RALEIGH WHITINGER
University of Alberta

Gerhart Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang*: On Alcohol and Poetry in German Naturalist Drama

When Karl Marx equates religion with opium in *Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* (1844), he captures with quotable brevity a sentiment shared by his poetic contemporaries of the post- and often anti-idealist "Vormärz" years. Just as Marx attacks traditional religion for its stultifying effect on social criticism and progress, writers like Georg Büchner and Heinrich Heine criticize similarly deleterious tendencies in the romantic and idealistic poetry of earlier generations. In doing so, they often attribute an inebriating or narcotic effect to such poetry. This is true in *Die romantische Schule* and in *Dantons Tod,* for example, but it is especially so in Heine's verse-epic *Deutschland. Ein Wintermärchern,* a work coeval with Marx's Hegel critique. There the link of romantic songs and dreams to bouts of drunken delirium fosters critical reflection on the gap between the heady poetry of an earlier age and the sobering realities of political action.[1] A century later the Marx-disciple Brecht places a similar emphasis on the intoxicating dangers of traditional poetry as part of his campaign against the emotional "fix," against the "berauschte Einfühlung" of traditional drama's cathartic effect. For by drawing the reader or the audience into sympathetic identification with suffering figures, it hinders critical reflection on the sociopolitical causes of their catastrophes.[2]

Between Heine and Brecht, Naturalist works, both seminal and typical, also give a prominent place to the motifs of alcohol and poetry. This can be seen in Holz and Schlaf's prose work *Papa Hamlet* and their drama *Die Familie Selicke* as well as in Gerhart Hauptmann's dramas *Vor Sonnenaufgang* and *Die Weber.* They refer frequently to drunkenness and alcohol abuse. They are also rich in references to traditional art and literature, citing or alluding to other works or depicting figures involved in artistic or poetic acts. For all of Naturalism's "realistic" focus, they show an intensity of critical and self-conscious interest in how literature relates to social problems.[3] Often these motifs might seem disparate and secondary elements of each work — the alcohol references part of a realistically depicted social milieu, the art references a vehicle for Naturalist polemics. Yet I propose that the works in question relate the two elements to make important statements about poetry's relationship to social and political complexities — with Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang* seminal in this respect for German Naturalist drama. These statements are essential to the understanding of each work's message. They are also revealing as to the place of Naturalist drama in the development of nineteenth-century literature toward social realism. By initiating critical reflection on how poetry can resemble alcohol as a means of narcotic flight from social problems, these dramas anticipate — despite Brecht's doubts about Naturalist dramas — basics of his "epic theater."[4]

This aspect of German Naturalism is generally overlooked or even contested by critics. Marxists and non-Marxists alike have often seen Naturalism's *deviation* from the line of development linking the *Jungdeutschland* era of Heine and Marx to Brecht's achievements. They stress its tendency to retreat from its literary revolution into dramatic convention or from its social concern into bourgeois caution: *Die Weber* with a conventional dramatic

conclusion that casts an anti-revolutionary pall over its pro-revolutionary beginning,[5] *Vor Sonnenaufgang* and *Die Familie Selicke* with the melodrama and forced hopefulness of endings that shift the focus away from the social problems of the plays.[6]

This view might be appealing, with its implied link of German literature's Naturalism back to its emphatically poetic realism. Yet it does injustice to the dramas involved, for in precisely the three plays cited, references to alcohol and art recall the Marx/Heine position and anticipate Brecht's in a way that supports critics who have already expressed doubts about the negative tradition among the critics of Naturalism.[7]

Die Weber and *Die Familie Selicke* merit subsequent studies in this respect, and I refer to them only briefly as concise examples of this often overlooked aspect of Naturalism. Metapoetic elements in both associate traditional poetry and art with alcohol as a means of fleeing reality, thus introducing an element of critical reflection on how such poetry relates to social and political reality. In *Die Weber,* for example, the "song scenes" do this—especially the "play within the play" that concludes the second act. They link "Das Blutgericht" with drunkenness and show how it moves the weavers to resolve and solidarity, then to a rush past sober contemplation of the contingencies and complications of that action.[8] This counters the positive message about the inspirational power of "Weber"-poetry and *Weber*-drama alike with warnings about the intoxicating effect of their emotional focus.[9] In *Die Familie Selicke* an abundance of metapoetical references and scenes links alcohol and art as havens from confrontations with grim social reality. Eduard loses himself in drunken song and role-play that enhance his image as patriarch and pillar of society.[10] The rest seek nonalcoholic escapes in artistic works or acts that conjure up visions of happiness or that adorn their hopeless situation with illusions of moral strength or heroic triumph.[11] Yet from early on—even in the title-pages and stage directions[12]—the overall context refutes these illusions, thus disabusing readers and audience of their conventional expectations and unmasking the artistic works evoked as "painkillers." By the time these plays make their alleged retreats into convention, their metapoetic elements have long since encouraged a skeptical look at such flight into idealistic illusions or emotional catharsis—be it by the figures or by the play itself. This inhibits emotional identification in favor of open-ended, critical reflection on the causes and resolutions of the social and political problems left unsolved by retreats into the metaphysics or idealism of traditional literature.

Gerhart Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang* is a fitting focal point for an initial look at this trend. Its interweaving of these social and metapoetic themes is both prominent and intricate. Also, in this respect as in others, this first major stage sensation of the era represents a turning point in the emergence of Naturalist drama.[13] For it *follows* the seminal prose work *Papa Hamlet*—acknowledging a debt to the "consequent Naturalism" of that work's "author" (10)—and *precedes* the more "consistently" Naturalistic treatment of similar themes in *Die Familie Selicke.* Hauptmann himself later noted this transitional position between the two Holz/Schlaf works (CA, XI, 495-96[14]), and his interweaving of social and metapoetic themes—of alcohol and poetry—in *Vor Sonnenaufgang* gives specific support to that view. On the one hand it verifies a thematic debt to the earlier prose work, in which the main character takes flight into both alcohol and literary role-playing. On the other hand it anticipates the later play where both "hero" and "heroine" remain forever prone to hiding their inadequate responses to social problems behind pleasing illusions and heroic poses borrowed from earlier literature.

In *Vor Sonnenaufgang* alcohol abuse is a major expression of social problems; its threat to the Krause household is decisive for the plot, and rare indeed is the scene that does not make literal or figurative references to "Trunk" and "Rausch." *Vor Sonnenaufgang* is also the most allusive and intertextual of the three dramas.[15] It characterizes major figures by their embrace or emulation of other art

works, above all Alfred Loth, a man defined by his books and reading tastes.[16] From the outset this metapoetic level associates traditional poetry with the theme of alcohol abuse in a way that sends signals — often overlooked — essential to the understanding of Loth and of the problem he embodies.

The divergence among critics about Loth springs in part from their hesitancy to consider him in this metapoetic context.[17] Granted, critics have rightly stressed that Loth, with his pro-temperance stand and social-democratic engagement, is in many respects a kindred spirit of the author and certainly a hero of the political line favored by Hauptmann.[18] It is precisely these metapoetic elements that verify Hauptmann's critical, even self-ironic awareness of the gap between such liberal intellectual phrase-makers and needful reality. They reveal a hidden similarity between the ostensibly righteous Loth and the miserable topers upon whom he descends. Though a vociferous teetotaler, Loth soon shows a penchant for the heroic and idealistic visions of an earlier literature, a penchant that renders his actions counterproductive to the problems concerned.

Even before Loth takes the stage the text begins to weave its network of qualifying metapoetry, awakening expectations that the on-stage events soon refute. This starts with the title page and the list of characters. The terms "Vor Sonnenaufgang" and "Loth" invite comparisons between Alfred Loth and his Biblical namesake. At first glance they allow a favorable likeness: both are righteous men who flee a self-destructive haven of sin before dawn. Not looking back, both proceed despite personal loss and survive to make a new start. Some critics have held to this line of comparison in Loth's defense. A few even claim that the play's working title, "Der Säemann," supports a still more positive interpretation.[19] Yet Hauptmann's decision not to use the working title could suggest that he expressly wished to forestall any New Testament associations and, in any case, that title could have been meant ironically.[20] Be that as it may, a closer look at the texts reveals two things. First, there is a similar dark side to both Lot and Loth: both escape as a loved one perishes; both are plunged into drunken pleasures as the world smolders; both are heedless parties to incestuous events (*Gen.* 19: 32-35). Second, Hauptmann has echoed these elements of "escape," "drunkenness," and "incest" in a way that underlines the gap between the Old Testament hero and his modern poseur. Alfred Loth forgets his crusade on behalf of the miners in favor of his apple-orchard trysts with Helene, thus behaving more like the old Adam than the old Lot. He soon wallows in the drunken bliss not of alcohol but of new love, savoring with "glücktrunkenes Gesicht" the "Berauschung" of that moment (75-76). Then he flees, at the behest not of angels but of the devil's advocate Schimmelpfenning. Unlike the Biblical Lot, he leaves intentionally without his "mate," abandoning her to a drunken father's incestuous advances in the face of which she takes her own life. This sequence radically modifies the positive parallels to Lot. It leaves only unflattering similarities born of Alfred Loth's infatuation with his heroic roles as great lover and champion of mankind.

In the first two acts, literary allusions and Loth's behavior combine to establish this tendency to irresponsible aesthetic flight. The first major dialogue — about the sculptor Fips — sets the tone. It indicates how Loth, like Hoffmann, prefers art that gives cheer (17 f.), and it shows how he favors visions of picturesque, heroic pathos over harsh reality; his first mention of Fips's suicide reveals how he has sought out the beauty of the incident ("Ja! er hat sich erschossen — im Grünewald, an einer sehr schönen Stelle der Havelseeufer. Ich war dort, man hat den Blick auf Spandau" 17). This dialogue also evokes — along with "um Hekuba" (19) — literary texts by Euripides and Shakespeare, linking references to heroic posturing and drunkenness in a thought-provoking way.[21] For by having Loth recall his late friend's disdain for the drunken posturing and Hekuba-like false virtues of their fellow students (19), it invites readers and audience to ponder — as Hamlet does about another traveling "player" — "What's

Hekuba to him or he to Hekuba?" (II, 2). Thus alerted, they cannot but note the recurring incongruence between Loth's projected image and the truth. The self-proclaimed social activist takes the stage as the modish traveler and is then mistaken for a beggar (15)—a prophetic confusion! For though he plays the social reformer and potential savior, he is out to fulfill his own material and spiritual needs.[22] Though an avowed enemy of ostentatious consumpton, he engrosses himself in a lavish meal, remaining patently deaf—his impairment is symbolic—to the hints of suffering and disease around him.

Act II drives home this contrast between pose and fact. It shows the self-defined "Ikarier" deftly freeing the birds, yet blind to the down-to-earth misery at hand represented by the fenced-in Helene (45). It shows the alleged crusader for the masses soon revealing his holiday mood (46), absorbed by the orchard's beauty, and tuning out Helene's remarks on how the starving miners steal the apples; like Wendt, he slips into the cocoon of his self-created idyll (46). Once drawn out of this reverie to talk about literature and his mission, he unintentionally reveals his literary tastes as symptomatic of a misalignment with reality not unlike the Krauses' alcoholism. This passage especially shows how he escapes from the distress of the real world into self-serving fictions about heroic struggle.

First, Loth passes over the alarming signals of Helene's interest in *Werther,* whose evocations of suicide and *Emilia Galotti* are soon verified by the text.[23] He ignores the cry for help implicit in her questions about Ibsen and Zola, and he raves instead about Felix Dahn (46). Since Zola and Ibsen are authors to whom the text at hand is indebted (see Sprengel 72), Loth's condemnation of these authors enhances the critical distance from him. His praise of Dahn—an author whom Hauptmann knew but did not greatly admire—focuses this criticism by revealing Loth as a "closet addict" of idealistic fiction of mystical and romantic bent.[24] Praising Dahn, the temperance fighter Loth now confesses his thirst ("ich bin ehrlich durstig") and, so to speak, "names his poison." He finds his "erfrischenden Trunk" in poetic works that give him idealized figures as his models ("Menschen . . . wie sie einmal werden sollen . . . Es wirkt vorbildlich"). From the "necessary ills" of life, from the literary "medicine" of realistic authors he takes refuge in an earlier literature's grand visions of the hero's role in cultural and social change.

Evoked in this context, the basic content and outlook of Dahn's 1876 best-seller suggest intertextual parallels that further underline the gap between the ideals cherished by Loth and the truth of his situation. A Dahn-initiate might find several parallels in the entire drama, such as Loth's link to Cethegus or Helene's to Amalaswintha.[25] The progression in this dialogue from Dahn's *Ein Kampf um Rom* to Loth's "Kampf" compels readers to note how literature and mission alike afford him essentially the same escape into idealistic visions. Again he passes unheeding over Helene's suicidal signals (47, she knows that her "struggle" can be ended) to dwell on the pleasures of heroic struggle, this time his own. Then, much as he had declared Dahn's *Kampf* a source of "refreshing drink," he soon contradicts himself to reveal his own "struggle" to be a source of similar pleasures.[26] He fights on in the hope that he might come "als letzter an die Tafel." He savors not merely "great satisfaction" with each step forward, but in fact—in words laughably ironic were it not for Helene's presence—"eine Art Glück" dearer to him than any that would content "der gemeine Egoist." Thus while others escape from harsh reality into the glow or stupor of alcohol, Loth takes flight into pleasing illusions of his own role as crusader, hero, or lover fed by the romantic notions of an earlier literature. Details of the remaining "love scene" drive home this point: the overall context refutes Loth's self-serving images,[27] and the soap factory anecdote forecasts the play's outcome. The close of that tale unintentionally reveals the little boy Loth as father to the man. Stationed at the "window" to observe life's horrors from a distance, then "washing his hands" and feeling badly about it—closer

to Pilate than to Christ—little Alfred anticipates the on-stage Loth from the start to his departure; the would-be savior is ultimately more interested in his own good mood than in his mission.[28]

Even here Loth is much less a hero than a critically drawn expression of a counterproductive combination of new science and old poetry that Hauptmann saw in himself and in fellow intellectuals of his day. With admirable self-irony he has made this misalignment into the central problem of the drama.[29] For these two acts portray Loth as a mixture that recalls Georg Büchner's Robespierre and even anticipates—as Hauptmann himself was to sense—demagogues of the Third Reich who combined their pose as crusaders for a new order with a dangerous thraldom for romantic myths and dreams.[30] They present him as a man whose positive resolve to join the rational, scientific attack on modern social problems is perverted by a tendency to love the heroic and tragic illusions of the literature of an earlier age more than the suffering humanity at hand.

Hope for rehabilitation declines in Acts III and IV. They parallel the first two acts, moving again from "house" to garden "idyll" in order to call attention to comparisons and contrasts that highlight Loth's negative aspect. The elements that have remained *constant* since Act II are dismaying. The brief reference in Act III to the *Sandor-Album* (64) revives suspicions awakened by the discussion of Fips in Act I (17-18). Again Loth's focus on serious matters is diverted to pictures of heroic adventure from a bygone age. He peruses the "Prachtwerk"—"nonsense" even to the delectarian Hoffmann (17)—while posing questions about Helene.[31] In the second garden scene in Act IV Loth again talks past Helene and draws upon works he has read to portray his concerns in a flattering light. His readings in love poetry (Hoffmann recalls these "studies" in Act III, 63) do for him now what Dahn's novel had done for him earlier. Again the self-proclaimed fighter for the common good and temperance focuses on what affords him a refreshing "rush" of "Glück" (75). In this respect the *changes* since Act II are alarming. He forgets his heroic enthusiasm for his historical mission in favor of a dionysian "rush" of the eternal moment. To the rejuvenated Helene—her morbid thoughts now forgotten—he is another, more dangerous romantic, dropping the heroic and nationalistic ideals of Dahn's epic for the "Berauschung" of that death-like moment beyond time's reach (75-76).

Thus, the so-called "idyll" scenes of Acts II and IV combine to reveal that the one constant element in Loth is neither the crusade for the common good nor—in the broadest sense—the campaign against the evils of intoxication but rather the tendency to flee into illusions of his own romantically charged fancy, to evade reality's demands in the roles of a bygone literary convention. This is clearly not even the "ambiguous hero" (contrast W. A. Coupe) struggling forward though burdened by tradition, holding to his noble goal despite the excess baggage of the idealistic tendencies of an earlier age. This is an expression of the acutely, even destructively narcotic potential of that tradition.

The metapoetic pattern anchored in these two "idyll" scenes has a significant impact on how the drama's ending is understood. The link it establishes between Loth's heroic posing and drunkenness invites a critical distance not only from his actions but also from events in the play reminiscent of the literary tradition to which he is "addicted." With Loth already exposed, his motives in Act V are clear. His decision to depart involves no inner conflict. His choice between the moments of intoxicating "Glück" with Helene (Act IV) and the ongoing "Glück" of his "Kampf" (Act II) is facile and predictable. He stays with his established role; his "heavy sigh" (95) as he "washes his hands" of Helene simply recalls the "bad mood" of the soap factory anecdote (49). The affair with Helene was a holiday diversion, one of his fleeting "Räusche" (91) after all; he remains oblivious of her need to escape.[32] His brief scruples about the desertion are "sedated" by Schimmelpfenning, himself a suspect misogynist and "drug peddler" (92). It is likely that he is the "mystery" lover to whom

Helene refers in Act IV (78), and thus Schimmelpfenning is content that Loth leaves her to him and his "narcotics" (92) as compensation for Loth's desertion (95).[33]

Having created this critical perspective on Loth's use of traditional literature, the pattern of metapoetic revelations also invites the reader and the audience to respond to Helene's last scenes less with conventional emotional involvement and more with critical reflection on the social causes and cures of her catastrophe. Granted, her suicide sheds some light in the darkness. It indicates a strength of will, a growth to insight that preserves an element of traditional idealism banished from the more consistently Naturalist *Die Familie Selicke.*[34] That later play places its thematic emphasis still more squarely on the problem of alocholic and literary evasion—perhaps an expression of Arno Holz's greater interest in the relationship of literature to social problems than in those problems themselves.[35] Here even the heroine's final gesture—in contrast to Helene's—is one of only *apparent* strength, yet another of those retreats into the ideals upheld by conventional literature that the play has undermined from the start. For while Hauptmann's Helene at least escapes the prison of her situation—leaving Loth to soldier on alone in his illusory roles, unaware of how she has shown genuine strength—Toni Selicke's apparent "decision" represents no change. Rather, she follows the tendency of her world—apparent since curtain's rise—to adorn the dire truth of her situation with the trappings of an idealistic literature from a past epoch. Thus since Helene's suicide is a long premeditated possibility, her decision injects a fleeting quantum of individual strength into *Vor Sonnenaufgang,* whereas *Die Familie Selicke* focuses critical reflection more emphatically on the causes and solutions of the catastrophe covered up by Wendt's grandiloquent claims about Toni's moral "triumph" and his own "second coming." Nevertheless, the critical distance from conventional heroism and tragedy, born of Loth's example and the social consciousness that it activates, extends to this part of the play as well—and not merely because his behavior leaves Helene with no means of escape other than suicide. The tendency to doubt and reflect established early in the play remains to qualify the "cathartic" impact of Helene's last act. The reader accustomed to contrasting Loth with his grand literary models is hesitant to equate Helene with the Emilia Galotti whom she evokes. This inhibits conventional identification and catharsis in favor of reflections on how Helene's act stems from the restrictions imposed upon her by the social and cultural situation, namely, how the one individual who has a will is left with the narrow choice between exploitation by the entire male tribe or suicide, with Loth offering only a tantalizing illusion of hope.

As the first major success of German Naturalism, *Vor Sonnenaufgang* anticipates a tendency prominent in the more typical examples. Rather than retreating into dramatic tradition and convention, it carries on a self-critical struggle against its own traditional tendencies, integrating that struggle into the thematic structure by portraying such retreats as being symptomatic of a relationship to the ideals and values upheld in traditional art and literature that is as dangerous as alcoholism. It establishes a critical distance from figures *in* the play or from elements *of* the play that resort to the ploys of the art and poetry of an earlier era. In this way it liberates readers and audience from the bonds of the idealistic expectations and emotional involvement of such art, freeing their faculties for critical reflection in a way that anticipates the innovations of a later generation.

Notes

[1] On the self-ironic view of poetic enthusiasm in this work see especially Ross Atkinson; also Maria-Beate von Loeben, Stefan Bodo Würffel, Herbert Clasen, and Jürgen Walter.

[2] Brecht stresses this "activating" effect of "epic" theatre in his "Anmerkungen zur Oper 'Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny,'" *GW* 17: 1004-16, esp. 1009. On the term "berauschte Einfühlung" see Reinhold Grimm 26.

[3] The tendency among critics on metadrama or metatheater (see Lionel Abel, Manfred Schmeling, June Schlueter, and Richard Hornby) to overlook German

Naturalism merits some qualification. For example, Manfred Schmeling claims that nineteenth-century German drama — even in the works of "Gerhard [sic] Hauptmann" (174) — is too much influenced by "klassische Dramaturgie" and too concerned with a "closed" picture of social realities to allow extensive metadrama. Granted, of the dramas cited here only *Die Weber* offers a "play within a play": the last scene of Act II. Yet this scene, along with the others, uses citations, allusions, and metapoetic figures to carry on a running commentary about poetry's potentials and perils.

[4] Brecht comments on *Die Weber* in "Notizen über realistische Schreibweise," *GW* 19: 349-73, esp. 363-67. On relationships of Naturalism to Brecht's "epic theater" see also Reinhold Grimm, William H. Rey, and Klaus Müller-Salget (1984).

[5] Regarding this reception by Marxist critics (Mehring and Brecht) and its support by other recipients (Fontane, Guthke, and Szondi) see especially William H. Rey 141-48.

[6] This negative view of *Die Familie Selicke* is held by Wolfgang Kayser 224-27; Fritz Martini 70, 74-77; Siegwart Berthold 106, 112-13; David Turner 207-09, 215; Gerhard Schulz 61; and especially Edward McInnes 132-35. On *Vor Sonnenaufgang* see especially John Osborne (1969/70) 120-21, and (1970) 77-78; Edward McInnes (1976) 124-26; and Peter Sprengel 73.

[7] On *Die Familie Selicke* see Dieter Kafitz and Klaus Müller-Salget (1984; contrast 1974). On *Die Weber* see Helmut Praschek and Peter Wruck (1979); Lutz Kroneberg (1981); and William H. Rey (1982).

[8] On the link of the weavers' song with religion and alcohol see Roy Cowen (1973) 196; Peter Sprengel 85-86; and Rudolf Mittler 192-93. In Act II Jäger's "performance" inspires the drunken Ansorge and Baumert, but it also leaves them confused and emotionally drained. This inscribes a conventional drama-audience interaction that stresses collapse into emotional violence or spent catharsis. Rudolf Mittler (192-93) is enlightening on Baumert's response.

[9] Only Karin Gafert (265) suggests this function of the song.

[10] In Act II, Selicke enters as Father Christmas, singing the German national hymn. The significance of the song is noted by Dieter Kafitz (1978) 135.

[11] Toni keeps a secret diary. In Act I Wendt tempts her with his idyllic word picture; as David Turner points out (202), it alludes to Goethe's "An den Mond." In Act II Linchen makes her escape into the nostalgic narrative of her rural stay. In the final scene Wendt interprets Toni's inability to decide for change as a triumph of moral will and forecasts his own triumphant return as savior.

[12] Terms such as "Familie," "Seligkeit," and "Weihnachten," as well as the many artifacts of the stage setting — the Kaulbach engraving of Lotte surrounded by the pillars of state and culture — evoke images of harmony that are soon refuted by the facts of the unchanging situation.

[13] See especially Dieter Kafitz (1978) and John Osborne (1988) on this play's transitional position.

[14] In his dedication to *Vor Sonnenaufgang* Hauptmann thanks "Bjarne P. Holmsen" for the "entscheidendste Anregung" for his own drama. Years later he emphasizes that it was specifically the work *Papa Hamlet* — not the "somewhat primitive theoretician" Arno Holz — that merited his gratitude; hence his reference to the fictional author. He then recalls that Holz praised *Vor Sonnenaufgang* warmly but went on, with *Die Familie Selicke,* to offer his "consequent Naturalism" in "angeblich reine Form" (496).

[15] There is the dedication in the first edition to Bjarne P. Holmsen, "dem consequentesten Realisten" (10). Then, not counting the allusion in the working title to the "Sower"-parable in *Matthew* 13:3-9, three biblical texts are evoked: above all the story of Lot (*Genesis* 19), briefly the apple-garden passages of *Genesis,* and very tentatively Pilate's hand-washing gesture (*Matthew* 27:24). In addition to Mother Krause's reference to Goethe and Schiller (36), *Werther* is discussed (46) and, concomitantly, Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* is implied. The brief reference to Fips's comment "um Hekuba" (19) calls to mind both the Euripides play and the strolling players scene in *Hamlet.* Loth's involvement with the "Ikarier" club evokes that mythical figure's story. Then Zola and Ibsen are mentioned, and Felix Dahn's novel *Ein Kampf um Rom* is discussed (46), while the third act makes fleeting reference to *Die Abenteuer des Grafen Sandor* (64). Whether "Lene," the shortened version of Helene's name, is meant to evoke either Hebbel's *Maria Magdalene* — the relationship of suicidal female lead to her rigidly principled, intellectual "fiance" are comparable — or Theodor Fontane's *Irrungen, Wirrungen* is an intriguing question. Roy Cowen's comments on how the Hoffmann/Loth confrontation in Act III recalls the Danton/Robespierre relationship in Büchner's play (1973, pp. 162-63, and 1980, p. 37) are stimulating in a similar way.

[16] On Loth's talents as a story-teller, "Akteur," and weaver of phrases see also Rüdiger Bernhardt 978; Hans Steffen 427; and Roy Cowen (1973) 162.

[17] Surveys of the Loth-figure's reception by critics are offered by Roy Cowen (1980) 42-43, Sigfrid Hoefert 15, and Werner Bellmann 10-13. Cowen takes a negative view (1973, pp. 161-63, and 1980, pp. 43-44). Cf. Brigitte Schatzky, Margret Sinden, Herbert Scherer (97), Günther Mahal (138-39), Walter Requardt, and Martin Machatzke (143-51). W. A. Coupe also surveys this reception and offers a positive reading, as does Werner Bellmann (32-44). Leroy Shaw, Philip Mellen, Norbert Oellers and, on some points, John Osborne and Edward McInnes tend toward a more positive or sympathetic view.

[18] Peter Sprengel (esp. 71-72) notes how the proximity of Loth to Hauptmann is tempered by a critical distance. Requardt and Machatzke (esp. 143-47) show in enlightening detail how Loth reflects the complex and contradictory position of liberal intellectuals of Hauptmann's circle. They point out that he takes up causes dear to Hauptmann and his colleagues (notably Alfred Ploetz), but he expresses them in a way that Hauptmann views from a critical distance (esp. 147). Werner Bellmann's defense of Loth on these grounds seems to overlook the possibility of critical distance on Hauptmann's part.

[19] W. A. Coupe, Philip Mellen, and Werner Bellmann (esp. 21) make much of the allusion in the working title to the "sower" parable of *Matthew* 13. The link to the Biblical Lot is noted by Eberhard Hilscher (108), John Osborne (80), Norbert Oellers (404), W. A. Coupe

(20-21), and Roy Cowen (1980, p. 43). They infer only the positive aspects of the allusion. Werner Bellmann (21) suggests that the Lot/Loth comparison is untenable but passes over the possibility that Hauptmann may have intended the superficial comparison to alert reader or audience to the underlying contrast.

[20] There is surely an ironic implication in the title *Das Friedensfest* as well as in the working title for *Einsame Menschen: Das Wunderkind.*

[21] On this dialogue see also Hans Steffens (426-28). Although "um Hekuba" appears to come from the Schlegel/Tieck translation of *Hamlet,* Steffens refers only to Euripides's play.

[22] At the outset he "borrows" 200 Marks from Hoffmann (22), thus compromising his journalistic objectivity and offering his service as a "spy" for the "enemy" camp. In Act II he admits to Helene that he is virtually "on vacation" (46).

[23] Early in Act III Helene states her resolve to get out or die (55). Here in Act II one might ask—as Loth does not—exactly what parts of *Werther* she "understands." As Helene's relationship to Hoffmann and Father Krause emerges, the echoes of *Emilia Galotti* implied by the discussion of *Werther* become more compelling, until the ending's grotesquely distorted reflection of Lessing's play.

[24] Oellers overstates Hauptmann's high regard for Felix Dahn (404). In *Abenteuer meiner Jugend* (*CA* VII: 775) Hauptmann calls Dahn the "mystical" purveyor of "mystical" notions about pan-Germanism.

[25] These intertextual patterns merit a separate study. Loth, like Cethegus, is an outsider whose intrigues are directed partly at upholding something Germanic against foreign influence, as with Loth's stand here against Zola and Ibsen in favor of Dahn. Like Cethegus he manipulates and then deserts a noble female figure, Amalaswintha, leaving her to her fate while he himself maintains a noble and heroic bearing.

[26] Many critics (W. A. Coupe) take Loth's "fine words" at face value without noticing the contradiction; cf. also Edward McInnes (126) and particularly Werner Bellmann (esp. 33-35), who supports his defense of Loth by taking the praise of Dahn and the repudiation of *Werther* out of the complete context of this scene. Yet, after forswearing his own "happiness," Loth dwells on the intense "happiness" that his struggle gives him. Contrast the astute observations of Brigitte E. Schatzky 25 f., Margret Sinden 25, Roy Cowen (1973) 161-62, and Peter Sprengel 72.

[27] To let one example stand for many: his platitude about people starving while others feast is risible in the light of the dinner scene in Act I and of the preceding remarks about apples, "Trunk," and "Tafel" (47).

[28] Loth concludes: "Ein einfaches Stückchen Seife, bei dem sich in der Welt sonst niemand etwas denkt, ja, ein Paar reingewaschene, gepflegte Hände schon können einen in die bitterste Laune versetzen" (49). The anti-climax and self-centeredness of this ending put Loth in a diminished light: the world suffers horribly, and he is put in a "bad mood" when he washes his hands.

[29] Regarding the central theme Hans Steffen in particular (426) emphasizes that it is not the miners' problem nor the heredity question but rather the complexity of Loth and those like him that is the key issue. Contrast Norbert Oellers (404-05).

[30] Roy Cowen notes the Robespierre link (see note 15). In 1937 Hauptmann remarks how the "seed" planted by Loth and his model has "sprung up today" (*CA* XI: 532). Philip Mellen misuses the quote (139) to support his reading of Loth as "sower" of "selfless" love—a view at odds with the text. He does not notice how Hauptmann's 1937 statement suggests a link between Loth and his type and the prevailing reformers in the Germany of 1937—as Roy Cowen quite rightly does (1980, p. 37).

[31] The *Sandor-Album*—mistitled here (64)—is the "Reit- und Fahr-Ereignisse des Grafen Moritz von Sandor" as painted (thirty plates) by J. G. Pestel (1739-1808), a painter and engraver who traveled for twelve years with the count and claimed to have been present at "almost all" of his "accidents." The album was published in 1886 (Martin Rommel, Stuttgart), with a second edition in 1892 attesting to its popularity. By itself the "Prachtwerk" is part of the realistically drawn milieu and testifies to the tone of "moderner Luxus auf bäuerische Dürftigkeit gepfropft" (15) at the Krauses'. In Loth's hands at this point it suggests again his participation in such neo-romantic frivolity.

[32] Helene's pursuit of Loth is calculated; it is not the "sheer passion" that McInnes sees (127). Yet the position in which the "hunters" place her (Kahl, Hoffmann, Father Krause, Loth and, very likely, Schimmelpfenning—compare Hans Steffen 426-30) earns her immeasurably more than just the "cord [sic] of sympathy" that Philip Mellen (142) concedes, and certainly more than the attacks by some critics (for example, W. A. Coupe's demonstrably incorrect view [17]). Margaret Sinden, although she mistakenly has Helene shooting herself (with a "Hirschfänger"?), is much closer to the truth when she accuses Loth of "impersonating St. George for the day" (25), as is Roy Cowen with his comments on how Loth's idealism takes the form of "Weltfremdheit" (1973, p. 161).

[33] Helene mentions a "man who seemed less bad amongst all the bad men around" her (78). In a play that is otherwise so meticulous, such a remark could hardly be a blind reference to someone not even mentioned elsewhere in the text. Who else in Witzdorf could have attracted Helene's attention but this other educated outsider with high "principles" and "narcotics" to offer? Even without this reference there is much to suspect about the good doctor's attitude here in Act V. What does he think Loth has left Helene? Hoffmann? His own narcotics (92)?

[34] Especially Dieter Kafitz (1978) draws this distinction, comparing the Hauptmann play to Ibsen's *Ghosts* and contrasting both of them to *Die Familie Selicke* on the basis of this glimmer of hope or strength. See also Peter Sprengel—although his comparison to Schiller's tragic heroes goes too far (73-74).

[35] Contemporary recipients like Heinrich Hart note this tendency in the Holz and Schlaf play. Finding little in the play that could appeal to the "Volksseele," Hart calls them "Dichter für Dichter"; see Helmut Scheuer (150).

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