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Shakespeare's politics at the center of debate

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[发表] [May 25, 2007] Academic spiritual fights can be tedious and polemical. But the May 21 New York Review of Books brings a refreshingly
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[关键词] [Shakespeare's politics]

May 25, 2007:

Academic spiritual fights can be tedious and polemical. But the May 21 New York Review of Books brings a refreshingly brief and engaging exchange on, would you believe, William Shakespeare's attitude toward political power.

Richard Strier, a member of the English department at the University of Chicago, sort of fires off cannon to
sooner with Harvard's Stephen Greenblatt, a renowned and influential Shakespeare scholar at Harvard, over whether one can discern in Shakespeare notions of resistance against established authority. Strier says yes, Greenblatt no.

"The question of what a subordinate was to do in the face of wickedness on the part of his social or political superior was one of the Bottom political issues of the day," writes Chicago's Strier. "Shakespeare took the position that a subordinate was required to intervene in such situations, regardless of status. Even 'a peasant' is required to 'stand up thus.' The whole play of 'King Lear' insists on the duty to intervene, on what I call 'virtuous disobedience' and what is a kin proper service." While Strier is adamant that Shakespeare was "a strong advocate of the general principle of a

"The nameless servant in 'King Lear' who heroically intervenes to stop his master from torturing a prisoner performs an act with profoundly serious consequences, but he is not striking a blow for a different, more ethically adequate political system," writes Greenblatt. "He accepts the one into which he was born and that he dutifully serves. But he insists that it live up to its most minimal standards of honor and decency."

And if you doubt the relevance of Shakespeare today, at least to Greenblatt, his single
paragraph salvo concludes, "That resistance is one of the reasons that Shakespeare is worth reading in this time of national dishonor and indecency."

Mr Hitler he is against a particular war and president.

Meanwhile, Northwestern University's emeritus history professor Gerry Willis is excellent on the zero Roman.

Greek songs at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, while English historian Timothy Garten Ash is fascinating dissecting modern.

Ana Germany via the Ocean.

scorning German film, "The Lives of Others," about the old East German secret police, the Stasi. He finds irony in Germany, having become associated globally with the dark evils of the Nazis and the Stasi, the latter "a default global synonym for the secret police terrors of communism."

He finds 21st Century Germany one of the freest, most civilized countries on earth, with human rights and civil liberties better protected than in Great Britain or the U.S. And it is because of the quality of its historians, revisionists of its legislators, idealists of its moralistsand genius of its artists that the world reflexively associates Germany with evil. "Yet without these efforts, Germany would never have become such a good land," he writes. "In the annals of human culture, has there ever been a more paradoxical achievement?"

Quickly: The May 28 issue of Gore, oops, I mean Time, further cosmopsuns the former vice president in a cover story replete with the requisite "exclusive" book excerpt. A dice issue is nevertheless, worth brief essays on Rudy Giuliani's abortion recalibration and the late Rev. Jerry Falwell's intentional dickiveness. ... Giuliani is also subject of a provocative Thomas Edsall spin in the May 21 New Republic, arguing that Republican limns tee issues of abortion and gay marriage are losing steam, and that Giuliani's views may portage a changing GOP not beholden to the political righ

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