

Invitation to a Conference

The Shakespeare Translations of August Wilhelm Schlegel & Ludwig Tieck and his Circle: Context – History – Editions

In coordination with the Commission for the Scholarly Editions of Texts since the Eighteenth Century in the
Working Group for German Literary Editions
and the State Library of Saxony – The State & University Library of Dresden (SLUB)

Dates: Monday 13 June – Thursday 16 June, 2022

Location: Klemperer-Saal, Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB),
Zellescher Weg 18, 01069 Dresden

Cultural Programme: Schloss Pillnitz

Conference organization: Claudia Bamberg, Christa Jansohn, Stefan Knödler

URL: <https://www.uni-bamberg.de/index.php?id=133304>

January 2022

Dear Shakespeare readers and enthusiasts,

It's with great pleasure that we'd like to invite you to a conference on the Shakespeare translations of the German Romantics in June 2022 in Dresden.

The Shakespeare translations of August Wilhelm Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck – which soon found their way into the canon as the so-called 'Schlegel/Tieck' version – were published for the first time in their entirety between 1825 and 1833. Alongside Johann Heinrich Voß's translation of Homer's epic poems, the 'Schlegel/Tieck' is today considered to be one of the most significant works of German literature, and it has only very gradually been supplanted in both bookshop and theatre by new translations, such as those of Erich Fried (from 1962 onwards) or Frank Günther (1995-2020). But despite a popularity that has endured for more than two centuries without interruption, we are still lacking a historical-critical edition: indeed, even today, we do not possess an edition that might start to do justice to the complicated gestation and publication history of the 'Schlegel/Tieck' version. Even its reception history has rarely been the subject of sustained scholarly reappraisal in the context of either English or German Studies.

The aim of this international conference is both to critically examine these gaps in the existing scholarship and to outline the work that still needs to be done. The very fact that the 'Schlegel-Tieck' version is *not* the collaborative work suggested by the double name is itself relatively little known: Schlegel began to work on it individually in 1797, and by 1810, he had published his own translations of seventeen plays. It was only after fifteen years that the 'Schlegel-Tieck' emerged from these first versions and was published in its first full form, another eight years later, in 1833. It was revised, primarily without Schlegel's consent, by Tieck's daughter, Dorothea, and Wolf Heinrich von Baudissin.

This conference aims firstly to offer a fresh assessment and appraisal of these translations, on the basis of which Shakespeare was elevated to the position of the third of the German 'classics'; and, secondly, to interrogate both the contexts and the scholarly desiderata for a future edition: we want to discuss the significance of the translations within the project of Early Romanticism and the literary-political debates around 1800, as well as the concept – pathbreaking at the time – of a 'poetic' Shakespeare translation. In relation to that, we shall be adumbrating the differences in method and approach between A. W. Schlegel and Tieck and his Circle, demonstrating precisely why and how these translations should be seen as distinct from one another. We shall also be critically examining the reception and print history of the edition, as well as the efforts of the German Shakespeare Society to establish a German 'Shakespeare text'. And finally, we want to address the question of how these texts might best be edited today, which contemporary philological demands need to be met, and what forms of digitization need to be applied in the production of a much-needed new edition.

Guests are particularly warmly welcome – and we very much look forward to your active participation!
With very best wishes,

