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ERIK LEVI

## JANÁČEK AND THE THIRD REICH

Undoubtedly one of the major landmarks in Janáček's life took place in February 1918 when his opera *Jenůfa* was given its first – triumphant – performance in Vienna. Not only did this event mark the beginning of a new stage in the composer's career, but also it afforded him the first significant opportunity to establish a reputation in the German-speaking world – a process that was surely enhanced, first by the signing of a contract with Universal Edition, the Viennese publishing house that in the ensuing decade was to hold such a major stake in the development of contemporary music throughout Europe, and secondly by the excellent German translation of the composer's libretto by his devoted supporter Max Brod. Yet, despite the critical acclaim that was accorded to the Viennese performances of *Jenůfa*, Janáček's opera did not gain widespread acceptance in Germany and Austria as quickly as one might have expected. Although the cultural climate in the Weimar Republic ostensibly encouraged a much more eclectic approach to repertory than had been possible during the Empire, it took five years before German opera houses began to stage *Jenůfa*. (See Table I attached to this article).

To explain this delayed response to the composer's masterpiece, one should note that despite his relatively advanced age, Janáček remained practically unknown in Austro-German musical circles even in the aftermath of the First World War, and his output hardly warranted serious discussion in some of the most widely-disseminated books on music history of the period.<sup>1</sup> For example, Janáček received only cursory attention in Karl Storck's *Die Musik der Gegenwart*, which reached its fifth edition in 1922. While acknowledging that the Viennese performance of *Jenůfa* had marked something of a breakthrough for the composer, Storck made the somewhat disingenuous comment that its success had been engineered as much by political issues as by any consideration of its artistic merit. Further-

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<sup>1</sup> As an example of German ignorance concerning Janáček it is interesting that no entry on the composer appears in the 1921 edition of Riemann's *Musiklexikon*, although generous space is accorded to his younger colleagues Suk and Novák. One should also add that the first detailed articles on Janáček to appear in Universal Edition's house journal *Musikblätter des Anbruch* date from the mid-1920s, another factor that might have delayed a wider dissemination of his music in the immediate aftermath of the Viennese performances of *Jenůfa*.

more (having played through the vocal score) he argued that the opera hardly demonstrated “any particular individuality or a really captivating musicality”.<sup>2</sup>

Storck’s somewhat negative comments on Janáček, and for that matter on many other non-German composers, have to be examined within the context of the author’s own staunchly conservative and proto-nationalist position. In a study purporting to offer its readers a comprehensive appraisal of European contemporary music, Storck devotes almost eight of his ten chapters to German composers. Moreover, the book opens with a belligerently xenophobic foreword in which Storck condemned the current cultural climate in his native country, where “international forces” appeared to be threatening the survival of German music.<sup>3</sup>

In referring to the fear of internationalist subjugation, Storck was merely reiterating an argument most prominently articulated by Hans Pfitzner in his essay *Die neue Ästhetik der musikalischen Impotenz* (Munich 1920), and taken up with increasing vengeance by journals such as the *Zeitschrift für Musik*,<sup>4</sup> of a widespread conspiracy during the Weimar Republic to flood German concert halls and opera houses indiscriminately with repertory by foreign composers. Although there is little evidence to suggest that Janáček was particularly singled out as a specific target for such hostility, as was certainly the case with Bartók and Stravinsky, the composer’s continuing association with Universal Edition, not to mention the enthusiastic support he gained from adventurous interpreters such as Otto Klemperer, made him potentially vulnerable – a point that is confirmed to a certain extent by the somewhat indifferent critical response accorded to the 1922 German premiere of *Katya Kabanova* in Cologne.<sup>5</sup>

While during the early 1920s Janáček’s music appears to have made little headway in Germany, there seems to have been a significant change to his reputation by the middle of the decade. One can attribute this development to a number of factors, particularly the growing influence of progressively-minded concert and opera organizations who were more prepared to incorporate unfamiliar contemporary non-German repertory into their programmes. No doubt this trend was also stimulated by the propaganda from new music journals such as *Melos* and *Anbruch*, which had a particular stake in encouraging a more eclectic approach to programming. As far as Janáček was concerned, the publication in 1925 of Max Brod’s detailed study of the composer almost certainly helped to raise his profile. But once again it was *Jenůfa* that acted as the catalyst, particularly after the 1924 staging of the opera in Berlin under Erich Kleiber. The considerable critical success of this performance in the German capital certainly encouraged a remarkable

<sup>2</sup> Karl Storck, *Die Musik der Gegenwart*, Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1922, p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> Storck, *ibid.*, pp. 7–9.

<sup>4</sup> The *Zeitschrift für Musik* was relaunched in 1925 as the journal exclusively dedicated to the “spiritual renewal of German music”.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Heyworth, *Otto Klemperer: His Life and Times*, volume 1: 1885–1933, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 162–4.

enthusiasm for the opera that spread from the obvious metropolitan centres to many provincial opera houses.

Universal Edition capitalized on the sudden popularity of *Jenůfa* with prominent advertisements extolling the virtues of the distinguished composer. But if their intention was to encourage German opera houses to take up other works apart from *Jenůfa*, the strategy seems largely to have misfired. As the statistics suggest, stagings of *Káťa Kabanová*, *Das schlaue Fuchslein (Příhody lišky Bystroušky)* and *Die Sache Makropoulos (Věc Makropulos)*, all in the German translations by Max Brod, were confined in each case to a single opera house, respectively Cologne, Berlin and Frankfurt, with limited revivals in later years. A further obstacle to a wider appreciation of Janáček's operas was the economic crisis at the end of the 1920s, which had profound repercussions for future cultural activity in Germany. With drastically reduced public subsidies, opera houses were forced to adopt a far more cautious approach to programming. Under these circumstances, the staging of the composer's final work *Aus einem Totenhaus (Z mrtvého domu)* in Berlin in 1930 could not have occurred at a less propitious moment. Indeed, rising tension between the Czech and German governments during this period, stimulated to a certain extent by anti-German demonstrations in Prague, actually forced a temporary postponement of the performance.<sup>6</sup> Although the opera was also performed in Mannheim, Oldenburg and Düsseldorf in 1931, its pessimism engendered little enthusiasm from critics. Reviews printed in the ideologically neutral journal *Die Musik* were almost unanimously sceptical about the work, arguing that it betrayed a primitive technique and was tonally monotonous.<sup>7</sup> Lurking behind such critiques was probably a growing antagonism towards Czech culture, manifested in its most xenophobic manner in an article published in the journal *Deutsches Volkstum*, in which Hermann Unger singled out Janáček as one of a group of "radical" nationalist composers whose prime intent was to destroy German music.<sup>8</sup>

The advent of the Nazis initially signalled a further dip in Janáček's reputation. With the enactment of the Civil Service Laws in April 1933, the regime managed to remove a number of prominent conductors and producers who had earlier championed the composer's cause.<sup>9</sup> In the mounting climate of fear and uncer-

<sup>6</sup> Heyworth, *ibid.*, p. 345.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the reviews "Das Musikleben in der Gegenwart", in *Die Musik* (1931–2), pp. 357–8, 687, 760 and 922.

<sup>8</sup> Unger's article is paraphrased in "Kreuz und Quer: Wer zerstört die deutsche Musik?", *Zeitschrift für Musik* (February 1931), pp. 153–4.

<sup>9</sup> The majority of German interpreters of Janáček during this period were of Jewish descent. Otto Klemperer remains the most high-profile interpreter, followed by Jascha Horenstein (Düsseldorf), Paul Breisach (Cologne), Joseph Rosenstock (Mannheim), Wilhelm Steinberg (Frankfurt) and Fritz Zweig (Berlin). All these figures were relieved of their conducting posts in 1933. The "Aryan" Erich Kleiber, who had conducted the Berlin performance of *Jenůfa* in 1924, left Germany in 1935.

tainty, the early months of the Nazi era saw the proscription of repertory deemed unacceptable on political, racial or aesthetic grounds.

At the same time, critics who had proclaimed their loyalty to the new order were much exercised by the problem of finding suitable replacements for the works that had been banned. Although they approved of the promotion of purely German repertory, by composers who had not tarnished their reputation through excessive exposure during the Weimar Republic, there was little consensus among them as to ways in which contemporary music from other countries might be used. For Fritz Stege, writing in the *Zeitschrift für Musik*, it was essential that opera houses should in future promote works by Nordic composers rather than by Slavs or Magyars.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, Wilhelm Altmann, providing an impressively detailed shopping list of neglected operas that he thought deserved to be revived in the new cultural environment, argued for a more judicious approach, based on musical quality rather than national origins. Amongst the works he singled out as worthy of inclusion, Altmann cited *Jenůfa*, as warranting strong endorsement, not least because the opera “reflected a genuine feeling for the Volk”.<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately Altmann’s plea for the revival of *Jenůfa* fell on deaf ears during this period, since aesthetic judgment was all too frequently subordinated to political realities. For instance, an official from the Dresden Opera submitted a request to the newly established Prussian Theatre Commission in June 1933 for permission to stage the work the following season. In a letter dated 22 June, and addressed to Hans Hinkel, of the Prussian Ministry of Education, Art and Public Enlightenment, he wrote :

Dear Staatskommissar,

We have already asked you before whether you have any objections to a planned performance of the opera *Jenůfa* by Janáček. The opera as such is an excellent work of art that derives direct inspiration from Czech folklore and folk music. Moreover the composer is not Jewish. The publishers have raised no objection to the performance of operas by foreign composers (naturally in reduced numbers), particularly when a real work of art arises so directly from the mother earth of a particular nation. After all, one would hardly expect foreigners to reject Wagner merely because he is a German.

Perhaps you could think over this matter and therefore permit us to see your answer as soon as possible. Heil Hitler!

Hinkel’s reply, coming four days later, read thus:

We have no objections to the performance of the opera *Jenůfa* in principle, but we should point out to you that you should take into consideration whether the foreign country in question of the composer’s birth maintains friendly relations with Germany. Unfortunately, in the case of Czechoslovakia, this is not the case.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Fritz Stege, “Die Reinigung des deutschen Opernspielplans”, *Zeitschrift für Musik*, Jahrgang 100 (1933), pp. 487–8.

<sup>11</sup> Wilhelm Altmann, “Für einen deutschen Opernspielplan”, *Die Musik*, Jahrg. 25 (September 1933), p. 905.

<sup>12</sup> These documents are quoted in Joseph Wulff, *Musik im dritten Reich*, Gütersloh: Rororo, 1966, pp. 95–6.

Needless to say, after such a threat had been issued, the proposed Dresden performance never took place. In view of the strained political relationship between Germany and Czechoslovakia, neither was any other opera house prepared to risk mounting the opera over the next two seasons. In the interim period, the Nazis had further tightened their grip over cultural policy by unveiling the Chamber of Culture of the Reich in November 1933, to which all practitioners in the performing arts had to belong. In the area of opera, the establishment of the post of *Reichsdramaturg* in 1934 proved significant, for this functionary was responsible for surveying and controlling all repertory plans proposed by Germany's opera houses.

Whether the *Reichsdramaturg* took a more relaxed attitude towards foreign repertory at the beginning of the 1935–6 season is unclear. Undoubtedly the hard-line approach of previous seasons was somewhat modified in the light of the impending Olympic Games in Berlin in the summer of 1936, when the Nazis made a conscious effort to present themselves as open-minded in cultural matters. Perhaps as a result of this, *Jenůfa* was revived once again, albeit in two provincial opera houses (Halle and Görlitz). However, both performances were to a certain degree controversial. In Görlitz, a town then on the border with Poland and Czechoslovakia, the performance of an opera based on Moravian folk-life was deemed provocative and unacceptable. Organized protests against the opera were instigated by local sections of the *NS Kulturgemeinde* (National Socialist Cultural Community) – a pressure group of zealous ideologues, controlled by Alfred Rosenberg, who took it upon themselves to monitor the official cultural policies of Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry, with the objective of drawing special attention to anything that could be construed as subversive.<sup>13</sup>

The protests seem to have worked: *Jenůfa* was quickly withdrawn from both theatres for fear of further demonstrations. Yet, if one is to judge by some of the critical responses that were published at the time, it appears that not everyone sympathized with the actions of the Rosenberg faction. This impression is certainly confirmed from a review of the Halle performance of *Jenůfa* which was published in the February 1936 issue of the *Zeitschrift für Musik*, in which the critic Hans Kleeman contemptuously challenged the justification of the *NSKG* action, in the light of his opinion that *Jenůfa* was evidently a work of “such astonishingly confident musico-dramatic quality”.<sup>14</sup>

With the Sudeten crisis looming ever larger in 1937 and 1938, there were inevitable repercussions in the musical sphere, particularly after the Czech government suppressed a festival featuring music by Sudeten German composers. Since anti-Czech sentiments were running particularly high at this time, any further chance of promoting the music of Janáček seemed remoter than ever. In view of

<sup>13</sup> In Görlitz, the local *NSKG* took the unusual step of lodging a protest to the Ministry of Propaganda against the town's theatre Intendant for putting on *Jenůfa*. However, officials in the Ministry refused to intervene in the dispute. See Fred K. Prieborg, *Musik im NS-Staat*, Frankfurt: Fischer, 1982, p. 132.

<sup>14</sup> Hans Kleeman, “Oper: Halle”, *Zeitschrift für Musik* (February 1936), p. 234.

the increasingly xenophobic climate of opinion, it is all the more surprising that after 1938 and the German occupation of Bohemia and Moravia, *Jenůfa* suddenly enjoyed a level of success that almost rivalled the period of the mid-1920s. As the statistics illustrate, from 1939 to 1944 the opera appears to have risen phoenix-like from the ashes, securing frequent performances in theatres throughout the greater German Reich.

Hamburg was one of the first major opera houses to present a high-profile revival of *Jenůfa*. The production, by Oscar Friedrich Schuh, conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, took place on 29 May 1940 – and the occasion was deemed sufficiently auspicious to draw critics from the German capital to the first night, amongst whom Richard Ohlekopf, the editor of the *Signale für die musikalische Welt*, was particularly emphatic in proclaiming the work a masterpiece.<sup>15</sup> Two months later, the same journal published an equally enthusiastic report of a new production of *Jenůfa* in Braunschweig, the local critic Gerhard Weise seemingly bowled over by Janáček's "tremendously dramatic music".<sup>16</sup>

Other opera houses that had pursued a more cautious repertory policy during the Third Reich than Hamburg and Braunschweig seemed emboldened by these positive reviews, and also decided to revive *Jenůfa*. Freiburg introduced the opera alongside Smetana's *Bartered Bride* (*Prodaná nevěsta*) and Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*, making a special feature of their focus on Slavic operas for the 1940–41 season. Likewise, Schwerin presented *Jenůfa* in summer 1940, with considerable success: the performance drew a positive response from the critic A.E. Reinhard in the journal *Die Musik*.<sup>17</sup> Writing in the same journal, Willy Spilling gave the opera a more detailed appraisal, in response to its staging in Nuremberg in summer 1941. Spilling acknowledged that Janáček's opera would probably appeal most to musically sophisticated audiences, but laid particular emphasis on the opera's relationship to *verismo*, citing both Verdi and Musorgsky as strong influences on its musical language.<sup>18</sup>

Without doubt the most highly publicized staging of *Jenůfa* took place at the Berlin Staatsoper in the 1941–2 season. Although this occurred in the middle of the war, no effort was spared to assemble a particularly star-studded cast for the occasion. Amongst the leading roles were Tiana Lemnitz and Maria Müller, alternating as Jenůfa, Peter Anders as Števa and Martha Fuchs as the Kostelnička, with Wolf Völker as producer and Emil Preetorius as stage designer. To bring an element of authenticity to proceedings, Václav Talich was invited from Prague to conduct the performances. Whether the conductor refused the invitation, as has

<sup>15</sup> Richard Ohlekopf, "Musik im Reich: Hamburg", *Signale für die musikalische Welt*, Jahrgang 98, no. 21/2 (1940), p. 983.

<sup>16</sup> Gerhard Weise, "Musik im Reich: Braunschweig", *Signale für die musikalische Welt*, Jahrgang 98, no. 29/30 (1940), p. 266–7.

<sup>17</sup> A. E. Reinhard, "Das Musikleben in der Gegenwart: Schwerin – Oper", *Die Musik* (August 1940), p. 387.

<sup>18</sup> Willy Spilling, "Das Musikleben in der Gegenwart", *Die Musik* (June 1941), p. 322.



been argued in certain circles, or fell ill during rehearsals, is not entirely clear. In any case Talich did not ultimately conduct the work, his place being taken by Johannes Schüler, whose previous experience of conducting Janáček had been in 1931, with performances of *Aus einem Totenhaus* in Oldenburg.

The articles published in the special number of the *Blätter der Staatsoper* exclusively devoted to *Jenufa* show no evidence whatsoever of the anti-Czech rhetoric that had characterized earlier writings on the composer. In surveying the composer's life and work, Dr Julius Kapp, the editor of the journal, wrote very effusively not only about the earlier Berlin performance of *Jenufa*, but also about *Das schlaue Fuchslein*, which he commended to his readers as a work of genuine beauty.<sup>19</sup> Apart from Kapp's enthusiastic survey, the *Blätter* offered a fuller picture of Janáček's particularly "warm" relationship with Berlin audiences,<sup>20</sup> and reproduced on its first page the composer's autobiographical sketch, "Ohne Pauke".

The reviews of the Berlin performances seem to have been uniformly positive and enthusiastic. For Hans Lebende, writing in the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*, the staging was a triumph for the entire cast. Indeed he went so far as to claim that "rarely had the German opera stage witnessed such a memorable and compelling theatrical experience".<sup>21</sup> Responses of this nature certainly helped to maintain the position of *Jenufa* in the repertory even in the difficult political circumstances of the final years of the War, when many of Germany's opera houses were being destroyed in Allied air raids. Dresden, for example, mounted a new production of the opera under the conductor Karl Elmendorff as late as 31 March 1944, performances continuing until Goebbels's declaration of "Total War" in August of the same year.

One interesting aspect of the Nazi reception of *Jenufa* is that its libretto, translated into German by Max Brod, appears not to have aroused concern or controversy – a somewhat surprising state of affairs, given that Brod was not only of Jewish descent, but enjoyed a sufficiently high profile to have merited an extended article entry in the *Lexikon der Juden in der Musik* (Berlin 1940).<sup>22</sup> As is well-known, the Nazis were particularly troubled by works in which there had been artistic collaboration between Aryan and Jew, and were keen to undermine any Jewish contribution to an accepted masterpiece wherever possible. Absurd though it may seem, the authorities went to great lengths to disregard Heinrich Heine's authorship of poems set by Schubert and Schumann, and to aryanize the

<sup>19</sup> Dr J[ulius] K[app], "Leós [sic] Janáčeks Leben und Werk", *Blätter der Staatsoper*, 22. Jahrg. (1942), Heft 5: *Jenufa*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Anon, "Erinnerungen an den Menschen Leós Janáček", *Blätter der Staatsoper*, 22. Jahrg. (1942), Heft 5, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Hans Lebende, "Janáček: Jenufa", *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*, 174 (1942), p. 72.

<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that the entry on Max Brod fails to mention his professional connection with Janáček, focusing attention almost entirely on an article he wrote on the Jewish element in Gustav Mahler's melodic writing. See "Brod, Max", in Theo Stengel & Herbert Gerigk, eds., *Lexikon der Juden in der Musik*, Berlin: Bernhard Hahnfeld, 1940, p. 41.



Lorenzo da Ponte librettos that formed the basis of three of Mozart's greatest operas. As for more recent music, one of the biggest scandals of the Third Reich was the banning in July 1935 of Strauss's opera *Die schweigsame Frau* on account of Stefan Zweig's libretto.

Since the Nazis had created the post of a *Reichsdramaturg* with the responsibility of overseeing and approving repertory proposed by Germany's opera houses, it is all the more extraordinary that Brod's contribution to *Jenůfa* was overlooked, especially since frequent applications to perform the opera would have had to have been placed in the hands of officials working from Berlin. Yet the files of the office of the *Reichsdramaturg* contain nothing to suggest that the issue was even discussed.<sup>23</sup> It is possible of course that discussions surrounding Brod never surfaced because Universal Edition had already taken steps to camouflage his contribution to the opera. In 1935 they published a completely new translation of the work by Felix Greissle with the catalogue number UE 10730.<sup>24</sup> The reasons for commissioning Greissle and thereby jettisoning Brod's translation seem obscure, since the new publication follows the pattern of the original edition (UE 6004) in reprinting Brod's introductory article "Über Janáček's Wortmelodie" before proceeding with the libretto itself.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps UE made the decision on the grounds of financial expediency. Having experienced a severe dip in revenues once most of the works in their catalogue could no longer be performed in the Third Reich, they were naturally keen to promote anything that might rescue their current situation. The applications in 1935 from the opera houses in Görlitz and Halle to perform *Jenůfa* could well have prompted them to believe that the best chance of ensuring the work's continued success was to eradicate Brod's translation altogether.

The gamble to re-launch *Jenůfa* in Germany in 1935 failed. But after 1938 the situation changed dramatically. Faced with the increasing popularity of the

<sup>23</sup> Confirmation in an e-mail dated 25 May 2006 to the author from Dr Boris von Haken, who is currently writing a book on the activities of the *Reichsdramaturg*,

<sup>24</sup> The Arnold Schoenberg Center in Vienna houses a document stating that Greissle transferred the copyright of his revision of *Jenůfa* to Universal Edition on 15 June 1935. See: [http://www.schoenberg.at/6\\_archiv/satellite/satellite\\_g13\\_list.htm](http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/satellite/satellite_g13_list.htm) (accessed January 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Felix Greissle (1894–1982) is best remembered for his transcriptions of Schoenberg's music, including an arrangement of the Wind Quintet as a sonata for flute and piano. At the same time, he developed a reputation for translating Eastern European opera libretti into German: for example, Universal issued a vocal score of Moniuszko's *Halka* with Greissle's translation in 1936. This version was presumably the one used for the German premiere of the work in Hamburg in 1935. The Greissle translation of *Jenůfa* differs in some respects from Brod's text, as can be illustrated by the opening lines sung by Jenůfa; in Brod they read: "Ach, es wird schon Abend, und Stewa ist nicht zurück. Wie mich die Angst geschüttelt hat, heut' in der Nacht", and these lines are changed in Greissle to "Ach, es wird schon Abend, und Stewa nicht heimgekehrt. Schauernd durchwachte ich die ganze Nacht". UE reprinted Greissle's translation in 1942 and 1944 under the aegis of Dr Johannes Petschull, who became the new director of Universal Edition after the Anschluss. It should be noted that in the 1942 and 1944 reprintings of the libretto, Brod's name is removed from the authorship of the article "Über Janáček's Wortmelodie".

opera, Universal were forced to reprint the original vocal scores, which of course contained Brod's translation. They met this demand by printing 300 extra copies of the vocal score in 1939, and a further 300 in 1941.<sup>26</sup> To avoid drawing undue attention to Brod's translation and thereby potentially jeopardizing the financial rewards that would have accrued from further performances of the opera, UE appear merely to have removed his name from the title page, while leaving the original plates of the music as they were presented in 1919. Clearly the publishers believed that this mendacious gesture was sufficient to ward off any suspicions of Jewish involvement in the translation, and prevent the possibility of the opera being removed from the stage on racial grounds. Furthermore, in having published Greissle's translation only a few years earlier, they may well have claimed Greissle to be the sole author of the German text in the original vocal score. The irony of this act of subterfuge is that the Nazis seemed unaware of Greissle's connections with Schoenberg: he was in fact Schoenberg's son-in-law, though not himself of Jewish descent, and had followed his mentor to the United States after the *Anschluss*.<sup>27</sup>

The sudden explosion of performances on the German stage of *Jenůfa* after 1938 raises interesting questions. Was the revival of the opera merely another manifestation of the cynical exploitation of Eastern European culture that followed the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact – an alliance celebrated in musical terms by high-profile performances of operas by Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and Dvořák during the early war years? Given the 1938 occupation of Bohemia and Moravia, why were the Nazis apparently prepared to promote a work which incorporates folk traditions to which they were ideologically opposed? Did officials, who presumably had access to the relevant information, merely brush aside the Jewish contribution to the work?

Three points are perhaps relevant here. First, one needs to consider the continuity of personnel in the German stage between the 1920s and 1930s. As the statistics demonstrate, the popularity of *Jenůfa* during the 1920s was not merely confined to metropolitan centres, and the work enjoyed regular and highly successful performances in several smaller provincial opera houses – a situation that was not replicated to the same extent with Janáček's other operas, none of which was revived in the Nazi era. Although the purge of "undesirable" singers, stage directors and conductors at the outset of the Nazi era removed many notable pro-

<sup>26</sup> Information from a telephone conversation with Universal Edition, Vienna, 7 September 1999.

<sup>27</sup> The copyright for *Jenůfa* was renewed in 1944. Given that opera houses in Germany continued to perform the opera during this period, Universal Edition must have taken this step because they had run out of copies of the original vocal score. In the 1944 reprint they appear to have replaced Brod's translation of the vocal line with Greissle's more recent text. Not wishing to reset the music completely, they concealed this change by preserving the original UE plate numbers (UE 5821). After the war, Greissle's translation was now misleadingly attributed to Brod, whose name was reinstated on the score's title page. In 1969 UE published a revision of both vocal score and libretto, restoring Brod's original text (information from Geoffrey Chew, 1 January 2007).

ponents of Janáček's art, a sufficient number of performers remained in Germany that had been associated with the work's huge success in earlier years. Following the desire to maintain sufficient variety in the operatic repertory after the proscription of so many standard works, it was understandable that opera Intendants would reconsider *Jenůfa* as an opera worth staging, particularly after its success in Berlin.

Secondly, one should consider the musical language of the opera. Despite Janáček's stylistic individuality, the work was performed in the glossy reorchestration by Karel Kovařovic. For ears accustomed to the work of Richard Strauss and Puccini, the late-Romantic sheen of Kovařovic's *Jenůfa* could hardly have provoked opposition on aesthetic grounds. While the Nazis ignored Janáček's later operas, *Jenůfa* could never have been proscribed on the grounds of its music, which was very direct and palatable.

Perhaps more important than any of these issues is the ideological background to the opera, especially its link to the theme of *Blut and Boden*, so strongly encouraged by the Nazis. A survey of non-German operas that were promoted during the Third Reich reveals a particular enthusiasm for works that, for want of a better word, can be described as *Volksopern*. Frequent performances of Moniuszko's *Halka*, Smetana's *Bartered Bride*, and the Croatian Jakov Gotovac's *Ero der Schelm* [*Ero s onoga svijeta*], suggest that despite their nationalist overtones, each of these operas was deemed perfectly acceptable for a German audience. For the Nazis, *Jenůfa* evidently came from the same stable – a genuine folk-opera utilizing folksong, which to all intents and purposes offered a faithful depiction of village life. The positive outcome of the drama, where, after all her sufferings, Jenůfa makes the immense sacrifice of accepting Laca's love, would have exerted a particularly strong appeal at this time. Perhaps it would also have had special resonance for German audiences, who may well have drawn parallels with the trials of fire and water which Tamino and Pamina underwent in Mozart's *Zauberflöte*. In any case, the spirit of self-sacrifice for a higher ideal remained a constant *leitmotif* for those contemporary German composers seeking suitable dramatic material for operas. How sobering indeed that an opera by a Czech composer could have served as an ideal model for this, particularly at the very moment that German nationalism was entering its most virulent phase.

TABLE I

*Numbers of productions of Janáček operas each year in German theatres, 1918–1944*

Year	<i>Jenufa oder Ihre Ziehtochter</i> (1904/1908/1917)	<i>Katja Kabanowa</i> (1921)	<i>Das schlaue Fuchslein</i> (1923)	<i>Die Sache Makropulos</i> (1925)	<i>Aus einem Totenhaus</i> (1928)
1918	1				
1919					
1920					
1921					
1922		1			
1923	1				
1924	3				
1925	9				
1926	21	1			
1927	13		1		
1928	7				
1929	4	1		1	
1930	4				1
1931	1				3
1932	2				
1933					
1934					
1935	2				
1936	2				
1937	1				
1938					
1939	5				
1940	12				
1941	7				
1942	6				
1943	5				
1944	2				