

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Report

of

Committee on Examination

This is to certify that we the undersigned, as a committee of the Graduate School, have given Esther Amanda Strand final oral examination for the degree of Master of Arts . We recommend that the degree of Master of Arts be conferred upon the candidate.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 3 1920

Walter R. Myers
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Report
of
Committee on Thesis

The undersigned, acting as a Committee of the Graduate School, have read the accompanying thesis submitted by Esther Amanda Strand for the degree of Master of Arts.

They approve it as a thesis meeting the requirements of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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June 3, 1918²⁰

"Erhebungsmomente"

in the
Tragedies
of
Friedrich Hebbel.

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A Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Minnesota

by

Esther A. Strand

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

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I. Introduction.

Tragedy very naturally suggest something fundamentally pessimistic and oppressive. It has long been recognized, however, that the final effect produced by tragedy should be spiritual elevation rather than depression.^{1.} The laws of aesthetics demand that every true tragedy possess spiritually elevating forces that tend to counteract and thus to relieve the depressing effect of the tragic downfall of the hero.^{2.} These forces or elements producing aesthetic relief are what the German calls "Erhebungsmomente"; and for want of a precise English equivalent, the German term is retained. The term "Erhebungsmomente" includes all those forces in the play that tend to lighten the tragedy. Not that these "Erhebungsmomente" are to cause the spectator to feel the effect of the tragedy less keenly, but this effect is no longer oppressive and painful and therefore unaesthetic. One critic has said of Hebbel's plays that they lack this fundamental element of elevation and have a depressing rather than an uplifting effect.^{3.} Scheunert compares them to an eagle with broken wings fluttering about on the floor of a room without being able to rise.^{4.} I believe, however, that the unprejudiced spectator will be truly impressed by the tragedy in the majority of Hebbel's plays. He will feel the "Katharsis" and the elevation of spirit peculiar to all tragedy. The pur-

1. Freytag-" Technique of the Drama." pp. 84-103.

2. Volkelt- "Aesthetik des Tragischen." p. 213.

3. Volkelt- "Aesthetik des Tragischen." p. 108 ff.

4. Scheunert- "Der Pantragismus als System der Weltanschauung Friedrich Hebbels."

pose of this paper is to discover the "Erhebungsmomente", the forces in Hebbel's plays that cause this feeling of elevation.

II. Historical Review.

A brief review of the dramatic theory and practice which were Hebbel's most direct inheritance from preceding generations will serve to throw light upon the nature of the question under discussion, and contribute to a clearer understanding of Hebbel's theory and its significance in German literature. To be sure, he was not directly influenced by all the writers whose theories I shall discuss, but they form the foundation upon which his work is based. It is Hegel who has influenced the work of Hebbel most profoundly and thus the discussion of his philosophy is of primary importance.

To begin with the Greeks, Aristotle maintains that the chief effect of tragedy is the disburdening of the spectator from the depressing moods of the day. He says that man needs to be shaken by powerful emotions; and that after this desire has been satisfied, he experiences a feeling of freedom.^{1.} His theory of purification is essentially what we term elevation. In Lessing's interpretation of the term, the same emotions must be awakened in the spectator as are awakened in the characters of the play, or there is no sympathy. (Mitleid). Inseparable from this feeling of sympathy is dramatic fear; - the feeling, that if placed in a similar position, we should experience the same reaction as the characters before us. As Lessing says: "Es ist die Furcht, welche aus anserer Ähnlichkeit mit der leidenden Person für uns selbst entspringt; es ist die Furcht, dasz wir der bemitleidete Gegenstand selbst werden können."^{2.} This feeling of a limited identity with

1. Freytag - "Technique of the Drama" p. 67
2. Lessing - "Hamburgische Dramaturgie" Stück 75

the tragic hero must, of course, be present or he is not real and human to us. Still the fear of a similar fate ought not to be over-emphasized; for while experiencing the misfortunes of the hero, we cease to think of ourselves definitely as individuals or of the fact that we may some day be forced to suffer the same fate. It seems rather that the effect of the hero's sufferings should be purer and deeper than in everyday life, because we are above personal considerations. As Walter Harlan says in his "Schule des Lustspiels": "Von der Lust an der Wirklichkeit unterscheidet sich die Lust an der Kunst einzig dadurch, dass sie von allen Schlacken der Wirklichkeit durch irgendeine bestimmte, besonders festliche Gefühlseinheit gereinigt ist."¹ Schiller's theories are to the same effect. He says that the pleasure in painful emotions is universal, but that this is true only of an emotion that is reproduced for us. So the feeling of pain predominates in him who actually suffers, however much the delineation of his suffering may uplift the spectator. As he says in his essay on tragic art: "Natürlicherweise gilt dies (Vergnügen an schmerzhaften Rührungen) nur von dem mitgeteilten oder nachempfundenen Affekt; denn die nahe Beziehung, in welcher der ursprüngliche zu unserem Glückseligkeitstrieb steht, beschäftigt und besitzt uns zu sehr, um der Lust Raum zu lassen, die er frei von jeder eigennützigen Beziehung für sich gewährt."² Schiller is perhaps considered the most idealistic of German dramatists. But in spite of his idealism, most of his plays have intensely tragic conclusions, - tragic, and yet they leave a feeling of elevation with the spectator. The "Jungfrau" goes rejoicing to her destruction, completely absorbed in the victory she has gained. Although

1. Harlan - "Schule des Lustspiels" p. 35

2. Schiller - "Über die tragische Kunst" D.N.L. Vol. 129, 1 p. 38

life has by no means lost its attractions for Maria Stuart, she has strength to renounce it and leave it without fear or complaint. In Wallenstein, death is a purification, an atonement, as is also the death of Don Cesar in "Die Braut von Messina." This attitude on the part of the hero must necessarily inspire a similar feeling in the spectator and reconcile him to the tragedy. According to Schiller's own theory, the source of the elevating effect produced by tragedy is to be found in the moral congruity (Zweckmässigkeit) it presents. He says that if the first law of tragic art is the presentation of a suffering individual, the second is the presentation of a moral^{1.} opposition to this suffering. Tragedy must present a struggle in which this moral congruity is the victor. There is, however, a certain inevitable underlying incongruity. For the pleasure we feel at the victory of the ethical forces at work in the play is marred by the fact that an individual, who is moral with the exception of a weakness in one direction, must suffer; but still his very suffering makes the value of moral law evident. For example, while the wrongs committed by an individual are not in harmony with moral law, his moral rehabilitation is morally congruent since he recognizes this law as the supreme force. Thus Schiller's characters are not perfect individuals; they all have tragic guilt. But although guilty of even serious crimes, all are before death brought into harmony with moral law. Each is at the end a moral individual, purified through suffering and from any wrongs he may have committed. Thus there is a double source of elevation in Schiller's tragedies: that proceeding from the moral rehabilitation of the hero, and the assurance given us that moral law will triumph

1. Schiller - "Über das Pathetische."

in spite of any attempts to overthrow it.^{1.}

Goethe, on the other hand, writes his plays with an entirely different purpose. He does not aim to give dramatic expression to an abstract idea, but rather to present some character in whom he is interested. As he said in a conversation with Eckermann on May 6, 1827: "Es war in ganzen nicht meine Art, als Poet nach Verkörperung von etwas Abstraktem zu streben." In Goethe's plays, the tragedy proceeds directly from the character of the hero. Götz commits no crime. He comes to destruction because of his nobility and his high ideals. Likewise Egmont suffers because he is what he is, - because he is noble, upright, trusting, ^{and} believes everyone else to be the same. In his last hours we see the gradual change from the Egmont who loved life above all else to an individual who still loves it, but who is also able to renounce its attractions without pain and fear. The elevation in "Faust" lies primarily in the moral purification which Faust experiences. In spite of the wrongs he has committed, his better self is dominant and in the end triumphant. In all of Goethe's plays, the elevation for the spectator is derived chiefly thru the character of the hero, - thru what he is and thru his manner of reacting to the blows of fate. Goethe comes much nearer than Schiller to the art of Shakespeare. Much more objective in his treatment, he introduces no underlying "Idee" into his work. He concerns himself entirely with the tragedy of an individual, and the elevation is derived altogether from the character himself.

These are the viewpoints of the three men whose names are most prominent in German literature. It may not be out of place to

1. Schiller - "Über den Grund des Vergnügens an tragischen Gegenständen."

consider also those philosophers who express themselves on the question. Vischer's theory of tragedy is somewhat of the same nature as that of Schiller. He believes that the tragic action must be accompanied by the assurance that the good will be victorious. The destruction of the individual serves chiefly to emphasize the value of the idea or moral principle for which he died.^{1.} Carriere goes even farther. He thinks that every tragedy must show us that life is not valuable for itself; but only becomes so thru an appreciation of the good and the true.^{2.} According to Theodor Lipps, the value of tragedy lies in the fact that by witnessing the suffering of the tragic hero, we pass thru the same development as he. We see how the power of good obtains a hold on his personality; and by suffering with him it becomes uppermost also in our characters.^{3.} According to Hegel, the true theme of tragedy is "das Sittliche." It is only justified insofar as it presents the triumph of the moral forces in the world. Thus the tragedy does not lie in the fall of the individual, but in the destruction of moral law. We do not feel oppressed at the destruction of a good man; but we look ahead and are uplifted by the good he has rendered society. The unusual individual may have to suffer; but if the moral foundation and unity of the world remain undisturbed, the final effect is satisfaction and not depression.^{4.} Mention of Hegel will be made again and more fully when we consider Hebbel's theory of "Versöhnung."

1. Vischer - "Aesthetik" p. 121, 4, 9.
2. Carriere - "Aesthetik" Vol. I. pp. 169, 195.
3. Lipps - "Der Streit über die Tragödie" p. 79.
4. Hegel - "Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik" Bd. III. pp. 528, 554.

The above are the theories of some of the most prominent German thinkers who tend towards an optimistic philosophy. It may be of interest also to note the attitude of the practical theater director. Walter Harlan, the manager of the Lessing theater in Berlin on the other hand, scorns the idea of pleasure in tragedy, and says that Lessing has wasted much valuable time in trying to keep Aristotle's theory of purification "above water". Of Hegel and his followers he says: "Bei den Hegelianern sollte das tragische Vergnügen eine Lust über die Wiederherstellung der sittlichen Weltordnung sein. Welches Philistervergnügen! Wenn ein herrlicher Mensch zu Grunde geht, soll es eine Lust sein, dass es doch gottlob keine Riesen der Seele geben darf!" He calls Schiller's theory of satisfaction thru the fulfillment of moral law "eine vollkommene Selbstbeschwindelung." Harlan maintains that the final effect of tragedy must be termed "Erschütterung" rather than "Lust", and that any feeling of elevation we may feel is but secondary.¹ To Americans of the twentieth century this attitude may not seem strange; for we are accustomed to the pet theory of our theater managers that "the public doesn't want tragedy." This seems, however, a very superficial point of view and does not indicate a knowledge of human psychology. Moreover, Harlan has not been just in his estimate of either of those, whose theories he ridiculed. He has misinterpreted Hegel's most fundamental statements. Hegel argues that the elevation lies in the fact that an unusual individual contributes his share to the progress of mankind, although he himself is destroyed; not, as Harlan says, in the destruction of "ein herrlicher Mensch."

Harlan is very evidently in sympathy with the modern dramatists. Ibsen, and his followers of the Naturalistic school, are not

1. Harlan - "Schule des Lustspiels" pp. 17 - 18.

deeply concerned over the effect of their plays, except insofar as this concerns the problem of picture they wish to present. Hebbel, however, was still under the influence of the older generation of writers and the elements of elevation are evident in the majority of his plays.

We shall find that Hebbel is one of these "Hegelianer". On making a study of his plays, it becomes clear that his general theories of tragic art are fundamentally those of Hegel. He, too, does not concern himself so much with the tragedy of the individual as the preservation of moral law ("die Idee", as he terms it). He considers the destruction of a single man unimportant in the broader conception of his value in the development of humanity. Tragedy treats the inevitable conflict between the individual and the world about him. The individual plans his course of action according to his own desires; but he finds traditions of the society in which he lives. When an individual thus comes into conflict with his age, he is working for the future development of mankind. He may be regarded as the instrument of the "Idee" which he represents; and the spectator looks forward to the time when his acts will be justified, a time when he, who has fallen as the sacrifice of the superstitions of the age, will be understood and appreciated.

III. Hebbel's Practice.

Altho this "Idee" becomes the chief source of the spiritual elevation of Hebbel's plays, there are at least seven prominent means which he employs as "Erhebungsmomente" in his tragedies. Elevation is derived from: a) the character of the tragic hero, b) the relation of the hero to his final defeat, c) the effects of this downfall upon the hero's character, d) foreshadowing, by means of which the dramatist justifies for us the tragic conclusion, e) the satisfaction derived from a completely harmonious and therefore artistic presentation of the subject matter, f) "Versöhnung", or Hebbel's theory of reconciliation. Each of these elements contributes to the feeling of elevation peculiar to tragedy. I shall undertake in the following pages to determine the relative importance of these forces in the final effect which each of Hebbel's tragedies has upon the spectator.

A. The Character of the Hero.

That the hero of a tragedy must possess some greatness of character is, of course, presupposed; for the spectator is exceedingly critical of the one to whom he is to give his interest and sympathy. The hero must be strong enough to resist the opposing force; there must be blow and counter-blow, the conflict of forces nearly equal in strength. Then even in the most terrible suffering and consequent destruction, this greatness of character will act as an elevating force. Tragedy involves suffering plus struggle. Merely passive suffering alone is pathetic but scarcely tragic. It leaves a sense of oppressive sordidness rather than deep tragedy. Thus children are very rarely available as tragic heroes, for they have not yet sufficient command of themselves to make a determined struggle. It is not the sight of a hero's suffering that constitutes the charm of a tragedy, but his display of activity, strength, and courage. As the spectator leaves the theater, his first remark will not be an expression of his satisfaction at the triumph of moral law; but he will first speak of the strength of character, that made such a victory possible.^{1.} He will continue to think of the character of Agnes Bernauer for days after he has seen the play; but I doubt, whether he will rejoice especially that Hebbel has presented the rights of the state as superior to those of the individual. The latter, of course, plays its part, but it is not indispensable. There are great tragedies free from any "Idee"; but a

1. Harlan - "Schule des Lustspiels"

p. 39.

great play in which the tragic hero does not win our respect and sympathy is inconceivable. He must have some claim to greatness; must make us feel that in some one direction, at least, he has developed beyond the ordinary man.¹

In considering this point in Hebbel's plays, it is frequently very difficult to determine to the satisfaction of all who the hero of any one play is. No two critics seem to agree, for instance, who is the chief character in "Agnes Bernauer". But since Hebbel himself, in the presentation of his characters, lays the chief emphasis on the psychological, we shall in the following discussion consider as the hero that character who is the center of the psychological action.

With one exception, Hebbel's tragedies all present personalities that are worthy of our interest and sympathy. "Maria Magdalena" is the one play in which Hebbel has failed in his attempt to create a tragic character. Klara is pathetic, but scarcely tragic. Elizabeth Woodbridge says that "tragedy means the effect produced by the sight of a losing struggle between a strong but imperfect individuality and the overpowering forces of life".² Klara lacks one of the most fundamental of these requirements, namely strength of character. I doubt if even Klara's staunchest admirers would go so far as to call her strong. She is very evidently related to her predecessors in bourgeois tragedy, to Sara Sampson and Luise Müller. And why should Klara be expected to be strong? All her life she has been hemmed in by the boundaries of the narrow society in which she lives; she has not had the determination of will to express herself,

1. Volkelt - Aesthetik des Tragischen p.67

2. Woodbridge - The Drama. Its Law and Technique, p.36.

but has submitted to her father in everything. It may be argued that tragedy does not demand firm, decisive action on the part of its hero. As Volkelt says there is also the tragedy of "Willenslosigkeit",^{1.} in which the greatness of the hero lies in the field of feeling and thought rather than of action and power. Hamlet is far from being a man of action and yet we feel the tragedy of his life deeply. But even in this tragedy of "Willenslosigkeit", the dramatist must give us a hero who rises above the commonplace. That is fundamental, whether his hero is an Othello or a Hamlet. As Volkelt says: "Von der einen, beschränkten Seite aus, nach der die Grösze der Personen liegt, muss sich die ganze Person derart heben zeigen, dass wir das bestimmte Gefühl haben, es liege hier ein menschlich hervorragender Fall vor."^{2.} The dignity of the hero himself must serve to raise us above the commonplace. And because Klara does not possess this dignity, the "Schlacken", the sordid things of everyday life, force themselves upon us, cloud our minds and distract our attention from the great experience she is undergoing. It has been said that it is not the sight of suffering that constitutes the charm of tragedy,^{3.} and this play lends support to the statement. Klara undoubtedly suffers, but her struggle has been very weak until it is too late. The struggle has all been in her own heart, she has not acted with decision at the proper time. Klara is literally pushed out of the world, because there is no room for her in it. She is beaten back step by step until there is absolutely no way open to her. She suffers, too, suffers continually; but there is no elevation for us in her suffering.

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|-----------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Volkelt - "Aesthetik des Tragischen" | p. 82. |
| 2. Volkelt - "Aesthetik des Tragischen" | p. 68 |
| 3. Schlegel - "Vorlesungen" | p. 69 |

In all his other tragedies, however, Hebbel has presented characters that command all our sympathy and respect. To begin with Albrecht, the hero of Agnes Bernauer, we find a character whose charms are not easily resisted. He belongs to the same class as Shakespeare's Romeo or Kleist's Prince of Homburg, - young, handsome, a passionate lover and a brave knight. We are introduced to him in the first outburst of his passion for Agnes (I,13) and from the very beginning we are satisfied that his love for her is genuine. We believe him perfectly when he says: "Ich liebe sie, aber ich wüßte's ihr nimmer gesagt haben, wenn ich nicht hinzufügen wollte: ich werb' um sie !" (I,18) But Albrecht is not all youthful passion. He is the son of Duke Ernst and has inherited a goodly portion of the latter's proud spirit. "Ich habe zu viel von Euch im Leib, um auf eine und dieselbe Frage an einem und demselben Morgen zwei Antworten zu geben." Young and idealistic as he is, he is independent both in thought and in action. (II,9) He is not one who follows the lead of his statesmen blindly. As he says: "Ihr sollt mich zum Nicken bringen, wie einen Nürnberger Hampelmann, den man von hinten ziehen kann! Es wird Euch nicht gelingen." (III,10) He is a man who has won the love and respect of the older men of the kingdom. Nethafft von Wernberg shows their attitude toward the young prince by his speech (III,10): "Nethafft von Wernberg kann euch nicht raten, in den Abgrund zu springen, aber er springt nach, wenn Ihr's tut!" But independent and determined as he is in his dealings with his father (III,10), Albrecht is tenderness itself to Agnes. Never by word or action does he remind her that she is not his equal in social position. (III,8) It is in the tournament scene (III,13), however, that Albrecht proves his manliness beyond a doubt. His sudden flash of anger as the herald begins to read the law is an expression of his pride and his nobility. "Werden hier Krippenreiter

zugelassen, die das nicht wissen?" (III, 13) Then his public acknowledgment of Agnes as his wife increases our respect for him. (III,13) He has married her and will not deny her love altho' it may result in his loss of the throne. If at the death of Agnes, Albrecht gives free rein to his thirst for revenge and rushes thru the country destroying all that opposes him. (V,8) it is but a sudden outburst and he soon regains control of himself. (V,10) The supreme test of his manhood comes at the close of the play, when he finally rises superior to his passionate nature. He has now developed into a man of the highest ideals, one who realizes his duty fully and has the strength to live accordingly. (V,10) He does not finally yield because he loves Agnes less but, because he sees what relation the individual and the state must bear to one another. Albrecht, the young, passionate lover has given place to Albrecht, the ruler. As a true leader of his people, he has risen to the point where he can give the desires of Albrecht a secondary place and put the welfare of his subjects above all else.

This development in Albrecht's character occupies first place in the final feeling of relief in the play; yet it is unfair to Agnes to pass her by without a word. Altho not the heroine, she is given by far too much prominence to be neglected entirely. The play is faulty in its construction, for the tragedy of Agnes' life grips us as powerfully as Albrecht's fate. That we should feel the charm of Agnes's character is, of course, not strange, for she is by far the most attractive of all Hebbel's characters. She is often called a second "Genoveva" but she is a far more charming and womanly character than the colorless figure of the earlier play. There is nothing heroic in her character, except as the genuine qualities of her soul give her true dignity. She is a sweet, simple girl with marvelous beauty, both of face and of soul. (I,13) (I,7)

She is never for a moment dazzled by Albrecht's position; it frightens rather than attracts her. (III,8) (IV,7) But having once accepted Albrecht's love, she will not deny it. (V,2) In her faithfulness to him, she shows the sterling qualities of her nature. She does not, like Genoveva, endure weakly any insult that may be inflicted upon her; but she fights for her life and her love until the last hope is gone. (V,3) Her fate rests entirely in her own hands. She has but to speak and her life will be spared.(V,2) That she chooses death rather than prove untrue to Albrecht adds the final touch to her character and becomes a source of elevation for the spectator. Simple girl that she is, we recognize her as truly great for she has not betrayed our confidence in her.

A similar character analysis can be made for each of Hebbel's heroes. Space will not permit, however, and the following discussion will attempt to show in a few general statements that the character of each of Hebbel's heroes works as an elevating force in his tragedies. In "Judith", his first play, there can be no doubt as to Judith's greatness of character. From the very opening of the play, our interest is attracted to her. She stands as far above other women as Holofernes stands above other men. When all others fail, we unconsciously look to her with confidence. Like the Judith of the Bible she is intensely pious; but more than merely pious, for she loves her people and her religion with a passion deep enough to make her sacrifice every other interest for it. She is an intensely religious enthusiast, quiet externally until the time for action arrives. Perhaps nothing makes her character stand out more clearly than contrast with Ephraim. Fearless and heroic, she cannot but scorn this timid, shrinking man. She possesses a strength that is almost masculine, softened, however, by her sincere piety

and the nobility and purity of her ideals. In her fury of wronged womanhood, her character borders for just a moment on that of an Amazon; but even tho' she commits a terrible deed, she does not become repulsive. The Judith of the Bible was a "heroic cat" to Hebbel,¹ but the character he presents is human and inspires sympathy. The fierce passion that prompts her to kill Holofernes, is not exactly in accordance with our ideals; but knowing her character as we do, we realize what she has endured and forgive her. Judith is the one who murders Holofernes, but she is also the one who suffers most deeply as the result of her deed. By the spiritual suffering she endures, she atones fully and offsets any revulsion we might otherwise feel at her deed.

It may seem surprising to connect the term "Erhebung" with the character of Golo, the hero of Hebbel's "Genoveva." It might seem that the only elevation to be derived from the character of such a wretch would be the relief one might feel at his destruction. Hebbel has not, however, created another "Richard III" in the character of Golo. He is worthy of our interest, and the feeling at his death is one of true tragedy. He has stooped to the basest treachery; but his attitude of repentance and his genuine struggle to overcome his weakness win for him our sympathy and our respect. Yet he is not a great character as Judith was great. He does not sacrifice life and honor to become the savior of his people. Nor does he do anything else in the play that might be called heroic, in the usual sense of the word. Golo's, however, is a harder fight to win. The forces against which he is struggling have gained a firm position in the defensive trenches, and are fighting more strongly from within than from without. The opposing forces have

1. W. XI. 61.

found lodgment in Golo's own soul; and in spite of a most terrible struggle on his part, he is finally overpowered. We pity Golo for a weakness that he combats in vain; but we respect him for the fierceness of the struggle against his weakness and recognize the nobility of character that caused him to struggle. In both Judith and Golo, we feel that we have become acquainted with individuals whom we can respect. Altho we do not necessarily approve of all their actions, we grant them the full measure of our sympathy. Both are overcome by the enemy forces, but the determined struggle they have made acts as an elevating force for the spectator.

In "Herodes and Mariamne", however, we have characters that command all our sympathy and respect. Both Herodes and Mariamne are exceptional beings, but I believe Mariamne must be considered the chief character. Brought up in the midst of hatred, revenge, and greed, she has remained pure and uncontaminated. She was married to Herodes for political reasons; nevertheless, she loves him passionately, -loves him with a different, and to Herodes, new and incomprehensible love, that seeks happiness in sacrifice. But she is more than a loving wife; she is a tragic heroine who possesses truly heroic dignity. She is the daughter of a long line of proud Maccabees, and is not a thing to be disposed of at will by her husband. She is an individual who commands our respect and sympathy, as well as our love and admiration. With the inborn pride of the Maccabees, she scorns the petty intrigue and jealousy of the court. And when she finds that her husband is animated by the same suspicious jealousy, the injury of his mistrust prevents her from doing what she had intended to do of her own free will. Pride is, perhaps, her outstanding characteristic; but pride alone never made a tragic character. Her greatness lies in her magnanimity of soul. She forgives Herod freely again and again. It is not until he has committed the same sin against her individuality a second time, that she is convinced of the hopelessness of

any trustful relationship. The consciousness that she is nothing but a thing to him robs her of all hope and leaves her cold and longing for death. Herod has been her entire world; she cannot live without him, but she also cannot live with him.

In "Gyges and sein Ring", we have a hero of the same mould as Albrecht. Gyges, too, is a young, handsome Prince Charming. But Gyges is above all a Greek, and possesses, therefore, that remarkable delicacy of feeling and sense of proportion peculiar to his race. This poetic temperament is, perhaps enough in itself to attract our attention but he also surpasses the Lydians in athletic games. He proves to be the truest of friends to Kandaules, and to have the highest ideals of right and wrong. Rhodope, too, correctly appreciates his wonderfully sensitive nature when she says:

"Du hättest mich der Heimath nicht entführt,
Um so an mir zu tun."^{1.}

Gyges is forced to act against his own ideals in making the visit to Rhodope's room, and thus we do not blame him. The sight of Rhodope's beauty, however, helps him to recover his normal attitude and makes him aware of the enormity of his crime. He offers his life as an atonement, he tries to leave the country, in fact, he does everything in his power to make amends. Gyges has without a doubt developed beyond the ordinary individual in the genuine nobility of his character and we cannot deny him the full measure of our respect and love.

In "Die Nibelungen", Hebbel has been criticized as going too far in his attempt to portray a strong character. Some critics maintain that instead of a character who inspires love and pity, he has in the character of Kriemhild presented a monster.^{2.} She does, to be sure, come nearer to inspiring terror than any of Hebbel's

1. W. III, 1585-6

2. Meinck, Ernst-"Friedrich Hebbels und Richard Wagners Nibelungen-Trilogien". p. 86.

Rehborn, K. "Die Nibelungensage in der deutschen Poesie" p.143.
(The two references above quoted from Newton-"Woman in the Thought and Work of Fr. Hebbel.")

characters. The extreme to which she carries her revenge is horrible but we pity her in spite of it. Her evolution from a sweet, gentle girl to an avenging fury is so gradual and well-motivated that it convinces. Time and again she has been wounded to the soul, until she is so entirely possessed by her desire for revenge that she can see none but her own point of view. This intense thirst for revenge is terrible and we shudder; but still we, too, have not forgotten the wrong she has suffered and we pity her. The comparison Dr. Newton draws between the character of Kriemhild and that of Michael Kohlhaas is especially good.¹ Both sacrifice everything to their immoderate thirst for revenge. Both devote their lives to the avenging of their wrongs; and then finally when his end is gained, each is ready for death. Indeed it is the very intensity of Kriemhild's grief that enlists our sympathy. Her love for her husband had been the dominating passion of her heart, and with his murder this fullness of love is changed into hatred equally strong. Only for a moment do we feel anything resembling revulsion, and that is at her sacrifice of her child, Ortnit. Yet this feeling is also softened when Kriemhild cries out: "Mein Kind ! Mein Kind !" ²

Moreover Kriemhild does not want to sacrifice her brothers. SHE hopes until the end that she may be able to spare them, and her suffering at their death is many times greater than their own. Theirs is mere bodily pain, to which they as warriors have grown accustomed as a part of their life. But hers is the suffering of the soul, suffering far more intense than any Hagen ever endured. It was not easy for Kriemhild to sacrifice Giselher; and in her struggle, we cannot deny her our sympathy.

1. Newton - "Woman in the Thought and Work of Friedrich Hebbel" p.124
2. W. IV, 11.4956.

Hebbel has in all cases, with the possible exception of "Maria Magdalena", presented a truly tragic hero, ^{who} suffers intensely and usually succumbs to opposing forces; but in spite of suffering and death, our feeling is one of elevation. Hebbel's heroes are in most cases strong-willed individuals, - for instance, Judith, Mariamne, Kriemhild. They all have a definite aim to the accomplishment of which all their energies are bent. Even the less positive characters can scarcely be accused of being weak-willed. Neither Golo, Gyges, nor Albrecht are cowards. They are young and inexperienced when the action opens but during the play they develop truly heroic characters. "Maria Magdalena" is Hebbel's only failure to create a strong tragic hero.

B. The Relation of the Hero to his Downfall.

1. The Attitude of the Hero toward his Death.

The attitude of the hero toward his death is one of the determining factors in the final effect of the play. Whether he accepts his death as a hero or as a coward is of primary importance to the spectator. If in the moment of intense suffering, the hero gives evidence of cowardice and weakness, the tragic effect is entirely destroyed. We then no longer see a great individual, but one who has been untrue to his own character. We must not, however, go too far in our demand that all complaint and lamentation be excluded from the tragic downfall. In order to arouse our genuine sympathy, the hero must give expression to his suffering; but even so we must feel that it is the suffering of a noble soul. If our respect for the hero is not weakened, then the effect of his suffering upon us is elevating and not oppressive.

In the case of Hebbel's first play, Judith does not actually suffer death. The effect of the play is, however, the same. Judith has endured suffering that is worse than death and the devastation in her soul is so complete that she cannot rise and take up life again. It will merely be a question of a few months' existence until she demands from the church fathers the fulfillment of their promise. Death under such circumstances will naturally be a relief to the spectator as well as to Judith herself. The thought that she may bear Holofernes a son fills her with terror and she longs

1. Volkelt - "Aesthetik des Tragischen" p. 79.

for death as a salvation from further suffering. She is not condemned by others, but both her suffering and death are voluntary. Deaf to the praise and rejoicing of her people, she pleads for death as her only reward. The spectator, knowing her as even her own people do not, can derive the same spiritual elevation from her death, as Judith herself experiences.

Golo, too, dies only as the result of his own condemnation. He is willing to make the supreme sacrifice, altho life has not lost all its attractions for him. He knows better than anyone else that he deserves death, and he does not hesitate to admit it. He has given evidence of his ability to endure suffering and by his death, is not merely trying to avoid the issues of life. He has struggled earnestly against the evil in his own character but he finally forced to surrender. When offered the alternative of life or death, he realizes that life will but prolong the struggle indefinitely and that death, when it finally does come, will find him no nearer victory.

In the character of Klara in "Maria Magdalena", we have also a heroine who is willing to die; but the effect of her death upon us is entirely different from that of the preceding play. To Klara death is a minor factor; the all important thing in life to her is her father's honor and happiness. She does not suffer as the result of her own guilt as does Golo, but because of her unselfishness. At best the Erhebung to be derived from the sacrifice of an entirely guiltless individual is of a somewhat negative character. But the fact that Klara fails in her purpose, in spite of this sacrifice, proves disastrous to our feeling of elevation at her death. Moreover, the spectator is granted a broader outlook than Klara. We see that Anton is not worthy of the sacrifice his daughter makes for him and thus it is rendered of no account. We feel no pity whatsoever.

ever for Meister Anton. He is behind his times and suffers as a result. Having made honor his gods, he sacrifices everything to it. That in itself would be justified, provided he sacrificed only himself but he does not stop at that. He offers his entire family up to his god, honor. For Klara to sacrifice her life that such a father might continue in his narrow prejudice seems to us the height of folly. Her intentions are of the noblest, but even so they are not strong enough to counteract our dislike of Meister Anton. Klara's attitude toward her death is all that could be desired, but we derive no elevation from it.

Mariamne considers her own death an unavoidable necessity, and this is also the attitude that the spectator takes. Mariamne does not want to die any more than we want her to. Life still has attractions for her and she realizes what she is losing when she says to Titus: "O nein, ich weiss, wovon ich scheiden soll !" She feels however, that life really left her when she finally satisfied herself of Herod's mistrust. She confesses to Titus: "Ich fühle keinen Schmerz mehr, denn zum Schmerz Gehört noch Leben und das Leben ist In mir erlöschen, ich bin längst nur noch Ein Mittelding vom Mensch und vom Schatten Und fass' es kaum, dasz ich noch sterben kann," Too proud to disprove Herod's suspicion, she dies rather than live with a man who has wounded her so deeply. Her proud resignation to her fate and her intense suffering gain our sympathy and we say with Titus:

"Und dieser Mut versöhnt mich fast mit Dir !"

In "Agnes Bernauer", Albrecht the hero does not die; but because of the prominence given to Agnes, 'it might be fitting to dis-

cuss her character in this connection. Agnes struggles against her fate until she sees that death is inevitable, and then she yields, - not willing, but with a noble, peaceful resignation that forces us to an acknowledgment of her genuine greatness of soul. When we see Agnes facing death bravely and remaining true to her love for Albrecht, there is awakened in us an elevating consciousness of her purity and a strong feeling of admiration and reverence.

In "Gyges und sein Ring", Gyges is allowed to live; and Rhodope is not given enough prominence to warrant discussing the effect of her death upon the spectator.

In the "Nibelungen", Kriemhild is given little opportunity to express her attitude toward her death. Hildebrant stabs her almost immediately after she has accomplished her purpose. But as her character has been revealed to us, we have every reason to believe that she would in any case not have desired to live. She felt the death of her brothers too keenly to wish to live after she had murdered them. Moreover we know that she has no affection for Etzel... She married him solely to further her own aims. It is inconceivable that the wife of Siegfried should desire life with Etzel, realizing as she does that she has destroyed her entire race.

Hebbel's heroes are by no means perfect individuals, but when face to face with death, they show real nobility of character. The majority demand their own death and they deserve to be granted it. And those who do not ask it, regard their destruction in such a way that they satisfy the highest ideals of the spectator.

2. The Attitude of the Hero to his Guilt.

Of dramatic guilt, as we ordinarily understand the term, Hebbel takes no notice. His hero never comes to destruction because of some specific act he has committed. There is no question of guilt and atonement. Both forces in the conflict are in the right, each in his way and from his point of view; the conflict may arise from excess of goodness as well as from excess of evil. There is no great amount of elevation for the spectator in the fact that those who receive punishment deserve it. As he writes in his diary; "Es ist doch eine Versöhnung, wenn im Drama die Bösen zu Grunde gehen. Nun ja, in dem Sinne, worin der Galgen ein Versöhnungspfehl ist."^{1.} The guilt lies in the hero's very character, in what he is and not what he does. He is destroyed because he cannot live in harmony with his environment. Hebbel says further that the fundamental guilt of mankind is excess. This guilt is inseparable from man's nature; because he has not been perfected, has no claim to duration, and hence through his inborn desire to give expression to his own personality, must necessarily work to his own destruction.^{2.} This tendency to excess (Maszlosigkeit) is very prominent in the majority of Hebbel's characters. But although they have this guilt, they themselves are unconscious of it. Kandaules is the only character who is fully aware of any wrong doing. The presence of this excess does relieve the spectator from a feeling of depression that might

1. T. II. 3105.

2. T. II. 3158

be present in the death of an innocent individual. But since the hero himself is unaware of any guilt, we can derive no satisfaction from his attitude towards it. In several of his plays, however, Hebbel has also given his characters specific dramatic guilt, in spite of his theories; and in these we do derive satisfaction from the hero's admission of his own guilt.

Judith felt her guilt keenly. The consciousness that she forgot her original purpose and murdered Holofernes for personal reasons gnaws into her soul until she can no longer endure existence. Her sense of guilt leaves her inwardly crushed and deaf to the praises of her people. That she is unwilling to accept this undeserved praise wins our respect for her; and in her death, we are glad that she is to be relieved from the oppression of her own guilt.

This element of relief is, however, even more prominent in the character of Golo. From the very beginning Golo recognizes his own guilt. Youthful and inexperienced as he is, he realizes the seriousness of his disloyalty to Siegfried. As soon as he realizes that Genoveva, too, is human, he is fully aware of the guilty passion that takes possession of his heart. He attempts to justify himself, it is true, by laying the blame on Providence. Yet deep down in his own soul he knows he has sinned. This, however, would not in itself be uplifting; for every sinner feels at some time or other the pangs of conscience. But in Golo the struggle is truly tragic. He seems to be in the thrall of some demonic power over which he has no control. His evil spirit is always present, ready to urge him to sin. But at the same time, his disgust with himself is so genuine, that we are forced, in spite of ourselves, to admire the brutal frankness of his self-analysis. It is this readiness to judge himself more harshly than others judge him that inclines us in his favor. That he condemns himself rather than complains at the condemnation of others, softens the harshness of the catastrophe and reconciles us to it.

Albrecht also finally sees and admits his own guilt in marrying Agnes, in placing his own selfish desires before his duty as a ruler. In the midst of the suffering Agnes' loss has caused him, he recognizes the necessity for her death. It is thru the spectacle of this reconciliation on the part of Albrecht that we are elevated.

In "Die Nibelungen", Kriemhild is guilty of "Maszläsigkeit", but she also has definite dramatic guilt in her betrayal of Siegfried's trust. Altho Hagen must bear the larger share of the blame for Siegfried's death, Kriemhild is not altogether innocent. Twice she betrayed Siegfried's faith in her and her fidelity comes too late to absolve her from her guilt. Altho she herself realizes her guilt, her affirmation of it is not strong enough for us to derive any great amount of elevation from it. Nevertheless since she does not deny it, there is also no feeling of oppression.

These are the only plays in which this means of obtaining relief is found. In all others guilt lies entirely in lack of restraint, (Maszläsigkeit) and thus does not come into consideration here.

3. The Necessity of the Hero's Death.

One of the reasons for the feeling of satisfaction after the close of a tragedy is the inevitableness of the hero's downfall. If we do not accept his death as absolutely necessary, then we can also feel no elevation from it. There must be no suggestion of accident in the hero's death. It must be the inevitable conclusion of a given series of events; the line of cause and effect must remain unbroken. As Elizabeth Woodbridge points out, the fate of the Confederate soldier who had been waiting for months for a furlough and then was accidentally shot just as he was about to leave for home, appeals because of its grim irony. But it is not available for tragedy because it is, after all, accident.¹ This presentation of necessity in the hero's death depends naturally on the motivation in the play. If the catastrophe is based on some incident whose relation we cannot understand, then the catastrophe itself becomes intolerable. If an individual is guilty, however, his death becomes necessary to satisfy our sense of moral justice.

In most of Hebbel's plays, the necessity of the hero's death is perfectly evident. In "Judith", death is not so much a moral necessity; for as a punishment, none could be greater for Judith than life. Given, however, such a character as Judith, death is inevitable. As she has been presented to us, it is inconceivable that she should be willing to bear Holofernes a son; and our sympathy has been aroused to such a degree that we feel with Judith this impossibility.

1. Woodbridge - "The Drama. Its Law and Technique." p. 44

In Golo, death at his own hand is the logical result of all that has preceded it. Were he to accept Genoveva's forgiveness and continue to live, all his previous development would have been in vain. We are sorry that Golo has to die, but we see the justice of it. His death is the only expiation, and we are satisfied that he is willing to do all in his power to atone. But he, wretch that he is, deserves his death and its effect upon the spectator is quite different from that of Leonhard in "Maria Magdalena". The latter is so completely lacking in any nobility of character whatsoever, that he does not even deserve the attention which his death attracts to himself. The death of Klara in the same play is not convincing, largely because of faulty motivation in Klara's fall. It is inconceivable that Klara, as she is pictured during the play, should lose her head and yield to Leonhard whom she does not love. The rest of the play is, to be sure, almost perfect in its motivation; but when the fundamental motive is not convincing, what follows can not be accepted.

In "Herodes und Mariamne", Mariamne is condemned because of her lack of restraint. She goes to excess in her desire for individual freedom and also in her proud, reserved attitude towards Herod. We realize the necessity of Mariamne's death, since we see how impossible it is for two individuals so lacking in restraint to live in harmony together. We suffer keenly at the tragedy that two who love one another so devotedly should lead each other to death and destruction; but we are reconciled because we see the necessity of it all. Crime has debased Herod to such an extent, that there is no possibility of harmony in the future, for Mariamne would see in every man who approached her a third executioner.

"Und folgte ich, so würde mir der Lohn,
Dasz ich vor einem jeden, der mir nahte,
Von jetzt schaudern und mir sagen müszte:
'Hab' acht, das kann dein dritter Henker sein !' " ^{1.}

In "Agnes Bernauer", we also feel the absolute necessity of Agnes' death. To preserve the state, Agnes must die. Since by her marriage to Albrecht, there could be no legitimate heir to the throne, the peasants' wars and the endless wars of succession would be unavoidable and the newly-founded state would be destroyed. Hebbel has made it very plain that to preserve the safety of thousands, Agnes must be sacrificed. The spectator, much as he sympathizes with the innocent victim, feels the necessity of her death and is reconciled.

In "Die Nibelungen", Kriemhild is guilty both of "Maszlosigkeit" and of betraying Siegfried's trust; and although she does not condemn herself, we do not feel that her death is undeserved. It satisfies our sense of moral justice, that she should die at the hand of Hildebrant, the last representative of defiant heathendom.

In the majority of his plays, Hebbel succeeds in making the death of his hero appear inevitable. In all cases this necessity is presented primarily through the character of his hero. In his own words: "In der Tragödie darf niemand fallen als durch sich selbst!" ² His characters may sometimes seem to meet destruction for external reasons, but such causes are always secondary. For instance, Agnes Bernauer may seem to be destroyed because she has opposed the welfare of the state; but the fundamental cause is that she cannot but act in accordance with her own character. In each of Hebbel's plays, we feel this necessity strongly; it is always present and acts prominently as an element of relief.

1. W. II. 3082 ff.
2. W. XI, 208.

C. The Effect of the Hero's Downfall upon
his Character Development.

We have endeavored to show how elevation in tragedy is obtained (1) through the character of the hero, and (2) through his relation to his downfall. A third means is the relief obtained through the effect of this downfall upon the hero's character. An individual whose character grows richer and stronger through suffering and downfall leaves the impression that he has triumphed over death. He who is able to preserve his character against the blows of the opposing force and grow stronger in nobility and purity of soul, leaves a remarkably strong feeling of elevation with the spectator. Walter Harlan believes, that the witnessing of this character-development takes such firm possession of us that for the moment, we develop with the hero. This theory is practically that of Aristotle when he speaks of purification. We suffer all the experiences of the hero and come through the fire purified as he does. Harlan maintains further that it is not poetry, but a psychological fact to which Grillparzer gives expression in his poem "zu Mozarts Feier":

"Glücklich der Mensch, der fremde Grösze fühlt,
Und sie durch Liebe macht zu seiner eignen."

And it is, without doubt, true that this character-development is contagious only insofar as the hero arouses our sympathy. But it

1. Volkelt - "Aesthetik des Tragischen" p. 229
2. Harlan - "Schule des Lustspiels" p. 40.
3. See Page 1.
4. Harlan - "Schule des Lustspiels" p. 40.

is also true that where this sympathy is present, our own ideals must rise to reach those of the hero before us. We see ideals higher than those ordinarily our own; and if we did not strive to attain them, it would necessarily mean scorn for ourselves. In Harlan's words: "Überall wo eine Kraft sich dem Wahrnehmer offenbart, kann seine Seele nicht anders, sie musz sich in die neuerkannte, erhabene Kraft erheben, augenblicklich, wie die Luft in einen luftleeren Raum, der sich daröffnet, hineinstürzen musz."¹ This elevation of character furnishes one of the most vital means of providing satisfaction and pleasure in tragedy.

In our previous discussion we have touched on this point several times, although very briefly. From the discussion of the character of the hero, it was evident that Hebbel's heroes were for the most part such that they inspired love and sympathy. And from the hero's attitude toward his guilt and downfall, one might draw the conclusion that his character had developed into a strong personality.

In Judith, there is development and moral purification; but this moral purification means at the same time the ruin of her entire personality. Her feeling of degradation is so strong that she cannot rise and take up life again. The purification remains in the form of a painful consciousness of her own unworthiness which prevents her from rising to a new moral life.

It is evident that this form of moral purification must possess a much smaller degree of elevation than one in which the hero rises victorious, as is the case in the character of Golo. The forces for good finally overcome the evil in his nature and Golo stands as a victor. If at the beginning, his evil nature seemed to be gaining the upper hand, then surely this can not be said of him at the conclusion. Through his mental suffering, the genuinely good and noble qualities of his character have begun to assert themselves.

He has succeeded in fighting his way out of deep sin step by step and an entire rebirth of character is the result.

But in no play is this development of character more prominent than in "Agnes Bernauer" in the character of Albrecht. He has attempted to disturb the entire state, to overthrow all that his age considered fixed and eternal; but he finally comes to a realization of his duty. His words: "Ich kann,- ich will, was ich noch kann!" show that he has at last risen superior to his unbridled nature and can accept his father's challenge.

Not one of Hebbel's heroes is an entirely static character; all show some development. In Albrecht, Gyges, and Golo the development is very striking. Mariamne and Kriemhild also change; but their development is in another direction. In Klara, the development is the least noticeable. She does grow in strength through her suffering, it is true, but the change in her character is not nearly so remarkable as that in Albrecht's, for instance. In order to become a determining factor in the final elevation, this element must be present to a very remarkable extent. Thus it is only in Albrecht, Gyges, and Golo that it plays a vital part in the final relief.

D. Foreshadowing.

The laws of dramatic technique demand that nothing may happen by accident or by chance. Accordingly the spectator must be prepared for what is to come. By making the spectator his confidant as to the outcome of the action, the dramatist establishes a bond of sympathy which is important in the reconciliation of the spectator to the final outcome. The individuals concerned may be themselves wholly or partially ignorant of what is to befall them, but the spectator must be fully informed. This foreshadowing includes any device the dramatist may employ to suggest to the minds of the audience in a manner not too definite any future event or situation, thus preventing the shock or surprise of an unexpected occurrence. This is foreshadowing in general, preparation for any event in the play. This discussion will, however, be limited to the foreshadowing of the catastrophe, since that is the only phase that concerns the effect of the play as a whole.

This foreshadowing of the catastrophe is effective as an element of relief because of its gradual preparation of the tragic conclusion. The spectator has been given an opportunity to foresee the end, so that the tragedy does not surprise and shock him. He has become at least partially reconciled to the catastrophe and it no longer seems terrible, but only the inevitable, tragic development of what had preceded. This element of foreshadowing is purely a technical device, but one that very clearly reveals the dramatist's skill. He may state his foreshadowing boldly, or he may so subtly interweave it with his narrative that only the most discerning can perceive its full significance. He may use several methods of foreshadowing in varying degrees of definiteness, but all have the same purpose, of

reconciling the spectator to the tragic conclusion.

In "Herodes und Mariamne", Mariamne's death was foreshadowed twenty-six times, of which only the most characteristic instances will be cited. We have the first instance of foreshadowing in I,5 when Herodes says, "Versprich mir denn, dass Du sie töten willst, wenn sie sich selbst nicht tötet." Not a very definite hint, to be sure, but it suggests the possibility of Mariamne's death, altho not the manner in which it occurs. And in the light of her words in I,3 ("Das kann man tun, erleiden kann man's nicht."), we feel that Herod's insult to her individuality is not to pass unheeded. In II,3 there is another suggestion of her death; "Ich sterbe, wenn er stirbt". A somewhat more definite hint is given in II,6 when Mariamne, driven to desperation by Salome's taunts, cries out:"

"Hört er drauf,
So nimm mein Wort, ich widersprech' Dir nicht !
Ich liebe mich nicht mehr genug dazu !"

Then when Herodes discovers that Mariamne knows of his crime and fears that he will never be forgiven; we also feel the approach of the catastrophe, when Herod says: "Entsetzlich ! Nimmer löscht' ich's in ihr aus (III,3). Salome too is plotting against Mariamne and after Herod's return, it becomes evident that she will be successful in her intrigues. Her threats leave a feeling of foreboding with the spectator, when she says

"Du sollst
In ihrem Blut Dich waschen, wie in seinem,
Sonst wirst Du niemals wieder rein !"

Mariamne's words as Herod comes to take leave of her the second time fill the spectator with apprehension and hint definitely at her death.

Herod: "Sei gewiss
Ich werde Dir nicht wieder so wie heute
Den Gruss entpressen!"

Mariamne:

"Nein, es wird nie wieder

Vonnöten sein !"

That Mariamne intends herself to execute Herod's plans soon becomes evident and she again prepares the spectator for the tragedy when she says to Soemus:

"es soll nicht ein Befehl,

Den er gegeben, unvollzogen bleiben,

Das soll sein Totenopfer sein."

A very definite hint is given in Mariamne's account of her vision. She sees in a mirror all the periods of her life, including the final one when life shall have left her. When Herod returns, the spectator, as well as Mariamne, is filled with apprehension and feels with her, when she cries out: "Der Tod ! Der Tod ! Der Tod ist unter uns !" And Salome's words make the foreboding complete: "Der Tod für Dich !" The fifth act contains much that might perhaps be called foreshadowing, altho' it seems almost too definite. It is all plotting on the part of Herod, who is making the final arrangements for Mariamne's execution. The spectator has ever since Herod's return, however, felt assured that Mariamne must die. Thus the fifth act must be considered plot rather than foreshadowing.

Each of these instances of foreshadowing is effective as an element of relief, since each prepares for the tragic conclusion. Each suggestion of the final outcome helps to prepare the spectator so that when the blow actually falls, it does not seem harsh and cruel, but the inevitable outcome of all that has preceded. The spectator has foreseen the tragedy and had had time to become reconciled. He no longer feels that Mariamne's death is horrible, but he is now able to accept it with the same elevation of spirit in which Mariamne herself does.

Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the use of foreshadowing as an element of relief in all of Hebbel's plays. A similar analysis can, however, be made for all. Altho each play

does not contain as many instances of foreshadowing as does "Herodes und Mariamne", there is none in which the catastrophe comes as a surprise to the spectator. In "Maria Magdalena", Klara's death is suggested seventeen times beginning with the second act, when we feel somehow her prayer will be granted when she says: "O Gott, O Gott ! Nimm' mich zu Dir !" In "Agnes Bernauer," the death of Agnes is suggested very early in the play and very frequently thereafter. The true catastrophe, Albrecht's acceptance of the crown, is, however, not foreshadowed until rather late in the action. The foreshadowing is, nevertheless, strong enough so that the final outcome is not a surprise. Thus the same general rule holds true for all Hebbel's tragedies, - the foreshadowing, because of its gradual preparation of the final solution furnishes an element of relief in the final effect of the play. In each case, the spectator, knows what is coming and had had time to become reconciled. The approach of the tragedy has been so gradual that it does not shock him, but he accepts it with a feeling of noble resignation that cannot but act as a form of elevation.

E. The Aesthetic Appeal.

The element of elevation which we shall discuss in this chapter is that derived through an appeal to the aesthetic sensibility of the spectator. According to Freytag: "The elevating influence of the beautiful upon the soul is no entirely unusual art; but the peculiar effect which is produced by a union of pain, horror, and pleasure, with a great sustained effort of the fancy and the judgment, and through the perfect satisfying of our demands for a rational consistency in all things, - this is the prerogative of dramatic art alone."¹ This statement contains several elements. First, the concentration of all the emotions upon the presentation produces a stronger, effect than could be obtained from witnessing a similar event in reality,² - an effect quite free from any extraneous elements. In addition, there is the feeling of perfect harmony that the presentation leaves with us, - a harmony heightened by the fortunate employment of the externalities of the play, such as a satisfying division into acts, scenes, etc. and the addition of music and stage effects. The spectator is unaware of these elements, perhaps, nevertheless their presence is very effective. Moreover, the lyrical quality of the dialogue furnishes another reason for our delight in the presentation; for "Die Lyrik ist das Blut im Körper des Dramas."³ Hebbel is, to be sure, not primarily a lyricist; but his plays have just the right proportion of lyric to prevent them from becoming undramatic. "Gyges und sein Ring" is the only instance in which the lyric is in danger of outweighing the dramatic.

1. Freytag - "Technique of the Drama." p. 88-9
2. Harlan - "Schule des Lustspiels." p. 35.
3. " " " " p. 134.

In its poetic expression, this play is often compared to Goethe's "Iphigenie"; and indeed Hebbel does succeed in holding the reader enthralled by the rhythm and poetry of the piece. Artistically it is his best work; but at times, the reader thinks more of the poetry than of the tragedy itself.

F. Versöhnung.

Hebbel demands that there be reconciliation in the drama, but not reconciliation in the ordinary sense of the term, - not that the villain is punished or that the hero is saved. His is "Die Versöhnung der Idee". The proper realm of tragedy is the presentation of the struggle between the "Individuum" and the "Universum". "Das Dramasoll den jedesmaligen Welt - und Menschenzustand in seinem Verhältnis zur Idee, d.h. hier zu dem alles bedingenden, sittlichen Zentrum, das wir im Weltorganismus, schon seiner Selbsterhaltung wegen, annehmen müssen, veranschaulichen!"^{4.} This reconciliation occurs in the interest of the universal, not in that of the individual. Life is the broad stream, in which tragic individuals are the blocks^{1.} of ice that rub against one another until they are finally crushed. Through the destruction of the individual, the principle that he has disturbed is again established, but only temporarily. In this victory of the "Idee", Hebbel finds the beauty of tragic art. He says: "In der bildenden Kunst ist Schönheit dasselbe, was in der Tragödie die Versöhnung ist, Resultat des Kampfes (dort des physischen Elements, hier des geistigen), nicht breites Fundament eines ungestörten Daseins."^{2.} This Versöhnung must, however, fall without the frame^{3.} of the drama. The "Idee" derives satisfaction from the downfall of the hero; but if shown in the play, it is in danger of being undramatic. It is, therefore, left to the spectator to draw the story

1. T. II, 2664
2. T. II, 3257
3. T. II, 3168
4. W. XI. 40

to its logical conclusion and find the reconciliation for himself.

The theory of "Versöhnung" is largely that of Hegel. The reconciliation, according to Hegel, lies in the fact that the downfall of an individual does not prevent him from contributing his share to the progress of the whole world. The individual, convinced of his freedom, plans his own course of action; but however he orders his life, it still serves some purpose in the development of humanity. He suffers, perhaps, for the "Universal" takes no notice of the "Individual", but goes steadily on its course; nevertheless his life has not been in vain. In this process, the individual as well as Society is in the right; the individual as the pioneer of the future, Society as the representative of the present and the protector of the historical past.

Hebbel takes this theory almost as it stands, applying it, however, to the drama. So he places his action in crucial periods of history, for here the conflicts he seeks are unavoidable. The old order is still law to the majority, but there are individuals of wider spiritual vision that struggle against it. Thru this conflict the individual is working for the future development of mankind. He serves as a battering ram to overthrow all that is meant to be destroyed, and to open the way to broader and more liberal views. To preserve the moral order of the world the individual must be destroyed for a view-point which succeeding generations will justify. Therein lies the tragedy; but the "Versöhnung" lies in the fact that even in their downfall these individuals have brought humanity one step nearer perfection.

In his first two plays, "Judith" and "Genoveva", Hebbel had as yet not decided this question of "Versöhnung" to his own satisfaction. He writes, July 29, 1842: "Ich denke viel über das nach, was die Rezenscenten das Versöhnende in der tragischen Kunst nennen.

Es gibt keine Versöhnung. Die Helden stürzen, weil sie sich überheben." ^{1.} The "Idee" is not prominent in either of these plays. In "Judith" there is a suggestion of woman's place in Society, in "Genoveva" almost nothing; and "Versöhnung", as we find it in the other plays, is entirely lacking.

"Maria Magdalena" is the first play in which we find this element present. But even here it seems to have exactly the opposite effect from that intended by Hebbel. The reconciliation we find here has no elevation in it. We are satisfied that Maria and her father should die, but only because they are of no use in the world. Both are behind their times and must suffer; for the progress of the ages goes ruthlessly onward, and those who fall behind are crushed. By further life, neither would be able to contribute an atom to the progress of the world. Even by their death they accomplish nothing for future development, they are too closely hemmed in by narrow conventions. The secretary alone stands out above this pharisaical group as one with a somewhat broader view-point. But he also is at first not able to rise above mere convention and his words: "Darüber kann kein Mann weg." pierce Klara's heart like a dagger. Perhaps Hebbel has meant to furnish a bit of elevation thru this character by showing the broader attitude of later generations. But if so, the role of the secretary is not sufficiently important, and the elevation passes over our heads. The play is rather a picture, after the pattern of those of the Naturalists, and a picture with a most depressing effect. It may seem significant that this play is produced but very rarely. It is on the repertoire of the German theatre and is generally recognized as an excellently constructed play, still it has never been successful on the stage. Germans, who, more than any other people, find pleasure in deep tragedy, reject this play as too sombre.

In "Herodes und Marianne", Hebbel makes great progress in his presentation of his theory of "Versöhnung". He chooses for his action the period in which the ideals of Christianity are beginning to make themselves felt. In this turning-point of the world's history, Herodes stands for the established. But his wife, Marianne, has already adapted herself to the coming age of Christian altruism. She loves Herod deeply, is willing to sacrifice her own happiness for his; but she cannot forgive the fact that he regards her as a costly possession and nothing more. She feels that her life is her own to dispose of as she sees fit.

....."Doch ein Leben
Hat jedermann und keiner will das Leben
Sich nehmen lassen, als von Gott allein,
Der es gegeben hat'.^{1.}"

In this respect Marianne has attained in advance the view-point of the coming age, and finds no support in her own time. Because of this attitude she suffers; but we find relief, because we see that by her suffering she is laying the foundation for future progress. Marianne is destroyed, but the thousands who come after her will be understood and will not have to suffer a similar fate.

In "Agnes Bernauer", Hebbel has made this theory of "Versöhnung" even more prominent. He is also successful in making the reconciliation fall within the drama itself, in spite of his statement to the contrary.^{1.} Albrecht opposes the universal will in his marriage with Agnes, but he also makes full atonement for his offense. The reconciliation is here complete since Albrecht himself recognizes his relation to the universal and is finally able to accept his fate peacefully. As he receives the ducal scepter from his father

1. T. II, 3168.

and thus makes himself the representative of the "Idee", he realizes that in his struggle against the state, order and unity demanded his defeat. We can also find "Versöhnung" in the character of Agnes. She dies the death of a martyr who is sacrificed for the common good. Here the "Versöhnung" lies without the drama again. We know that the marriage of Agnes and Albrecht today would not disturb the entire order of things and we look back and see what she accomplished by her death. She is destroyed that future generations might gain a broader and more human point of view and that those who come after her might not be punished by death.

In "Gyges und sein Ring", the "Versöhnung" again falls within the limits of the play and thus appears as a complete reconciliation. Hebbel refers without doubt to Meister Anton and Kandaules respectively when he writes: "Sie (die Versöhnung) ist bald vollständig, indem das Individuum trotzig und in sich selbst verbissen untergeht und dadurch im Voraus verkündigt, dass es an einem anderen Punkt im Weltall abermals kämpfend hervortreten wird; bald vollständig, indem das Individuum im Untergang selbst eine geläuterte Anschauung seines Verhältnisses zum Ganzen gewinnt und in Frieden abtritt."¹

With inadequate means and at the wrong time, Kandaules attempts to do something that is in itself perfectly justifiable. Enlightened to a higher degree than any of his people, he considers himself free from the bonds of tradition and tried to destroy those still sacred to his wife and his subjects. He sees how fettered they are by the laws of convention; but he does not realize that these conventions cannot be overthrown at a single blow. He tried to awaken the sleeping world, without stopping to realize that she too needs her sleep as does the individual. Kandaules opposes the existing conditions of his time and he falls; but not before he sees that future generations will accept and justify the attitude for which he is condemned. He expresses the central idea of the play and his relation to it per-

1. W. XI, 31.

fectly in his speech on the sleep of the world when he says:

"Ich weisz gewisz, die Zeit wird einmal kommen,
Wo alles denkt wie ich; was steckt denn auch
In Schleiern, Kronen, oder rost'gen Schwertern,
Das ewig wäre? doch die müde Welt
Ist über diesen Dingen eingeschlafen,
Die sie in ihrem letzten Kampf errang,
Und hält sie fest. Wer sie ihr nehmen will,
Der weckt sie auf
..... So ist's. Auch darf's nicht anders sein!
Die Welt braucht ihren Schlaf, wie du und ich
Den unsrigen....."¹

In "Die Nibelungen", Hebbel again places his action at a turning point in history, in the period when German paganism was breathing its last. Of course the old Nibelungenlied offered such a period in itself, but it was left for Hebbel to emphasize the two forces and make them stand out in contrast to one another. The character² of the chaplain has been introduced largely for this purpose. There was a chaplain in the old Nibelungenlied, but the role Hebbel gives him in his trilogy is entirely original. He is the^{one} who represents Christianity in the first part of the play, while Dietrich von Bern plays the same role in the latter part of the play. Thus Hagen and Dietrich are the two opposing forces that represent the "Idee". Each is convinced that he alone is in the right and the tragic conflict cannot be solved. But the coming age will see in their struggle nothing but the vain effort to save an order that has already been condemned. This is not "Versöhnung" as we have it

1. W. 11. 1809 ff.

2. Walzel - "Hebbelprobleme", p.94.

in Hebbel's other plays. Here it is the old order that is destroyed in its last desperate struggle for existense. There is no sacrifice of an individual because of his attempt to overthrow old and long-established customs. The "Versöhnung" lies again within the drama itself. Through the murder of her husband, Kriemhild is placed in the midst of the conflict between the old and the new, between the law of revenge and the teaching of forgiveness. In her childhood and youth she had been taught the fundamentals of Christianity, and she also absorbed many of the ideals of her pagan ancestors. She combines in herself the elements of the old and the new. In a time of crisis, she makes a definite choice and casts in her lot with the old order. With the death of Kriemhild, this old order is overthrown; and with Dietrich as master of the world, we feel that the new regime will be successful. We are no longer concerned with the death of the individual, but the elevation is derived from the success of the whole. We do not feel the death of Hagen or Kriemhild as individuals oppressive, for we see that their death was historically necessary. The spirit of Christian altruism that has come to rule the world in the character of Dietrich von Bern throws a hopeful light over the ending and the tragedy of these individuals recedes into the background.

To give a brief restatement of the above results, it is evident that Hebbel's idea of "Versöhnung" is conceived of essentially from the point of view of the spectator. The hero is not necessarily reconciled to his fate, although he may be; but the spectator is enabled to see the broader significance of the tragedy for society, and thus he is satisfied that the outcome is inevitable. The "Versöhnung" need not be accomplished within the limits of the action, although the reconciliation is more complete if it is possible. Usually the hero is found to be in advance of his time, though not necessarily; for the spectator, the reconciliation is complete in either case.

IV. Conclusion.

In the foregoing discussion, it has been shown that Hebbel's chief interest lies in the depiction of a psychological action. His plays have, to be sure, some underlying principle which he attempts to exemplify. There is usually a theme with historical significance. But although he does give this phase of his drama considerable importance, the essential interest lies in the character portrayal. And it is primarily thru this psychological delineation of character that he accomplishes the elevation of feeling in the spectator. In every case, with the exception of "Maria Magdalena", we find a hero who arouses our deepest interest and sympathy. His heroes are in most cases strong-willed individuals, individuals who show their ability to make a determined struggle against the opposing force. They suffer intensely and are defeated in the struggle. Nevertheless by the manifestation of their strength and courage, they furnish a vital element of elevation for the spectator.

Through their relation to their downfall, Hebbel's heroes furnish another element of relief for the spectator. They all take the noblest attitude toward their destruction; none of them are cowards when forced to face death. Judith, for instance, looks forward to her death with longing. Marianne accepts her fate in a spirit of resignation; Golo, as a just punishment for his crimes. There is never a suggestion of cowardly complaint, but always an elevated spirit of resignation. Generally they are not aware of any specific guilt, which makes them deserving of death. Judith and Golo do, indeed, feel their guilt very keenly; but Marianne is

unconscious of any whatsoever. According, to Hebbel, the primary guilt of mankind lies in excess; and not one of his heroes is, therefore entirely without such guilt. Albrecht and Gyges are the only ones, however, who realize that they have sinned thru "Maszlosigkeit" and who express themselves in regard to it. Neither is destroyed, but an additional element of relief is obtained when they recognize that they deserve punishment and are willing to atone. Some of the others who are not conscious of this guilt of excess, feel that they have committed some specific wrong and they also are ready to atone, as for instance, Judith and Golo. Moreover, Hebbel succeeds in making the hero's death appear so inevitable, that it must necessarily be accompanied by a feeling of relief on the part of the spectator. He has drawn his characters with such definite lines; that we surrender our longing for a happy ending, and demand that the conclusion be in harmony with the character as it has been given to us. As Hebbel has portrayed his characters up to the point of the catastrophe, this is but the unavoidable, tragic outcome of the conflict and we accept it as such.

As a general rule Hebbel's characters develop through their suffering. In Gyges, Golo, and Albrecht, this development is remarkable; and the feeling of elevation on the part of the spectator is consequently very great. In "Maria Magdalena", it is slight; but even here, it furnishes what little elevation the play affords. Judith, Mariamne, and Kriemhilde all show development; which, although not so extraordinary as that of Golo, Gyges, or Albrecht, still adds something to the final relief. In most of these characters, we see ideals higher than our own attainments; and in our effort to achieve them, we experience one of the pleasant emotions connected with tragedy. Because of our sympathy with the hero, his development proves

to be contagious and we feel our characters growing with his. This approaches what Aristotle calls purification; and is one of the most vital means of achieving elevation of feeling as a result of tragedy.

Hebbel never allows his conclusions to appear unannounced. The catastrophe is always suggested long before the final solution. There is no shock or surprise to the spectator. He has been warned of the tragedy, so that when it takes place, it does so with a softened effect. The relief for the spectator lies in this gradual preparation of the tragic conclusion.

A goodly portion of the "Erhebung" to be derived from Hebbel's plays is that which is afforded by an appeal to the aesthetic sensibility of the spectator. The satisfaction derived from a perfectly harmonious presentation of the subject matter acts as an "Erhebungsmoment" although the spectator may be unaware of its presence. The elevating influence of the beautiful is present to a high degree in all of Hebbel's plays.

We have mentioned before Hebbel's practice of introducing some historical principle as the underlying motive of his plays. He shows in his drama the conflict of two historical movements; but by means of this conflict, he aims to show the continual progress of humanity. This is what he terms "Versöhnung", - the reconciliation of the spectator to the fact that, although the individual must be sacrificed, his death has served to preserve the moral order of the world and to aid in the continual progress of mankind. This theory of "Versöhnung" is peculiar to Hebbel's work. Although not indispensable to a good tragedy, it must be recognized in an estimate of his contribution to literature. Several of his plays, that might appear oppressive when judged by the older canons of dramatic art, appear in quite a different light when this ^{theory} tragedy is taken into consideration.

ation. Those who have found his dramas depressing, have ignored his theories of dramatic guilt and "Versöhnung". They are fundamental to a true appreciation of Hebbel's work, for they form the basis upon which he has constructed his plays. But whoever reads his dramas with an open mind and allows the tragedy to work upon his emotion freely, cannot but experience the "Katharsis" and a genuine feeling of elevation.