

Abstract

This master's thesis is concerned with the appropriative and adaptational afterlife of William Shakespeare's play *Coriolanus*. Particularly with the reasons for and strategies behind appropriative efforts from contradicting ideological movements. Appropriative adaptations of the play appeared already within the first hundred years after Shakespeare's passing with the first being Nahum Tate's *The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth* which recontextualises Shakespeare's text to support the cause of the Abhorrrers during the Exclusion Crisis. Then, less than forty years later, John Dennis wrote his adaptation *The Invader of His Country* which represents the adapted text as supporting the Whigs in opposition of the Stuarts, who threatened to return on the English Throne with the support of foreign armies. This chapter's analysis seeks to establish the appropriative strategies that allowed single text to be claimed by two opposing political camps.

That knowledge is then applied in the next chapter which focuses on the interwar period during which was Shakespeare claimed by a number of contradicting ideologies making their way on the political spectrum in the wake of the fall of a number of Europe's monarchies. This chapter is primarily focused on interpretative texts rather than on dramatic rewrites. These include texts ranging from elitist interpretations from the Anglophone cultural context to A.A. Smirnov's attempt at appropriating the play for the purposes of Stalinist Russia. The chapter ends with the exploration of fascist appropriations of the text, mainly with that of the German Nazi regime which arguably succeeded and damaged the play's reputation as anti-democratic. It is primarily examined to what extent are these ideological claims of being supported by the play legitimate, and how did the appropriators attempted to conceal the aspects of the text that contradicted them.

The final chapter then examines adaptations and appropriations of the play created since WWII, to see how adapters reacted to the Nazis successful appropriation and attempted to reappropriate an appropriated text. These adaptations include Bertolt Brecht's unfinished socialist rewrite of the play, John Osborne's rage-filled and never-produced modernisation, and Ralph Fiennes' film version. Brecht is also the only iconoclastic adaptation of the thesis, i.e., an adaptation which arguments against Shakespeare rather than claiming his support. Fiennes' adaptation is meanwhile explored as a culmination of a tendency to depict Coriolanus as an apolitical soldier. This tendency reaches centuries back but has only recently become prominent in adaptations of the play. All of the analyses are done in accordance with adaptational theory as delineated by Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* and by Julie Sanders in *Adaptation and Appropriation*.

Key words: Adaptation, appropriation, Coriolanus, William Shakespeare, stage, film, adaptation process, early modern theatre, English revolution, 20th century, PTSD, fascism