theatre critic.

<sup>65</sup> Arthur Rundt (1881–1939) was a journalist and theatre director.

<sup>66</sup> The Deutscher Bühnenverein [German Stage Union] is an association which, in contrast to the Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger, represents the interests of the theatres.



*Biographisches Künstler-Album. Bilder-Gallerie der berühmtesten [Bühnen-] Künstler der Jetztzeit nebst aus authentischen Quellen geschöpften Biographien.* Eds.: A. Böltje, J. Steinitz. Berlin 1867

*Deutsches Theaterjahrbuch. Ein bibliographisches und biographisches Handbuch der dramatischen Literatur der Gegenwart für Theater und Literaturfreunde.* Ed.: Karl Biesendahl. Berlin 1892

*Biographisches Bühnen-Lexikon der deutschen Theater. Von Beginn der deutschen Schauspielkunst bis zur Gegenwart.* Ed.: Ottomar G. Flüggen. München 1892

### Appendix 3 The major dramatic pocketbooks<sup>67</sup>

*Almanach dramatischer Spiele zur geselligen Unterhaltung auf dem Lande.* Ed.: August von Kotzebue<sup>68</sup> 1.1802–32.1834;

*Dramatisches Sträußchen für das Jahr.* Ed.: Ignaz Franz Castelli<sup>69</sup>. 1.1809; 2.1817–20.1835;

*Almanach dramatischer Spiele.* Ed.: Carl Ludwig Costenoble.<sup>70</sup> 1–3.1810–11.1816;

*Almanach dramatischer Spiele für Gesellschafts-Theater.* Ed.: Franz August von Kurländer,<sup>71</sup> 1.1811 (1810) –8.1818 (1817);

*Lustspiele oder Dramatischer Almanach.* Ed.: Franz August von Kurländer. 9.1819 (1818) –31.1841 (1840);

*Opern-Almanach auf das Jahre* 1815, 1817. Ed.: August von Kotzebue;

*Jahrbuch deutscher Nachspiele* (später *Jahrbuch deutscher Bühnenspiele*). Ed.: Karl von Holtei. 1.1822–3.1824; 4.1825–45.1866;

*Dramatisches Vergißmeinnicht.* Ed.: Theodor Hell. 1.1824 (1823) –26.1849 (1849);

*Berliner Theater-Almanach.* Ed.: Alexander Cosmar.<sup>72</sup> 1.1836–7.1842 (1841);

*Almanach dramatischer Bühnenspiele zur geselligen Unterhaltung für Stadt und Land.* Ed.: Carl August Görner. 1.1851–11.1868.

<http://www.theaterjournale.at>

<http://kultur-in-ostpreussen.de/>

<sup>67</sup> A complete list of the dramatic pocketbooks is found in: ULRICH 1994, III–III4.

<sup>68</sup> August von Kotzebue (1761–1819) was a dramatist and theater director.

<sup>69</sup> Ignaz Franz Castelli (1780–1862) was a dramatist.

<sup>70</sup> Carl Ludwig Costenoble (1769–1837) was a dramatist.

<sup>71</sup> Franz August von Kurländer (1777–1836) was a dramatist.

<sup>72</sup> Alexander Cosmar (1805–1842) was a writer.