

EPILOGUE

There can be no question that from the 1930s through the 1960s Buenos Aires was a volatile, conflict-ridden place. To an extent, the city's German populations mirrored their hosts, who also were in nearly constant political and social turmoil. The polarization of Argentine society allowed both antifascist and nationalist German blocs to cultivate intercultural alliances without modifying many aspects of their own political platform. The competition among emigrants to define German culture also was shaped by events in Europe, including German dramatic theory, Bonn's domestic and foreign policies, and new waves of emigration to Argentina. Neither off- nor onstage were the disputes stable; instead they evolved over time as the emigrants became immigrants, and their relationships to their respective countries of origin and residence shifted. By the 1960s, there was an expanding stretch of common ground among the German immigrants, although their historical animosity remained unresolved.

The West German government intervened at both the German Stage and Ludwig Ney's Chamber Theater, and its actions are one measure of how closely dramatic performances were intertwined with the social and political agendas of German Buenos Aires. Furthermore, Bonn's level of investment in theater—up to 180,000 German marks per annum in Buenos Aires alone—is testimony to the power of this cultural medium.¹ On the occasion of the 1965 Summer Festival, against the backdrop of Ney's presentation of Friedrich Schiller's *Robbers*, the immigrant population revealed both how much they now approximated each other and to what extent historical hostilities remained entrenched. Recognized as Germany's preeminent national poet by all parties, Schiller elicited a shared and largely congruous emphasis on language and Cold War politics. The *Argentinisches Tageblatt* devoted an entire preview to Irene Ney's individualized language instruction with each actor to practice enunciation and delivery, often reciting, recording, and listening to a single passage dozens of times. Although this technique was reactionary for rehearsals in the 1960s and even recalled fascist dramatic theory, Irene Ney's meticulous focus on language resonated throughout German Buenos Aires.² By this time many actors in Ney's group were Argentine-born, and most spoke imperfect German. Crucial to this new generation's propensity to sustain transnational attachments over time, the preservation of the German language among younger members was vital to immigrants in Argentina.³ The press reinforced this priority and fretted over tenuous linguistic links to the fatherland.⁴ Writing to Bonn

1. Internal memorandum, FFO, March 24, 1960; WGE to FFO; FFO to WGE, November 8, 1961, Bestand B95, Band 765; WGE to FFO, December 15, 1962, Bestand B95, Band 765; WGE to FFO, January 1, 1964, Bestand B95, Band 1066, PAAA.

2. Spolin, *Improvisation for the Theater*, 112.

3. Rubén Rumbaut, "Severed or Sustained Attachments? Language, Identity, and Imagined Communities in the Post-Immigrant Generation," Levitt and Walters, *Changing Face of Home*, 43–95, 47–48.

4. "Du mete dich nicht in was dich nicht importart," *FP*, March 13, 1956; "Deutsche Eltern haben argentinische Kinder," *AT*, August 22, 1957; "Deutsche lernen Deutsch," *FP*, March 11, 1959; "Die Musik der deutschen Sprache," *AT*, January 22, 1961; "Deutsche Kulturpolitik im Ausland," *FP*, March 1, 1964.

on Ney's behalf, both the journalist Carl Hillekamps and West German ambassador Werner Junker had stressed the improvement of younger actors' spoken German under the director's tutelage.⁵ The German populations of Buenos Aires coalesced around an emotional sense of cultural identity based on their native tongue and concern for its perseverance among future generations.

With obsequious lines such as "For his entire life Friedrich Schiller fought for the freedom and dignity of man," the *Freie Presse* and the *Tageblatt* coordinated their previews of the 1965 production of *The Robbers* with West German ambassador Ernst-Günther Mohr's panegyric to Schiller's crusade for freedom and justice in his introductory speech at the event.⁶ The show of unity against the perceived Communist menace provoked the *Tageblatt* to assert that a single German colony filled the seats at Ney's Summer Festival.⁷

While media coverage of *The Robbers* found common values in linguistic preservation and Western democratic principles, the aftermath of the festival revealed the projection of unity to have been showy indeed. A week after the final presentation, the *Argentinisches Tageblatt* published an anecdote by a young Jewish actress in Berlin in 1936.⁸ Dismayed by Hitler's order to remove the Schiller monument at the Gendarmenmarkt in Berlin to create a military parade ground, she remembered discovering a new tribute in a nearby phone booth. It was a poem prophesying the inexorable dawn of the Marquis Posa's vision of freedom, because no nation had ever chosen subjugation to leaders such as Spielberg or Franz Moor. The actress had memorized the poem, because it was too dangerous to write it down. There was of course no corresponding piece in the *Freie Presse*. Written by a Jewish actress just a week after the all-Gentile performances of *The Robbers*,

5. Hillekamps to FFO, January 1, 1964; WGE to FFO, March 5, 1958, Bestand B33, Band 248, PAAA.

6. "Die Räuber," AT, October 24, 1965; "Die Räuber," FP, October 31, 1965; "Schillers *Räuber* als Freilichtaufführung," AT, December 6, 1965.

7. "Letzte Vorstellung der *Räuber*," AT, December 12, 1965.

8. "Lesebrief über Schiller von Elfi Zweig," AT, December 19, 1965.

the article prodded at the underlying disunity in German Buenos Aires. Harmony among Argentina's German-speakers was contingent upon a willful amnesia of the past, especially Nazism, World War II, and the Shoah. When either colony refused to engage in this exercise of selective memory, the thin veneer of rapprochement was exposed to be a contrivance.

Both the oldest and newest directors in town, Ludwig Ney and Reinhold Olszewski, respectively, seem to have recognized that playing theater in Buenos Aires was still a precarious balancing act. The potential of theatrical energies to stir polemics, unearth memories, and vitalize lingering rancor by violating the uneasy scripted silence among immigrants remained even in the mid-1960s. Furthermore, by this time, the German-speaking public was shrinking. The last wave of postwar immigration had ended with Germany's economic recovery in the 1950s. Aging, integration, and remigration to Germany also caused the number of potential theatergoers to drop. It was imperative for Olszewski's large, supraregional, government-funded operation as well as Ney's smaller community ensemble to draw from as wide a swath of German Buenos Aires as possible. The two men confronted this challenge with pragmatism. In key productions Ney and Olszewski opted for universalism as a means of reducing the risk of alienating theatergoers and reigniting the explosive antagonism still pervading the populations.

For Ludwig Ney the highlight of the theater season was the Summer Festival. His cast began preparations months ahead of time, because instead of the approximately 200-seat capacity of his regular facility, audiences at the Summer Festival numbered in the thousands. This event attracted extensive media coverage in both populations, and Ney hoped that the large attendances would eventually garner him funding from the Foreign Office in Bonn. Taking care to avoid controversies, at least as much as possible, Ney chose dramas that were politically unobjectionable and universally accepted as worthy of performance. Of the Summer Festivals from 1956 to 1966, nearly half featured Shakespearean dramas, including *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1956 and 1962), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1957), and *Othello* (1966). No other dramatist received more than a single performance. Nobody

questioned Shakespeare's literary merit, and through the ages he had been staged by German speakers of all faiths and political convictions. Through the universality of William Shakespeare, Ney's company could appeal to spectators from across German Buenos Aires, irrespective of their ongoing differences.

For the 1966 festival, Ney's group presented *Othello* (1604). At first glance, this selection seems finally to represent Ney's definitive departure from Nazi dramatic politics. The noble African protagonist, Othello, is a tragic hero, and the plot focuses on interracial sex and marriage. Although in Nazi Germany Othello would have been deported to a concentration camp and sterilized for racial defilement, the drama did not disappear from the nation's stages. In fact, during the Nazi era *Othello* generally was presented more frequently and in more theaters than the *Merchant of Venice*, although the latter's plot dovetailed with Nazi anti-Semitism.⁹ Critics underscored Othello's passions, describing him as a paragon of masculine virtues and military bearing in an aristocratic and morally decadent society. The protagonist's race could not be ignored, of course, so Othello was depicted as a light-skinned Moor, very different from the black Africans in numerous productions during the Weimar Republic. Othello's behavior was conditioned not by race but by the agony of a proud and dignified soldier who finds himself isolated and betrayed in a foreign and decadent world.¹⁰

Authored by Ludwig Ney himself, the introductory essay in the Summer Festival program coincided with National Socialist interpretations. Evoking articles on Shakespeare in *Der Weg*, Ney praised the spirituality of Othello's love for Desdemona and rejected his subsumption into contemporary "sex sensations."¹¹ Ney criticized Venetian society, which he saw represented by the "selfish, amoral and cold" behavior of the "degenerate" Jago.¹²

9. Thomas Eicher, "Spielplanstrukturen 1929–1944," in "*Theater im Dritten Reich*": *Theaterpolitik, Spielplanstruktur, NS-Dramatik*, ed. Thomas Eicher, Barbara Panse, and Henning Rischbieter (Seelze-Velber: Kallmeyer, 2000): 298–301.

10. Bonnell, 173–174.

11. "Menschenwürde und Gattenwahl," *Der Weg*, January 1957; program, *Othello*, December 1966.

12. Program, *Othello*, December 1966.

Othello's soldierly idealism contrasted thus with the "materialistic values" of the Republic of Venice.¹³ Ney never mentioned Othello's race, which, represented by a blond actor, was "Aryanized" in the presentation. Instead, the director lamented the "broken soul" of the solitary military officer upon losing his most sacred treasure: his love for Desdemona. Instead of opening a new chapter, Ney's essay stands out for its consistency with National Socialist interpretations of the Shakespearean tragedy. Even in 1966, the director advanced his fusion of conservative dramatic theory with an intercultural cast, setting, and audience. Contrary to the program, the *Tageblatt* lamented the tragic destruction of an inspirational love that transcended artificial and unjust racial barriers.¹⁴ In another reference to the racial background of the play, the paper observed that the diabolical intriguer, Jago, had white skin but a black soul. The discrepancy between the program and the review demonstrated the evolution of relations between the German-speaking populations of Buenos Aires. Conflicts between the groups persisted, especially concerning any discourse related to Nazism, but Shakespeare's universalism drew members of both blocs to the same theatrical presentation, something that would have been unthinkable years earlier.¹⁵

The year before the German Chamber Theater moved from Santiago to Buenos Aires to replace the German Stage, Olszewski's cast played Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as part of a five-day run in the Argentine capital. The company presented five different dramas; however, *Hamlet* was the only sold-out performance, indicating that both German populations attended the production. The *Freie Presse* emphasized that *Hamlet* represented an artistic challenge for any theater, and was concerned that an inadequate interpretation would transgress against Shakespeare's genius.¹⁶ However, subsequent reviews praised the scenic design, dramatic diction, and expressive unity of performance. The *Argentinisches Tageblatt*

13. Program, *Othello*, December 1966.

14. "Shakespeares *Othello* in Los Polvorines," *AT*, December 12, 1966.

15. "Deutsche Kammerspiele: *Hamlet*," *AT*, September 2, 1964.

16. "Spielplan der Deutschen Kammerspiele," *FP*, August 18, 1964.

referred to the event as a delight for all spectators, and the *Freie Presse* also affirmed the group's impressive artistic achievement.¹⁷ Faced with the challenge of attracting various demanding and divided populations, and almost certainly aware that a potential move to Buenos Aires and an accompanying windfall of embassy funding hung in the balance, the troupe chose Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as its final argument. The following year, with lavish support from Bonn, Olszewski's group moved permanently to Buenos Aires. Although their European "homeland" boasted literary giants like Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Brecht, and many others, during the post-war period from 1945 to 1966 no playwright was performed on German-language stages in Argentina as often as Shakespeare. This unexpected statistic is as much a testament to the universality of the Bard of Avon, who transcended all political, social, and artistic agendas, as it is to the unending competition between Argentina's immigrant factions. Even in the 1960s, depictions of German dramatists remained fraught with divisive interpretations of the nation's culture, history, and identity.

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In the introduction to this book I posed a series of questions to guide its readers (and its writer) along the winding paths it follows from Europe in the 1930s to South America in the 1960s. Many pages have passed in the interim, so it is helpful to restate those queries here: How did the German Theater and the Free German Stage contribute to transatlantic and transnational projects, such as delineating and consolidating German identity in South America, staking political allegiances, and integrating with the Argentine host society? Why, more than any other form of art or cultural representation, did theater have such wide, enduring appeal in German Buenos Aires and beyond? Finally, how does putting theater at the center revise perceptions of German-speaking nationalist, anti-fascist, and Zionist populations in Argentina? I revisit these questions here by linking them to a more poignantly profiled reflection

17. "Deutsche Kammerspiele: *Hamlet*," *FP*, September 2, 1964.

on the salient themes of this study, including inclusion and exclusion, integration, transnationalism, drama theory, theatrical energies, and, of course, competition. The central role of theater in this book enables a reexamination of German-speaking immigrants in Argentina, emphasizing previously underexplored events and individuals while offering new perspectives on more frequently studied topics. The conclusion depicts the impact of theater on existing narratives about Germans in Argentina, as well as the power of a focus on culture and the arts to inform and shape studies of migrant groups.

Inclusion and Exclusion

Putting theater at the center profoundly changes our perceptions of German speakers in Buenos Aires, including how the groups constituted themselves and delineated their limits. As noted in chapter 1, many scholars have ratified the emigrant Balder Olden's observation that the city's German-speaking population consisted of two absolutely separated groups—a mostly Jewish antifascist bloc, which also included earlier republicans during the Weimar Republic, and a Gentile nationalist faction, which transitioned from monarchists to Nazi sympathizers during the 1930s.¹⁸ The lens of theater reveals this definition to be problematic not only with respect to social, religious, and generational groupings that predate the period under consideration, but also on multiple levels also during the 1930s and beyond. Germán Friedmann rightly differentiates between antifascist activists and politically disengaged emigrants, and he also questions whether the separation was as absolute as

18. Kießling, *Exil in Lateinamerika*, 73–74; Meding, *Flucht vor Nürnberg*, 230; Ismar, *Der Pressekrieg*, 29; Ana María Cartolano, “Editoriales en el exilio: Los libros en lengua alemana editados en la Argentina durante el período de 1930–1950,” in Rohland de Langbehn, *Paul Zech y las condiciones del exilio en la Argentina*, 81–92, 82; Rojer, *Exile in Argentina*, 97; Anne Saint Sauveur-Henn, “Das Exil der ‘kleinen Leute’ (1933–1945): Ein Spezifikum?,” in *Alltag im Exil*, ed. Daniel Azuéllos (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2011), 41.

Olden suggests.¹⁹ In this study another group emerges—Zionists. Theatrical performances demonstrate that German-speaking Zionists are not subsumable into the antifascist colony. While the antifascists welcomed a plurality of faiths and nationalities into their fold, Zionists founded their own independent social, religious, philanthropic, and journalistic institutions. They excluded Gentiles from the ranks of anti-Nazis despite the existence of obvious examples to the contrary, including the founder of *Das Andere Deutschland*, August Siemsen; the owner of the *Argentinisches Tageblatt*, Ernesto Alemann; and members of the Free German Stage's ensemble. For their part, antifascists and moderate Jews rejected the Zionist platform by boycotting Zionist dramas, such as Nathan Bistritzky's *That Night* and J. Aialti's *Father and Son*. The Free German Stage's public attended plays with religious and political themes, including Lillian Hellman's *Watch on the Rhine* and Carl Rössler's *The Five Frankfurters*, but it consistently rebelled against stridently Zionist dramas. Finally, the FGS concluded that an inclusive community of theatergoers was possible only by excluding Zionists. For their part, Zionist groups broke irrevocably with the FGS after controversial celebrity guest performances and the addition of nationalist Germans to its personnel. As Bernhardi Swarsensky, editor of the *Jüdische Wochenschau*, made clear in 1962, the foundation of this rift was Zionists' rejection of German culture in general.²⁰ German-speaking Zionists refused to define themselves as Germans, and they did not belong to the antifascist colony. Thus, although the Free German Stage touted itself as an open, intercultural anti-Nazi community-building institution, opposition to Hitler alone did not signify unity or even inclusion.

Despite individual interactions, in their competition to define Germanness victims and supporters of Nazism excluded each other. During World War II, these groups shunned the opposing faction in the spheres of education, media, and entertainment. Both

19. Friedmann, "Los alemanes antinazis de la Argentina," 205–226.

20. Swarsensky to Jacob, January 8, 1962, PWJAK.

German stages had their origins in this polarized and antagonistic environment. Supported by the antitotalitarian *Tageblatt*, the Free German Stage defined itself as an anti-Nazi theater; Ludwig Ney's German Theater was sponsored from the outset by National Socialist organizations, including the German embassy, the German Labor Front, Strength through Joy, and the Ministry of Propaganda. Each troupe actively contributed to the entrenchment of these positions through divergent repertoire, personnel, advertising, and media coverage. Both directors, Ludwig Ney and Paul Walter Jacob, published essays further demarcating the opposing factions and intensifying their own rivalry.

In this light, each theater can be viewed as a collective representative of its public, reflecting and hardening extant hostilities. This exclusionary community-building created divisions that could not be undone. During the postwar period, Paul Walter Jacob attempted to redirect policy at the Free German Stage by pushing an agenda of inclusion and reconciliation with nationalist Germans. By advertising in the *Freie Presse*, successor to the *La Plata Zeitung*, and contracting actors from Ludwig Ney's ensemble, Jacob demonstrated that in the realm of theater the split between Argentina's German populations was not absolute. To his chagrin, however, for many emigrants the tactics of exclusion had not ended with the war. After years of inculcating their constituencies with antithetical visions of Germanness, there was no possibility of postwar reconciliation. As he opened relations with nationalist Germans, Jacob estranged many of the theatergoers, artists, and journalists who had supported him. His efforts at inclusion resulted in his own exclusion.

Nationalist Germans, by contrast, were a more coherent population. At least publicly, there was no infighting about political objectives or cultural values. Dramas such as Werner Hoffmann's *Utz Schmidl* demonstrated that there was variation among nationalist emigrants' level of identification with Germany and affinity for Argentina; however, audiences, artists, and the press all consistently upheld a National Socialist view of Germanness. In public forums, all nationalist Germans were accepted as members of the colony, and this continued after World War II when nationalists included

postwar emigrant actors, journalists, and spectators in their ranks. Explicitly neo-Nazi organizations that did not find sufficient support to survive on their own, such as *Der Weg* and the German Chamber Players, integrated with older, nationalist counterparts like the *Freie Presse* and Ludwig Ney's ensemble. Although some eventually opened paths to contact, communication, and limited cooperation with antifascist groups, such as the Free German Stage, even in the 1960s many leading nationalist institutions and individuals never renounced Nazism. They thereby implicitly affirmed ongoing tactics of exclusionary community-building.

A final aspect of inclusion is this book itself. By analyzing both German theaters, it tracks the evolving relationships not only within, but also between antagonistic German populations. Viewed over the full period covered in this study, Ludwig Ney's troupe and the Free German Stage reveal that they had much in common. They adopted parallel tactics in publicity by cultivating close relationships with media, educational, and social organizations; in repertoire by favoring the comic genre in times of crisis and performing historical plays to mold current cultural identity and foster political cohesion; in intercultural outreach by embarking on multiple collaborative projects with Argentine artists, audiences, and media; and in constructing community by promulgating a sense of togetherness based on a shared history and common foes. Ironically, the similarities in their approaches to constituting a loyal audience precluded rapprochement even when both directors wanted to expand audiences. Neither Paul Walter Jacob nor Ludwig Ney was able to surmount the barriers they themselves had helped to construct. Whereas Zionists denied Germanness altogether, neither antifascists nor nationalists could imagine allowing the opposing faction into their community. The groups could inhabit common areas, such as certain dramatic performances, and by the mid-1950s both theaters found their way into the pages of the *Freie Presse* and the *Argentinisches Tageblatt*. Nonetheless, the contrast in reporting on performances such as Zuckmayer's *The Captain of Köpenick*, Winsloe's *Girls in Uniform*, Lessing's *Nathan the Wise*, Hackett and Goodrich's *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and Schiller's *The Robbers* disclosed intransigently antipathetic

positions on German history, World War II, and the Shoah that did not waver from the late 1940s through the mid-1960s. There may have existed overlapping political alliances against communism, and a measure of common cultural heritage, but neither group ever truly regarded the other as among its own ranks. This is why Bonn ultimately opted to relocate a new, postwar theater from Santiago, Chile, to the Argentine capital. Strong campaigns of antagonistic exclusion had been mounted for years, so there was no path to a single, inclusive German-speaking community in Buenos Aires.

Integration

Perhaps unexpectedly, given their divergent views on politics and cultural identity, this study shows that German nationalists, anti-fascists, and Zionists all cultivated relationships with the Argentine host society. Their motivations varied. Zionists had decisively rejected Germany. As Bernhardt Swarsensky wrote in the *Jüdische Wochenschau*, there was no possibility of Zionists returning to Germany or forgiving Germans after what Jews had suffered.²¹ Twenty-five years after the fallout from Hellman's *Unvanquished*, he reiterated the Zionist position: "Smoke billowed from the gas chambers. Fires were visible for miles. Ignorance is an unconvincing excuse. Everyone knew it and they kept silent."²² Zionists did not seek integration with Argentine Gentiles; however, they supported dramas, such as Pico and Eichelbaum's *The Nutshell*, that steered refugees away from Europe by familiarizing them with Argentine culture and customs. Zionists also sought to utilize theater to build relationships with Argentine Jews, exemplified by the production of Bistritzky's *That Night*. While the performance failed, many Zionists persisted in their efforts and participated in intercultural professional and religious organizations. Swarsensky, for example, eventually became president of Centra, an umbrella organization for central European Jews throughout South America.

21. "Einig wie nie zuvor," *JW*, April 26, 1940.

22. "Das deutsche Volk," *JW*, February 3, 1967.

To disseminate their religious message to a larger public, Zionist publications increasingly appeared in Spanish.²³ Zionists' goal was to convince Jews to make aliyah, not integrate into Argentine society, but they realized that they could not achieve this goal without cross-cultural cooperation and outreach to other Jews in Argentina.

The Free German Stage was a different case. Unlike Zionists, many members of its cast self-identified as Germans and considered returning to Germany after the war. Still, they also had to persevere in exile. As a politically vulnerable, privately funded theater company, the enterprise could survive only if it forged partnerships with Argentine artists and institutions. A model for internationalism and interculturalism, from its foundation the Free German Stage established a presence in Argentine media, initiated dramatic projects with local artists and venues, joined and participated in administrative organizations, staged benefits for international charities, and attracted a diverse public to its productions. The troupe drew from these connections to secure venues, process visas and work permits for actors, and gain recognition beyond German Buenos Aires, as well as withstand pressure from Argentine fascist sympathizers and nationalist Germans. Its intercultural relationships helped save the stage from bankruptcy in 1944 and 1946, and were fundamental to its ability to woo celebrities for guest performances after the war. Politically, especially through its diverse repertoire and charity productions, the Free German Stage played a key role in the formation of an international community of antifascists. Through intercultural dramatic performances, the FGS also pushed sometimes reluctant refugees to transition from emigrants to immigrants in Argentina. Members of its own ensemble, including Jacques Arndt and Hedwig Schlichter-Crilla, integrated so successfully that they became celebrities in the Argentine

23. The magazine *Porvenir* appeared from 1942 to 1945. The *Jüdische Wochenschau* was also called *La Semana Israelita* and featured articles in Spanish, and Bernhardi Swarsensky published in Spanish, including his book *Historia de la Noche de cristal* (Buenos Aires: Ejecutivo Sudamericano del Congreso Judío Mundial, 1968).

entertainment industry. In accord with the Argentine constitution, which promotes European immigration to improve and teach the sciences and the arts, Schlichter-Crilla's innovative Mask ensemble and her pioneering projects in children's theater left lasting imprints on drama theory and pedagogy in Argentina.²⁴ It is not possible to evaluate every individual in these pages; however, the successful integration of several refugee actors confirms Ottmar Ette's concept of literature as a science for living together.²⁵ The Free German Stage demonstrates, at least in this instance, the efficacy of interculturalism and internationalism to persevere, construct community, and even achieve prosperity amid the multifold challenges of diaspora.

At a more gradual pace, Ludwig Ney's ensembles, too, initiated a process of intercultural outreach and integration. Already in 1941 dramas such as Hoffmann's *Utz Schmidl* demonstrated that many nationalist emigrants considered themselves to be immigrants, or at least hybrids, and harbored a sense of national affection for both Germany and Argentina. Nevertheless, during World War II the German Theater essentially was a monocultural enterprise. Thanks to its sizable and affluent public as well as ample funding from state-sponsored German organizations, the troupe had no need to collaborate with Argentine organizations. All this changed after the war, when the nationalist colony suffered losses of wealth, prestige, and influence as a result of the Argentine government's declaration of war on Germany and the Allied victory in the conflict. Finding himself with greatly reduced institutional support and no public funding, in the early 1950s Ludwig Ney's posture toward Argentine artists and public organizations underwent a remarkable shift. He initiated intercultural relationships with the Cordoban government, local artists, and media, and even began performing in Spanish. Although his collaboration with the Argentine government ended after Perón's downfall, Ney advanced his intercultural agenda by launching translingual tours

24. www.argentina.gov.ar/argentina/portal/documentos/constitucion_nacional.pdf, 4.

25. Ette, "Literature as Knowledge for Living," 989.

with the Chamber Theater as well as incorporating Argentine performers into the annual Summer Festival. Ludwig Ney never repented for his work as a Nazi collaborator, and there is ample evidence that he remained sympathetic to fascist ideology through his retirement in 1972; however, he too came to recognize interculturalism as the most viable and effective route to professional success in Argentina.

Zionists, antifascists, and Nazi collaborators comprised a diverse cast of characters. They advocated oppositional political platforms, professed distinct religious beliefs, and cultivated contrasting relationships to Germany and German culture. Yet all emigrated from German-speaking Europe, and most morphed into immigrants in Argentina. As noted in chapter 5, Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin have argued that interculturalism is not a menace to the preservation of ethnic identity, but rather is probably necessary for the protection and survival of emigrant communities. The Germanist Egon Schwarz also theorized that integration is essential for emigrants to thrive in their new countries of residence.²⁶ While Schwarz speaks as a Jewish refugee and the Boyarins refer to Jewish diasporic identity, this study suggests that their theses hold true for emigrants of diverse political, ethnic, and religious affiliations.²⁷ Groups as various and conflictive as Zionists, Nazi sympathizers, antifascists, and politically disinterested refugees came to consider integration as an imperative to achieve their objectives and pursue their divergent political agendas in Argentina. For all German-speaking blocs in Buenos Aires, integration signified expanding one's horizons, honing skills, forging intercultural alliances, and participating in cultural and artistic life beyond the fringes of their ethnic population. Within the purview of this book, the process of integration was essential to any emigrant who wanted to become an immigrant—that is, to become a productive and prosperous member of a new nation and to participate in its society at all levels.

26. Egon Schwarz, "La emigración de la Alemania nazi," in Rohland de Langbehn, *Paul Zech y las condiciones del exilio en la Argentina*, 13–28, 19.

27. Boyarin and Boyarin, "Diaspora," 721.

Transnationalism

From the start, both German theaters in Argentina were fundamentally transnational projects. In the first years of its existence, Ludwig Ney's troupe relied on funding from the German Labor Front, Strength through Joy, the German embassy, and, eventually, the Ministry of Propaganda in Berlin. In numerous reports to Berlin, Ambassador Edmund von Thermann emphasized the propagandistic value of the stage, which other emigrants also noted was crucial to the cohesion of the nationalist population. Nazi officialdom saw the German Theater as a vehicle to promote loyalty to Hitler in Argentina, and they appear to have been successful in this endeavor. Many nationalist German emigrants had an abiding relationship with National Socialism; they never dissented publicly against Nazi influence in Buenos Aires, even long after 1945. Nonetheless, Werner Hoffman's *Utz Schmidl* demonstrated that some of them had a sense of transatlantic identity that did not match National Socialist visions of Germanness. These emigrants viewed themselves as patriotic Germans, but also felt genuine sentiments of national affection toward Argentina. They regarded themselves as hybrids, and understood that their transnational sense of identity contrasted profoundly with the identity of their European countrymen.

The foundation of the antifascist Free German Stage stemmed in large part from a will to compete against the nationalist German Theater.²⁸ Nazi officialdom thus had a germinal influence on both theaters in Argentina. Furthermore, the German government pursued a transatlantic agenda of oppression against the FGS, including denaturalizing its director, blacklisting the theater in Germany, blocking publishers from sending it materials, and leveraging German influence to impede the troupe from continuing to perform in Argentina. The theater fought back, however, and pursued transcontinental alliances by presenting an international dramatic repertoire and coordinating with antifascists in Europe and the Americas, as well as with various nationalities in Buenos

28. Jacob to Weil, January 29, 1941, PWJAK.

Aires, to combat Nazism in South America. These partnerships enabled the stage to survive amid mounting adversity during the war, and then contributed to a new area of transnational celebrity guest performances in Argentina and Germany in the postwar period.

Zionists added other international elements at the Free German Stage. Leading figures in the local Zionist movement, such as Bernhardt Swarsensky and Günter Friedländer, worked to disrupt connections to Germany by inveighing against nostalgic depictions of Germany and Austria at the theater, and well as indicting Germans collectively for the Shoah. Zionists saw the FGS as a Jewish theater that performed in German, while antifascists, including founder, Paul Walter Jacob, regarded the German in the theater's name as a reference to the Europe of yesteryear and, they hoped, of tomorrow.²⁹ Finally, Zionists rejected the concept of diaspora as an indication that Jewish life in exile could become tolerable.³⁰ Zionists regarded any existence outside Eretz Israel as *galuth*, which connotes suffering, dislocation, and alienation from a true home.³¹ Thus, they also seized on the Free German Stage to promote *aliyah*, including by inviting Nathan Bistrizky, who resided in Palestine, to attend a performance of his drama, *That Night*, and then donating the proceeds to Keren Kayemet Leisrael y Keren Hayesod.³² Although only a small percentage of the refugee population made *aliyah*, the Free German Stage did contribute to the transnational project of Zionism during World War II. After the war, Zionists abandoned the theater out of vehement opposition to Paul Walter Jacob's dual program of outreach to the nationalist German

29. "Deutsches Theater in Argentinien," *AT*, September 7, 1941.

30. "Galuth und Diaspora," *JW*, September 18, 1951.

31. Krüger, *La diáspora*, 56–57.

32. Established as the Jewish National Funds at the Fifth Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1901, Keren Kayemet Leisrael purchased land in Eretz Israel for the Jewish people. The central fund-raising organization for Israel, Keren Hayesod was founded at the World Zionist Conference in Britain in 1920 and moved to Jerusalem in 1926. The chief tasks of Keren Hayesod included financing immigration and absorption, settlement, defense, development of water resources, and public works.

population and Germany itself. Rather than engaging in rapprochement, Zionists renounced German culture altogether.

Postwar celebrity guest performances at both stages indicated a shift in the transnational projects being undertaken by Argentina's German theater companies. Ludwig Ney courted the Nazi diaspora to Argentina by allying himself with the fascist monthly *Der Weg*, and contracting actors who had formerly featured in Nazi Germany and other countries under fascism. Initially then, Ludwig Ney espoused the transnational agenda of some nationalist Germans and recent postwar emigrants to advance fascist ideology in Argentina. The extent to which the Peronist government welcomed Nazis, facilitated their emigration to Argentina, and permitted or even abetted the perpetuation of their ideology will remain a thorny subject of debate, yet it is striking that Ludwig Ney collaborated on several large-scale productions with the Peronist government at a time when he was openly advocating fascist ideology in neo-Nazi publications, adhering to Nazi drama theory onstage, and collaborating with ensembles that touted their refusal to work with Jewish actors.

During the same period, Paul Walter Jacob launched numerous transatlantic endeavors. At first Jacob mostly contacted fellow exiles; however, by 1948 the director's focus had shifted to individuals and organizations based in Germany. Guest performances endowed with international star power boosted the stage's domestic and international profile, which facilitated Jacob's project to reinvent the Free German Stage as a formally transnational institution. At the exclusion of East Germany, Jacob extended and deepened networks with West German artists and institutions, parlaying his fame across the Atlantic into professional opportunities in Europe. When he accepted the position of general intendant in Dortmund, Jacob became the first actor at either stage to remigrate to Germany. Although many others still were struggling to adapt to Argentina, nobody followed Jacob's route across the Atlantic. The entire refugee ensemble at the Free German Stage remained in the Americas, the vast majority in Argentina. Few in the troupe espoused a Zionist point of view; however, they concurred on the point that their break with Germany was permanent.

Nonetheless, transnational programs continued at the institutional level. There was significant concern in West Germany about

the spread of communism in the Southern Cone, and the West German embassy in Buenos Aires wasted little time in recruiting both German theaters to form an alliance against this perceived threat. The interventions of the embassy, particularly its financial lure, pulled both theaters into its cultural and political orbit. Although Bonn was reluctant to grant funding to Ludwig Ney because of his past as a Nazi collaborator, diplomats agreed that his traveling presentations were an effective tool for projecting West German soft power in the nation's interior. They regarded Ney as a crucial, unifying figure in their endeavor to forge a united front against communism among Germans throughout the country and exerted a heavy influence on his performances in service of this aim. Whereas Ney misrepresented his role during the Nazi period in numerous attempts to garner funding from Bonn, actors at the Free German Stage also felt compelled to moderate their tone if they sought financial support from West Germany. As individuals, leftist actors embarked on cross-cultural projects with Argentine artists, most notably Hedwig Schlichter-Crilla's ensemble, *The Mask*. Yet, their dependence on funding from the West German embassy incentivized thespians, including Schlichter-Crilla herself, who directed the FGS in 1963, to strictly avoid a progressive political agenda when working with this theater. Once a singular expression of resistance to German officialdom in Argentina, the exilic enterprise became a mouthpiece for projecting West German cultural politics in the Southern Cone. Under instructions from the Federal Foreign Office, the embassy molded emigrants' national affections and incorporated them into a transnational crusade against communism. It is possible that actors of both competing theaters would have adopted alternative modes of cultural and political expression had it not been for Bonn's financial clout.

Theatrical Energies

More than any other art form or mode of cultural expression, during the tumultuous years from 1934 to 1965 theater garnered the lasting attention and sponsorship of German political institutions, media organs, and antagonistic German-speaking populations. The

collective sacrifices of time, work, and financial resources required to sustain the Free German Stage and Ludwig Ney's ensembles ratify them as vital community-building institutions. The prominence and endurance of both stages raise the question of why theater was such a singular focus of effort, resources, and debate among emigrant populations in Argentina.

Freddie Rokem's concept of theatrical energies—that is, the emotional, cultural, and political forces generated and unleashed by live theatrical performances—helps resolve this conundrum.³³ The environment of mass migration, cultural conflict, and political antagonism that characterized Buenos Aires in the mid-twentieth century was germane to theatrical communication, especially among immigrant populations. Drawing from a blend of literary text and dramatic performance, theatrical communication releases aesthetic, social, and political energies that interpret contemporary and historical events onstage and, often, intend to bring people together and shape their actions offstage in the present or future. Deployed to effect catharsis—the emotional, intellectual, moral, or even physical reactions that may be experienced by spectators during or following a performance—theatrical energies reverberated among and within Argentina's German-speaking blocs. By creating the illusion of reality, theater joins often distinct aspects of human experiences and social practices and elevates them for spectators to witness and decipher onstage. This shared event can trigger explosive, often unforeseeable offstage energies, which theater critics and journalists refract and often attempt to steer through the media. Even before Paul Walter Jacob and Ludwig Ney had arrived in the Argentine capital, Ferdinand Bruckner's antifascist play, *Race*, and the German Drama's propagandistic portrayals of Lessing's *Minna of Barnhelm* and Schiller's *Mary Stuart* had witnessed such an impact locally. The theatrical event generates a reaction that often resonates beyond the theater, spilling into the public sphere, frequently with the intention of catalyzing transgressive behaviors against existing groups, social norms, or ideologies.³⁴ The

33. Rokem, *Performing History*, 188–204.

34. Goldmann, *Actor's Freedom*, 23–24.

reverberations of theatrical communication are thus characterized by aggression, a salient feature of interactions in German Buenos Aires throughout the period under consideration.

Therefore, as exemplified by the Free German Stage and Ludwig Ney's ensembles, theater can act potently as both a unifying and a polarizing force. For decades, the aggressions that sprang from dramatic presentations cleaved and coalesced German-speaking blocs on the River Plate. When the dispersed tensions residing on- and offstage became attuned, these theatrical energies detonated the controversies and discord pervading German Buenos Aires. During the war, performances of Lillian Hellman's *The Unvanquished*, Carl Rössler's *The Five Frankfurters*, the German classics, and Werner Hoffmann's *Utz Schmidl*, for example, roused public responses to questions of religion, national affection, and political loyalty that united and strengthened certain German-speaking groups while attacking other blocs and the religious beliefs, cultural identities, and political programs they were seen to represent. At the same time, the failure of other productions to discharge theatrical energies, such as the Free German Stage's productions of *Mary Stuart*, Bistritzky's *That Night*, and Aialti's *Father and Son*, also delineated the boundaries of the refugee community, which embraced neither the German canon nor the Zionist agenda.

Theatrical energies remained a vigorous and unstable force after the war. Sentiments and alliances stemming from the Nazi period and the aftermath of World War II found expression in incendiary reactions to Carl Zuckmayer's *The Captain of Köpenick* and *The Devil's General* at the Free German Stage, as well as Ludwig Ney's presentation of *Mary Stuart*. The hardened hostilities stymied Paul Walter Jacob's program of celebrity-infused outreach to all German speakers in Buenos Aires, in which exilic actors and fascist thespian collaborators were ghosted by their roles on- and offstage during the recent past. Despite this setback, the West German embassy recognized and exploited theatrical communication to project Western soft power during the Cold War; however, despite the care taken to contrive harmony, theater proved divisive. The depictions of historical events onstage transformed actors into hyper-historians, whose representations in *Anne Frank* and *Nathan the*

Wise rendered these figures from the Nazi occupation of Holland and the Third Crusade in Jerusalem poignantly “present” at the theatrical performances. Imbued with the Stanislavskian “magic if,” the presentations carried the mimetic force of dramatized historical events. The thespians interpreted and stirred past and present onstage, inciting theatergoers.³⁵ The blend of identification and involvement inherent to witnessing performances of history was intensified because the audiences had personally endured the suffering depicted in *Anne Frank* and the racial trauma emphasized in *Nathan*. The spectators-cum-witnesses-cum-participants then reported their catharsis to a wider public, which experienced the theatrical energies vicariously beyond the venue of the production. Members of both populations contested the history performed, accusing those who advocated contrary perspectives of immoral, politicized revisionism. In the case of *Anne Frank*, the West German embassy foresaw the ensuing strife and unsuccessfully intervened against the presentation. *Nathan the Wise* represents a contrasting instance, in which the embassy, media, and thespians all hoped that catharsis would conduce to reconciliation. Instead Lessing’s drama vitalized conflicts, catalyzed aggression, and restored behaviors that transgressed against the embassy’s campaign for unity against communism. Though performed long after the death of the author and the culture for which they originally were intended, canonical German dramas, including *Nathan* and Schiller’s *Robbers*, transmitted a social and historical energy that arose from their long life as performed literary works.³⁶ The polemical aftermath of *The Robbers* resembled the trajectory of Schiller’s drama, and the dramatist’s conscription into the National Socialist propaganda machine continued to be the subject of emotive debates through the 1960s. The volatility of the German classics reflected the volatility of German culture and history itself.

35. Colin Counsell, *Signs of Performance: An Introduction to Twentieth-Century Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1996), 28.

36. Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1988), 2.

Their confidence, albeit often mistaken, that they could harness these theatrical energies to promote their own interests motivated diverse local and transnational institutions to support the Free German Stage and Ludwig Ney's ensembles over the span of four decades. At the same time, the sense of community and catharsis experienced by spectators inspired durable loyalty to their theaters, sustaining them for a full generation.

Dramatic Theory and Repertoire

Beyond theatrical energies, other approaches to dramatic theory also open new approaches to historical and cultural examination. For example, it is tempting to view Ludwig Ney's career as a course of integration into Argentine society accompanied by his steady alienation from fascist ideology. Productions in Spanish, collaborative efforts with Argentine and other immigrant artists, and the inclusion of non-German dramatists in his repertoire all support such an interpretation. Furthermore, given Ney's steady popularity among emigrant-cum-immigrant audiences, this perspective also would indicate that nationalist Germans themselves had followed a similar course.

Drama theory problematizes this analysis. Especially concerning integration and interculturalism, Ney and other nationalist Germans eventually moved beyond their ethnocentric survival tactics and cultural practices of the Nazi period, yet the director's work evinces much aesthetic, cultural, and political continuity. During World War II, the German Theater's repertoire mirrored theater programs in Nazi Germany, including extending all Nazi bans on dramatists to Argentina. Ney and his troupe also upheld fascist drama theory. Onstage and behind the curtain, this included reverence for the dramatic text and the spoken word as the highest form of ethnic artistic expression, an understated *mis-en-scène* to repudiate the elaborate stage designs of the Weimar Republic, meticulous rehearsals to eliminate improvisation, and the exaltation of the director as the dramatic embodiment of the cult of the leader.

Offstage, nationalist theater critics in Argentina followed transatlantic models that wielded theater as part of their propagandistic arsenal to consolidate and legitimize the National Socialist state. Reviews posited German dramatists as harbingers of Hitler's rise to power and exploited historical dramas to justify Nazi government policies, including the glorification of military power and war, racial anti-Semitism, and exclusionary community-building.

Ney's postwar productions, too, revealed unflinching adherence to National Socialist aesthetics, drama theory, and repertoire policy. Even as he internationalized his repertoire, collaborated with Argentine artists, and began performing in Spanish, Ney never staged dramatists who had been proscribed in Nazi Germany. Furthermore, whether in German or Spanish, from 1948 to 1966 his presentations of the German classics, Molière, and Shakespeare abided by axioms of fascist drama theory. Although the productions in Córdoba and the Summer Festival showcased grand stage designs, Ney held fast to the primacy of the word and assiduous preparation to squelch improvisatory acting. Reviewers, too, manipulated Schiller according to the same pattern of politicized contemporization, brandishing him as proto-Nazi visionary, anti-occupation crusader and, finally, strident Cold Warrior. Molière and especially Shakespeare were among the foreign dramatists favored by the Reich Theater Chamber, and Ney's productions of *The Miser*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Othello* dovetailed with interpretations of these works in Nazi Germany, including anti-Semitism, exclusionary community-building, the glorification of the soldier as a paragon of masculinity, and, in the case of *Othello*, the Aryanization of Shakespeare's protagonist. From his South American debut in 1938 until his retirement in 1972, Ludwig Ney neither staged a Jewish dramatist nor engaged a Jewish thespian. It is striking to what degree Argentine artists, media, and Peronist functionaries embraced his archconservative approach to theater. Ney collaborated with dozens of local actors and musicians, and was featured in numerous national press organs, as well as the antitotalitarian *Argentinisches Tageblatt*, without ever renouncing Nazism, implementing a more inclusive repertoire, nor altering the fascist drama theory that undergirded his theatrical performances.

The case of Ludwig Ney demonstrates that even nationalist emigrants are compelled to integrate, and, furthermore, that they can do so successfully without a pervasive ideological shift.

When the Free German Stage debuted in 1940, it already was navigating deep fissures in its public. Its repertoire was exceedingly cautious and betrayed refugees' estrangement from German culture. Although he personally believed in a reformed postwar Germany and eventually remigrated to Dortmund, in 1941 Paul Walter Jacob explicated the adjective "German" in the ensemble's name by foregrounding the formal aspect of its work with the German language to present international dramas. Cognizant of his public, Jacob associated "German" less with a specific country than with European cultural diversity and cosmopolitanism.³⁷ Many theatergoers broke with Germany, including much of its literary canon. The most performed dramatist at the German Theater, Friedrich Schiller, flopped at the Free German Stage. Its public wanted to see dramas from the recent past, especially light, early twentieth-century comedies by European Jews. The troupe willfully deployed the comic genre as a therapeutic memory machine to foster a buoyant sense of community and provide refugees with a temporary escape from their troubles outside the theater. This fed emigrants' often chimerical nostalgia for their previous lives in Europe, which met with reprobation from Zionists and antifascist activists. During the postwar period, the stage attempted to attract all German-speaking theatergoers; however, celebrity guest performances revealed the predicament of playing to audiences who had contradictory definitions of German theater. Whereas the refugee population preferred actors who had starred in the Weimar Republic and then emigrated when Hitler seized power, nationalist Germans expected thespians and dramas that did not break with Nazism. Actors and plays that implied criticism of this period were anathema to them. The Free German Stage failed to bridge this gap; in fact many members of its own cast rebelled against conciliatory gestures in personnel and repertoire.

37. "Deutsches Theater in Argentinien," *AT*, September 7, 1941.

Dramatic theory also discloses the weighty influence of the West German embassy, which prohibited leftist agitprop theater at the stage. Hedwig Schlichter-Crilla could only fully develop her pedagogical theater and propagate Konstantin Stanislavsky's acting system in Argentina outside of the bounds of the Free German Stage, despite the Russian actor's tense relationship with Soviet authorities. At Bonn's behest, the FGS shunned Brechtian mechanisms such as the alienation technique and the principle of historicization, although the dramatist was popular among Argentines and exilic actors alike.³⁸ Neither Brecht nor any playwright living in East Germany or the Eastern bloc countries was selected for performance. Instead, the repertoire comprised only canonical European and contemporary Western authors. The lens of dramatic theory belies a convergence between Argentina's competing German theaters. On the contrary, theatrical performances depict Ludwig Ney's adherence to fascist dramatic theory and the Free German Stage's remarkable transformation from political dissidence to conformism, underscored by the pervasiveness of West German soft power.

Competition

From 1933 to 1966, Argentina's German nationalist and anti-fascist populations—Zionists eventually withdrew themselves by renouncing Europe altogether—existed in a state of implacable competition. Multiple communities of German speakers had existed since the beginning of large-scale immigration to Argentina in the 1880s. Lutherans and Catholics, for example, formed separate, sometimes competing populations of German speakers. Christian denominational conflicts are absent from all discourse on German theaters in Argentina, however, likely because of the waning role of denominational difference in immigrant identity formation among Gentiles as well as the predominance of Lutherans

38. Arndt, interview by author, 2006.

in most nationalist German institutions in Buenos Aires. Competition between Lutherans and Catholics also would have had little relevance for the Free German Stage, because its cast and public were overwhelmingly Jewish. In the aftermath of the First World War, new, political discord between monarchists and republicans emerged, and the advent of National Socialism profoundly exacerbated these tensions. From the outset, the groups waged their rivalry across multiple fronts, including education, media, and cultural forums. Although the rivalry was defined by the participants' positions vis-à-vis Nazism, it was also messy—along with animosity came linkage, crisscrossing, disunity, and ambiguity. The conflict represents a singular instance of immediate, local, and fully open competition to dispute German politics, history, and culture throughout the Nazi period and for decades beyond. More than a contact zone, Buenos Aires was a battleground for oppositional definitions of German identity.

Surpassing any other venue, theater became the proving ground for contesting what it meant to be German. After nationalists contracted Ludwig Ney to launch the German Theater, German-speaking antifascists and Jewish refugees retaliated by establishing the Free German Stage. Thus, the two stages were conceived under the rubric of competition. The troupes and their constituents portrayed themselves as soldiers on cultural front-lines, and sought financial backing on this basis.³⁹ Neither side was willing to acknowledge the other's legitimacy throughout the Nazi period. The *Deutsche La Plata Zeitung* never mentioned the Free German Stage by name, and implied it was illegitimate by labeling its reports on Ludwig Ney's ensemble, "German Theater in Argentina." Meanwhile, the *Argentinisches Tageblatt* snidely remarked that even a few "Nazis" may have enjoyed the performances at the antifascist stage, because it was the only "truly German theater" in Buenos Aires.⁴⁰ Although they adopted similar tactics in community building, integration, publicity, and transnational alliances,

39. "Gespräch mit Ludwig Ney," *Teutonia*, September 1938; "Ein Sieg auf der Kulturf front," *DAD*, August 15, 1940.

40. "Die erste Spielzeit der Freien Deutschen Bühne," *AT*, November 17, 1940.

and even drew some of the same spectators to their performances, the two stages remained in fierce competition during the postwar period. Striving to become director of the Free German Stage, Ney denied and concealed his past as a Nazi collaborator. Under Paul Walter Jacob, the Free German Stage curried favor with nationalist Germans in an attempt to force Ludwig Ney off Argentine stages. Even gestures of rapprochement were steeped in competition against the rival ensemble.

Irreconcilable understandings of German identity were at the core of their competition. Each troupe designated itself as German; however, they held starkly antithetical views on what this signified. Adhering to fascist dramatic theory from across the Atlantic, Ludwig Ney relentlessly deployed theater to justify nationalists' claims that they represented an eternal, racially exclusive German nation. Numerous actors at the Free German Stage argued that Nazism was neither essence nor continuity, but aberration. For them, to perform in German was to fight for the restoration of the fundamentally German values of tolerance and cosmopolitanism that Nazism had trampled. The competition continued unabated after the war, when many nationalists never revised their conception of Germanness and adamantly rejected accusations of war crimes and guilt for atrocities during the Nazi period. Antifascists and Jews would not forgive them for these transgressions, and clashing performances of German history onstage vitalized, prolonged, and sharpened these conflicts over decades. Despite the efforts of numerous parties to achieve rapprochement, Argentina's competing German theaters had helped inculcate hostilities that could not be extinguished for many years to come.