THE CONCEPT OF 'TRAGÖDIE' IN THE WORK OF GERHART HAUPTMANN

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This thesis deals with Gerhart Hauptmann's eight plays which the author himself entitled 'Tragödien'. It examines those characteristics which made Hauptmann call these plays 'Tragödien' and thus arrives at a definition of his concept of 'Tragödie'. This concept is shown to be largely inspired by Hauptmann's visit to Greece in 1907.

In Greek mythology Hauptmann finds a figurative representation of reality, in which psychological and natural forces are interpreted as aspects of superior, metaphysical powers which determine man's existence. The perpetual conflict between Olympian and chthonic gods mirrors Hauptmann's own view of life as a continual battle between opposing forces of creation and destruction. 'Tragödie' demonstrates the victory of the destructive forces.

Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' show man's helplessness both directly, as destructive forces gain a hold over man's mind by driving him to act on blind impulses, and indirectly, as an atmosphere of menace is built up, in which man feels totally disorientated, unable to distinguish between illusion and reality. No longer rationally master of his actions, man is driven to commit inhuman acts of cruelty and murder. The portrayal of such inhumanity as the result of superhuman intervention defies man's ability to explain it away rationally.

The first four 'Tragödien' have Nordic or Germanic settings but in the 'Atridentetralogie' Hauptmann achieves the full power of 'Tragödie' as he conceives it by returning to the Greek source of his inspiration. In this form 'Tragödie' portrays an irruption of the underworld powers of Hades into the light and the sacrifice of human life which this entails.

Based on a concept of supernatural, destructive forces, inherent in creation, which threaten human existence, Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' are a remarkable attempt to revive genuine tragedy in an age of rational scepticism.
INTRODUCTION.

(a) The place of ‘Tragodie’ in the author’s work.

From his very first dramatic and epic sketches in the 1880s until the novel “Der neue Christophorus”, on which he was working at his death, Gerhart Hauptmann’s writings cover a variety of genres, yet he is above all a dramatist. One of his epigrams reveals clearly the overriding importance which he attaches to this genre: “Das Drama ist doch wohl die grösste Dichtungsform. Schliesslich werden alle Gedanken dramatisch gedacht, wird alles Leben dramatisch gedacht.” (1) Behind this claim lies the author’s belief that all life rests on conflict, that man’s whole existence is a battle which can best be expressed in dramatic form. It is thus hardly surprising that in his early work Hauptmann devotes himself almost exclusively to drama and that, even later, when his search for other forms of expression leads him to experiment with a variety of genres, he should invariably return to drama in order to express most clearly his view of existence.

Despite the extensive range of over forty published dramatic works, less than half of Hauptmann’s plays are performed regularly on the German stage. Few of the late

Quotations from the author’s work come from three sources:

1) Gerhart Hauptmann “Gesammelte Werke” Centenärerugabe zum hundertsten Geburtstag des Dichters, 15 November 1962 Propyläen Berlin; these will be prefixed CA.


3) the Gerhart Hauptmann archive typescripts in the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz 1 Berlin 39, Reichskultschafer. 72 - 76.

(1) Kunst des Dramas p.175
works find favour with producers, who are mainly attracted by the early social dramas, in which individuals and families fall victim to the social and psychological forces which appear to determine their everyday existence. In our modern, rational age, social and psychological pressures, which can be largely comprehended with our reason alone, provide one of the few credible interpretations of superior tragic forces. Only thus can we imagine any determination of individual, human lives. Most critics have therefore focussed their attention on the author's early dramas, following Fontane (2) in type-casting Hauptmann as a naturalistic successor to Ibsen (3). Even critics conversant with the late works have attempted to include the early works in their discussion of Hauptmann's tragedies, suggesting as a common denominator a tragic view of existence which is unique to Hauptmann and which can be traced throughout all the tragic plays (4).

There can be no doubt that the characters in the early social dramas are exposed to sufferings of a tragic nature and many attain a dumb awareness that they are utterly abandoned in a hostile, destructive world. Yet, despite this, Hauptmann specifically avoids the term 'Tragödie' for these dramas. This title is reserved for only eight plays, all of which form part of his late work (5).

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(2) Theodor Fontane: "Über Vor Sonnenaufgang": "Er (Gerhart Hauptmann) erschien mir einfach als die Erfüllung Ibsens" quoted in 'Gerhart Hauptmann in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten', ed.Kurt Lothar Tank Hamburg 1959, p.166.

(3) cf. John Osborne: 'The Naturalist Drama in Germany' Manchester 1971, where, in the introduction, Osborne clearly reveals his preference for Hauptmann's early works: "it may even be true, as Hauptmann's friend, F.A.Voigt, has insisted that the young Hauptmann was not the 'real' Hauptmann, but this will, perhaps, not mitigate our regret that the 'real' Hauptmann took over, abandoning the restraint of his Naturalist works for the self-indulgence of his lesser-known 'poetic' works".

(4) cf. Wilhelm Barich: 'Der Tragödientypus Gerhart Hauptmanns' in 'Der Deutschunterricht' Jahrgang 1953 Heft 5 'Das Drama der Gegenwart' Stuttgart 1953 pp.20-35

(5) 'Florian Geyer' (1896) is subtitled 'die Tragödie des Bauernkrieges in fünf Akten mit einem Vorspiel', but the author is obviously using the title 'Tragödie' here in a specific sense to describe the theme of the play and not in a generic sense to describe its form.
"Maggie Carlyle", 1914 (published 1912).
"Winterballade", 1916 (published 1917).
"Grönländstragödie", 1917 and 1918 (published 1918).
"Voland", 1924 (published 1925).
"Die Atridentstragödie", 1940-44 (published 1940), comprising "Iphigenie in Aulis" (1944), "Agamemnons Tod" (1945), "Elektra" (1945) and "Iphigenie in Delphi" (1941).

These eight 'Tragödien' form only a small proportion of the author's total dramatic output but they are the works in which Hauptmann portrays most clearly the tragic consequences of his view of existence as a battleground, on which opposing forces of creation and destruction vie for supremacy. At the same time as he was writing the "Atridentstragödie", Hauptmann was also working on his last novel "Der neue Christophorus" in which the gloom of the 'Tragödien' is lifted. The latter can thus be seen to represent only one aspect of the author's work but, as definitive expressions of the pessimistic side of Hauptmann's view of existence, they are of crucial importance within the complete work. A close study of their characteristics is essential, if the author's dramatic achievements are to be seen in just perspective. If Hauptmann calls only these eight works 'Tragödien' it becomes necessary to discover first of all what distinguishes his early "tragic" plays from the later 'Tragödien'.

The first major characteristic of the social dramas is their realistic setting. With the exception of "Florian Geyer" all the early works which have an essentially tragic theme are set in or around modern Berlin or in Silesia, areas well-known to Hauptmann. In each case the author attempts to give as accurate a reproduction of the setting as possible. Minute detailed stage directions are given, so that the period and locality may be correctly portrayed. Before writing "Die Weber" Hauptmann travelled around the region studying the locality.
entering the houses of the weavers and speaking to eye-witnesses of the events which he wished to portray. One version of the play is written completely in Silesian dialect. "Rose Bernd" is based on the true story of a girl brought for trial for the murder of her child. In this case Hauptmann himself was a member of the jury. Even for "Florian Geyer", the historical "tragedy", Hauptmann undertook study journeys through the area and produced several versions of the play before he was satisfied with his recreation of the setting. In all these plays the décor is so detailed as to evoke the precise atmosphere required with camera-like accuracy.

Such meticulous care in the recreation of the setting is mirrored in the detail with which Hauptmann individualises the various characters. Stage directions point to the attitude and personality of each character. In 'Rose Bernd' Franz is described as "eine hoffnige, frische, lebenslustige, breitschultrig imponierende und durchaus sympathische Erscheinung"(7) the actor being left in no doubt as to how he should play the role. In "Die Weber" the weavers waiting to hand in their cloth at the mill-owner's house are meant to resemble people in the dock awaiting sentence, whilst the poverty of the weavers' cottages contrasts vividly with the opulent interior of the mill-owner's house. Clothing also is described in detail and where the character's social position or job is vital, it also is stressed, even to the extent of becoming part of the title.

In this way stress is placed firmly on the setting, on appearances, on externals; even the thoughts of the characters are interpretable as reactions to the outside stimuli of social environment. The hero thus appears as a passive sufferer of


(7) CA II p. 107.
circumstance, a poor human being caught up in events and pressures beyond his control. So it is that Rose Bern's driven to kill her baby, Henshel and Helene to commit suicide and the weavers to rebel in vain. In each case the character appears as a plaything of forces which he cannot understand. What are these forces in the early plays?

The earlier plays stress the limitations imposed on human existence by the social environment. Neither Helene nor the weavers are able to overcome the influence of their background and escape from their misery. In these dramas Hauptmann is close to the naturalist theoreticians of his time who saw man's existence as determined by his heredity and his environment. In the first four plays an outsider attempts to change the lot of an individual family or community. In each case his or her attempt is defeated by social forces. The characters are either unable to respond positively or else they respond but are unable to overcome the prevailing social conditions. The outsider, having brought in new ideas, is forced to accept defeat, but the discontent with their situation, which he has aroused in the other characters, is too great for them weekly to continue accepting their lot. The new situation leads to personal tragedy, often to suicide. It is typical of these suffering heroes that their one and only action is suicide, the taking of their own life, brought about by the realisation that they are powerless to escape the misery of their existence. This determinism is equally visible in the other two modern dramas, Henshel's second marriage and Rose Bern's surrendering to the advances of Streckmann set loose psychological forces within the heroes, who, deprived of the life-giving power of love which is essential to their well-being, are driven to react despairingly to their inhuman situations. The stress is here transferred from social forces to the hero's own internal development, but, although the hero is now seen to carry some responsibility for his actions, they are still portrayed as involuntary or
instinctive and the tragedy remains basically that of a passive hero.

These typical characteristics of the early dramas, the realistic settings, the individualisation of the characters, the passive hero and the acceptance of social forces as those which determine man's existence, are the very characteristics which Hauptmann calls into question as a result of his journey to Greece in 1907. Already, in an entry in his diary dated 20th December 1906, he talks of a new trail which he must now tread and which will be generally misunderstood:

"Ich will revidieren und von theatralischen, das immer sich eindrängt, frei zum Schlichten und ganz Mahren Roman." (8)

With the one word 'theatralisch' the author dismisses the considerable achievement of his early works, the meticulous realism and the specific characterisation. In its place he seeks a form with which to express the universal truths of human existence, a form which avoids the particular, the circumstantial, the outer appearances of realism and penetrates to the essential truths behind reality. An audience can too easily be diverted from these truths by the familiar distractions of everyday reality. Theatricality, the attempt to find common ground with the audience, must be abandoned and a simple, direct method found, which penetrates beyond appearances and brings the audience face to face with the real conflict which underlies all existence. "Die kosmische Kraft der alten Tragödie wiedererringen" (9) is the tragedian's task, and in order to achieve this, he must escape from the restrictions of individual characterisation:

"Von Individuellen der Charakteristik muss in der Tragödie irgendwie absurdiert werden". (10)

(8) Kunst des Dramas p.203
(9) Ibid p.176
(10) Ibid p.182
The stress on the tragedy of a particular individual must be replaced by an earlier form, in which the hero is a representative of all men, without particular eccentricities, and in which the stress is firmly laid on the action and not on the character. Discussing Shakespeare's 'King Lear' in 1915, Hauptmann says:

"Die Tragik liegt nicht etwa nur in dem Falle Lear. Sie liegt in der ganzen Formel des blinden, vernunftlosen Lebens." (11)

In 1906 Hauptmann expands this point and prepares us for the unrealistic settings and extreme characterisation of the later 'Tragödien' when he writes in his diary:

"Das moderne Drama entwickelt die Fabel folgerecht aus den Charakteren. Die alte Komödie legt eine künstlerische, humoristische Fabel zugrunde, eine unwahre, durch die aber die Charaktere, wenn auch zu ungewöhnlichen Ausserungen entwickelt, ihre Wahrheit nicht einbüßen. Es wird ihnen nur vom Individuellen so viel genommen, als das Allgemeine an Raum und Kraft des Ausdrucks gewinnen muss." (12)

These notes in his diary anticipate the universality of Hauptmann's later works but they do not tell us what precise form these works will take. The stimulus for renewal is provided by the author's journey to Greece and by the direct contact with nature which he experiences on Greek soil. The influence which his visit to Greece exerts on the author can be divided into four categories.

First of all, it provides him with the representative picture of reality which he has been seeking as a replacement for the realistic setting of his early dramas. On Greek soil the author feels himself transported back into the natural harmony of mythological times when man lived in close proximity

(11) GA VI p.928
(12) Kunst des Dramas p.204
to nature. In order to express his dependence upon natural forces, man had developed a vision of the world in which the various internal and external pressures which influence men's lives were represented in the form of gods and immortal heroes. This mythological portrayal of the essential forces behind everyday reality corresponds exactly with Hauptmann's requirements. It possesses "jene Magie, die es zu einem tausendfachen Schein der realen Welt erhebt." Hauptmann has now found the universal, symbolic form on which to base his dramas. The author's notes to the first drama which he was to write as a result of his Greek experience, "Der Bogen des Odysseus" (published 1924) not only show his acceptance of this new form but also specifically reject the realism of his earlier works:

"Sollen wir dieses grosse Erlebnis des Menschen nicht eines Tages über die Angelegenheiten von Gevatter Schneider und Handschuhmacher stellen dürfen, ob es auch wirklich nichts für sie bedeutet kann?" (13)

From his contact with Greek mythology, Hauptmann develops a symbolic form with which his later dramas can represent his views on existence more adequately than did the early works.

Secondly, the author believes that the vital characteristic of early Greek civilisation was its whole-hearted affirmation of life. The heroes of Greek mythology have little in common with the passive sufferers of Hauptmann's early social dramas; they do not bow their heads before the external forces which overwhelm them. Life may have its tragic moments as well as its joyful ones, but man's dignity consists in standing up to life in all its aspects. By affirming his independence and acting upon it, man can achieve a fuller existence. He remains exposed to the tragic side of life, but he lies in his power to reconcile the two opposing life forces, the creative urge and the desire...

to destroy. These two impulses are represented mythologically by the Olympian gods and their underworld counterparts. This Greek synthesis of life's conflicting forces dominates Hauptmann's thought following his Greek journey and its first result is the strong, life-affirming figure of Odysseus who triumphs over adversity in a career which Hauptmann describes as "das Lebensabenteuer eines Starken". The passive hero is replaced by a more active representative of mankind, the mythological hero who reacts positively to the dilemmas of existence.

This affirmative approach to life, linked mythologically with the name of Dionysus, is diametrically opposed to the author's Christian beliefs, which centre on the figure of Christ. The sacrifice by which Christ triumphs over the forces of darkness symbolises man's salvation through renunciation. During the years following his Greek journey Hauptmann attempts to reconcile the Christian doctrine of renunciation with the affirmative Dionysian approach which accepts life's challenge. This search for a synthesis is particularly apparent in Hauptmann's last novel 'Der neue Christophorus' where the author's (and mankind's) search for the utopia where life's discord can be resolved is symbolised in the messianic figure of Erdmann. But the catastrophes of modern times allow the author little alternative but to leave man's final triumph over the forces of darkness in doubt. In the dramas these two approaches to life are of course polarised and represented in separate individuals. The only occasion where a resolution of life's conflicts appears to be achieved is in "Indischdi" (published 1921). There Erdmann, the active figure, is led to a fuller understanding of life by the actions of his father, Prospero, against whom he has rebelled. Faced with his son's

25. Ibid p.117
26. CA X pp. 675-1115
revolt, Prospero come to see it as symbolic of the whole tragedy of creation, whereby new life can only prosper through the death of the old. Secure in this belief, he is able to find the strength to overcome his urge for revenge and to sacrifice his own life instead of that of his son, who has become his prisoner. In this way he achieves final reconciliation and triumphs to a certain extent over the forces of darkness. Prospero's renunciation of life, based as it is on an understanding of the laws of creation, is also stimulated by the instinct of love, symbolised in the figure of Ferdinand, and as such it owes its origin more to the author's mystic, protestant background than to his Greek experience. This resolution of life's discords through the power of love is entirely missing from the Tragedien, which owe their form solely to the Greek side of the author's experience. In them the urge for revenge is not overcome and man's succumbing to it heralds the upsurge of the dark forces of instinct.

Man is shown to be trapped in the inevitable antagonisms of earthly existence, a prey to the forces of chaos against which he has little resistance. The evocation of the power of these forces forms the subject matter of tragedy. Man's only hope for survival lies not in the power of love, but in a realisation of the extent of death's control over life, of the tragic paradox whereby creation is seen to be a battleground of opposing forces. Tragedy does not portray man's resolution of these conflicts; rather does it mirror in each individual case the eternal laws of existence. Man is shown falling victim to the destructive side of his nature, to the dark forces represented mythologically by the gods of the underworld. His escape from their influence is depicted as purely temporary, remaining subject, as it does, to further penetration by their power. Man may attain realisation of the true nature of his paradoxical existence, but he cannot break out of it without shattering the bounds of human conception. Such an action
would entail the end of the world, the flight into a void beyond the limits of human imagination.

This view of life as a perpetual struggle between two opposing forces leads Hauptmann to penetrate beyond classical Greek formulations to the primitive legends which portray existence as a battleground between the forces of light and those of darkness. This specific, primitive mythological representation of reality is the third fruit of the author's Greek journey, corresponding closely to his own concept of 'Urdrama'. At the beginning of this introduction, Hauptmann's approach to life was stressed as being that of a dramatist. He conceives of existence as a perpetual battlefield between two impulses, the urge to create and that to destroy, of which birth and death represent the two extreme cases. The individual's first perception of this dualism comes when he learns to distinguish between himself and the world around him, between 'ich' and 'du'. As the individual develops, so he learns to differentiate more and more between the various forces which determine his existence and drama is but an artistic representation of these differentiated forces, which man is continually attempting to synthesize. The author thus clearly places the origins of drama within the individual, in his feelings, instincts and thought processes, a fact shown by his statement that "Urpurung des Dramas ist das 2-3-, die 4-5- und mehrgespaltene Ich." (17) Development can be seen as a two-way process, for just as the individual learns to differentiate diverse tendencies, so he seeks continually to relate these to each other in one unified vision. Only in this way can the individual attempt to make sense of his existence and avoid being torn apart and overwhelmed by instinctive forces. In the realistic dramas, these forces were portrayed in social terms, but the 'Tragödie' portray them as destructive powers which form part of the process of creation itself.

17. Kunst des Dramas, p.175
The primitive Greeks had attempted to represent life's duality with a mythological hierarchy, where the Olympian gods did not reign alone but were shown in perpetual conflict with their underworld counterparts. These dichotomous forces might at any time erupt into the light of day, uncontrollable, as their only masters were the fates themselves, the laws of existence which remain inescapable to both gods and men.

In everyday life we may deny the existence of such blind, destructive forces and the possibility that man may be subjected to them, but this mythological vision presents them as one of the factors determining human existence. Life is shown to be continually marred by the possibility of their upsurge into human affairs, an irruption which causes tragedy for the individuals concerned. This tragedy is seen to lie, however, not only in the extreme suffering of the individual and the sacrifice of his life, but also in the process of creation itself: "In der ganzen Formel des blinden, vernunftlosen Lebens" (19). This form of drama represents the pessimistic side of Hauptmann's view of life, in which the forces of darkness erupt into man's existence and dominate it. The tragic hero accepts his instinctive urges, but his actions, instead of resolving his problems, plunge him further into the power of destructive forces. This tragic view, in which man is portrayed as being unable to resolve his struggle for existence, is forced into prominence by the First World War. Yet at that time Hauptmann still thinks of Greek civilization as a success in terms of an ideal synthesis of life's problems and he has to turn to Nordic themes in order to express dramatically his tragic vision. In the period between the wars, following his last Nordic "Tragödie" "Voland" in 1928, the idea of synthesis gradually recedes as the author becomes preoccupied with the tragic figures of Ibsen and his Greek equivalent: Orestes. Under the impact of the Second World War, the tragic side of
Hauptmann's Greek experience comes to the fore and in the story of the Atrides he finds at last a Greek subject for tragedy. The curse of the gods on the family and descendants of Atreus provides the author with a vivid, dramatic representation of the upsurge of the underworld forces into the light. In the four 'Tragödien' of the "Atridentetralogie" Hauptmann's mythologically based concept of 'Tragödie' achieves its definitive form. The insight which the author gained at Delphi into the continual menace of the forces of darkness has developed under the impact of two World Wars into an essentially tragic vision, in which all existence is seen as liable to the irruption of irrational powers which overwhelm man's rational defences and lead him into an inhuman state in which he commits actions which can only lead to tragedy.

Why does the author seek to evoke the power of irrational forces? By rejecting the rational, meticulous, psychological approach and by choosing a representative form in which human urges and desires are expressed in titanic, superhuman form, is the author rejecting the Goethean humanism which he so much admired? The 'Tragödien' are only one part of the late work and elsewhere the author strives to achieve a humanistic resolution of the conflicts which determine human existence. The place of the 'Tragödien' within the late work can be best understood if we consider the author's realisation of the nature and origins of tragedy, as revealed to him at Delphi. This is the fourth important effect of his Greek journey. Tragedy, like its predecessor, the ritual sacrifice, is seen as an attempt to appease the powers of darkness. In place of a real sacrifice, the gods are offered an artistic representation of one, in which an individual is shown falling as a sacrificial victim to the powers of the underworld. If we replace the religious imagery by modern, secular thought, we can say that a Hauptmann 'Tragödie' represents to its audience the dangers of the irrational, instinctive forces within them. By exposing them to an
undiluted vision of the horror of violent actions committed by individuals under the sway of blind passion, it forces onto their rational minds the realisation of the power of the irrational and leads them to beware of surrendering to their instincts. Providing that one accepts the stylised form of reality, one is shocked into an awareness of the tragic depths of human existence. In this way the 'sacrifice' of the tragic hero exercises the power of instinct which it celebrates, just as the ancient sacrificial ritual was meant to appease the gods and prevent them from destroying men's lives. George Steiner (19) has pointed to the necessity for the modern artist to distance himself from the horrors of modern times, if he is to succeed in representing them artistically as tragedy, and he has asserted that it is impossible to achieve sufficient distance for this to be possible. By resorting to primitive myth and saga, Hauptmann attempts to achieve such distance. His 'Tragödie' celebrate a stylised version of the victory of instinct over reason. They represent the pessimistic side of the author's late work, in which he abandons the search for a resolution of life's conflicts and evokes the tragic consequences of the process of creation. By forcing on their audience an undiluted vision of the dangers which underlie modern existence, they constitute perhaps the only valid dramatic attempt to come to terms with the catastrophes of the twentieth century and translate them artistically into tragedy.

(b) The place of 'Tragödie' in Hauptmann criticism.

Most Hauptmann criticism centres on the earlier works, casting the author as the humanistic creator of the passive suffering hero. (20) Until recently, Hauptmann's 1906 forecast

19. George Steiner; 'The Death of Tragedy'. London 1961
20. This view has been advanced as recently as 1954 by H. H. Borchardt in 'Deutsche Literatur im 20. Jahrhundert' ed. Hans and Friedmann (Heidelberg 1954) p.391: 'So sind die tragischen Menschen bei Hauptmann immer nur Helden des Leidens, nicht Helden der Tat.'
that no one would understand his later work has proved accurate.

The first influential critic to show a real understanding of the late work was Felix A. Voigt. In his analysis of the Greek influence on the author from his first youthful longings to visit Greece to the writing of the 'Atridentaturalogie', Voigt concludes that the author's visit to Greece in 1907 represents a vital breakthrough. It is in Greece that Hauptmann finds the unity of experience, the affirmative approach to life which he is seeking. His contact with the Greek soil gives him the feeling that the gods are present and active in natural life. It had not been the works of classical literature which had drawn Hauptmann to Greece but a natural, instinctive affinity, which is immediately confirmed by his experience there. In the life of the Greek countryside, where men live in natural harmony with nature, the author finds an answer to man's attempt to achieve a synthesis between the base world of instinct and a higher realm of purity and beauty, an answer which does not seem doomed to fail before the primacy of instinctual forces. This ideal harmony owes nothing to the classical, Goethean ideal, the Apollonian domination of instinct. Hauptmann looks beyond the classical age in his efforts to find a unity of experience. In the post-romantic era a purely rational ideal would not suffice. Hauptmann finds a mystic ideal suitable for the modern world in the figure of Dionysos, the god who, whilst fully aware of the sway of instinct and passion, yet embraces them and affirms life in its totality. Man must be strong enough to embrace the whole of life, be a prey to its dangers and yet affirm it. This Dionysian ideal is shown to be the vital catalyst for the later, mythological works. Not, although Voigt realises the importance of the author's insight into the nature of tragedy.

22. Felix A. Voigt 'Antike und antikes Lebensgefühl im Werke Gerhart Hauptmanns' (Breslau 1935), later expanded by the author (1948) and then by Wilholt Studt (Berlin 1965) under the title 'Gerhart Hauptmann und die Antike'.
which he gains at Delphi, he leaves it almost uncommented. This
darker, pessimistic side of Dionysos' influence is ignored, as
Voigt goes on to trace the author's struggles to reconcile the
affirmative aspect of his Dionysian view of existence with his
Christian background, which teaches him that it is only through
renunciation that one can arrive at a resolution of the problems
of existence. Hauptmann's preoccupation with the figure of
Hamlet leads Voigt finally to stress the author's interest in
tragedy and he attributes Hauptmann's acceptance of his tragic
vision to a growing feeling of gloom inside him, brought on by
his long work at the Atvides' story. The dramatist, with his
belief in conflict as the basis of life, has triumphed. In the
face of two World Wars, the author has come to accept that the
forces of darkness cannot be fully overcome. Voigt unfortunately
ignores the early nordic Tragödien in which this development
begins to gain hold of the author, but, in seeing the vital
importance of the Greek journey and of the role of Dionysos for
the later works, he succeeds in opening up what he calls "eine
mir allzulange überschene odor irrig gewertete seite" 23 of
Hauptmann's work, a side which is vital for an understanding of
his concept of 'Tragödie.'

The view that Hauptmann's Greek experience acts as a
catalyst for his late work is now generally accepted. The Greek
journey is seen to provide the author with new themes and forms
and to release him from the limitations of naturalistic
description. The result is a dramatic form in which the full
force of the author's tragic concept of 'Urdrama' can be
portrayed. Ernst Alker 24 has shown that the key to the late
work is its vision of reality as a fusion between dream and the
world of appearances, a technique by which Hauptmann can blur
the distinctions between rational and instinctive forces and
make his audience look deeper into the nature of reality.

23. Ibid p.182.
24. Ernst Alker 'Bemerkungen zu Gerhart Hauptmanns Altersstil'
Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie Bd. 67, 1942.
The impetus for this formal change is provided by the author's contact with primitive Greek mythology. Hauptmann's experience at Delphi, where he visualises tragedy as the irruption of demonic forces into life, points the way, as Karl S. Guthke(25) has shown, to a form of tragic drama in which the author is able to express what had been felt to be almost inexpressible, to force the audience to a realisation of the essentially tragic pattern of existence. In the early dramas, the characters were brought through suffering to a realisation of their predicament and this experience crushed them. Yet, throughout the plays, everyday preoccupations had hidden the tragic depths of existence from both the characters and the audience. The mythological form of the late works allows the author to dispense with realistic details, which would divert the audience's gaze from the real tragedy. Instead, the audience is offered a full, undiluted portrayal of the basic conflict behind all existence, the pattern of life and death, of creation and destruction, from which no man can escape. The realistic portrayal of an individual case of tragedy has been replaced by the attempt to portray all life as unavoidably subject to opposing forces, which may at any moment clash with tragic repercussions.

Both Alker and Guthke recognise as a constant in Hauptmann's dramatic career his concept of 'Urdrama', but both point to the author's Greek journey as the source of the formal changes which allow him to achieve a final, dramatic realisation of his vision of existence. Hauptmann ascribes the generic title 'Tragödie' only to those works which portray his tragic view of life directly, without recourse to realism and individualised characterisation, yet some critics have attempted to widen the concept to include the early works. Edward McInnes(26) has shown that the early

plays are less a record of the physical disintegration of the hero than one of a genuinely tragic spiritual experience, which brings him to a deeper awareness of life, a realisation, born in family conflict, that all life is based on destruction. The characters are finally crushed not so much by their own predicament than by this revelation that all life is tragic. As Dorothy A. Angermann says: 'Das Leben selbst ist die Brutalität.' \( ^{27} \) Wilhelm Endrich \( ^{28} \) goes even further than Heimnes, when he suggests that both the early and the late works are examples of one, single concept of 'Tragödie', which he sees as a kind of tragic pattern which can be expressed in various forms. Endrich's mistake is to equate Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie', an artistic form, with his concept of 'Urdrama', a view of existence, and in so doing, he totally fails to realise the importance of formal changes in the author's works, which Hauptmann considered vital if he was to write a real 'Tragödie'. Endrich stresses the similarity of the tragic awareness of the true nature of reality in the early and late heroes, without giving sufficient emphasis to the fact that whereas, in the early works, the hero is shattered by his realisation, in the late works the tragic hero must live with the knowledge of this guiltless guilt which cannot be comprehended rationally. \( ^{29} \) Endrich also equates the speechless

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27. CA III p.204
29. The difference between the passive early heroes and their active counterparts in the 'Tragödie' forms the main theme of K.G. Heimnes' Hauptmann Centenary Lecture, "The 'Active' Hero in Gerhart Hauptmann's Dramas", delivered in London in 1962 and printed in Hauptmann Centenary Lectures, edited by K.G. Knight and F. Norman, London 1964. Heimnes specifically rejects Endrich's thesis that Hauptmann's tragic dramas all fit into one pattern. His stress on the "unrestrained affirmation of life" in the later works, where the heroes "involve themselves in acts of destruction and murder" is, in itself, sufficient to oppose Endrich's claim. Heimnes, however, goes further. He accepts with Endrich that the majority of Hauptmann's heroes attain a terrible insight into the conditions of human existence, but he links the devouring fury of destructive passion which is the hero's response to this insight in the 'Tragödie' with the hero's capacity for love, seeing this conflict within the individual as an expression of the unresolved tension in Hauptmann's
view of existence. Whereas Enrich assumes the simultaneous existence of uniting and destructive passions within the hero, Helness denies this, suggesting instead that the hero undergoes a spiritual transformation. Thus whereas in some plays the hero's destructive frenzy drives him to commit actions which for ever cut off all possibility of resolving the conflict within him, in others the hero is shown resolving this discord by an act of self-sacrifice. Helness accepts this, in the first case, as in 'Veland' and 'Winterballade', the play "brings to fruition the possibility of tragedy in Hauptmann's view of man", but he also shows how Prospero and Iphigenie overcome their instincts for revenge and, by sacrificing themselves, furnish the opportunity for others to lead a new, fuller, freer existence. In Prospero's case, such a spiritual transformation does seem to occur through his love for Selina, although Hauptmann was later to see even Prospero's end as tragic (Beih op. cit. p.216: "Es ist die tiefeste und schmerzlichsste Tragödie alles menschlichen: dieser Weg in die Einsamkeit und das Nichts.") Prospero is however shown triumphing over the conflicts of existence and it is precisely because of this that the play is not a 'Tragödie'. At the end he is symbolically portrayed climbing the mountain towards his star of love, but Iphigenie, on the other hand, throws herself into the abyss, a clearly symbolic gesture showing that she has finally accepted that she cannot avoid her role as death's victim. Her self-sacrifice is not an "act of creative mercy" (p.72) but a demonstration of death's hold over her.

(of Machtzeit: Gerhart Hauptmanns nachgelassene Erzählfragent "Machtelmam" Miss Berlin 1968 p.171, Michaelis op. cit. pp.297-300 and Kate Hamburger: 'Das Opfer der delphischen Iphigenie'in Wirkenes Wort; Jg 4 pp.221-31, 1953-4). The symbolic difference between the two endings portrays the development in the author's attitude towards the possibility of resolving life's conflicts. Whereas at the time of "Indischki", he can still envisage a harmonious resolution to the problems of existence, by the time of the "Atridentetralogie" he has come to accept the force of his tragic vision, whereby the powers of darkness can never be totally overcome. In the 'Tragödien' there is no spiritual development, as Helness suggests for Iphigenie. Such Christian ideas do exist in the late work, particularly in "Der neue Christophorus", but the 'Tragödien' stem purely from the author's Greek experience and they show the essential primacy of the forces of darkness and destruction.

The idea of the hero's spiritual development, inherent in Helness' misread of Iphigenie, is attacked by Evill E. Alexander ('Studien zu stilvandcl in dramatischem Werk Gerhart Hauptmanns' Stuttgart 1961). He shows how the duality in Hauptmann's view of life leads to a static conception of drama, in which the two opposite poles have no point of contact. Man's tragedy lies in the fact that a prey to two opposed principles, he acts, but his actions are determined by collisions of these opposed principles.
Each and every action forms a link in a chain of fate controlled by higher forces which rage indiscriminately, whether they be the positivistic laws of nature of the early period, the erotic impulses of the middle period or the classical fates of the late works. The main characters are split into two opposing groups between which no dialogue is possible. Spiritual regeneration of the hero is impossible on these terms and the only ending which can form an integral part of such a dramatic concept is that of tragic annihilation. A resolution of the conflict is dramatically illogical and can only be an ending imposed by the author in order to dilute the full force of the tragedy. Such an unchangeable world of irreconcilable opposites comes as near as is possible to portraying the full force of the tragedy of creation. The 'Tragedian' portray the price which the forces of destruction claim in any resolution of life's conflicts. Such resolution is seen as purely temporary, and as such it fits logically the author's view of life as a dramatic battle between irreconcilable opposites.
state to which the early heroes are reduced with the trance-like state beyond normal consciousness, in which the later heroes commit their frenzied acts of destruction. The vital difference here is the length of exposure of both the characters and the audience to a different level of existence. It is precisely to evoke life lived on a 'higher' plane, in the eternal tension of awareness, that Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' dispense with realism. The vital formal change brought about by the author's Greek experience is thus essential to their very nature, rendering them diametrically opposed to the author's earlier portrayals of his tragic vision.

Rational life hides chaos from sight, but the 'Tragödien' expose the audience to the full force of the powers of darkness and death, encompassing the whole span of creation in which man is swayed to and fro, from humanity to inhumanity, from love to hate, from life to death. He is incapable of breaking out of the whole dialectical process and his every action directed at overcoming his fate is but a step on his road to fulfilling it.

Two critics have devoted themselves above all to the nature of Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' and both stress the importance of the Greek journey as a breakthrough. Ralph Fiedler (30) traces the author's change of style and themes not only to the author's Greek experience but also to his marriage crisis, which may explain the pessimistic side of the Greek influence. The author's inner struggle is shown to be first expressed in epic works, as distance is needed before he can mould these into dramatic form, and Fiedler explains how the advent of the First World War accelerates this process and allows the preoccupation with tragedy to come to the fore. Man is now seen as being driven by demonic forces, above all by the urge for vengeance. Fiedler traces this theme through 'Valand' and 'Indipochai', where the conflict is resolved in different

30. Ralph Fiedler: 'Die späten Dramen Gerhart Hauptmanns'
München 1954.
directions, to its final expression in the "Atridentstralgic". Above all he stresses the necessity which Hauptmann felt for a change of form, if he was to represent these demonic forces vividly to audiences. Whereas the early works had kept dream and reality strictly apart, in the later works the two realms fuse into one. He uses a quotation from C.F. Behl (31) in order to demonstrate the strange settings of the late dramas. "auf der Grenzschied zwischen Elementarwelt und Menschennelt - dort, wo die beiden ineinander sich spiegelnden Hemisphoren der Schönung sich berühren zu höchster Seligkeit und tiefester Qual" (32). As the limit between dream and reality becomes less distinct, so does that between gods and men. The latter, when possessed by the blind madness of instinctive urges, grow into superhuman, god-like figures. They commit their violent actions in a state of ecstatic trance, like that of a sleepwalker, and in the face of this, ethical reactions become pointless. The escape from milieu description leads to the plays being set on the border between reason and instinct, where the irrational takes on ever greater hold, and this allows Hauptmann to express more directly man's occurred fate, in which he is at the mercy of elemental, natural powers which penetrate his very nature. It is in this mysterious link between the individual and the demonic powers, "das Zauberhaft-Abgründige" (33), that the greatest danger to man's existence lies. The fact that the individual and the world around him both stem from chaos does not lessen the tension between them but rather prevents men ever gaining a firm footing in the everyday world of reality, as the blind forces of chaos may irrupt into his life at any time and undermine his reason with a welter of passion from which there is no escape. Man's tragedy lies in his domination by these powers. Fiedler follows Tottenborn (34) in

(32) Ibid p.41
(33) Ralph Fiedler op.cit p.134
differentiating between the author's earlier indirect evocation of man's tragic fate through individually characterised cases of human suffering and its direct expression in the late "Tragödien", where the cause is shown to lie in the primitive layers of existence beyond rational reach. This realm he calls "das Fömenisch-Elementare" and the "Tragödien" are played out under its sway.

A detailed illustration of the mythological setting of the "Tragödien", whereby the author achieves an evocation of the force of these demonic powers, is presented by Rolf Michaelis. Michaelis' point of departure is that the author, travelling to Greece in search of light and clarity, is also initiated there into the terrible powers of darkness. That Hauptmann calls his "Pilgerfahrt zur Stätte des goldenen menschlichen Zesu" becomes a descent into Hades, into the realm of the black Zeus, the dark, underworld counterpart of the Olympian ruler. The contrast between the realms of the upper and lower Zeus is shown to be the basic vision from which all action in Hauptmann's late mythological works develops. Certain characteristics occur in this all: the theme of human sacrifice, the irruption of the demonic forces of the underworld, the magic realism or unreal reality of the setting where characters are uncertain if they are awake or dreaming, the heightened emotion, almost amounting to delirium, in which the hero acts, the contrasting imagery of light and dark and the almost inescapatory use of language. Particularly striking in this last context is the use of the magic number three to persuade us of the proximity of the forces of darkness, whether in the three mercenaries in "Hinterballade", the three priestesses of Eleusis in 'Iphigenie in Aulis' or the temple in 'Agamemnon Tod' and 'Michtra' dedicated to the three underworld deities Babor, Persephone-Ere and Pluto or the black Zeus. Visual effects (Eleusis' black ship at Aulis), sound

35. Rolf Fleder op. cit. p.144.
37. CA VII p.37
effects (the barking of dogs as death approaches) and vivid imagery evoking death's power "(den Ruf des schwarzen Zeus") are all used to instill in the audience an uneasy feeling, to portray the uncanny atmosphere which goes with the upsurge of underworld forces into the light. Even the individual characterisation is built up from this basic conflict behind existence. The heroes are not reduced to rational size by psychology but are over-lifesize depictions of man's irrational impulses. Such exaggeration is necessary if the barbaric force of their passions is to be conveyed. Hauptmann is seen to reject the normal use of mythology whereby the archaic figures are humanised, modernised, diluted in impact. Michaelis mentions Gide's view that all mythical figures are but vessels for a timeless, rational reality, and shows how Hauptmann refuses to accept this dilution of the force of mythology. He does not ironise or humanise the story, he does not tailor it to modern conditions but leaves it in all its primitive force as a challenge to the rationalising mind of modern man. It is only in his 'Tragödie' that Hauptmann creates such a monumental work which brings man once more face to face with the menace of chaos, which several centuries of rationalisation and humanisation have merely succeeded in keeping out of sight rather than in overcoming. 'Tragödie' is the artistic depiction of "den Ruf des schwarzen Zeus" whose aim is to awake horror at the force of the destructive, uncontrollable powers which determine human existence. As such it is a child of night, taking place in all-pervading darkness, and when the tragic hero receives the call of death, it penetrates his mind and transports him into a kind of trance, in which rational analysis is overwhelmed by the extreme fury of primitive impulses which have not been tailored by the rational mind to fit everyday human existence. Michaelis follows Käte Hamburger in pointing out

that the archaic version of mythological reality which Haupt- 
mann uses fits closely into his view of the double nature of 
man. Not only does it fuse the two figures of Artemis and 
Hekate into one underworld goddess, but in the figure of 
Iphigenie it links the early goddess Iphigenia, one of the 
pseudonyms of Artemis, goddess of darkness,\(^{41}\) with the later 
figure of Iphigenie, Agamemnon's daughter. In this way the 
double nature of Iphigenie, "einen Tod, der wandelt"\(^{42}\) can be 
stressed and her self-sacrifice can be interpreted as an 
acceptance of her chthonic role, of death's claim over her \(^{43}\), 
and thus as a prerequisite for the withdrawal of chthonic 
forces from the upper realm of the Olympian Zeus. It allows 
the survivors to remove the realisation of death's predominance 
from their minds, but at the same time it testifies to the 
existence of the chthonic sphere of Hekate and as such is an 
integral part of Hauptmann's tragic concept. Michaelis traces 
this dominance of the forces of darkness through the witchhunt 
in 'Nigripus Carbo', the murders and urge for revenge of 'Die 
schwarze Maske', 'Winterballade' and 'Veland' and the romantic 
sacrifices of 'Die goldene Maske' to its definitive form in 
the human sacrifices of the 'Atalantentrilogie' where the 
onessential conflict between Hekate and Apollo, which fate has 
decreed, works itself out at the expense of a single family. 
In primitive mythology Hauptmann has found a stylisation of 
reality which not only fits his concept of the basis 'Urdrama' 
of existence but is also on such a monumental scale that it 
can generate an immense creative force and penetrate by its 
barbaric vigour the tidy, rational cover which modern man has 
placed over all manifestations of the instinctive depths of 
the human mind and of the implacable drama behind all creation. 
Hauptmann's "weiter Weg" leads him back to man's earliest

\(^{41}\) cf. G. Michaelis 'Das Opfer der Iphigenie' Herkunft, I- 
Jahrgang, Heft 9 (Sept. 1943)

\(^{42}\) CA III p.1077

\(^{43}\) cf. CA III p.1066: 'Chorpreistrin:

"Nicht ruhig, Tote, in das Hades Loch,

ihr seid es, ihr nur, denen ich gehöre!"
mythological representation of his destiny. His 'Tragödie' demonstrate the dangers of life lived in the presence of the primitive representatives of destruction and death, the forces of the underworld whose rulers are the goddess Hekate and Pluto, the black Reus.

Critics of the late work are thus unanimous in pointing to the author's Greek journey as the vital catalyst without which his ideas could neither have developed as they did nor found viable forms of expression. Hauptmann begins to experiment with other genres than drama as he attempts to represent his struggles to find the unity of experience which he sees as the greatest achievement of Greek civilisation. But under the impact of two world wars the tragic side of his view of life asserts itself, and it can only be fully expressed in dramatic terms. It finds mythological form as the upsurge of underworld forces into the light of day, leading to Hauptmann's archetypal concept of 'Tragödie', in which heroic human representatives fall as sacrificial victims to ethereal forces which penetrate their minds and determine their existence. By reducing existence to its essentials and then magnifying the vision which remains, Hauptmann's 'Tragödie' challenge our superficial, rational conception of existence and demonstrate its basically tragic nature.

(e) The place of Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' in the theory of tragedy.

Of all definitions of tragedy, the most influential remains that given in the Fourth Century B.C. by Aristotle. In his 'Poetics' he urges against earlier strictures laid on poetry by Plato and by taking examples from the classical Greek tragedians he demonstrates the nature of tragedy.
Plato had banned dramatic representation from his ideal state because it was far removed from reality and appealed to the baser emotions of the audience. Being but a representation of appearances which are already at once removed from ultimate reality, poetry possesses a low degree of truth. Where reason demands restraint, poetic representation allows an audience to indulge its weaker emotions, thus encouraging the lower, irrational elements of the mind at the expense of reason. Having no serious value or claim to truth and possessing a terrible power to corrupt, dramatic representation should not be allowed in an ideal state.

Aristotle, on the other hand, accepts the value of poetic representation, comparing its truth favourably with that of history. Whereas the latter describes what has actually happened, poetry represents the kind of thing that could happen because the circumstances render it probable or necessary. Thus whilst history deals with particular facts, poetry is concerned with universal truths; the actions which it depicts demand serious attention.

In a tragedy, these actions do not indulge an audience’s grief, but rather purge the audience of base emotions. By representing the life and actions of the hero, bound up as they are with happiness and misery, the author excites the emotions of pity and fear, but rather than allowing these emotions to be indulged, the action releases the audience from their grasp and is thus in no way a corrupting influence.

Aristotle’s defence of the validity of dramatic representation as worthy of serious attention and his description of the tragic effect are the two vital prerequisites for his definition of the nature of tragedy. His examples show the best ways in which the required purgation, or catharsis, may be achieved and in so doing they point to the particular universal truths which are the proper study of tragedy.
The greatest tragic effect is to be gained by the portrayal of undeserved misfortune. The hero must be an impressive representative of humanity, whether of high rank or divine status. He must be of high reputation, but neither wholly good nor wholly bad. A change in his fortune must be the subject of the tragedy, and this change, from prosperity to misery, must be due not to vice nor depravity but to an unfortunate error in the man's actions or in his character. If his action involves the suffering of those who are near and dear to him, the tragic effect is greatest, particularly if the hero, having acted in ignorance, is brought to a tragic realisation of the consequences of his action either just in time to prevent an outrage or else just too late, when the deed is done.

These suggestions not only point the way to achieving the maximum tragic effect but also show how far Aristotle has moved from Platonic ideals. In Aristotelian theory the stress is firmly placed on action. What a man does, and not just what he is, is the subject of tragedy, for it is a representation of existence with all its vicissitudes and not a static character study. Essential truths must be deducible from the action and they must relate to human existence.

A close study of Aristotle's requirements reveals one further, essential factor. In his description of the hero's character, Aristotle seeks to avoid extremes of good and evil because he wishes the fall of the hero to be devoid of moral implications. The emotion awakened by tragedy has nothing at all to do with feelings of justice or morality. It is completely amoral, requiring in the audience the ability to sympathise, but not to judge. In this way the hero appears as a gratuitous victim of forces beyond his control, whose fall evokes not only pity for his misfortune but also fear that such misfortune could also befall the audience at any time. Being unconnected with any particular code of ethics, tragedy
can thus persist in different cultures, providing that the basic tragic pattern, the destruction of a hero by superior forces, is adhered to.

It is therefore hardly surprising that modern critics have come to similar conclusions with regard to the dramatic constants of tragedy. By considering a selection of such critics, it will be possible to attain a criterion, by which Hauptmann's theory of 'Tragedie' can be set in perspective. After considering four actual tragedies, 'Oedipus Rex', 'Hamlet', 'Macbeth' and 'Thèdre', Geoffrey Brereton is led to conclude that an empirical tragic pattern exists, which is based on a preoccupation with the various kinds of power which influence human existence. The impulse behind it is seen as an undogmatic curiosity about the nature and sources of this power, a curiosity which may border on the irrational but which is never frivolous. The hero always suffers and comes to disaster, but he is not passive. He acts as a kind of unconscious exploratory agent, committed to a course in which he will be ultimately destroyed but which will lead the spectators to a discovery about life which is the essential tragic discovery. Existence is the subject, with all the hazards which attend it. A passionate interest is created within the spectator with regard to the consequences of a certain situation, and the causes are only important in so far as they throw light on the situation. Being neither didactic nor exemplary, this constant behind tragedy remains empirical and can persist in different cultures. Odette de Méragues comes to a similar conclusion when she gives the following list of the ingredients of tragedy: "the magnified image of man, the hero being larger than life-size either because of personal qualities, or by his divine origin, or for social reasons; the opposing forces, which can be the gods, fate

44. Geoffrey Brereton: 'The Principles of Tragedy' London 1968
or political circumstances; the catastrophic clash always on an impressive scale, involving suffering and sometimes death; whatever the ending, which is generally unhappy but not necessarily so, the indication of some transcendental order; finally the ritualistic element: the enacting of this conflict being a kind of ceremony and the formal aspect of it satisfying originally a religious emotion which in modern times becomes an aesthetic emotion." 46 The last two points lead her to distinguish between the tragedy of the individual, the essential tragic pattern mentioned above, and the abiding moral or metaphysical order within which the action is set. This she calls the "pattern of order". 47 Whereas the tragic pattern is immoral and empirical, the "pattern of order" varies according to contemporary ideas on politics, ethics and religion. It provides the tragedy proper with a framework which is necessary to comfort the audience. It transcends the individual fate of the tragic protagonist, indicating a political, moral or religious order which is in keeping with the values of the spectators. The development of different forms of tragedy depends on changes within the "pattern of order", as the tragic pattern itself remains unchanged.

In Greek tragedy the exploration of the superior forces which determine men's existence here on the extra-human, but post-Renaissance humanism has internalised the tragic cause within the hero. Whether in the stylised neo-classical plays or in the imaginative wealth of the Elizabethan stage, the extra-human retains only poetic appeal and the tragic cause is shown to exist within the human personality. In Racinian tragedy the gods are still present and in Shakespearean drama a wealth of medieval ritual and mystic symbolism is still visible, being in many ways an equivalent to the Greek gods, but the spread of scientific rationalism eradicates this further dimension and leaves the vision of man's domination by psychological forces as the only poetic myth, the only "pattern of order" with which an author can reach a critically aware audience.

46. Ibid. p.18
47. Ibid. p.121-3.
With the rise of reason, the old neo-Platonic and Christian idea of two contrasting worlds takes on a new form. The dichotomy between ideal and real, between heaven and hell, is transferred to the clash between reason and passion and tragedy comes to be seen as being determined by this conflict within the mind of the hero. This rationally acceptable, humanistic myth has dominated tragedy since Racine, leading on the positive side to Goethe's "Sühne Soodle" Iphigenic and on the negative to Ibsen's Hedda Gabler who is unable to reconcile her passionate nature with her drab surroundings. Once human suffering itself is exalted in men's minds to a certain dignified level, it no longer becomes necessary for the hero to struggle to forge an existence for himself despite its rigours. The tragic effect can be equally well evoked by passive heroes who are merely shown succumbing to their fate. Hauptmann's early dramas owe a large debt to this humanistic concept of tragedy, whose cause lacks any sign of a transcendental order and whose heroes suffer passively under psychological or social forces, their only escape being the act of suicide. For this reason, the author refuses to consider them as 'Tragödien', despite the essentially tragic insight which their heroes attain in their despair.

Once psychological interpretations bring tragedy completely within the bounds of reason and deny the existence of any transcendental order, it is doubtful whether the artistic "pattern of tragedy" represented in Aristotle's definition can survive. George Steiner has expressed this view. He concludes that tragedy is impossible in the modern world because it is "that form of art which required the intolerable burden of God's presence" and his shadow no longer falls upon us as it fell on Aeschylus or Richard or Athisiae. The decline of an organic world view, of fixed beliefs with their attendant context of

48. George Steiner, op. cit. p.342
49. Ibid. p.353.
50. Ibid. p.353.
mythological, symbolic and ritual reference has brought with it the rise of analysis, represented in literature by the rise of prose, the language of reason and realism. Tragedy appears to modern man as an oversimplification and its simple, stylised gesture has been replaced by the complicated, many-sided exploration of life which is to be found in a great novel.

Marxist critics, such as Raymond Williams, see the only unified vision of life left to modern man as that of communism and Steiner too had implied this; when, at the end of "The Death of Tragedy" he recounts the ritualistic ceremony with which workers of a Chinese agricultural commune recall the heroic death of one of the founders of the local communist party, killed by the imperialist Japanese. Steiner however stresses less the communism than the aspect of defiance and honour to the dead which the ritual entails, comparing it to ancient Greek tragedy. Other modern authors have attempted to resuscitate the organic, unified view of life, and the first clear statement of this break from psychological, piecemeal analysis is to be found in Friedrich Nietzsche's 'Die Geburt der Tragödie'.

Nietzsche sees the origins of tragedy in pre-Socratic rituals, in a "Reich der Weisheit, aus dem der Logiker verbannt ist". Tragedy is seen as a symbolic representation of the instinctive, spontaneous approach to life, which leads one to penetrate beyond the evils of individual existence to the metaphysical joy beyond, a joy which stems from the realisation of the basic unitive impulse behind all creation. Only when scientific rationalism has been developed to the limit and seen to lack the universal validity which it claims will it be possible to resurrect tragedy with anything like its original force and impact.

Steiner denies the possibility of such a revival, seeing tragedy as an expression of the pre-rational stage in history, which can never recur. Once man has begun to approach life rationally, he is forced to deny the real existence of the

uncontrollable natural forces which tragedy shows dominating the human mind and to see them as visions of primitive ignorance and superstition. Individual poets' attempts to invent new mythologies are reduced to the scale of private, artificial terrors when compared with the realities of present-day sufferings and attempts to return to the world of ancient myths are but ideological jeux d'esprit. The impact of ancient mythology has been lost; whereas even Racine's audience could still react emotionally to such visions of demonic chaos, a modern spectator only sees in them an amusing charade. How then can a modern author find a 'pattern of order', either invented or revitalised, with which he can penetrate the modern rational mind and convince it of the existence of superior natural forces which are able to penetrate its defences and determine human existence. This was the question which was preoccupying Gerhart Hauptmann when he set off on his journey to Greece in 1907, a journey which convinced him that he must, like Nietzsche, seek to model a modern concept of 'Tragödie' on its original, pre-classical origins in the ritual of human sacrifice. He must break with realistic psychological depiction of character and with realistic settings. The original impact of tragedy is only to be regained if the heroes are reduced to bare essentials, their actions stemming from basic instinctive impulses and set in an uncanny atmosphere which defies the rules of reason and magnifies the action to such an extent that its monumental characteristics are able to penetrate, however slightly, the most sceptical of modern minds. The mythological framework and the impressive proportions of the action suggest the transcendental order; but accurate psychological motivation places the tragic cause equally clearly within the human mind. In this way the cosmic drama of the gods is seen as a reflection of the drama in man's own mind, linking man's own drama with that of all creation. Unlike Nietzsche, Hauptmann does not in his 'Tragödien' postulate a basic unitive impulse. Rather is the essential pattern of existence shown as one of conflict and the fusion of cosmic and psychological drama leads the audience to realise the existence
of a deeper level of reality than that of rational comprehension. The absolute value of tragedy is thus reinstated. Hauptmann is in the humanist tradition, in that he internalises the tragic cause within the hero, but by stressing the uncontrollable depths of human personality and linking the forces which dominate at that level with those prevailing throughout creation, he rejoins the Greek idea of man at the mercy of external forces, which may at any time gratuitously irrupt into man's existence. Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' can thus be seen as an attempt to reinstate the transcendental in modern tragedy. Hauptmann's gods may be a personification of the various impulses which battle for dominance within creation, and within man's mind, but they are beyond man's control and thus worthy of respect. They are the "pattern of order" within which the tragic pattern is set, but their role is less to comfort the audience than to establish the essential reality of the violent shock produced by the tragedy proper and force upon the rational mind of modern man a realisation of its limits. This is the concept of 'Tragödie' which is Hauptmann's particular contribution to modern literature. Its mythological framework is the stylisation which conveys, more than realistic representation can, the universal truths which Hauptmann sees behind the rational exterior of modern life.

The basic impulse behind Hauptmann's archaic concept of 'Tragödie' lies in the author's view of life, as it is lived today. Reacting to the apparent separation of rational and religious feeling in the modern world, he attempts to expand the humanist, scientific, sceptical view by which we now try to make sense of our lives in order to bring modern man once again into contact with religious or poetic experience, with the world of the senses. To do this he needs a form which defies rational analysis and yet appeals sufficiently to man's subconscious that he does not dismiss it as a private fancy. The Christian myth, despite its strong hold over the mind of modern man, relies on renunciation. It is thus rejected in favour of the earlier, more positive vision of the Greeks, which sanctifies rather than profanes natural experience.
Faced with the various atrocities of recent years, Hauptmann has to accept that however much man may long for the synthesis between the forces of reason and those of instinct, between the urge to create and the frenzy of destruction, there are times when the dominance of instinctive powers cannot be questioned. It is just such moments which provide the subject matter of the 'Tragödien'. In accepting a concept which stresses man's liability to be overwhelmed by irrational urges, in evoking their sway in a much more intensive manner than that by which they manifest themselves in reality and in lending to them the force of transcendental powers, Hauptmann is reacting poetically to modern times and attempting to transpose them into a valid literary form of expression.

Other modern authors, particularly the French, have written mythological dramas in order to put across their view of existence, but in most cases the philosophical theme has dominated at the expense of the creation of full-blooded characters. Youthful rebellion against the compromises of everyday, adult reality is symbolised in Anouilh's Antigone. Sartre portrays Orestes face to face with an extreme example of the existentialist choice which he sees man continually having to face with his every action whilst Cocteau makes out of the Oedipus legend a witty game based on his view of the absurdity of life. Where the characters have been portrayed with some degree of reality, by O'Neill in his ' Mourning Becomes Elektra' or by T.S. Eliot in 'The Family Reunion', this has been achieved by abstracting the mythological figures from their context and placing them in a modern context as twentieth century characters, whose every action is perfectly explicable on a rational psychological level. Hauptmann neither transfers the action to modern times nor sacrifices the creation of dramatically vivid characters in favour of a philosophical message. His tragic characters live life to the full.53.

53. cf. Heinnes op. cit. p.66 "The unrestrained affirmation of life in the German work (the Atridentetralogy) contrasts strangely with the exhaustion of O'Neill's figures and with the anguished determination of Sartre's hero".
is the action which counts and the causes are only important in so far as they elucidate the action. His method is to accept a fictitious, mythological framework in place of reality, but within it to create characters who, however extreme or unusual their actions, remain psychologically convincing. The fiction achieves the necessary distance, without which we could not face the extremes of horror portrayed. The characters are representatives of humanity, reduced to its bare essentials, but the realistic motivation of the violent urges which dominate them ensures that the audience follows their actions with sympathy, however violent they become. The structure of a classical tragedy is retained, in that the hero is placed in a situation where external forces determine his existence and where without conscious awareness he commits actions which irrevocably lead to his downfall, but the tragic pattern is reduced to its essentials and magnified, so that the force of the individual tragedy is as striking as possible. The unrealistic setting, which seems to border on the world of dreams, conditions our sense to a realisation of the irrational nature of the forces which are causing the tragedy. Hauptmann's belief in the validity of man's dream experience leads him to use his mythological framework in such a way that one's realistic, psychological assessment of the action is brought into question and seen to be less convincing than its alternative, poetic counterpart which accepts the impenetrability and interpenetrability of certain phenomena and represents them to the imagination in a simplified, personified form. If the lesson of the 'Tragedien' is learnt and modern man accepts the existence of dangers threatening him from outside his rational control, his wider view of existence will leave him better prepared to combat these very dangers. Perhaps man will then be able to master his technical progress and not be dominated by it. The technological age, like the mythological age, threatens to magnify man's eternal problem of reconciling the diverse impulses behind creation, as its potential for good or bad is immense. Atomic catastrophe may not be in reality the revenge
of the Titans over their Olympian rivals, but such a poetic vision represents clearly the vital insight that unless one realizes the limits of his rational control over existence, he will fall prey to deeper urges and his every action will lead him, like a Hauptmann tragic hero, inextricably towards catastrophe. With each separate step his control will be diminished and his chances of escape reduced.

Hauptmann thus places a classically structured tragedy within a fable whose form represents more closely than everyday life the real nature of human existence. This form is provided by his Greek experience and consists of a mythological framework of conflicting deities, whose quarrels mirror the various natural conflicts of forces within creation. The tensions within the human mind are laid bare and linked with the cosmic "order", so that man's own tragedy is seen to be but one aspect of the whole tragedy of creation. This consists of the clash between creative and destructive impulses and is portrayed mythologically as a clash between the later Olympian gods and their earlier, chthonic counterparts whose rule represents the victory of chaos. When they irrupt into man's ordered existence, tragedy occurs and the archaic primordial form of Hauptmann's

54, Ch. X p. 762.

"Ich brauche Ihnen gewiss nicht zu sagen, was technische Fortschritte sind. Die technischen Ruder überschreiten hin und her jedes Masch und übertragen bei weitem alles, was menschlicher Wille und menschliche Hoffnung je erwartet haben. Und überall ist das Feuer im Spieß. Man fährt mit dem Leben, in ihm die allenalben gebundene und geheiligte Gedankenkraft. Es gibt es nur ein Beispiel eine Uranatome, wenn es von einem anderen getroffen und aufgespalten wird, entwickelt es mächtige Energien. Sofern rapide Summierungen ein Uranokupplung zu einer Luftkasten vereinigen, entwickelt es in weniger als den kompliziertesten Teil einer Sekunde Energie, die ausreicht, um ein Gewicht von einer Milliarde Tonnen sicherzustellen, die schon hoch zu haben. Seine Explosion könnte uns außer unseren Planeten zu einer gefährlichen Katastrophe verdammt.

concept of 'Tragödie' allows this upsurge to be depicted in monumental fashion, so that its transcendental nature is difficult to deny.

The universality, humanity and dramatic force of primitive Greek mythology point the way for the author to face up to the modern challenge of the forces of evil and, by an extreme portrayal of mankind suffering despite itself, to evoke the dark, destructive powers which threaten to engulf it and extinguish all possibility of humanity and love. Yet, however much the 'Tragödie' may stem from the author's humanistic belief in the need for modern man to recover his faith in the realm of the spirit and the senses, they are above all powerful, poetic portrayals of the tragic side of existence. Despite the psychological motivation of the violence, despite the classical structure of the tragic pattern itself, it is the extreme frenzy of the characters, the horror of their actions and the traumatic nature of the setting which are the dominant characteristics and they are only explicable within the irrational, unrealistic, mythological form which results from Hauptmann's Greek experience and which is the distinguishing feature of his concept of 'Tragödie'. 
Hauptmann's theory of 'Tragödie' is largely inspired by his visit to Greece in 1907; the impressions of which he recorded and published in the following year under the title 'Griechischer Frühling'. From his very first steps on Greek soil at Corfu, Hauptmann falls under the spell of the Greek landscape. He gives his imagination full rein and experiences a kind of communion with nature, in which his rational, scientific, sceptical approach to life is swept away and replaced by a belief in the infinite variety of natural forces at work around him. In an attempt to represent and come to terms with these forces, the ancient Greeks had evolved an imaginative recreation of them, in which these elemental powers are personified as godlike figures, whose conflicts and reconciliations reenact the whole drama of existence. Hauptmann comes to feel that these Greek gods are perpetually around him. Everything is "mit einer zweiten Welt göttlich phantastischen Lebens bedeckt und bevölkert". Seasickness can appear to him as Poseidon's revenge and a menacing storm can be represented as the imminent visit of Zeus to Circe. With this suspension of his reasoning powers Hauptmann enters the realm of religious feeling, as it was with the ancients when imagination was the dominant factor. He realises the

2. CA VII p.65
3. Ibid p.14
4. Ibid p.33
correspondence between religious feeling and the life of the senses and is ready to reject cultures which do not accept this basic phenomenon.

"Religiöses Empfinden hat seine tiefsten Wurzeln in der Natur; und sofern Kultur nicht dazu führt, mit diesem Wurzelsystem stärker, tiefer und weiter verzweigt in die Natur zu dringen, ist sie Feindin der Religion."\(^5\) Behind this acceptance of the world of the senses is the feeling that cold reason only serves to split our earthly life off from the eternal life and its aims. In Greece Hauptmann feels anew the elemental power of the natural forces which determine our lives, forces which our reason is powerless to control, and by espousing the Greeks' natural, instinctive approach to life, he hopes to regain the harmonious, balanced existence which seemed to precede our rational, modern era. The mythological representation of existence seems to be an imaginative recreation of the essential features of earthly life; it does not diminish the impressive scale of natural events in order to fit them tidily into a rational scheme of things; its personification of basic, life-determining forces breaks through the cozy limitations of rational understanding, accepts the testimony of man's senses and seems nearer the natural heart of things:

"Das Rauschen hat in mir nachgerade einen Rausch erzeugt, der Natur und Mythos in eins verbindet, ja ihm zum phantasiengemässen Ausdruck von jener macht."\(^6\)

The author had found the stylised representation of reality which he is seeking, a form which portrays the drama of creation in such a naive, monumental fashion that it transcends the limitations of rational argument.

Hauptmann's attitude towards the mythological view of life is seen most clearly in the remarks which he makes about his

5. Ibid p.70
6. Ibid p.31
visit to Eleusis. The temple there is dedicated to Demeter, the suffering earth goddess, whose eternal lot is to undergo both the sorrows of separation from her daughter Persephone and the joys of reunification. In this imaginative symbol of the ever-changing seasons, "die ewige Trägerin des schmerzhaft süßen Verwandlungswunders"\(^7\), the author sees a parallel with man's existence, itself an eternal mixture of joy and sorrow: birth and death, and he realizes that both gods and men are subject to the dictates of powers beyond their comprehension and control. The polytheism of mythology thus in no way contradicts belief in one all-powerful, invisible arbiter of fate, whether it is represented in the person of

7. Ibid p.59. The figure of Persephone attracts the author not only by her symbolic coincidence with natural phenomena but also because she incorporates the central theme of his view of existence, namely that creation and destruction are intricably linked, new life being always dependent on the death of the old. This theme is central to all primitive religious observances, from which tragedy stems. Geoffrey Brereton (op.cit) traces it back to the ritual of the Corn King, whose annual sacrifice and replacement was meant to propitiate the gods and assure a good harvest. Hauptmann is attracted to this interpretation of tragedy as a propitiatory act, linked with the natural processes of creation, and it is this view which finds exact expression in his experience at Delphi.

Brereton goes on to cite the crucifixion of Our Lord as the supreme development of the ancient Corn King ritual, but here one vital difference emerges. Whereas tragedy is linked to the natural processes of creation, Our Lord's sacrifice transcends these with its promise of redemption on a higher plane. Tragedy, however propitiatory, must be based on the unpredictability of the divine response, having, as Aristotle had said, no contact with feelings of justice or morality. Christ may thus have some of the attributes of the tragic, sacrificial hero, but his sacrifice is a triumph and thus cannot penetrate the world of tragedy. Christian tragedy is in many ways a contradiction in terms and thus, despite his Christian background, Hauptmann must learn to eschew all Christian hope in his 'Tragödie'. Other sections of the late work attempt to envisage a solution to life's conflicts in Christian terms, but the 'Tragödie' are restricted to an evocation of the facts of earthly existence in terms of the author's Greek experience. As such they personify the natural forces at work through mythological deities, whose combat is a powerful, poetic expression of the conflicts inherent not only in human existence, but also in the whole process of creation.
Moira or Kore, the Greek symbol of fate, or by the Judaic and Christian concept of the one, eternal God. The Greek gods are powerful creations of man's imagination, corresponding to the various natural, external forces which determine human life. They too are unable to control their destiny and thus their conflicts and clashes, which impinge on human lives, are completely beyond the power of human understanding and appear gratuitous. Just as we cannot understand why there are plagues or earthquakes at certain times, so we are unable to penetrate the mystery behind the various actions of the gods and can only prepare to minimise the effect of their impact upon our lives. When reason fails, our primitive instinct is to attempt to propitiate the gods in the hope that our destiny may thus escape the extremes of horror and suffering.

At Delphi Hauptmann is led to realise that the ritual of tragedy originally fulfilled this propitiatory role. By representing an undiluted vision of the conflicts of gods and demi-gods and showing how they determine and destroy a human life, tragedy enacts in artistic form the propitiatory human sacrifice of earlier times. The hero replaces the sacrificial victim and the performance of a ritual whereby the gods are shown dictating the destiny of a human individual and claiming his life replaces the actual sacrifice itself. Tragedy is thus a representation of the bloodthirsty resolves of fate, but there is no point in man's questioning these, for they are beyond the comprehension of both men and gods. Where fate decrees a happy life, men can begin to think that they are responsible for their happiness, ignoring the fact that it may be taken from them at any time. Where fate decrees tragedy, man is brought face to face with the realisation that his existence is determined by external forces beyond his control. A dramatic tragedy represents just such a situation: the fictitious victim is

offered in propitiation to the gods and the spectators are
led up to a realisation of fate's power, to "die schaudernde
Anerkennung unabhirbarer Blutbeschlüsse der Schicksalsmächte."9

Life, controlled as it is by the incomprehensible
dictates of invisible powers, may swing at any moment from joy
to grief, from sorrow to happiness. This basic duality of
life is central to Hauptmann's view of existence. In his
mythological representation of reality it finds its expression
in the eternal conflict between the joyful Olympian gods and
their chthonic, underworld counterparts, who are the deter-
mining factors in tragedy. In the Greek's natural, instinctive
approach to life, which joyfully accepts this duality and yet
overcomes it by total commitment, Hauptmann sees a way of life
which is far preferable to that of Christianity, with its
stress on asceticism and renunciation. This approach is
symbolised by the victory of the Olympian gods and the author
experiences its effect most intensely on the Acropolis in
Athens.

Attic clarity and joy, "der Trieb zur Freude"10 as
Hauptmann calls it, banishes the darker side of life without
denying it. Such a joyous, irrational affirmation of life
seems to the author to represent the highest form of existence
possible; it is positive and enthusiastic, accepting life's
mysteries but refusing to be cowed by them. "Hieiterkeit,"11
"Der Ausdruck überschaunnder Lustigkeit,"12 "ein derber,
überschüssiger Lebensmut,"13 many are the author's references
to this full-blooded adoration of existence which is to provide
him with the synthesis of life's duality which he had come to
Greece to find.

"Nicht der Weltweise war der Erschonte oder Willkommene
unter den Menschen jener Zeit .... sondern ersehnt und

9. Ibid p.72
10. Ibid p.49
11. Ibid p.47
12. Ibid p.48
13. Ibid p.48
It is in Athens, in the theatre of Dionysos, that Hauptmann is first led to apply this experience to drama. In the brightness and clarity which prevail there, he comes to appreciate that tragedy and comedy are but different sides of the same coin, neither having anything to do with a weak, sensitive approach to life, but being rather full-blooded expressions of the enigma of existence which demand the strong nerves and joyful pleasure which seem to have disappeared from present-day civilization. This synthesis signals not only the end to his series of passive heroes but it also leads the author to reject the rigid separation of the realms of gods and men and to show them reacting upon each other. Just as the ancient Greek spectators did not separate into opposing compartments their experiences of dream and reality but treated both as manifestations by day and by night of the same existence, so modern drama should also accept the validity of both realms and their interaction. With a setting on the borderline between dream and reality and full-blooded characters who appear almost to rival the forces of nature in intensity, drama should offer a representation of reality which will act as a liberating and rewarding influence on the modern mind.

Yet if this joyful Olympian synthesis provides one of the two sources of artistic tension in the late epics and novels, as Hauptmann struggles to reconcile it with the Christian teaching of salvation through renunciation, it is basically lacking from one aspect of the late work, the 'Tragödie'. They are based on a full, clear, terrifying view of the tragic side of life, unrelieved by any comic counterpart and unresolved by any joyful Olympian victory. They take place under the sway of the powers of the underworld, the earlier Catholicic rivals of the Olympians, and it is at Delphi that Hauptmann experiences the full force

14. Ibid p.71
of their upsurge into the light.

Central to Hauptmann's insight into the nature of tragedy which he achieved at Delphi is the belief that the tragic ritual, like the earlier ritual of human sacrifice of which it is an artistic representation, evokes intense emotion in the spectator. The emotions common to tragedy are those of fear, terror, deadly apprehension, despair and an ecstatic delight in murder and bloodthirsty revenge, which should reach their peak as the victim falls under the avenger's axe, arousing in the audience a feeling of panic-stricken terror. The proper subjects of tragedy, torture, incest, revenge, murder and the extremes of patricide, matricide or fratricide, result from the uncontrolled reign of unbridled passions, enmity, hate or frustrated love. They would, if portrayed in an undiluted form, so terrify the spectators that they would be petrified at the sight, as if they had come face to face with the legendary Medusa's head. Only by a concerted cry for help to the gods can the spell of the tragedy be broken, the appalling tension of horror, fear and terror stilled and the audience saved from collapsing into madness.

"Es kann nicht geleugnet werden, Tragödie heisst: Feindschaft, Verfolgung, Hass und Liebe als Lebenswut! Tragödie heisst: Angst, Not, Gefahr, Pein, Qual, Marter, heisst Tücke, Verbrechen, Niedertracht, heisst Mord, Blutgier, Blutschande, Schlächterei—wobei die Blutschande nur gewaltsam in das Bereich des Grausens gesteigert ist." 15

In this concept of tragedy, instinctive passions are seen to dominate and when they clash, they give rise to a wave of devastation which the Olympian forces of light and joy are completely incapable of stemming. There is thus no Olympian synthesis, none of Yeats' "gaiety transfiguring all that dread". 16 The dread is evoked in monumental proportions and is allowed to

15. Ibid. p.80.
speak for itself, as the sacrificial victim falls prey to destructive forces working both in and around him and the whole bloodbath, along with its human victims, is offered up to the bloodthirsty gods of the underworld in a desperate gesture of propitiation.

Hauptmann links the destructive forces within man to those working outside him in the process of creation itself and thus achieves the transcendental aspect which is a prerequisite of real tragedy. The powers which irrupt into and destroy human lives in a seemingly gratuitous fashion are represented by the chthonic gods, the rulers of the underworld. They are in perpetual conflict with their Olympian rivals and it is their breakthrough into the Olympian world of light and day which constitutes tragedy. Hauptmann expresses it in just those terms; when he compares tragedy to a "Durchbruch der unterirdischen Mächte oder ... Vorstoß dieser Mächte ins Licht." The role of tragedy is not to portray a resolution of life's conflicts but to concentrate on a vivid portrayal of the tragic moments in human existence, the moments when life is dominated by the irruption of uncontrollable, instinctive forces. These are manifestations of the destructive side of creation, of the titanic gods of the underworld whose power the Olympians never manage to overcome completely.

This dominance of the forces of darkness is achieved through the actions of the characters themselves. In the assertion of their individuality, in their devouring urge to wreak revenge and their willingness to commit murder, to spill human blood, they are portrayed as if in a trance, a state of frenzied madness; in this state they lose all humane characteristics, all willingness to compromise; they become a prey to their impassioned instincts, to forces within themselves which they can neither comprehend nor control. Their mind is

dominated by primeval urges, they commit acts of intense, single-minded cruelty and in this way the ephigenic forces which lurk at the deeper level of existence gain a hold over the character which is rarely relinquished until the murderous fury which they have inspired has run its course and the havoc created has led to the destruction of the character himself. Having grown into such a state of mind, Agamemnon may well pray to Artemis at the end of 'Iphigenia in Aulis' that she should spare them and return them to normal humanity after the reign of chaos is over. He is aware of the inhumanity of heroism, but his prayer "zerreisse nicht mit deiner Göttergabe das Gefäss" is not answered, because by accepting the demands of revenge and sacrificing his daughter he has opened himself up to the power of Hekate, goddess of night and death, and once the powers of darkness have made him their prisoner, he will never know the peace and joy of carefree humanity again. Such are the demands of tragedy.

Vital to Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' therefore is the upsurge of destructive forces into life, a basic process of creation, the force and horror of which the author first realised at Delphi. His tragedies shatter the audience with a direct insight into the mystery of existence, in which the ordinary trivialities of life are discarded and the basic impulses which determine human action are portrayed on a monumental scale. The emotions of the audience are built up to a climax of horror and despair from which they can only be released by the fall or death of the hero. This may herald the ending of one particular irruption of the forces of chaos into our lives, but as the underworld gods depart with their prey, the audience is left to meditate on the recurrent danger which their very existence poses to human life. Devoid of the solace of belief in these transcendental forces, the modern mind is left with a powerful poetic vision of the inadequacy of our

18. CA III p.925.
rational defences in certain situations, when they are faced with irrational, uncontrollable impulses. If the immense emotional impact of the *Tragedie* is insufficient, all the spectator has to do is to look around him in modern life and he will see similar manifestations of the irruption of chaos. His rational mind will be unable to produce an interpretation of these which is any more reassuring than Hauptmann's poetic vision of man's tragic domination by powerful natural forces beyond his comprehension.

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19. c.f. I.A.Richards: *Principles of Literary Criticism*. London 1924, reprint 1967 p.193: "It is essential to recognise that in the full tragic experience there is no suppression. The mind does not shy away from anything, it does not protect itself with any illusion, it stands uncomforted, unintimidated, alone and self-reliant. The test of its success is whether it can face what is before it and respond to it without any of the innumerable subterfuges by which it ordinarily dodges the full development of experience. Suppressions and sublimations alike are devices by which we endeavour to avoid issues which might bewilder us. The essence of tragedy is that it forces us to live for a moment without them."
In the years following his Greek journey Hauptmann not only returns to realistic drama, as in "Die Ratten" (1911) but he also attempts to come to terms with his Christian background, as in the novel "Der Bauk in Kristo Emanuel Quent" (1918). The seed sown by his experiences in Greece takes a long time to come to fruition. In the first play written as a direct result of his journey, "Der Dogen des Olympos" (1921) the hero accepts all that life has to offer him and the Greek synthesis of life's conflicts, the Athenian 'Kulturkraft' appears to dominate. Olympos resolves the conflicts which face him and it is only with the proximity of war that the author feels impelled to struggle against himself and to create a 'Tragödie', in which man is shown to be incapable of resolving the conflicts inherent in all existence.

Taking up an idea which had originated in a visit to the Dresden torture chamber in 1899, at the time of his marriage crisis and the failure of "Florian Geyer", he writes "Ragusa Sarbo", which he calls one of the typescripts "die bittereste Tragödie der Menschheit". Set in an

1. of CA VII p.923 where Hauptmann refers to his duty to write the tragedies as "sein Leiden und ... sein Schicksal wie das Tragische,
2. CA IX p.1331.
3. "Ragusa Sarbo", Tragödie, written 1911-13, published Berlin 1912 in "das gesamte Werk" (ausgabe Lötzer Ullard)."
Independent southern German town in the sixteenth century, it shows the demonic spread of religious fanaticism which overcame the town on the arrival of the Inquisition tribunal, against which the mayor, Magnus Carbo, proves powerless. His expectant wife Felicia is branded as a witch on the forced confession of a midwife and dragged off to torture and the stake. The author's feeling of this 'Tragödie' being forced out of him is clearly shown in his comment to C.F.O. Schi: 'Ich hätte das Stück nicht schreiben können, wenn nicht die schwere Krankheit Margaretes und das Kesseltreiben gegen mich wegen des Brosilauer Festspiele vermehrt wären ... In diesem Stück wartet ein tiefer Pessimismus. Heine innere Leidenheit steht auf einem anderen Blatt.' The author's attitude to his 'Tragödie' is thus clearly expressed at the beginning. They deny the possibility of a synthesis to life's problems, and yet he feels obliged to write them. Under the impact of World War Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' begins to crystallise. Kurt Letherer Tank relates how his wife felt unable to listen to a reading of 'Magnus Carbo' to the end because it was too terrible. When he told this to the author, Hauptmann fully understood and explained that he had not allowed his performance because he could not have endured watching it: 'Es wäre mir wohl, wie Ihrer Frau organ, Ich hätte es nicht ansehen können. Aber geschehen geschehen Hieher es um die, und Tragödie ist Tragödie.' Tank goes on to record a later conversation, in which Hauptmann explains that he has always been classed as a compassionate author, yet compassion does not mean weakness and sentimentality, but love. 'Wenn bitte keine Tragödie', he goes on, clearly expressing his humanitarian approach to the genre of tragedy. All his 'Tragödien' are expressions of a wounded love for humanity and it is this

5. Ibid. p. 92
6. K. Letherer: 'Gerhart Hauptmann in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten' January 1959
7. Ibid. p. 133
8. Ibid. p. 223
which gives them their tension, their vitality. The forces which overfill humanity, whether they be the religious fanaticism of 'Magnus Garbe' and 'Iphigenie in Aulis' or the frenzied urge for revenge of 'Verand' and the 'Andernachtstraegie', are always seen as enemies of the human spirit. The depiction of their ravages is forced out of the author by his love for his fellow; a cry of protest at the existence of such destructive forces in life. This first 'Tragödie', in which Magnus Garbe succeeds before the fury of the Inquisition, ushers in a decade, in which Hauptmann's view of life attains a deep pessimism.

In the creation of the primitive forces which are breaking into the life of the town, Hauptmann gives the first clear indication of the way in which his ideas on tragedy are developing. At the beginning there is an unnatural darkness brooding over the town, causing unease in the Garbe household, where the wife is expecting a baby. This theme of an expectant mother, symbolising the anxiety in the situation, is to be a frequent feature in the later 'Tragödien', and here Felicia's unease, at first connected in the audience's minds with her pregnancy only, is seen to have deeper motives as well. The world seems to be in Satan's power; "as helles Tage von Satan verdunkelt", and thus are we introduced to the powers of darkness which are going to sweep all before them as religious fury takes hold of the people. The streets are unsafe, as a mad dog is loose in the town, but this mad dog palces before "den geistlichen Haunmi", the Inquisitor, whose entry into the town the mayor had fought to avoid and whose reign of terror is just beginning. Garbe and Doctor Anselm, when they first appear, refer to themselves as "drei klare Köpfe unter Rosenkranz", and as we learn of the fate of other towns which the Inquisition has visited with its torture and burnings, we begin to realise the town's powerelessness before the wave of.

9. CA II p.1013
10. Ibid. p.1016
11. Ibid. p.1016
Blind fury which these "Canos Domini" are spreading in the name of the true God. Pater Guido Landus the Inquisitor, "dieser Blutsrass, der sich in Blut bemacht, mit den Trieb eines Harunds, dieser Mönch, den das Fieber des Irrsinns in den Augenblenden gibt" has seen profit from the superstitious nature of the town mob, driven to distraction by a combination of drought and plague. They have been cowed into submission by an unnatural flash of lightning over the church where the Inquisition is meeting, lightning which is not followed by thunder or the long-sought-for rain. Religious madness has soon caught fire in the crowd, "er hat in erschrecklicher Weise gesündet. Er hat allen Abglauben, allen Unfug, allen geistigen Abhub, Wegwurf und Schlicht der Stadt in Brand gesetzt." The sight of the first burning has satisfied the mob's appetite for blood; and, having smelt blood, the mob is unrestrainable as a real witch hunt develops. Here in the bloodthirsty rage of the mob, demanding human sacrifice, we have the first case in a Hauptmann 'Tragödie' of the irruption of primitive, murderous rage into human life, an irruption which opens the way for the forces of darkness and death to affirm their control over life and which is to become the central theme of all Hauptmann's 'Tragödien'.

Rational argument is no defence against this satanic force; human sacrifice and the smell of blood let loose basic destructive instincts against which Magnus Carbo himself has no defence. An accusation against Carbo's wife of witchcraft is wrung under duress from one of the Inquisition's victims, the mob storms the house in a mad fury and as the bells ring out, sweeping away all rational resistance, Felicia is dragged off in public to the torture chambers. Despite her desperate shrieks of pain, the mob, sensing blood, yells for her to be stoned. Bell has been let loose within the town vallies.

Here, as in his later works, Hauptmann uses every visible, audible and linguistic device to stress this reign of horror.

12. Ibid p. 1016
13. Ibid p. 1026
which has overwhelmed the town. Furious ringing of the bells accompanies the storming of the Garbo household and the imminent burning at the end. Clouds of flame cover the town and the action is penetrated by wolves' howling, dogs' barking and cats' spitting in order that this realm of hell shall come alive in our imagination. The language is full of references to wild, uncontrollable animals, the monks are God's hounds, martyrs in the dovecoot, wolves in sheep's clothing. Death rides around on a galloping hag. Mad dogs, poisonous flies and adders are referred to and the raven of death circles overhead. Above all we are introduced to the adder's bite as a symbol of man's loss of rational control before the forces of death. Hearing of Policia's fate from a messenger, the faithful gardener Eckart says to Garbo: "In hat einen Biss oder Stich einer Ratt oder giftigen Fliege ins Hirn bekommen," and Garbo himself, in the last scene when he is marked by death can say: "Der Biss einer giftigen Ratt oder läßt mich." This symbol of the bite recurs time and again in the 'Tragödien' to signify a man's succumbing to the irrational power of the forces of death.

It is possible to follow each particular stage by which the forces of darkness gain their hold over the normal, rational world of this medieval town. First the wave of destructive fury penetrates the walls of the town, overcoming Garbo's resistance by invoking papal and imperial decrees. Then it penetrates the walls of the Garbo household through the uncontrollable fanaticism of the mob, and finally it attacks Garbo himself. Aware of the danger which the Inquisition poses for the town, Egonus Garbo has become completely indifferent to this papal plague, in the hour of crisis, when he is most urgently required, being filled with a new fatal dread from which he senses there is no escape. He imagines already, probably under the stress of seeing his wife approach childbirth, that she has been taken from him on a journey "zu sie grausam verlassen über glühende Eisen, durch brochende Wilder schreiten muss." and it is to recover

24. Ibid. p.1043
25. Ibid. p.1072
26. Ibid. p.1084
from this superhuman insight and fear that Garbo leaves the town to seek refuge and composure in his vineyard. This man of iron is already a prey to hell's power; this reason is vulnerable through his wife, and at the time that she is being dragged away screaming to the prison, Garbo, in his vineyard, seems to hear a cry coming from the town, and from that moment on he is powerless, "von allen meinen Kräften verlassen"17. He can still put up a vane of resistance, rationalising that the Inquisition won't dare attack him and that he will drive it out, but a premonition of his wife's fate hangs over him, "ein fürchterlicher Alpdruck eines schweren Traumes"18. When he is finally forced to face up to the situation, the inhuman blow proves too much for his reason to take and he collapses before this inhuman test, his reason too has now succumbed before the powers of darkness which henceforth govern his actions and fate.

In this evocation of the victory of the primitive powers of night and death, "L'agras Carpe' points the way to Hauptmann's later 'Tragödien', but, being the first of them, it is in several ways different, reminding one more of the earlier dramas. Despite their obviously symbolic names, Magnus the great and Felicia the happy, which attempt to point the universal significance of their fall, the Garbés and the other characters all have their due realistic role in the life of the town, whether as mayor, town councillor, gardener or artist, and the whole setting with its precise, realistic stage directions fosters this atmosphere of a normal everyday life such as we can imagine it to have been in medieval times. A certain distance is achieved by the choice of a historical setting, but in comparison with later settings in the universal world of saga and myth, this medieval town renders the tragedy "ideal verknüpft"19, comprehensible to our rational mind. The demonic forces are soon to invade this

17. Ibid p.1040
18. Ibid p.1050
19. A 259 p. 376
normal world from OEDIPUS, increasing their way ever more until they dominate the life of the town. In the later works we are not able to shelter INSIDE and watch the progress of inimical forces: we are exposed to them, unable to find any familiar landmarks with which to shield our conscious mind as we see and feel demonic forces wending up all around and overrunning the tragic characters from without and within. By appealing directly to our senses and attempting with a setting of intense, inexplicable anxiety to circumvent our rational reactions, Hauptmann in his later work tries to force upon our senses a realisation of the power of the grasp which death holds over men, rather than, as here, to present the threat of tragedy in clear, rationally comprehensible terms. The hero who is overtaken by, and succumbs to a fate beyond his deserts, gives way to a hero dominated by primitive urges who, by murderous action, takes his fate into his own hands and thereby opens himself up to the domination of demonic, destructive forces within him, which pursue him to the point of ultimate despair and death. Magnus Carbe, despite his reputation as a strong man, succumbs to his fate, rather than actively bringing it upon himself by some murderous assertion of a passion within him: he is the passive hero, a type who disappears in later 'Tragödie' before the men of action, Sir Archie, Thorgils and Veland.

"Magnus Carbe" is, however, not a realistic drama, but a 'Tragödie'. It is the only 'Tragödie' which retains the prose form of the realistically circumscribed earlier works, yet its setting and the psychological motivation of Carbe's collapse are both given a further dimension which stresses the universal validity of this particular example of the tragedy of life. In this way "Magnus Carbe" can be seen to be a work of transition, heralding the later, irrational world of the 'Tragödie' whilst retaining the realistic accuracy of the early dramas. During the first two acts, the spread of the wave of destructive fury which the Inquisition represents is shown by means of a contrast between the raging forces outside and the secure, rational world.
within, first in Garbo’s house and then in his vineyard. These sanctuaries of calm and reason are represented by the heraldic symbol of Felicia’s family, the golden sphere. The importance of this symbol can be seen in the fact that Hauptmann later thought of changing the title of the play and calling it ‘die goldene Kugel’20. When Garbo’s house is burnt by the mob and the weathervane, the golden sphere, falls, Brother Thomas is jubilant that God has struck it from the rooftops into the dirt beneath. Doktor Anselo and Doktor Wyk both tell of its miserable end in the mid of the streets, cursed and despised by all, whilst Felicia, looking at her prison chains, says: "Seht, aus der goldenen Kugel ist eine aus Eisen geworden, die schlepp ich an Fuss mit!"21. Her closed world of married bliss has proved no more immune to the raging forces which have besieged it than has the golden sphere itself, symbol of that happy life of prosperity which the fury of the Inquisition has finally destroyed. The red ball of fire which rolls along the roof where the Inquisition is sitting has replaced the golden ball of the Assings and the town is exposed to the ravages of religious mania, the rule of unreason.

Garbo and his wife also are both portrayed as larger than life, their individual fates serving as examples of the universal constants of human existence. From the very beginning Felicia is linked in the audience’s mind with the Virgin Mary. She has to rebuke Monica for comparing her to the “Kumesleken-igin”22, but whilst rocking the cradle, she sings of Mary rocking her child and Jan Gossaert, whose portrait of her has the beauty of a madonna, refers to her child as God’s son, “der Mensch von Morgen, der Christ, das Ebenbild Gottes von Morgen.”23 There is in Gossaert’s portrait of Felicia a hint of pain and it soon becomes clear that Felicia’s role is that of mother of sorrows. In her case the pangs of childbirth are

20. Dohl op. cit p. 91
21. GA II p. 106b
22. Ibid p. 1021
23. Ibid p. 1025
increased by her imprisonment and in this way Hauptmann gives a vivid representation of the interdependence of life and death. Felicia's fate is a clear example of the laws of existence, whereby life is only possible in conjunction with death. Carbe also is referred to in biblical terms as Sassen, the strong man whose only weak point lies in his love for his wife. At first he rejects the vague fears and premonitions for his wife's safety, secure in his happiness with Felicia which he would not change for the garden of Eden. But, when the news of his wife's fate is gradually broken to him in his vineyard, he is unable to withstand the shock and collapse. His rational approach to life has proved inadequate. His sorrow reveals to him the tragic depths of existence, life's dependence on death, and this insight can only be borne in a state of dream-like trance. In the third act the stage directions refer to him as a broken man, but he himself explains with far greater profundity the change which has taken place within him: "Klingend zerbröckerte da etwas und zerriß wie eine zu scharf gespannte Bogensohne im mir ... in es ganz zu verstehen, ganz zu erfassen, ganz errossen und erdulden zu können, musste ich sterben und dann langsam von Stufe zu Stufe in mein unermessliches Elend hinabwachsen." 24 In his painful insight into the mystery of existence, Carbe clearly differs from the earlier tragic heroes, for when a glimpse of this insight always proved unbearable.

The third act, which originated in a dramatic sketch 'Die Auferstehung der totgeglaubten Felicia', written in the year 1910, 25 illustrates clearly the author's change of style from earlier works. In it the forces of darkness prevail. Carbe has been claimed by death and has acquired a new level of consciousness beyond rational understanding. The audience is here given a foretaste of the existence in death's gaze, of the more intense life, which is to be the lot of all Hauptmann's future tragic heroes. In this world, dream and reality fuse

24. Ibid p.1067
in men's minds and our rational sense can no longer distinguish between them. Felicia, driven distraught by torture, is delirious, mixing denials of witchcraft and prayers with visions of her torture, which she confuses in her mind with the pains of childbirth. The setting in the prison, despite the realism of the decor, helps to evoke this realm of death and Felicia appears from her cell, torn by torture yet radiant, as if climbing up out of the grave. Captive already in deepest night, she is even unable to bear the feeble light of the candle with which the room is lit. Even more striking is the grip which death now holds over Carbe whose spirit and last rational resistance were broken in the vineyard, when he heard of Felicia's fate. Anselo can say of him: "Ihm sind Seele und Leib von Entsetzen gelähmt geblichen"26, yet he has grown into his grief and appears fully as a character who is now alive only in the mere intense existence in closer proximity to death. In his despair he has found new strength with which to face his situation. He has attained the more primordial realm of existence of the real tragic hero, which draws its strength and intensity from darkness and death. Thus he says to Anselo: "So tief könnt ihr nicht blicken, bis ich vorende."27 Death's victory is complete as, in his liebested with his delirious wife, the final blasphemous challenge is wrung from his despair with his cry: "Es ist kein Gott, es ist nur der Teufel."28

Here, as in the later 'Tragedie', hope is not absolutely lost. The young baby has been saved and transported out of reach of the Inquisition and one of the executioner's assistants bets that Carbe and his wife are now in heaven. Yet, with the appearance of one of the monks at the end, one of the wolves in sheep's clothing, the sincerity of the religious imagery which has punctuated the play is brought into question. With

26. Ca. 11 p. 1060
27. Ibid p. 1063
28. Ibid p. 1072
one of the fanatical monks shouting God’s praise and telling the bell furiously, Satan’s victory is rung in, whilst Sarbe’s desperate last challenge acts as the final testimony to the powers of darkness and their hold over men’s lives. The forces of night have penetrated the walls of reason and destroyed the safe world inside. Hauptmann’s new direction has begun.
CHAPTER THREE

'Winterballade'

With Hauptmann's next two 'Tragödien', 'Winterballade', and 'Grönlandstragödie', written during the First World War, the first full realisation of his tragic vision is attained.

Both are set in a bleak, icy wilderness, shrouded in almost perpetual darkness. This setting is far removed from the recognisable world of everyday reality, even the fanatical medieval reality of 'Magnus Garbe', and in such a precarious existence man is exposed to the violence of the elements. Natural forces appear to rule his life. Face to face with the unknown, fear is his predominant emotion.

Before such extremity man's reason loses control and the maelstrom of wind and snow merely mirrors an equally overwhelming upsurge of uninhibited human emotions and desires. Man becomes 'dehumanised', basic urges take over, despair, fear, lust, hatred and revenge break out, undiluted by any rational control and man is seen to live on a level dominated by the elemental forces of the universe.

Here is the full-blooded existence which Hauptmann sees as a prerequisite for genuine tragedy. Life is lived in the

1. 'Winterballade', begun in Italy in 1912, finished early in 1916, published Berlin 1917; first performance in Berlin on 17th October 1917.

presence of the gods. The whole atmosphere is dominated by the forces of night and death, who determine the tragedy. Against these dark forces only superhuman will-power can survive for any length of time, as the curse brought on by uninhibited, inhuman violence works itself out. Even then, it is death in one of its many forms that triumphs and the audience, bereft of any of reason's comforting shields, must gaze with horror at the primitive power, the dominance over human life of such primeval forces. Unease is inescapable, "das Antlitz der Medusa" is seen and the violence and directness of such a vision forces home Hauptmann's view of the basic tragedy of human existence.

'Winterballade', a dramatic ballad in verse form, was inspired by the short story 'Herr Arne's Hoard' of the Swedish writer Selma Lagerlöf. It's story of a brutal murder in the midst of an icy Swedish winter and of the revenge which the dead gain over the murderers fitted ideally Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie'.

The drama follows the story in showing how three Scottish mercenaries, marauding the countryside whilst awaiting the thaw which will allow them to return from Sweden to Scotland, rob Pastor Arne, a ninety-year-old priest, and slaughter him along with his wife and daughter Berghild in order that there should be no witnesses to their deed. Only the adopted daughter Elsalil escapes this holocaust. Eschewing Lagerlöf's direct intervention of the supernatural in the person of Berghild's ghost, the banality of which has been shown by A. Jolivet, Hauptmann prefers to stress the power of elemental forces by showing the hold which they gain over one human life. One of the murderers, Sir Archie, falls into their power as he is gradually forced to succumb to visions of his dead victim Berghild, to deny the call of life and finally to yield himself up to death's grasp. The precarious existence in a wilderness of ice and snow also...

3. 'Herr Arne's penningar' Stockholm 1904 (tr. A.G. Chater: Herr Arne's Hoard 1923)
represents vividly before our eyes man's exposure to forces beyond his rational control. Basic urges are seen to determine man's fate which unfolds under the aegis of the forces of darkness. We can agree with Wolfram Mauser that the vital dramatic conflict does not stem from the opposition of two people but from man's relationship with deeper, inexplicable forces. Such is the "Tragik bei voller Existenz" which the author requires of 'Tragödie'. The ballad form, avoiding a sharp division into acts, allows Hauptmann to evoke this existence in full, epic vein, as the drama of the irruption of primeval forces leads to inevitable tragedy in the death of Sir Archie:

"Nie ist genug geschehen, solange nicht unschuldiges Blut durch Mörderblut gesühnt ist."7

The priest's son Arnesohn's words before the tribunal mirror the basic motivation of the 'Tragödie' in which murder and revenge are inextricably interwoven, but it is the inevitable vengeance of the forces of death which overtakes Sir Archie, not any human revenge, however avidly Arnesohn may pursue this.

Before one word is spoken an atmosphere of unease and menace is evoked for both eye and ear. As the curtains open, a world of frozen desolation appears, an isolated Swedish farm in the midst of a snowy wilderness at dead of night. The silence is penetrated by the sound of dogs barking, hardly a comforting sound in such circumstances but rather the eerie symbol of the powers of darkness which rule over this precarious isolated existence. With the very first words, a question, man is seen to be at a loss before such extremity:

"Was soll man tun? Das ist 'ne Not, wahrhaftig."8

To exemplify man's exposure in the face of so precarious a life, Hauptmann introduces, as in 'Magnus Garbo', the plight of a mother having to face childbirth. Man's helplessness is stressed as we see Frederick, the father, being prevented by

6. 'Kunst des Dramas' p.163
7. CA II p.1108
8. Ibid p.1079
the elements from getting to a midwife in time for her to be able to help his wife. In this timeless wilderness man is perpetually at the mercy of natural forces surrounding him and his reaction is one of fear and confusion. "Was ist es, das so zischt?" asks Torarin, hearing the sound of the mercenaries sharpening their knives, and such pleas for understanding are continually repeated throughout the play. Sir Archie is entirely at a loss when seeing Missalil shouting for help at the murder, whilst Arnesohn is reduced at the end to continual questioning. From the first sentence quoted above to the last "Wo ist mein Feind?" the play is dominated by man's questioning as he tries to come to terms with his menacing surroundings. It is hardly surprising in such a predicament that man's pride in rational thought should yield before more basic human emotions which can be controlled more easily in our own well-shielded existence.

Behind all the fear and uneasiness lies the icy grip of the elements. Easter is past and May is at hand, but the ice is still unbroken and winter will not relent. The ships are held fast by the ice and thus the mercenaries are left to find what they can in these snowy wastes and many have succumbed to drink and debauchery. Not only are the icy wastes thus indirectly responsible for the mercenaries' attack on the Solberga vicarage, but we see from Torarin's testimony before the court that it was the elements which prevented him reaching the vicarage as usual and warning Pfarrer Arne of the danger from the mercenaries. Once again the elements seem to have intervened, just as when they prevented Frederick from finding a midwife to tend to his wife in childbirth.

The beautiful calm of Lagerlöf's icy setting is too comforting for Hauptmann, who sets the whole tragedy in black,

9. Ibid p. 1081
wintry night, where the weak half-light of the moon is the only light until the sulphurous dawn of the last scene. Unnerved by this unnatural penetration of winter's icy grip into the middle of spring, one of the mercenaries, Sir Douglas, asks:

"Wann ist in diesem Lande Tag, Sir Archie?" 10

In this upturned nature of things, chaos threatens, dream and reality fuse and reason quickly turns to madness. At such a level the sound of dogs barking and of the sea roaring under the ice can reach terrifying proportions. The hiss of the mercenaries' grinding of their knives can certainly be explained away but its first effect in this snowy waste is spine-chilling and Thorarinn's reaction that it is the old serpent hissing in paradise rings truer than any later rational explanation. In such circumstances the wild, drunken appearance of the mercenaries and their mad game of leapfrog strike fear in all around. Thorarinn's reaction: "Hier tut Warnung not" 11 sets the atmosphere in which other signs now begin to take on an ominous note. At the vicarage reason finally has to yield when old Arne's wife, who is almost deaf, clearly hears the knives being sharpened two miles away. In this irrational situation all are gripped by fear and none can find a rational explanation why the old lady's hearing should suddenly become so acute:

"Vernunft
hat nichts zu tun mit solchen Dingen, ...
Doch überlief's mich kalt, ich sag' es frei." 12

The appearance of the murderers and the murder itself seem to justify such irrational, ominous interpretations of experience and ensure that we judge Sir Archie's subsequent fate at a deeper level than that of mere reason. To suggest, with Sylvia Cyrus 13, that the fear experienced at Solberga is but an

10. Ibid p.1141
11. Ibid p.1087
12. Ibid p.1094
epidemic of hysteria, common in places where the population lives in isolated communities or hold to mediaeval beliefs, is merely to label the situation without explaining it. Such an interpretation fails to sense the whole atmosphere of the work of art and entirely misses the exposure to penetration by primordial forces, which Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' portray as the basic characteristic of human existence. The fear engendered by exposure to inexplicable situations of extreme menace, such as that portrayed here, cannot be argued away with comforting rational explanations. Hauptmann is presenting this level of existence to us as a deeper, more vital one than the comfortable, easily comprehended, limited world of rational experience, in which we deliberately turn our gaze from the depths of instinct beneath.

In the face of such peril, man is helpless; we are in the realm of Satan:

"Der Teufel selber steht am Schleifstein: wild
fahren die bösen Sterne durch die Nacht." 14
"Solang das Korn nicht spriesst, ist Satan mächtig." 15

Just as the sea is surging underneath the crust of ice, so the chthonic powers are threatening chaos in this primeval night. Men lose rational control and are dominated by demonic powers. The mercenaries, who have succumbed to their greed and lust for money, sink to a primitive level of existence, a full-blooded world of elemental passion in which, all inhibitions gone, they are at the mercy of their instincts. They are messengers from the deep, "schwarze Bestien des Abgrunds" 16. It is continually stressed that there are three of them and this figure three comes to be seen as a magic "unholy" number, a symbol of the dominance of Satan. Pfarrer Arne refers to the mercenaries as

14. CA II p.1161
15. Ibid p. 1082
16. Ibid p. 1106
an infernal Trinity and even the sentences are built round a threefold structure. Arne asks the mercenaries:

"Seid ihr Schotten? Seid ihr Männer? Seid ihr Menschen?" 17

whilst Sir Douglas evokes the eternal tragedy of existence in similar groups of double repetitions:

"Ein blutender Scherenschleifer, Herrgott, Astronom
am Kreuz, am Schleifstein, an der Wirtshausstreppe
bittet um Gnade, Essigschwamm und Leinwand." 18

Sir Archie thrice tells Berghild "Du darfst nicht leben." 19

and at the end it is with a triple rejection of life that he finally succumbs to death. The animal-like level of existence of these messengers of evil is brought out, as in 'Magnus Gerbe', by perpetual comparisons with the animal world. Sir Douglas stresses the mercenaries’ inhumanity by saying: "Ein Hai im Sund hat uns gelaucht" 20 and against such demonic inhumanity Pastor Arne's reasonable good nature has no power, rendering him speechless until, suddenly gaining a horrified insight into the danger of the situation, he too loses control in a sudden outbreak of madness and precipitates the bloody holocaust.

In the horrific murder-scene, the importance of which is pointed by the earlier title of the play 'Blut', we see for the first time in Hauptmann's work a full portrayal of his realisation that "Tragödie heisst Schlächterei". 21 Eschewing the milder form of reported action, Hauptmann forces the audience to watch as Sir Douglas goes on and on stabbing the ninety-year-old priest in the back, whilst Berghild's death is heightened by Sir Archie's reluctance to kill her. When he bows to necessity, it is his protective embrace which turns into a murderous clutch in which the petrified girl is stabbed to death. Murderous inhumanity is thus seen to lie at the heart of tragedy:

"Die Tat ist furchtbar! Über alles Mass entmenschelt und furchtbar!" 22

17. Ibid p. 1101
18. Ibid p. 1084
19. Ibid p. 1105
20. Ibid p. 1084
21. CA VII p. 80
22. CA II p. 1106
Such a horrific, direct view of violence, signal of the irruption into life of the powers of darkness, penetrates into the senses far beyond reason's reach. The consequences of murder and bloodshed, which are the essence of tragedy, are now seen, as the powers of death strike deep into Sir Archie and gain a hold over him from which he cannot escape. His action has drained him of human control and Berghild can drag him down with her, irreversibly, to the underworld. Marked by this climactic experience, he is lost to the real world, the world of the living, and he can only ask in confusion:

"Wo bin ich hier?

He undergoes a blood wedding with his dead love, and, aware that the powers of darkness will not rest until the wedding is sealed by his blood, he breaks down and thirsts for death. From now on this deeper level of experience controls Sir Archie despite his superficial, rational attempts to escape it. He is now in death's power and the 'Tragödie' concentrates on his duel with death, in which the underworld forces take their inevitable revenge.

Sir Archie is the first of Hauptmann's major tragic heroes. His murderous action has marked him out as death's victim and he now exists in a trance-like state, in which reason has little power. Whereas Magnus Garbe was only brought to this state in the last act of the author's first 'Tragödie', Sir Archie's deeper reality forms the main subject matter of 'Winterballade'.

23. Ibid. p. 1105
His exposure to the tragic processes of creation foreshadows that of Thorgils, of Veland and of Iphigenie. The hold which death gains through murder and bloodshed over specific individuals can thus be seen to be one of the major ways in which Hauptmann portrays man's helplessness before the tragic processes of creation. It is one of the main factors in his concept of 'Tragödie'.

The marriage to his dead bride has become the vital reality to Sir Archie, the level of existence which controls his instinctive reactions. When he meets Elsalil again, her resemblance to her half-sister so confuses him that he takes her for Berghild. Dream and the outer world of appearances are no longer distinct in Sir Archie's mind and he becomes continually subject to his visions. At times Sir Archie rationally appreciates his situation and wishes to recover his zest for life. He even implores Elsalil to go with him to Scotland and make him believe she is Berghild, whilst his rational wish to return to the light of day drives him to accept the other mercenaries' challenge to exorcise his visions. In a final effort of will aimed at regaining his former carefree-ness, he murders Elsalil whom he suspects of betraying him to Arnesohn. Murder however is one of death's weapons and not a method of avoiding death's grip. This new murder does not rescue Sir Archie from his visions. It does not allow him to deny his past. Instead it expands his visions of the dead as Elsalil joins Berghild in her pursuit of him. Sir Archie cannot escape this pursuit and his earlier realisation of his powerlessness before the forces of death is confirmed. His visions now tighten their grip on his mind. He is no longer in control of his destiny, the reins have fallen from his grasp and he must now face incipient madness:

"Und dennoch gibt es keine Rettung, ich
bin toll! bin toll! bin toll! Bin toll!"24

Sir Archie knows that he cannot escape from Berghild's kisses, symbols of death's hold over him. He refers to death's grip as

the otter's bite, and when Elsalil bites him to prevent him leaving her, the bite simply awakens his desire for oblivion. Once again his passionate love is tragically linked with his death-wish. After his murder of Elsalil this bite becomes for Sir Archie the "Wutbiss einer toten Hündin" and he constantly throws stones at the vision of Elsalil which is pursuing him as he tries to escape its clutches. But at such a primitive level Sir Archie is powerless against the predominance of his visions and the deeper, instinctive motive for his murder of Elsalil is seen, fitting in with his marriage with death earlier:

"Tot! Was man liebt, muss tot sein: tot! tot! tot!" Sir Archie admits death's hold over him to his vision of Berghild:

"Ja, ich bin tot, obgleich ich lebe, wie du lebst, obgleich du tot bist!"

Death's grip on Sir Archie is clearly seen in the last scene when, with the sun rising, Sir Archie still thinks that all is dark around him and the others can only marvel:

"wie er mitten im Lichte nach dem Lichtehungert."

The merrymaking of his Scottish companions seems to him but a shield to cover up their deeper griefs and, having joined in to no avail, he stands motionless as they dance off laughing. Still a prey to his inner visions, cast out from the light, he can only reply to the other lords' plea that he should accompany them with an awe-inspiring refusal which signals death's final revenge over him. He collapses and dies. The forces of death have finally enveloped him, his marriage with death is consummated. In a setting penetrated by irrational powers, where seagulls carry the souls of dead fishermen away, we have seen the

25. Ibid p.1170
26. Ibid p.1170
27. Ibid p.1129
28. Ibid p.1172
primeval powers of darkness determining human life. The corpses have bitten: their revenge is complete and the 'Tragodie' is over.

This dominant emotion of revenge is embodied also in two other characters, the lone survivor of the murder, Elsalil, and Hauptmann's own creation, Pastor Arne's son Arnesohn. Dramatically Elsalil's only importance lies in her effect on Sir Archie, due to her resemblance to Berghild, yet she too is penetrated by elemental forces and the judge's explanation of her state after the murder, that the horror which she has witnessed has turned her mind, hardly suffices to explain her ghostlike appearance or her apparent perpetual searching for something. It is Sir Archie whom she is seeking out of a combination of love and revenge and this pursuit, combined with the visions of Berghild, is the very strongest of death's holds over Sir Archie. He realises the dual nature of Elsalil's love, rooted as it is in the dark side of life, as he tells her:

"Sieh, du liebst mich
mit wilder Glut, und doch nicht minder heiss
sinnst du auf Rache." 29

With her love Elsalil is in fact exacting vengeance and forcing Sir Archie ever more firmly to a full acceptance of his Liebestod and to his final terrible denial of the forces of light and day. Even love is thus not impervious to death's power.

The apparent dramatic opponent of Sir Archie is Arnesohn who appears almost as a personification of revenge. After the murder his whole personality is taken up with the duty to avenge his father. From being a rather weak, vague copy of his father, he turns into a forceful character who is consumed by the desire for revenge and pursues it unceasingly:

"Das alte Führingsblut; Blutrache fordernd,
steht in mir auf; das stärker ist als ich." 30

Arnesohn is thus seen to be controlled by something outside himself and when at the end he has to admit that the Allmighty

29. Ibid p.1129
30. Ibid p.1164
has taken revenge into his own hands, he is still pursued by the need for personal revenge. Yet Arnesohn's revenge is pursued with purely rational means which are powerless in the maelstrom of irrational forces which are determining Sir Archie's fate. Seeing the murder as a plan of Satan's to bring disrepute on his family, Arnesohn believes that God will not allow this but he admits to having no rational defence against the possibility that God will not react before such horror. In such a case he too would be overwhelmed and become a wolf among wolves. Shielding his gaze from the dangerous world of unrestrained passion, he shuts himself off from real understanding for fear of being unable to cope rationally with the unknown. He is thus led to distrust his senses, saying:

"Hätt' ich Vertraun zu ihnen, war' ich längst, glaub mir, im Tollhaus."\(^{31}\)

At the end he can only watch uncomprehending as the primitive forces which he denies manipulate Sir Archie's fate. The real conflict thus by-passes Arnesohn, concentrated as it is in the inner development of Sir Archie.

Arnesohn's view of his enemy at the end as "ein Überwinder ....ein Entschüchter"\(^{32}\) given stress by its final position, lifts the gloom of the 'Tragödie' slightly and allows hope to prevail, but one must remember that Arnesohn has continually denied the power of the demonic forces and such a charitable explanation tells us more about Arnesohn, who has after all now lost his main raison d'être, his desire for revenge, than it does about Sir Archie. Cast out from the light, Sir Archie rejects the call of life and the powers of darkness finally engulf the murderer as he sinks into the abyss to which his bloody deed has led him. The whole 'Tragödie' consists of man's powerlessness when confronted by the incomprehensible dictates of dark, demonic powers. To misinterpret Sir Archie's suffering after the murder as the

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31. Ibid p. 1136
32. Ibid p. 1176
path which he treads to final salvation is to ignore the irreversible grip which death has gained over his life. Sir Archie's final rejection of life confirms death's revenge for the horrific murder which he has committed. The otter-bite of death and the visions of Berghild leave Sir Archie with no other way but to accept the sacrifice of his life, so that the irruption of the darker powers into life may be terminated. With this penitential sacrifice Hauptmann shows how completely 'Tragödie' is anchored in an underworld where instinctive forces reign supreme. In this icy wilderness shrouded in night, no rational explanation can blot out our grasp of the power of the darker side of creation, a power which is the essence, the tragedy of 'Winterballade'.
CHAPTER FOUR

'Grönlandstragödie'

The extensive fragment 'Grönlandstragödie' dates from 1917-8, although it has only recently become available. Written in iambic trimeters, the standard verse of Greek tragedy, it seems to suggest that the author is beginning to link his concept of 'Tragödie', as it was developing in his nordic plays, with its origins in his Greek experience at Delphi.

The fragment is set in the semi-mythical world of the Norse sagas, being inspired by a section of the story of the 'Leute aus Floi' in the Greenland sagas. In the saga, Kol, brother-in-law of the hero, Thorgils, son of Thord, attempts to protect his sister Gadrin by killing her suitor Sörli. He then begs Thorgils' protection to save himself from the wrath of Sörli's kinsmen. The whole family and their servants, accompanied by Kol's foster parents Jostein and Thorgerd and their people, set out to sail to Greenland, the Vikings' new el dorado. Pursued by the wrath of the god Thor, who is angry with Thorgils as a result of his conversion to Christianity, they are shipwrecked and have to spend two years in a hut on the ice. Whilst Jostein

1. See Note 2 to Chapter Three.

and his family get rowdier and succumb first to madness and
then to the plague, Thorgils orders his family to stay calm and
god-fearing. His wife Thorey bears him a son, Thorfinn, but
her sister Gudrun dies and has to be buried under Thorgils' bed.
After the death of Jostein and his family ghosts gain the upper
hand until Thorgils buries the corpses. Thorey meanwhile is a
prey to visions of beautiful lands and men in white and one day,
on a return from a scouting expedition, Thorgils finds her
stabbed to death and the servants fled with all their belongings.
Thorgils himself must now suckle the child, on blood, but
despair lifts when a bear is killed and those remaining
eventually succeed in reaching Greenland.

It is the precarious existence of the shipwrecked men on
the ice which draws Hauptmann to the sagas as a basis for a
'Tragödie'. Here, in such a primitive, elementary existence,
where men live in constant contact with danger and death, is
an ideal setting for a Hauptmann 'Tragödie'. Living in
excessive privation, unable to distinguish clearly between
illusion and reality, men are stripped bare of inhibitions.
Reactions are not hidden by civilised masks and clashes are
violent. Hauptmann sets his 'Tragödie' on the ice, at the
point where calm, rational control is breaking down and the full
horror of the setting in darkest night can be evoked. From the

3. C.F.W. Behl (op.cit p.158) records the following conversation
with Hauptmann: "Ich brachte heute das Gespräch auf die
'Grönländstragödie', von der zwei Akte vorliegen und deren
Nichtvollendung Hauptmann sehr bedauert. Aus den alten Sagen,
meinte er, liese sich überhaupt noch viel Dramatisches
gewinnen. Tief erregend sei diese ungeheure, leidenschaftliche,
immer bedrohte und in der Gefahr lebende elementare Existenz
der Nordlandmenschen, die in ständiger, nur von kurzen Schlaf
unterbrochener Abwehr lebten. Sie konnten den Traum vom wachen
Leben noch nicht scheiden, die Toten lebten mit ihnen, und
deshalb traten sie gegen Spukgestalten wie gegen wirkliche
 Wesen zum Kampfe an. Erst spät müssen diese Menschen das
Unwirkliche, Spiegelspiele des Traum- und Spuklebens erkannt
haben. So gebiert sich eine ganze Kette von dramatischen
Motiven aus den alten Sagas."
saga he then extracts the quartet Thorey, Thorgils, Gudrun and Kol and uses their incestuous relationship to link the various incidents of the saga. Sörli's murder, Gudrun's death and finally Thorey's murder form a chain of violence and revenge which leads deeper into the abyss of tragedy. Thor's curse, called upon the family by Sörli's murder, works itself out, as despair at the perilous situation of the expedition turns inevitably to hatred and bloodshed. Tragedy is once more seen to be determined by the spilling of blood, an action which attracts the powers of darkness into the light. Men are powerless before such an irruption of the underworld forces, whose dominance over men is seen in the control which they exert over men's basic urges. The 'Tragödie' unfolds until all is engulfed in absolute despair, as the forces of night and death prevail. Epic narrative is replaced by a dramatic conflict of violent passion which develops with remorseless inevitability until death finally triumphs. Man's reason is insufficient to understand his exposure to uninhibited passion, which engulfs him. All man can do is to attempt to fathom out his situation, a role which once again, as in 'Winterballade' is symbolised by his perpetual, unanswered plea for understanding: "Warum?"

From the very beginning the black, icy wastes dominate this small group of humans huddled into a small hut in the midst of a snowy wilderness,

"in Nacht und Eis, am äden Strand
vergessen und begraben lebend in der Welt."^5

It is dangerous to take more than three steps from the hut as beyond that certain doom lies waiting for its victims and the menfolk, who have to go out hunting for food, marvel, at their return, on ever having found the hut again. The sea and the ice have already claimed seventeen victims and the proximity

4. Hauptmann seems undecided between the names Kol and Thrand for Gudrun's brother. Thrand's story in the original saga is similar to Kol's, but it is Thorgils who actually murders Thrand's sister's suitor. It was perhaps in order to emphasize Thorgils' role in their incestuous relationship that Hauptmann considered substituting Thrand for Kol.

5. CA VIII p. 1063
of the elements is shown with striking force at one point when a snow-storm blows in the door of the hut. This danger and deprivation is evoked dramatically through the fear and despair of the characters, whose continual, puzzled questioning testifies to their feeling at a loss in such a predicament.

Thorey is pregnant and, faced with the prospect of childbirth in such extremity, her feelings can no longer be rationally contained and she verges on madness the whole time. The sheer desperation of human feelings faced with such a precarious existence is stressed in the dilemma of a mother with child and her confusion is mirrored by her continual desperate questioning of the motives for the voyage which she had opposed all along. Now she must accept her horrific situation and give birth in such extremity. As in 'Magnus Garbe' and 'Winterballade' the desperate situation of a woman forced to give birth in agonising pain seems to gather in one moment of intense suffering the whole tragic process of life, in which birth and death are inextricably linked. Thorey has been impervious to Thorgils' manly courage all along and when he is not at her side comforting and protecting her, she becomes a prey to fantastic fears and hallucinations. She imagines that the sound of her brother's step outside, as he guards the hut, is that of a mad dog scratching to get in and she thinks her son clambering onto her breast is a toad. Even stranger is her vision of death within, her passionate fear of their companions who live in the other half of the hut. She sees death lurking behind the partition, ready to stab them dead, and we also learn of her inexplicable hallucination that Jostein had in fact stabbed her to death the previous night. So sure is she of this that she is prepared to show Gudrun the wound, lest her sister's doubts drive her to utter madness, but when she tries to do so, the effort is too much and she loses consciousness.

Just as overwhelming as the fear engendered by the ice and its dangers is the feeling of being engulfed in an eternal night. Thorey feels that this load of darkness is squashing
This yearning for the light is responsible for the dreams of Wahlengland; the sought-for land of milk and honey, where light and sun abound. Such dreams acquire a reality of their own in the near madness caused by proximity to death. Such a paroxysm of unhappiness overcomes one of the servants Ossur, who has hallucinations of sun and blue sea, in which dolphins are playing and boats sailing. This delirious dream is pervaded by light and warmth but, in their situation, to so lose grasp of reality is dangerous, as Thorgils' return to open doors and a near-extinct fire proves. In such an atmosphere where dream and reality seem indistinguishable and darkness prevails, the spirits of the dead whether of the murdered Sörlí or the drowned Leif, are just as much at home as the living themselves. Kol thus has to spend most of his time defending his dead sister Gudrun against the ghost of her suitor Sörlí and for him no other existence is important:

"die Finsternis, die Gudruns schlang, ist jetzt das Licht."  

We are here dealing with a level of existence beyond the reach of reason. In people at the end of their tether, it seems normal that such instinctive forces should come to the surface. To show the force of these urges which deprivation has forced man to face without inhibition, Hauptmann introduces a creation of his own, the servant Gipar. In the face of imminent death, with all his inhibitions gone, he tries to seduce the fourteen-year-old girl Aslaug in the icy wilderness outside. Although we can see, with Thorgils, that such yielding to instinctive urges is the greatest threat to their continued existence, Gipar, in murderous, unreasoning fury is unrepentant and Aslaug has to be

6. Ibid p. 1075
7. Ibid p. 1092
shielded from him. Despair, fear, lust, these are the forces which defy reason. The incipient madness of Thor's fears and Iel's visions of Sörl's ghost may seem inexplicable in comfortable, rational terms as a natural reaction to the privations of life on the ice, but such psychological explanations founder on the precise details of Thor's pronouncement of her murder by Jostein. They also distort the whole sense of life's dependence on primordial forces which Hauptmann demands of his 'Tragedien'.

These late plays suggest a further dimension beyond psychological realism, in which man's life is seen to be one aspect of the essentially tragic processes of creation itself.

The predicament in which the Icelanders find themselves is presented to us in the very first lines of the play as being the result of Thor's curse which is pursuing the expedition:

"Scheue ruht auf uns der Fluch des armenen Gottes, Guðrun, das ist's, und darum leiden wir selbe Not." 9

But it is only when Jostein and his family are driven to desperate straits by cold and starvation and give voice to their fearful suspicions of Iel and Guðrun that we learn the reason for Thor's curse. Ingerid, Jostein's wife, has been made distraught by the loss of her three sons drowned in the icy waste and she relates how the ghost of Sörl had explained to them that the motive for Iel's murder of Sörl was jealousy of his sister's suitor, based on his own incestuous relationship with her. Iel's possessive protection of his sister is thus given a further motivation than brotherly love and the whole tragic expedition is seen to have been conditioned by incestuous passion and horrific murder, examples of man's succumbing to the basic urges within him which call forth an irruption of the forces of

9. CA VIII p. 1063

darkness into human life. All such irruptions lead to tragedy and this occurs here as Thor's curse and Sörli's revenge pursue the luckless expedition into this icy night, where corpses and ghosts are just as redoubtable as living men. In this icy wilderness Kol and Gudrun may be safe from the revenge of the living but, as in 'Winterballade', the revenge of the dead is not to be defeated so easily. Ghosts thrive in the perpetual darkness in which the expedition is engulfed. Kol has wrestled with Sörli's ghost outside in the snowstorm and has throttled him but Gudrun can still feel Sörli's desire for her. He continues to pursue her, like a wolf on her trail, and she knows that only with her death can the chain of revenge be broken.

Jostein sees Kol and Gudrun's flight from the revenge of Sörli's kinsmen as the sole, accursed reason for the expedition but he is unaware of Thorgils' own reason for the journey, namely his own love for Gudrun:

"Dir eine Welt zu schenken, die von Milch und Wein
und König trieft im ew'gen Glanz des Himmelslichts
nur darum setzt' ich meinen Fuss auf Schiffes Bord."

Faced with Gudrun's imminent death, Thorgils nearly succumbs to his basic emotion as Kol had done earlier when murdering Sörli, but Gudrun pleads with him to avoid such an upsurge of emotion, to stay clear-headed, as he alone can do. Even Thorgils however, who can shut his heart to fear, is a prey to the deeper feelings within himself and his love surges forth unrestrained, with all the power of sexual desire:

"Schenk mir den Wahnsinn deiner blonden Hüften, du einzige, der ich nachtrachte."

When Gudrun dies Thorgils breaks into a paroxysm of despair at his helplessness. That such an apparently rational man can so lose control of his senses is a shattering realisation and we feel the aptness of Gudrun's explanation of the curse, when she explains the journey as a flight for each and every one of them from the consequences of their own passions:

10. Ibid p. 1079
11. Ibid p. 1080
"Wir alle fliehen vor uns selber." 12

The servants too are driven by desperation at their plight to find some explanation and they succumb to their belief that it is the god's curse on Kol which is preventing their escape from deprivation. They attempt to murder the whole of Thorgils' family and their murderous attack is fused with their yearning for light when they all burst out in a mad paroxysm of despair:

"Entreiss ihm doch das Licht, oder hat das Licht, Licht!" 13

Gudrun's death is the first proof of the power of the forces of darkness, as Sörli gains his revenge despite Kol's and Thorgils' efforts to prevent this. Neither Gudrun's own Christian cross which has the power to calm her passionate nature nor Thorgils' Odin's chain can save her from death. Sörli's ghost is at this point synonymous with death as he stands there breathing plague over her before giving her the bite of death. With the cry: "or boest mir in die Gurgel," 14 Gudrun dies and once more, as in 'Winterballade', the bite is introduced to signify death's power and revenge. Kol's desperate attempts to hold back Sörli's pursuit of Gudrun have been in vain. No defence was really possible, as Sörli had the goddess of death, Hel herself, on his side:

"Er hat die bleue Hel
auf seiner Seite, und in seinem Vorsatz hezet
ihn keine Weite, keine Wege, kein Gebirg" 15

More than Thor or Odin, it is Hel who prevails in this icy waste, a northern Hekate in whose darkness the Icelanders are trapped. Thorgils can say of the drowned Leif:

"Hel hat ihm ins Gesicht geblickt und ihn
geszeichnet." 16

but it is Kol's retort that it is all of them that Kol has

12. Ibid p. 1078
13. Ibid p. 1101
15. Ibid p. 1079
16. Ibid p. 1077
designated as victims which seems nearer the mark. Hel’s
temptations are manifold, including the urge for uninhibited
passion and the hallucinatory illusion of well-being; both of
which sensations take over from reason when man is in close
proximity to death. Most impressive of all however is Hel’s
power over the man who is in control of his emotions and it is
in Hel’s triumph over Thorgils that death’s revenge is complete.

On Thorgils’ first entry he is described as a courageous
man who is master of the situation. For his wife he brings
security and hope into the hell which surrounds her. He is still
able to distinguish clearly between illusion and reality,
separating precisely the realms of the living and the dead. This
ability not to be overawed by the proximity of death leads him to
claim immunity from Hel’s powers as a descendent of Odin, but
his Odin’s chain proves powerless to prevent Gudrun’s death.
This event acts as a catalyst which looses all Thorgils’ repressed
love for Gudrun. It is only on hearing the cry of his new-born
son that he returns to his senses, after very nearly succumbing
to total despair. The loss of Gudrun, although nearly overcoming
Thorgils, forces him to steel himself against his emotions and
gain a superhuman control over them. This is the Thorgils who
can now face up to any eventualities. He celebrates the birth
of his son Thorfinn by cutting his own breast and suckling the
child on blood and he justifies the expedition in terms which
challenge the gods themselves:

"Der Mannes echte Weide heißt Gefahr und Not.
Gefahr und Not sind erste Brücken nach Walhall.
Es schreitet kühn in Dunkelheit, vor Licht begehrt;
denn alles wirkt das Dunkel, selbst das Licht und selbst
die Götter. Jedes Wunder hilft sie ein und schockt
es dem nur, der sich nicht im Dunkel fürchtet. Nur
der Nachtgewaltige ist an Kraft den Göttern gleich."

17. Ibid. p.1104 and 1107.
In this challenging, demi-god attitude born of despair Thorgils is reminiscent of Hauptmann's next tragic hero, Veland the smith. Here, as in the later work, the superhuman character sees himself as God's equal, but rejected, pursued by God's blind hatred:

"Unfug, Gewalt, die ich erlitt, sie kommt von Gott." 18

This belief of Thorgils in his own strength, although full of hope, is but another illusion, as Jostein had earlier pointed out. Jostein can only see ice and death in this eternal night, he attributes the change of air to the smell of corpses and his reference to Thorgils as a cripple seems very much to prefigure the later work, in which Veland has actually been maimed. In Thorgils' case it is Hel who has penetrated his determination, which is only held together by the vision of Gudrun who, having reached a new life in death, is beckoning them on through their icy hell. Thorgils' love, with its belief in immortality and its challenge to the gods, is thus seen to be another of the dreams of wish-fulfilment which precede death, as it centres on a person already dead. So it turns out in the fragmentary scenario to act three as Hel finally exerts her dominion over the expedition and engulfs it in murder and ultimate despair. As foreseen in Thorey's dream, Jostein murders her and goes off with all the belongings. On Thorgils' return he tries to organise departure for those remaining, but Kol will not leave without Gudrun. In an effort to exorcise Gudrun's spell over Kol, Thorgils stabs the bed and earth where she is buried with his sword, only to cause a blue flame to appear. As the colour blue has been associated throughout with Hel, one can only presume that she is here once more exerting her power. Thus, despite Thorgils' defiant suckling of Thorfinn, death's revenge on him and on his family is completed as everything sinks into final despair. The curse has pursued the expedition into death's grasp, into "eine andere Finsternis, viel schwarzer als die erste, schwarz wie Grabensnacht." 19

Thorgils' visions of immortality are dissipated as the deeper

18. Ibid p. 1105
19. Ibid p. 1084
darkness of death which Gudrun saw before her envelops the whole expedition and consummates the 'Tragödie'.

This total triumph of primeval forces seems to be modified somewhat in the short 1914 addition to the fragment. The play still remains "unterm Blicke Hels" and ghosts still have as much reality as the living, but the forces of light and darkness seem slightly more evenly balanced. Ultimate despair, which threatens as Jostein and his people go off with the belongings, seems to yield to hope when Thorgils provides food by catching a bear. Above all, all reference to Thorey's murder is dropped, including her irrational premonition of it in Act 1. The superhuman, Promethean courage of Thorgils in Act 2, when he compares himself to the gods, is rejected in favour of his developing, under continuous familiarity with despair, a complete resignation to the infinite possibilities for good and bad of life on the ice:

"Fasst neuen Mut!
Das Weltmeer unter uns ist aller Tücken voll
und aller Launen: gurgelnd schlingt's uns ein
zu ewiger Nacht und wirft uns, gutgelaunt,
auf Felder wilder Ähren, goldnen Weizens aus,
schenkt uns zur Nahrung reichlich Wild und Frucht."  

Thorgils may here be expressing Hauptmann's belief in the essential duality of creation, based as it is on a continual battle between the forces of creation and those of destruction. Any escape from Hel's dominion would thus be only temporary, conditional, the light being but the reverse side of the coin, which can turn back into darkness at any time. This courageous resistance, based on the resigned belief that total victory is impossible, seems to be a kind of human equivalent to the superhuman challenge to the gods of the earlier parts. In this final fragment death's power is not diminished but man, in full awareness of the tragedy of existence, battles on, refusing to

20. Ibid p. 1114
21. Ibid p. 1114
release all hope of a promised land.

Yet, in all Hauptmann's 'Tragödien', this ray of hope never succeeds in precluding the catastrophe. The scenario does end with the words "allerletzte tiefste Verzweiflung"22 and thus we must presume that Thorgils' challenge to the gods, like that of Veland, is but the product of despair, a final proof that all life is subject to death's power. 'Grönlandstragödie' can thus be interpreted as a clear, striking illustration of the basic tragedy of existence. The expedition's precarious existence on the ice shows us human beings struggling to survive. Gone are the rational shields with which in everyday life we hide the instinctive depths within us. Life is reduced to its bare essentials and in the fight for survival man is shown to be continually exposed to and dependent on the forces of destruction and death. Once murder and bloodshed expose man to Hel's power, his reason is seen to be helpless as basic urges take over and overwhelm his resistance. Tragedy is then inevitable and it unfolds inexorably until death's triumph is complete.
CHAPTER XVI

'Voland'

The climax to Hauptmann's "extended inner process of crystallisation", the decade in which his first 'Tragödien' appear, is reached with the completion of 'Voland' in 1923. The myth of Voland the smith and his devouring hatred for the king who has had him crippled and reduced to servitude had occupied the author's thoughts intently for the years following his marriage crisis in the 1890s. That period was the first in which the author allowed his thoughts on life to take a fully pessimistic direction. Talking of the eternal battle between light and darkness which his work portrays, he accepted that the destructive side of life was beginning to dominate: "Auch muss die Dunkelheit eindecasie in der Gegenwart über das Licht siegen." Both 'Voland' and 'Maugers Garbe' originated in ideas formed during that period of extreme pessimism, yet whereas all that remains of the original theme from which 'Maugers Garbe' developed is a note in Hauptmann's diary of 1896, extensive early fragments of 'Voland' survive. The play is therefore a key work in any understanding of

2. H.-H. Helmes op.cit. p.65
6. Archive typescripts, A 255-62, referred to below by their number only.
Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie', as it allows us to see which of its elements date from before the Greek journey.

The early sketches follow the original myth in the 'Volundarvida' and establish the essential theme of the play, the unfolding of Voland's revenge. Voland has not only been crippled, he has also lost his freedom and thus all possibility of ever finding his lost love again. Frustration, longing for lost happiness, and rage at his impotence combine to cause him to brood darkly on both vengeance and flight and finally to execute cruel, merciless revenge on his tormentor. The murder of the King's son and the seduction of his daughter are seen by Voland to offer him a road out of despair; they are "der Bordschlag des Hasses, der Entschluss bringt." F.A. Voigt has explained how Hauptmann conceived the play as a drama of revenge in the style of the ancient Greeks and how, influenced by Aeschylus' 'Prometheus Bound' and Sophocles' 'Philoctetes', he intended it to rival them in emotive force. The fragments clearly demonstrate Hauptmann's intention, portraying Voland's urge for revenge as an all-consuming passion which dominates his whole personality:

"mir aber swingt str(odd) auf ein durchbar Wort, des Rache heisst, und doch: nie hat ein Trunk mich so ergüht als meinen trocknen Geist, dieses Wort, indes ein hollisch Feuer mich durchsprengt der Hass!" 10

Several of the themes of the later 'Tragödie' are already apparent in these early sketches. Voland's overpowering urge for revenge is shown to be the destructive side of his capacity for love, an passion which has been frustrated and turned to hate.

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7. A 259. p.23
8. p.72
9. Ibid p.88
10. A 259. p.40

F. A. Voigt op. cit.
"Die Furchtbarkeit der Liebe in ihrer starken Form
dem, der sie nicht erwidert. Ihr Umschlagen in Hass." 11

Man's nature is seen to be a fusion of two opposing forces: "Zwei Worte: Liebe und Hass! und eine Glut!" 12 and this inherent duality is shown to mirror a basic conflict within creation. It is Veland's understanding of the tragic nature of existence, his ability to withstand this insight and survive, which most clearly links him to the later tragic heroes:

Veland empfindet sich schmerzlich, empfindet sich durch die Erscheinungen gejagt. Hört die disharmonischen und unharmonischen Schreie der Opfertiere und des Nordes al Qual, muss aber selbst werden, wird, wie gesagt, gejagt wie Zagreis, wird zerrissen von den Titanen (Sinnlichkeit, Leidenschaften etc.) ist zu furchtbarem Hellsachen verurteilt (Mantik), bedauert das Leben, das er zeugen muss mit Bathilda im voraus." 13

As in the 'Tragödien' man's own tragedy is seen here to be but one part of a general tragedy of creation and the mythical, divine protagonists in the 'Tragödien' are already linked here with the basic urges which play upon men's minds. This stress on the duality of creation will be seen again in Prospero's central monologue in 'Indipochdi' and also in Veland's opening speech in the final version of the play:

"Verdammte Schöpfung, bist du immer noch ringsum bewegt von deines Erbfuches ungebrochener Kraft.

Und du, du Erde, wäster Schauplatz einer Wut, die sich in Zeugung spaltet und Vernichtung!" 14

In Veland's case the realisation of life's tragedy forces him to revolt. Faced with God's impotence before the natural processes of creation, he likens the world to God's prison, in

11. Ibid p.36
12. Ibid p.19
13. Ibid p.94
14. CA III p.21
which he too can rival God. Yet he cannot escape his part in
the eternal process and whilst avenging himself on the king
by killing his son and seducing his daughter, he is also
condemned to prolong the king's line through the child when
he conceived with Bathild:

"In Lustwad hat Veland sich gerächt und befreit, aber
nur um den unsterblichen König im Ahr wieder zu
sehen." 15

It is impossible to tell from the fragments whether
Hauptmann planned a tragic ending for Veland himself in the
early work, as the repeated stress on his escape by flight
tends to deny this. That, however, is clear is that these
fragments offer a clear illustration of the author's concept of
'Urthema', his view of existence as a battleground between
creative and destructive forces. This concept can be seen to
lie behind all the author's work, both early and late. The
fragments also establish the idea that Hauptmann's 'Tragödie'
should break free from the realistic settings of the early work.
'Florian Geyer' is referred to as "Vergangen und lokal
verknüpft", whilst 'Veland' is to be "ewig und zeitlos". 16
What is lacking is a form in which these striking examples of
men's tragic existence can find vivid dramatic expression.
Hauptmann's Greek journey provides the author with the stimulus
which will lead to such a form and when he returns to 'Veland'
in 1916, he rethinks it on new lines: 'Veland auf neue Basis
wie anders alles ringent.' 17 As a result the setting of the
smith's revenge, its climax and consequences are changed and
rendered so vivid that they represent, in its most intense
form, the concept of 'Tragödie' which the author had developed
in the years following his journey to Greece.

In the setting of the "Glocke und gummelademen Velanda-
holm" 18 it is night and darkness which prevail. Veland;

15. A 259 no number
16. ibid. p. 27b
17. ibid. Sept.1916
18. GA 111 p.22
introduced as the son of night, unfolds his murderous plans, his "grauenvolle Nachtgeburt" in pitch darkness. As Bödwild enters the cave, the reign of night and horror is ushered in with Veland's words:

"Der Sonne Glutball ist hinabgetaucht
schauerdvnd vor meinen Werk, das diese Nacht enthüllen muss.
Fort, feiger Gott, denn deines Lichts bedarf es nicht."  

The cave is to live up to its name as Satan's smithy. With Bödwild's entry into it, the last of Harald's children is now in Veland's power and the scene is set for his revenge. The hellish background of the plan is seen not only in the murky darkness but also in the uncanny way in which all of the children somehow seem to be driven towards their doom.

Darkness is not the only sign of death's sway. In Act I, Harald tells us that a large black bird flew croaking over his palace and that since then its shadow has never left him. Before the seduction scene Bödwild expresses her inability to escape in a vision of a black ship similar to the one which, in the 'Atridentetralogie', spirits Iphigenie away to her living death on Tauris. Inevitably images of graves occur, but there is also the image of the hell-hound which has now been set loose. Sounds of dogs barking are to be heard throughout the 'Tragödien' when death is shown to be present. In this case Veland realises the enormity of his action in setting the hound loose, an action which has committed him irrevocably to his murderous instincts until death has got its victim:

"Schon band ich los den Hölkenhund,
und er er ganz nicht seinen blut'gen Frass verzehrt,
zwingt ihn an seine Kette wiederum kein Gott."  

Nowhere is the irrevocability of death's grasp over hero and victim so clearly stated as in this image.

19. Ibid p.7
20. Ibid p.31
21. Ibid p.59
In this realm of death and decay it is difficult to distinguish between dream and reality. Words like "Höllenspuk" abound, yet the interaction of dream and reality seems to have deeper roots than mere magic or wordplay. Böövild tries not to succumb to the dream, but she has to admit that she has dreamt it before, exactly as it is happening. It has haunted her ever since Veland took her on his knees as a child and she yelled to be let free. Whatever attraction her Velandstræm may have for Böövild, she is powerless in its spell.

This use of the dream, suggesting as it does some mysterious inner compulsion behind Böövild's visit to Velandsholm, immediately adds a deeper level to their relationship, going far beyond the original source in the "Volundarkvida" and the early fragments. In this Böövild falls prey to Veland through the spell of a magic ring. In the 'Tragödie' Hauptmann renders this motive in more modern form by suggesting a child-like curiosity on Böövild's part to see Veland's jewels, but it is not on this level but rather on that of the dream that we interpret her feeling of compulsion to visit Velandsholm. A motive is thus suggested in the later version beyond the limits of rational comprehension.

The whole of Act 3 takes place in an atmosphere which borders on the irrational. Elemental passions dominate—cruelty, remorse, revenge and frustrated love. In Veland's underground cave instincts are no longer controlled by reason and where they clash, suffering reaches unbearable intensity. Veland himself has become hardened to such pain but the King and his followers, the victims of the Smith's revenge, are unable to cope with a situation beyond their experience in which their senses are completely at a loss. As a result everything seems to them to happen as if in a dream. They fear the onset of madness and this is typified in Gunnar's cry to Veland:

"Facht uns alle Wahnsinn aus!"

Bist du der Traum, der aus den tiefsten Schlamm der Nacht in gift'gen Bläsen quillt und, trächtig jeder Qual
sich steckend,innigst, nordenauf den Menschen wirft." 22

22. ibid. p.90
The climax of this nightmare is the marriage feast which exists in none of the earlier fragments. In the original fragments the eyes of the murdered princes are sent as jewels to the Queen, their teeth as a necklace to Bödwild and their skulls as drinking cups to the King. The 'Tragödie' retains the idea of the skulls as drinking cups but Hauptmann requires of his 'Tragödie' a vivid, direct expression of revenge. Veland is thus made to confront the King and his retinue directly. They are offered cups of wine which turn out to be the skulls of the princes filled with their blood and Bödwild appears naked before them, acting as Veland's slave and serving the guests with apples which turn out to be the princes' quivering hearts. The princes also appear, in a pale, phosphorescent light, their skulls cut by two rings around the neck and above the ears, from which blood flows freely. The air is filled with an irrational cacophony of howls from the depths of the cave, which strikes despair into all who hear it:

"Wer dies vornahm, kann nie sich mehr des Lichtes freun."23

Harald is finally overwhelmed by all the horror. As Veland had previously said, the King is only used to happy dreams, and so he turns to flee, uttering the same heart-rending plea for light that was heard in "Grönländstragödie".

"Fort. Geht mir Licht! Licht! Luft!"24

Veland's cave is however the realm of darkness and no escape is possible. The cry for light is man's last desperate entreaty to the forces of life before he succumbs to ultimate despair. Harald and his friends are unable to withstand the long-drawn-out torture of Veland's revenge, their senses are petrified and they can only lock on as the marriage between Veland and Bödwild is consummated. Veland says contemptuously of Harald:

"Das Grau zerriss die Blutgefässe deines Hims
Für meine Rache, zeig's sich, bist du viel zu klein."25

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23. Ibid p. 64
24. Ibid p. 93
25. Ibid p. 93
This peak of cruelty, the most intense of any Hauptmann 'Tragódie', is the nearest that the author gets to the undiluted portrayal of tragedy which he had visualised at Delphi when he said that to be exposed to the full force of tragedy was as if one had been forced to look at Medusa's head and had been petrified in the attempt. With his lashing of Veland Harald had delivered the smith up to his instinctive urges and the revenge which this monster achieves is so extreme that ordinary mortals' senses cannot come to terms with it and they are overwhelmed.

The power of the forces of darkness is also seen in the fate of Veland himself. He was once a human being but constant brooding over his revenge has turned him into an animal, for whom only basic passions have any meaning. Eaten up by fury and desire for revenge, "Jagdwill, Gier nach Blut und Mordlust';26, he casts reflection aside and takes his fate into his own hands. His whole life becomes devoted to his revenge and as he prepares its climax, he admits:

"Nun aber kocht der Rache Abgrund wiederum in mir,
Und nicht mehr heiss! ich Veland, bin nicht Veland mehr,
nicht Leib, nicht Seele mehr: nur Rache bin ich noch."27

Steeled by suffering he no longer allows life to dictate to him. Terrible in his destructiveness, he carries his devouring fury through to its logical conclusion. Devoting himself to his revenge, he not only looses the forces of hell but also becomes their instrument, leading his victims into the abyss of horror which he has prepared for them. To kill Harald would be too little revenge. Only by slow torture can Veland repay Harald as cruelly as he himself has been treated and he is intent that Harald should know this and suffer:

"geile Inbrunst girrt
nach Harter, Folter, Sündenbrand und Pein für dich.
Längst hätt' ich dich getötet, wäre nicht ein Tod
zu wenig für das Arge, was du mir getan,
verwaiste nicht mit deinem Tode meine Wut."28

26. Ibid p. 75
27. Ibid p. 75
28. Ibid p. 75
Yet the upsurge of the forces of darkness, called forth by Veland's murderous intent and portrayed directly in the marriage feast, brings tragedy not only for Harald but also for Veland. The smith may have developed into a merciless beast bent on destroying its prey, but he is still subject to some human feelings. His destructive urge is bound up with his love for Herwarthe Alluaice, a love which is frustrated by his reduction to servitude. That Veland's cruelty is an instinctive reaction to the harshness of his fate and the isolation of his imprisonment where he can chew over his resentment is seen when his murderous intent is almost stilled by the kindly trustfulness of the two princes. He has to reopen his wound in order that the pain may remind him of his task and rekindle his revenge. Here, as in the love scene with Sævald, the presence of love and the presence of Herwarthe fuse into one for Veland and he has to force himself to give up his dream of Herwarthe for the moment so that he can complete his revenge. The revenge must come first but we see plainly that it is the escape from his imprisonment, the freedom to follow Herwarthe, which Veland is seeking to achieve with his revenge.

"Sævald. Der lange Flügel spreizen deutlich schon
an künstlichen Gestishe meiner blutigen List,
und bald entheben Diesenschwingen sich davon
ihn, der Vermissten, nach sie kann mir nicht entgehen."

This wish for reconciliation, the positive side of Veland, is personified by a character not found in the original myth, the shepherd Ketill. This saviour-like figure appears whenever Veland's murderous frenzy and lust for revenge threaten to prove unbearable even for him. Yet Veland denies Ketill and the forces of light which he represents, claiming that his strength comes from his revenge. This rejection of Ketill shows how firmly the smith has fallen victim to the forces of destruction, to "des Tötungs ungebrochenes Kraft". In taking upon himself the bloody deed of murder he has opened himself

29. Ibid p. 55
30. Ibid p. 21
up to domination by the powers of night, from whose grip there is no escape. After achieving his revenge Veland comes to realise that he has cut himself off from all possibility of love, that he has lost forever for ever. In his revenge he has soiled himself and must now bear the consequences, unworthy of his love:

"Nie kehrt zurück, die einstmal mein Hals umschlang, und käme sie, was könnt' ich tun in meiner Schmach?"32

Veland's esopausal of the urge for revenge has allowed the demonic forces of destruction to possess him and he has thus cut himself off for ever from the redemptive power of love. His dream of escape from servitude is shattered, but this latest blow, far from breaking him, strengthens his resolve. He scorns Allvater's mercy, for, by allowing this to happen, Allvater has proved as powerless as Veland before the incomprehensible forces of fate which rule existence and determine its balance between creation and destruction. In a defiant gesture of rebellion he challenges Allvater and flies off into the void, leaving Nordvik to bear their son who may some day rescue the world from the drudgery and servitude of "Allvater's falschen Tag."32. The consolations of religion are illusory, they are hypocritical, fetters which prevent men from facing up to the tragedy of creation. To break through these fetters is to rival the gods, but the vision which one attains demands nerves of steel, as men is seen to be dependent on natural forces. His only alternative to death is to accept proudly this dependence and set off into the unknown.

Veland's defiant rebellion marks an important development in Hauptmann's concept of the tragic hero. In all his 'Tragödien' the upsurge of demonic forces is partly shown by the hold which they gain over the hero but previously the hero has always finally been broken by the insight into death's power which he has gained. Even Sir Archie is unable to escape from his blood-vow with Borghild and has finally to reject life. In 'Veland' the character whose senses are paralysed in the king,

31. Ibid p. 87
32. Ibid p. 102
whose original cruelty to Voland was the cause of the smith's devouring frenzy of revenge. The defiant acceptance of life lived in death's realm is first suggested in "Grönländsstragödie" where Thorgils feels able to challenge God and assert man's equality with him. Yet that play remains unfinished and the fragments of 1910 tend to suggest that Thorgils' defiance is in vain, as the forces of darkness sweep everything into destruction. It is thus left to Voland to personify man's defiant resolve to accept the tragic dominance of the powers of darkness and to face up to such an exposed existence without succumbing to the comforts of religion. Ordinary mortals are shielded either by faith or by reason from exposure to the horrors of life, except when the powers of darkness invade human existence and shatter such shields of comfort, but it is possible for men with supersensitive resolve to shake off their fetters and face existence cut off from human weakness, god-like and alone. Such is Voland's fate as he flies off on his wings of fire into the void, "wo die Nacht am tiefesten ist." He has opened himself up to dominance by the destructive side of his nature and has cut himself off from all human emotion, his revenge makes of him a violent instrument of the powers of darkness and at the end it is they who claim their own.

33. ibid. p. 100
From 'Veland' to the 'Atridentetologie.'

The inner conflict which is apparent in 'Veland', the duality of love and hate, creation and destruction, which Hauptmann sees at the heart of all existence, occupies the author's mind following his Greek journey. It is resolved harmoniously in only one work, the dramatic poem 'Indischli,' which the author was to regard as a kind of literary testament. Once again in this play, inspired by Shakespeare's 'The Tempest,' the curse of creation provides the basis of the action in a world which God has created and then forgotten. Veland's "verdammte Schöpfung" cry is mirrored here in Prospero's central monologue which is yet another poetic evocation of the unresolved drama of existence:

"Furchtbare Schöpfung, Daseinszweckende, das an das ewige Vorgehen sich ewig verschwendet!" 3

Orsino, Prospero's son, rebels against his father but is captured and Prospero is faced with the necessity of executing his son. No clearer example could be found of the curse of

1. 'Indischli', Dramatisches Gedicht, Berlin 1921.
2. Kunst des Dramas p. 112. In his speech 'Dank an das Schicksal' 17 November 1922, Hauptmann says, "Zum letzten Male bin ich in einer Dichtung, die 'Indischli' heisst, gesagt aus der Welt gegangen; als Testament wollte ich sie zurücklassen."
3. CA II p. 1309
creation, where new life depends on death and murder of the old, but Prospero rejects life on these terms. Instead of sacrificing his son, he renounces life himself and by this gesture of self-sacrifice he not only frees Ormann from the power of his violent passions but also releases himself from the curse of creation. Prospero realises and accepts the possibility of self-sacrifice, an act which Hauptmann calls "die einzige freiwillige Handlung, die den Menschen offensteht". So therefore renounces life and forgives his son's rebellion. This transforms and liberates Ormann, purifying him from the perverting forces of destruction within him.

Behind Prospero's resolution of the conflicting demands of creation lies a clear portrayal of the tragedy which is at the heart of all human existence and which is responsible for forcing such a choice on men. This is so clearly understood by Prospero that Hauptmann later said of "Indischii": "Ich hätte die Dichtung schlechthin Tragödie nennen sollen. Es ist die tiefste und schmerzlichere Tragödie alles Menschlichen. dieser Weg in die Einsamkeit und das Licht". Even here death is seen to claim a victim before new life can flourish. Nevertheless the conflict is resolved in 'Indischii' in favour of the power of human love. Prospero freely sacrifices his own life to save his son. The redemption which Veland seeks is here as the experience of paternal love frees Ormann from the creature's instinctive rebellion against its creator. Prospero refuses to take the bloody deed upon himself and thus he avoids the inevitable catastrophe which Veland's action sets in motion. All must die, but whereas Veland and Sir Archie follow the murderous instincts within them, thereby setting loose the chain of events which leads to their own disintegration with the inevitability of tragedy, Prospero surmounts the destructive life urge and thwarts the primitive forces of destruction within him. He disappears into the void calmly resigned to

4. Schöf op.cit p.85
5. Ibid p.216
his fate whilst the tragic characters who can only follow
their passions and instinctive desires fall into the power of
the forces of darkness, lose their integrity of being and
fend the road to ultimate despair. Sir Archie's collapse and
Voland's rebellion are both the expressions of despair of men
in death's grasp, for when there is no escape from the forces
of destruction.

Prospero achieves a kind of inner harmony which enables
him to realise the cruel nature of creation and yet not be
overcome by the destructive forces within him. He thus never
commits the murderous actions which would deliver him up to
his violent instincts and, at the end, as he faces the void,
it is not in defiant rebellion, like Voland, but in calm
expectation of reconciliation and peace. The world which
surrounds Prospero is no less dominated by the forces of dark-
ness than that of Volandehoin, yet the forces of destruction
do not succeed in overcoming Prospero. The wise old magician
is able to resist such forces and remain beyond their reach.
then finally he lays down his magician's mantle and prepares
to leave this existence, rather than sacrifice his son, he has
attained an equanimity of the spirit which allows him to
envisage death calmly, even to welcome it:

"Und es dringt
wie leise Sphärenlänge auf mich ein.
vom Stern der Liebe. Rah ist die Versöhnung!
O, meine Priesterin, nimm weg die Welt
und scheue mir das Nichts, das mir gebührt!"

Such a resolution of the discords of existence represents an
ideal attitude to life which Hauptmann appears to have aspired
to all his life, as it appears again in his last novel 'Der
neue Christophorus' in the figure of the Bergpater. 'Indipachi'
is thus not a 'Tragödie' in Hauptmann's sense of the term.
It is "ein dramatisches Gedicht" in which Hauptmann presents
to us, in the figure of Prospero, an attitude to life which

6. CA 11 p.2437
faces up to the tragic processes of creation and through an inner harmony of spirit manages to surmount them and approach death with resignation. Such an ideal resolution of the conflicts of existence requires the vision and inner exposure of Prospero and as such it has no place in the author's concept of 'Tragödie', which portrays the victory of the destructive side of life.

Behind both 'Indischl' and 'Volcan' lies the vision of creation as a perpetual conflict between the powers of light and darkness. Both are set in worlds where the upsurge of instinctive forces threatens to overwhelm rational life and where human life is shown to be dominated by the impulses of fear, hatred, revenge and murder. In 'Volcan' the hero succumbs to these destructive passions and tragedy ensues, but in 'Indischl' these base instincts are overcome. These two plays represent diametrically opposed resolutions of the conflict within man's mind, but, faced with the all-pervasive influence of the forces of chaos in modern life, Hauptmann finds it more and more difficult to accept that any man can stay immune, like Prospero, to the influence of the powers of darkness. The author must now come to terms with his tragic view of existence which has been gaining in power ever since Hauptmann first realised at Delphi the full force of its consequences.

Over the next decade Hauptmann writes no further 'Tragöden'. The richness of his creative mind allows him to turn to various other genres and with 'Dorothea Angermann' (1925) and 'Ver Sonnenuntergang' (1932) he even returns to the realistic form of drama which had preceded the 'Tragöden'. Despite this variety one thread is clearly visible when one tries to trace his ideas on tragedy: his attempts to find a convincing expression of the basically tragic conflicts of
existence lead him to become preoccupied with the figure of Shakespeare's Hamlet. He adapts the Elizabethan play twice, writes an essay on the subject, creates an original play 'Hamlet in Wittenberg', dealing with the years in Hamlet's life before the tragedy and assembles all his ideas on the play in a novel 'Im Wirbel der Berufung', where the action centres on the preparations for a performance of the play. In the adaptations Hauptmann replaces Shakespeare's hesitant hero with a more active, forceful character, who is intent upon avenging his father's murder. In order to make this credible, he makes Hamlet the leader of the uprising against Claudius instead of Laertes. Yet when the young prince is faced with an Ophelia whose grief at her father's death has robbed her of her senses, he is overcome and cannot execute his bloody deed. So stricken is he at the consequences of his actions that he prepares to renounce his revenge and escape from Helsingör. Despite his love for Ophelia and despite having tried to renounce his revenge, Hamlet, unlike Prospero, cannot escape from the forces of darkness. Fate has decreed otherwise, the forces of death are too strong and he is drawn into the murderous trap set by Laertes and the King, in which he not only executes his revenge but also perishes in the attempt.

Hauptmann's two adaptations are thus based, like his own 'Tragödie' on the quest of an active hero for revenge, but it is not until 'Im Wirbel der Berufung' that the author finally achieves an interpretation of the Hamlet theme, where Hamlet's urge for revenge is represented in terms which stress its underworld origins and link it to the whole drama of existence. The author acknowledges the similarity between 'Hamlet' and Aeschylus' 'Choephoroe' as dramas of revenge, yet the most important aspect of the author's interpretation is his linking of the play 'Hamlet' to the primitive Greek concept of the cult of

7. cf. Fiedler op.cit p.45 - the first adaptation was for performance at Dresden, the second for publication, Weimar 1929.
8. Kunst des Dramas pp.63-81. 1927
9. 'Hamlet in Wittenberg', Schauspiel, Berlin 1935
10. 'Im Wirbel der Berufung', Roman, Berlin 1936.
the dead. The ghost of a murdered hero has the power, like the underworld gods when it serves, to irrupt into human life, demanding that its death be avenged. It has the rank of these gods and can only be assuaged with blood. If it is not satisfied in its demand for revenge, it is liable to turn in fury and destroy everything, its own kin and its enemies, in a frenzy of frustrated hatred. The projected human executor of its revenge may thus become not only its instrument but also its sacrificial victim.

"Die Seele eines grossen Toten muss, besonders wenn dieser durch Mord oder Neuchelmord uns Leben gekommen ist, versoehnt werden, da sein Zorn und die Nacht, ihm durchaussetzen, sonst verheerend sind .......

... der Heros wird, wenn unbefriedigt, zu einem grässlichen furchtharen, unversoehlichen, rache-glühenden Geist, der Gut und Böse, Schuld und Unschuld in wahllosen Raserei vernichtet...

It is clear that the ghost of Hamlet's father has just such a role in the play, as it activates Hamlet's urge for vengeance, and the underworld is thus seen to become the prime mover in the play. Hauptmann has found a form of tragedy which not only centres on an upsurge of underworld forces into life, but also remains true to tragedy's original role as that of a sacrificial ritual. The author sees no chance coincidence in the fact that Hamlet wears black; such was the colour not only of the sacrificial animals but also of the priests who slaughtered them and thus appeased the shades of the heroes with their blood.

This chthonic interpretation of 'Hamlet' demonstrates the author's preoccupation with dramatic portrayal of the tragic side of life. Gone are Velani's dreams of Horváth and Prospero's inner harmony. The influence of Kottul, the saviour shepherd, has also disappeared and man is shown helplessly exposed to the force of instinctive urges. The author's interest in the power of the dead over the living is seen in his attempt to take up again in 1938 his unfinished drama 'Lykophron', where the

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11. CA V p.122
12. 'Lykophron' 1906/1938 CA IX pp. 644-671
hero's belligerency when faced with the challenge of revenge closely resembles that of Hamlet. Lykosphron, son of Periander, King of Corinth, learns from his grandfather that his father was responsible for his beloved mother's death, but the young prince is completely unable to face up to the horror which this news inspires in him. In the early fragments he, like Hamlet, simulates madness in order to survive. He absolutely refuses his father's repeated offers of love and flees the palace to live an anonymous life amongst the lowest of the King's subjects. When Hauptmann returns to the theme he is less interested in the shattering impact which the blow has on the young prince than in the power which the dead queen Helen (Lyksa) still exerts over both father and son. He accuses in these violent emotions of love, hatred, jealousy and remorse, more intense than any of the emotions which she had commanded during her lifetime. Periander's madness becomes finally apparent when he resolves to a mass murder of all his lovers in honour of his dead wife, in an attempt to appease her spirit by such sacrifice. Once again the dead are shown revenging themselves and claiming as victims not only their murderers but also the sea who does not avenge them. The dead queen's hold over Periander and Lykosphron can only be broken when they fall victim to the instinctive urges which she incites in them.

Preoccupation with the power of the underworld also leads Hauptmann to return in the same year to his unfinished 'Demeter-
Hysterien'13. Ever since his experience at Munich, the figures of Demeter and her daughter Persephone or Kore have attracted the
author, but their importance for us lies in Persephone's
description to her mother of the realm of the underworld, whose
prisoners she now is. Two vital factors emerge. Firstly, the
undertakings powers are the custodians of Helen's head, able to
game on it without being shattered at the sight. Only they can
take face up to a full insight into the tragic conflicts of

13. 'Hysterien'. Hysterien-Lichtung, 1935-7/1944. VI. VIII
pp. 1115-1277.
existence. Secondly their hold over anyone who falls into their power never lessens, even if the character returns temporarily into the upper world. Not even Olympian Zeus can alter this, as both he and his underworld counterpart are powerless before the forces of night which here them both.

Although the "Scantar-Cystarum" remains a fragment, it stress on the power of the cathartic forces, linked with the influence of the 'Necropolis' which can be seen in the author's Neklot works and 'Lykephron', provides Hauptmann with a potentially powerful, primitive mythological representation of the tragic side of the drama of existence, which he can use beginning to dominate modern life. During his struggles with the Neklot those Hauptmann begins to link Shakespeare's hero in his mind with his closest Greek counterpart, Orestes. Both are called upon to avenge the murder of a father, for which the mother and her lover are responsible. Both heroes, although sensitive, achieve the revenge demanded of them, and both fall victim to it, the one in madness, the other through his oedipus' trickery. At one point in his novel 'Im Wirbel der Berufung' Hauptmann is even led to refer to the hero as 'Orestos-Neklot'\(^1\). Just as the curse which falls on the Danish family is personified in the dead king's ghost and has its origins in his murder, so Hauptmann will be led to seek in the story of the Strides a motive for the upsurge of avenging fury which can force Orestes to murder his own mother. In this, as in his preoccupation with Neklot, he is but following his own dictum, noted down at the time of his Greek journey or before; 'Jede Familie trägt einen heidischen Fluch oder Sagen, ihn finde! Ein logo zugrunde!'\(^2\)

\(^{14}\) M. V. p. 3273
\(^{15}\) Kunst der Dramen p. 282
CHAPTER SEVEN

'Die Atridentetralogie'

The immediate cause of Hauptmann's turning to the fate of the house of Atrous as material for a 'Tragödie' was not however the link between Hamlet and Orestes but a passage from Goethe's 'Italienische Reise', in which Goethe tells how he considered writing an 'Iphigenia von Delphi'. Goethe is attracted above all by the contrast between the saintly calm of Iphigenia and Elektra's earthly passion. The latter,

1. Goethe: 'Italienische Reise', Bologna 19 October 1786
2. Voigt op.cit. pp.137-8. Voigt quotes Hauptmann's own explanation from the preface to 'Iphigenia in Delphi':

diese Szene gelingt, so ist nicht leicht etwas Größeres und Nährenderes auf dem Theater geschen worden. So soll man aber Hände und Zeit hernehmen, wenn auch der Geist willig wäre.

Die hier entwickelte Idee nahm mich durchaus gefangen. Beinahe absichtlos formte sich mir das nachfolgende Werk."
believing that Iphigenie has sacrificed Crestes and Pylades, would attempt to kill her with the axe with which Crestes had murdered his mother, and the scene where this disaster is happily averted could provide, if successful, the most moving scene in all theatre. Goethe's version presumes a happy ending where they all return to Mycene. Hauptmann takes up Goethe's theme but he cannot accept that either Goethe's happy ending or the Aeschylean ending where Crestes is finally absolved by a jury of Athenian citizens are credible resolutions to the upsurge of underworld forces which the curse on the house of Atreus represents for him. It was the act of human sacrifice which set loose these demonic forces and they will only be satisfied when they have claimed the victim destined for them. Until then the murderous frenzy unleashed in the Atrides will rage on unabated. The whole family will be exposed to the powers of the underworld and each in turn will become their blind servant and their sacrificial victim. With such a chthonic representation of the tragedy of the house of Atreus Hauptmann achieves a definitive, mythological form for his concept of 'Tragödie'.

Although the inspiration for his 'Iphigenie in Delphi' comes from a quotation by Goethe, Hauptmann's heroine has little in common with the "schöne Seele" of Goethe's Taurid Iphigenie. In 1938 the author makes this point when he writes that in Goethe's play the characters are all too cultured and well-educated: "Es zeigt nicht, lässt nicht einmal ahnen die Furchtbarkeit der Tantaliden. Es zeigt nicht den mutterblutflecken, errinyengehetzten Crest. Es zeigt nicht die einst als Opfer geführte Iphigenie. Das Grausen ist nirgend wahrhaft da." Far from being a humane gentle creature, Hauptmann's Iphigenie is the bloodthirsty priestess of Hekate, goddess of the dead, and she has been responsible for the sacrifice at

3. 'Iphigenie in Delphi' Tragödie Berlin 1941.
Sauris of many sojourns Greeks. On her arrival in Delphi, a prisoner of Cretans, she is referred to by Apollo’s priest as the dark, merciless goddess Hekate herself, but it is the reference to her as Persephone which is more illuminating, as it links her with the author’s preoccupation with his ‘Demeter-
Systernus’ and demonstrates his chthonic interpretation of her role.

Iphigenia, like Persephone, is a prisoner of the underworld, from whose domination she can never escape. Her first speech in the play explains how Hekate has cut her off from all earthly joys and sorrows. When her father Agamemnon had attempted to sacrifice her to the goddess Artemis she had been spirited away by Hekate but had lost all contact with earthly life:

"Ich starb ins göttliche hinein und mag im Sterblichen nicht wieder leben."5

Since becoming Hekate’s priestess, she has been immune to horror. Her gaze has been stealed to face even the most intense cruelty and she has thus been able to sacrifice her own countrymen without qualms. Although she realises that she cannot escape her underworld role, her return to Greece threatens to arouse in her human emotions, family loyalties which she had already overcome and so she prays to Hekate for the superhuman power to be able to resist such passions which the meeting with her brother and sister could rekindle. Then she had been sacrificed by her father, she had entered into a living death, in which her one instinct which remained was hatred of those responsible, the Greeks. As priestess of Hekate she had been forced to renounce the world on a Stygian oath and as she spoke the terrible oath, she had attained a god-like perception which allowed her not only all-embracing knowledge of the horrors of this world but also, like Persephone, the ability not to be shattered by them:

5. CA III p.1065.
"Ein Joos Zeilehen meines Seins
an Haupt und Gliefern, zubehörhaft umgebildet.
ward führbar."6

Her real home being now in the land of the dead, she therefore
gives the impression of being more dead than alive, of being
no longer sensitive to earthly passions, yet like Creteus and
Elektrea, she is also a genuine, full-blooded member of the
Arous family. Then Creteus came to EURIS she had been filled
with revenge but at the moment when she needed to order his
death and thus revenge her mother's murder, she had succumbed
to momentary weakness, bit her tongue instead and been
captured. Her reconciliation with Creteus and Elektra offers
her the possibility of new life on earth but her god-like
insight allows her to realise that such a course would lead to
a perpetuation of the curse on the family, as the fates would
not be satisfied until her sacrifice was sealed irrevocably.
By accepting her underworld role and renouncing all murderous
contact with this life, she can avoid this outcome. The curse
on the family now rests on her, but, if she voluntarily
renounces her revenge and accepts her predestined sacrificial
role, she can satisfy the fates and die her last, irrevocable
death. By returning to the night whence she came, she
terminates the upsurge of the underworld powers into the light,
an irruption caused by her father's original attempt to shed
her blood. Ixion now has irrevocable control over her victim,
the gods of night and day are reconciled, Ixtian retires from
the light of day and Creteus and Elektra can face life anew,
freed by Apollo from the blood feud which Agamemnon's sacrifice
of his daughter had unleashed upon the family.

Hauptmann's interpretation of Iphigenie as a Persephone-
Like figure, whose home is already in the underworld, is
another illustration of the extent to which death can gain a
hold over the living. Iphigenie has become so hardened by

6. GA XIII p. 108f
proximity to death that her human emotions have been blunted as she has learnt to penetrate the mystery of existence. The reawakening of human emotions could only be a painful process for her, as both her oath and her murderous actions have committed her to death's grasp. Here she returns to human society, she would expose herself not only to an awakening of her urge for revenge but also to the revenge of the Greeks for all their kinsfolk when she had sacrificed on Tauris. It would also brand her father in Greek eyes as a deceitful traitor and the curse on the family would be perpetuated as the Greeks' revenge would fall on the whole house. This insight into the horrors awaiting her in human existence helps Iphigenia to renounce life and accept her sacrificial role. Her suicide returns her irrevocably to Hades and Elektra is left speechless by such a superhuman espousal of death's dominion.

Such a chthonic interpretation of Iphigenia's role, which renders her comparable to Sir Archir or to Ulenspiegel, shows us to what extent Hauptmann has departed from Goethe's original idea. In Hauptmann's first version of the 'Tragödie' he allows Iphigenia to face life anew with her kinsfolk, to return "zu neues Sein in Licht" but such a complete victory over the forces of darkness is inconceivable to Hauptmann. All joy must be bought at a price and so in the final version Iphigenia must accept death's dominion and voluntarily renounce her earthly existence.

The author's struggle to motivate Iphigenia's suicide leads him back to her original sacrifice at Aulis and gradually he begins to envisage a second 'Tragödie' showing the murderous action which renders Iphigenia's eventual self-sacrifice essential. In 1940 he tells C.P.W.Behl: "Ich muss nun doch

7. cf. Persephone's comment that those who are in the power of the underworld gods are able to gaze on Medusa's head without being harmed. Ca VIII p.1172:

Persephone: Ja, so ist's!
und wir versteinern nicht bei seinen Anblick.
Auch ihn gubar die Nacht, die nächsten ist
als er und Hades.

8. CA IX p. 1475.
noch eine 'Iphigenie in Aulis' schreiben. Ein innerer Zwang lässt sich nicht los, die Voraussetzung für die letzte Opferstat Iphigeniens zu gestalten. 9 To understand the hold which death has gained over Iphigenie it is necessary to go back to the origins of her tragedy at Aulis, yet to do so poses two major difficulties for any author. He must motivate Iphigenie's original acceptance of her sacrificial role and he must also represent the intervention of supernatural forces in her miraculous escape. Even Euripides seems to have been unable to find a solution to this problem, leaving his play unfinished at his death. Hauptmann's struggles with the material lead to nine separate versions of 'Iphigenie in Aulis' 10 before he is satisfied. At first he considers a plan whereby Achilles swears by Styx to save Iphigenie and does so with the help of his mother Thetis 11. This theme is however dropped in favour of intervention by Oktave in the form of her priestesses on a black temple ship and this final resolution of the problem not only illustrates how Iphigenie becomes a victim of the underworld powers but also demonstrates clearly Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' as the penetration of chthonic powers into the world of the living. Iphigenie's tragedy can now be shown to have its origins, like all other tragedies, in sacrifice, in the spilling of human blood, an action which always attracts the destructive forces of Oktave into the light of day.

From the moment that Agamemnon first sends her away from Aulis, Iphigenie begins to worry about her role in life. Her struggles to find her identity are reflected in two conversations, one with her father where she is at a loss to understand him and asks him: "Was ist mit euch, mit mir?" 12, the other with a new creation of Hauptmann's, Peitho, her barbarian nanny. Peitho, like Iphigenie later, is completely in death's

9. Behl op.cit p.48
10. 'Iphigenie in Aulis': Tragödie, Berlin 1914.
11. cf. Behl op.cit p.49
12. CA III p. 895
control. Daughter of Ileuto, she has been given the dreadful choice of being either death's servant or its victim and she has thus attained the deeper insight into existence which is the mark of all those whom death has claimed. She is aware of Iphigenic's fate but attempts to shield her charge from the sudden merciless revelation of the role awaiting her. Peitho's realization of the tragedy of existence is first seen when she admits to having murdered her child to prevent his having to be exposed to life's story path of pain and voo. She advises Iphigenic to flee from Aulis, to stop back from the precipice lest she fall into eternal torment. Yet it is when Peitho appeals to the gods to save Iphigenic from the insight into existence which Ileuto brings that Iphigenic first realizes momentarily that her life is threatened. Peitho expresses her vision of death's menace in the form of a black ship whose not is ready to claim its catch, its victim and Iphigenic momentarily glimpses the danger. Yet she is a descendant of Atrous and thus prone to strong passion and the desire to lead a full life and so she takes up the challenge. If fate has set danger for her in Aulis, she will stay and face it and not run away:

"Mich aber nicht der Kere Strudel an, 
oh oder enden mag im tiefsten Abgrund."  

The seeds of insight are now sown in Iphigenic's mind and her later realization of her appointed task is made plausible. The further she is taken from Aulis, the more her love for her father and wish to be with him grows. This love combines with her search for her role in life and leads to her sudden insight that she must die as a sacrificial victim if her father is to achieve his role in life and lead the Greeks to victory over Troy. This superhuman resolve almost breaks Iphigenic but she thrusts visions of a peaceful, country life with Achilles aside and with a clarity of perception, "was zu tragen höchste Kraft
Throughout the play the menace of death has been looming over the scene in the form of a black laurel ship at anchor in the harbour. The ship is dedicated to Hekate, the goddess "die mehr als alle Leuchten nach Menschenblut." Once again dogs can be heard barking at night and vultures circle overhead. The most vivid of all these images of death is that of a red-eyed, white-haired priestess, over 100 years old, who sacrifices prisoners on the ship nightly to Hekate. Then Iphigenia recovers life; three priestesses of Hekate appear to spirit her away, announcing themselves as Hekate's mother, her wet-nurse and Kore, the concubine of black Zeus himself. The job of these creatures of the underworld, as Peitho had foreseen, is to save Iphigenia from the axe and to carry her away to Tauris where she is to be death's priestess, not its victim.

"Das schöne Nymphlein wird von Tod befreit
um einzugehen in das Land der Schrecken,
wo sich im Grausen fürchterlicher Klot
das Entstellendes des ihr erwartet." 16

The three figures dance around Iphigenia, weaving a large black cloth in which they wrap Hekate's latest victim and carry her off to Tauris.

The death dance, with which these underworld creatures ensnared Iphigenia in the net which they weave around her, is yet another of the author's visual representations of the upsurge of chthonic powers into the realm of the living. In this underworld dance he receives the problem which the myth poses of the dramatic representation of the intervention of supernatural powers and he also demonstrates the hold which Hekate has gained over Iphigenia. She must now serve as her servant, sacrificing her kinmen and the curse on her family will rage

14. Ibid p.937
15. Ibid p.938
16. Ibid p.939
on unabated until she accepts to become death's victim and thus finally fulfills her predestined role.

Behind Iphigenia's tragedy, which has its origins in Agamemnon's sacrifice and is a perpetuation of the curse on the Atrides, lie the dictates of fate, or 'Noira'. Whatevber fate decides is irrevocable and such decisions remain unfathomable, even to the gods. When Kalkhas is horrified at the fate awaiting Iphigenia, Feitho tells him it is not Hekate's choice, but fate's:

"Was für ein Los die Kere ihr bestimm zu wissen bleibt selbst Göttern unergründlich."

Similarly, earlier when Clytemnestra is horrified at what fate is demanding of Agamemnon, Feitho explains:

"Der Noira Beschluss

ist allen - selbst den Göttern - unabweänder." 

Hauptmann is here expressing his view that the tragedy of existence, which is represented by the conflict between chthonic and Olympian gods, is basically inexplicable. Behind all conflict one has to suppose an irrevocable force which determines the lives of gods and men and it is this force which he describes as "Noira". The concept of such an essential, inexplicable power can be traced back to his experience at Kleussia, where he accepts that although life's conflicts can be mythologically represented as struggles between the gods, the gods can only represent facets of nature which we can conceive imaginatively. They do not and cannot attempt to explain the essential mystery of existence. Certain experiences will always remain beyond comprehension but the monotheistic view of the universe to which this can lead has not the dramatic potential of the mythological, polytheistic view, where discernible phenomena are represented in the form of personified gods and inexplicable experience is attributed to a

17. Ibid p. 932
18. Ibid p. 974
19. Ibid c. 1090
force beyond, those power is not understood and those rulings therefore can only appear as gratuitous. It is "Heira" who has decreed that Iphigenia shall be sacrificed and any escape from this fate can only be temporary, whether at the behest of gods or men. Iphigenia's self-sacrifice fulfills fate's decree and opens the way for a reconciliation between Iliakos and Apollo, the two opposing forces whose clash has been immediately responsible for the tragedy of the house of Atreus. It is however vital to realise that this reconciliation is by no means definitive as it also, like all human life, is subject to the dictates of fate and may at any moment be terminated. Man is thus seen to be at the mercy of an inscrutable exterior force whose dictates he is sometimes at a loss to understand but whose decrees allow of no escape:

"Der zum Opfer einmal ausgeschen
von einer Gottheit - ob so scheinbar oder habe ihren Spruch sich entwunden -
die Heira halten immer ihn im Blick
und bringen, wo er dann sich versteckt
an den gemiedenen Alten ihm zurück."

During his writing of 'Iphigenie in Aulis' Hauptmann's interest seems to have turned from the figure of Iphigenia to the tragedy of the whole family. In the wave of violence and bloodshed with which the curse on the Atreus family works itself out in the lives of each member of the family, the author begins to see an even more shattering representation of that upsurge of Othnian forces into life which constitutes tragedy. Perhaps the impact of the Second World War, threatening the very existence of civilized life, convinced the aging author that he needed to find an undiluted representation of the tragedy of existence which would mirror in intensity the events happening all around him in the real world. Certain passages in 'Iphigenie in Aulis', particularly "Britaless" often quoted

19. Ibid. p. 1090
20. cf. "Griechischer Frühling" CA VII p. 27, where Hauptmann says: "Ich bin überzeugt, dass die Erde unter einem Verwandten unter die gräuellichsten Phänomene der menschlichen Psyche zu rechnen sind."
vion of chaos beginning "die Erde hat geboben" 22 seems to suggest that the author was thus reacting to his experience of the war. Once more, therefore, as in the earlier 'Tragödie', the irruption of underworld forces is portrayed as a victory of man's instinctive urges over the weaker, loving side of his personality. Having lost all human attributes, man becomes bestial and commits murderous acts in a blind frenzy. Servant and victim of the powers of darkness, he achieves the full existence which is the proper subject of a Hauptmann 'Tragödie'.

His actions are penetrated by forces beyond his control and they take place in a setting which lies in a sort of no man's land between dream and reality.

If the full extent of the Atrides' tragedy is to be depicted, then it is necessary not only to show Iphigenia's two sacrifices but also the murder of Agamemnon and Orestes' matricide. The tetralogy is thus conceived, in which the curse is shown to break out when Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter in Aulis, to be perpetuated via Clytemnestra's and Orestes' acts of revenge and to be broken when Iphigenia renounces her revenge and accepts her predestined role as the curse's victim rather than its executor. The two middle plays, "Agamemnon's Tod" 22 and 'Elektra' 23 portray the two climaxes of this upsurge of instinctive urges and as their action is dominated by the underworld powers, it is set in darkest night, where day never dawns. Furthermore, despite the anachronism, both take place in the same temple of the goddess Nemeter in order to stress the pre-classical, chthonic interpretation of the myth. As Hauptmann's aim is simply to show the ravages of the curse, both plays are kept short and centre on their respective murders. Both are one-actors, the first hardly 1,100 lines long, the second a mere 700, and both eschew all secondary distraction. Hauptmann does not attempt to reproduce the effects of the great Greek tragedians. In place of Aischylos' conquering hero, returning in glory to his palace, Hauptmann substitutes a ship-wrecked

22. Ibid p. 390
23. 'Agamemnon's Tod', Tragödie, Berlin 1945
24. 'Elektra', Tragölie, Berlin 1946.
wanderer. His aim is not to magnify Agamemnon's individual tragedy but to see it as one instance of the ravages of the curse, into which the victim stumbles unaware. In the oppressive atmosphere which signals the dominance of the chthonic forces Demeter, Kore and Pluto, to whom the temple is dedicated, all humans appear lost, unaware of their whereabouts or driven on by forces beyond their comprehension. Agamemnon, Kritulcas and Cassandra stumble on the temple by chance, unaware even that they are in Argos. Clytemnestra is driven there by a dream and comes to sacrifice a lamb to her dead daughter Iphigenia. As Theosor tells Kritulcas, no one seeks shelter here, as the temple serves the underworld powers. In 'Elektra' Orestes and Pylades have no idea where they are when they arrive at the temple ruins and Clytemnestra and Aigisthus are driven to seek shelter there by a storm. In each case man is presented as defenceless in the face of superior powers and all that is needed is the outburst of revenge which will quickly claim its victim. There is not even time for the moving scene where Orestes and Elektra recognise each other on Orestes' return. Revenge cannot wait and, as in the case of Hauptmann's Hamlet, it is only in the presence of his mother that Orestes' resolve wavers. Yet Clytemnestra gives him no chance to escape his fate as, boasting of her revenge on Agamemnon, she attacks her son too and thus falls victim in her turn to the wave of instinctive passion which is destroying the family. Clytemnestra, Elektra and Orestes each succumb to their urge for revenge which distorts their personality and robs them of all humanity. The two sets of murders are the only actions in these plays. The resultant lack of relief from the horror proved too much for the audience when the plays were first produced in 1947. This is hardly surprising as the two plays only gain their full dramatic effect when seen in the context of the whole tetralogy. Their role is to represent the upsurge of the chthonic forces at its most intense and to thus illustrate the extreme tragedy to which man is exposed when the Dark

24. of Voigt op.cit p.164
powers have been attracted into the light by the spilling of human blood. The whole tetralogy is a demonstration that tragedy comes from human sacrifice and the object which thus catches our attention throughout is the axe which has been used in all the bloodshed. Cassandra, the prophetess, is the only one who realises how unjustified the Atrides' urge for revenge is, as she explains to Klytämnestra:

"In dir tobt falscher Rachedurst sich aus, in kurzen blutig und unwiderruflich. Der Götter liebe Waffe gegen uns, die Menschen, ist, mit Blindheit uns zu schlagen, so dass wir dumpf hinstolpern in die Nacht." 25

Until fate's dictates are carried out, man will be exposed to such domination by blind urges, weapons of the chthonic gods. Tragedy occurs when the spilling of human blood lures these underworld gods into conflict with the Olympians and exposes human life to this battle. The drama of the Atrides is Hauptmann's definitive expression of this tragic form and its every characteristic therefore needs close attention.

First of all Hauptmann pays great attention to the setting in which the action is to unfold. If the audience is to believe in the menace of underworld forces, then an oppressive atmosphere must be created which mirrors the agitated states of mind of the characters. In the early social dramas Hauptmann used stage sets which imitated real life with almost photographic detail but in his 'Tragödien' the stress falls on the conflict within the characters, on their state of mind. Precise, realistic background therefore gives way to the build-up of an atmosphere which seems to defy rational analysis. The tetralogy begins in darkness and the very first speech expresses a general despair. Man feels threatened, unable to distinguish between dream and reality and his imagination links this with the rule of the moon goddess, the goddess of death, as though the underworld had impinged upon the upper realm and man was

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25. CA 113 p. 976
no longer safe from its clutches:

"Seltsam spukt wacher Schlaf und schlafendes hauseln. Wenn endet dieser schlimme Tag und wo? Der Mondesgöttin grausen Nicht, das leichenhafte und gespeist aus Gräbern, ist seines Nachts. Wer mag vom linden noch getrennt sich fühlen in der ohren Welt?

O Gott, in welchem Grauen sind wir gefangen!" 26

In such an atmosphere men begins to question the basis of his existence. Having linked the uncanny atmosphere and unsure state of mind of the characters with the menace of an irruption of ethereal forces, the author can then give some rationally expressed reasons for Ulysses' despair. The Greek army is stranded, unable to set sail for Troy, as the fleet is localised. By day the sun burns down pitilessly from a clear sky and not a breath of wind is to be felt. Mass hysteria threatens. Salome's has already been stoned to death and the army is now seeking another sacrificial victim. lest anyone should believe in the goodness of the gods Hauptmann thrice refers to Apollo, who is responsible for this glaring sun, as merciless. It is the gods who are responsible for the Greeks' present plight which is Artemis' revenge on Agamemnon who has killed one of her sacred deer. The army's blind frenzy, in which they seek to placate the gods, is thus but a reflection of similar instincts on the part of the gods themselves. Yet the threat of divine retribution is represented not by Artemis but by her ethereal counterpart Echate, whose black Taurid cult-ship is anchored in the bay. The proximity of death and the threat of underworld dominance, the 'Totfl der Erhebung', 27 of which Nestor speaks, is vividly rendered by the stench-ridden ship. As in the earlier 'Tragödien' the continual barking of dogs at night is also used to add to the uncanny atmosphere, whilst on board the ship prisoners are sacrificed to Echate. The goddess' power does not however end there. Her birds have penetrated

26. Ibid p.345
27. Ibid p.354
into Iphigenia’s chamber and stolen her veil as she slept, whilst it is the goddess’ hundred years old priestess who has appeared to Agamemnon in a dream and caused him to send for his wife and daughter, so that Iphigenia may be Hector’s next victim. The conflicts within men’s minds, the various temptations and urges which beset them are exterriorised as interventions by the gods, the black side of men’s natures being represented by the menacing figures of the underworld.

The reign of death and destruction threatens in ‘Iphigenia in Tauris’ but it has not yet arrived and the atmosphere is thus one of uncertainty and of desperate attempts to achieve an understanding of the situation. Iphigenia, when she has chosen to die, can speak of ‘die Wächers Klarheit’ yet Peitho, her nurse, had prayed that Iphigenia be shielded from the full truth. The opposite of awareness is blindness, the state of mind where instinctive passions are allowed to cloud one’s judgment and lead one to desperate actions. From the very beginning of the tetralogy this state, in which the irrational side of human nature dominates, is represented as a victory for the underworld forces. It is in this way that these forces are seen to overwhelm a character and claim him as their own. The proneness of the Atrides family to this fate explains the curse which has been laid upon them, as this is no more than a mythological illustration of just such a character defect.

The danger that the sacrifice of Iphigenia will reactivate the curse and expose the family once more to domination by their passions is clearly seen in the reaction of Clytemnestra. Intent on defending her child, she threatens to destroy all around her in order to save her daughter. As Agamemnon departs with Iphigenia, Clytemnestra yells after him that he has killed off all human emotion in her and brought madness into the house. Her thirst for revenge and later murder of her husband are shown as originating in the despair of a mother whose child is

28. Ibid p. 936
taken from her. Agamemnon's action sets loose instinctive passions within the family or, to use the mythological terminology, it activates the curse, exposes the family to domination by the underworld gods and thus determines the 'Tragödie'.

Once the sacrifice has occurred and the chthonic forces have burst out into the light, the atmosphere becomes even more oppressive. During the whole of the two one-act plays, not one glimmer of light penetrates the darkness in which the murderous frenzy of the characters unfolds. Again Hauptmann uses a concrete object to symbolise the reign of the underworld, the anachronistic temple which is dedicated to the gods of Under. Man's spiritual disorientation is mirrored and increased by his lack of awareness of his physical whereabouts and in such an atmosphere of privation which exaggerates man's lack of control over his fate, chance encounters can be attributed to the dictates of supernatural powers and outbursts of hatred and revenge can be seen as the work of evil demons who have irrupted into men's minds. Actions dictated by intense spontaneous instincts testify to man's domination by destructive forces, as does the whole 'Tragödie' which unfolds under the aegis of Hekate, goddess of death. The temple is the gate to hell and the general odour of decay, the fumes and skeletal remains cause Creon to wonder why he has been prematurely slung into the realm of the dead. The victory of the chthonic forces over life, which 'Tragödie' represents, oppresses the mind and the spirit and the settings of Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' are meant to achieve just such an effect, whereby the audience is numbed into acquiescence, especially at those points where the outbursts of instinctive passion are at their most intense.

Arlotice ice in Sel's grave, Velani's cave, Cemetery's temple, each setting conjures up the domination of underworld forces: as Hekate's black ship sails away at the end of 'Iphigenia in Aulis', her latest victim on board, we are led to realise that death may irrupt at any time into our lives. Man lives under its constant threat: 'Nidoneus der Fürst ist auch im schönliicht nicht sich fechtlng.',

29. Ibid. p. 942
The second vital factor in Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' is the state of mind, in which the hero can commit acts of murder and revenge. The tragic hero must be seen to be in a perilous situation, in which fate seems to be demanding the impossible of him. The extremity of his situation is partly conveyed, as has been seen, by the atmosphere which exteriorizes the feelings of helplessness of the characters. In such a situation man is unsure of himself:

"die Erde zittert und der Mensch mit ihr." 30

He is unable to distinguish what is real in his experience from what he is purely imagining. Agamemnon faces this dilemma at the beginning of the tetralogy. His mind has become a battlefield, in which two conflicting urges attempt to dominate and he cannot decide what to do. The conflict revolves around the demand of the gods, revealed to Agamemnon in a dream, that he should sacrifice his daughter. The king had penetrated Artemis' holy grove and killed one of her sacred deer and she is demanding revenge. Until this is accomplished, her brother Apollo is hindering the departure of the Greek fleet for Troy. Agamemnon's agonizing choice thus lies between a father's natural love for his daughter and the dictates of the gods which are linked with the Greek frenzy for revenge over Troy. On the one side a positive human action, on the other a violent thirst for vengeance. In either case Agamemnon will require superhuman resolve. To defy the gods would be to stir man's titanic depths, to rebel like Prometheus and expose oneself to the gods' revenge. On the other hand to sacrifice his daughter would be to deny all that is human in him, to isolate himself on a pinnacle where he is completely cut off from all human contact. Such is the dilemma which the war situation poses for the Greek leader. Whichever course he decides, his fate can only be tragic. At the beginning Agamemnon resolves to defy the god's inhuman request which he can still rationally condone as "die Pierergluten, die mich blind gesetzt." 31. When he acts too late to prevent his

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30. Ibíd. p. 830
31. Ibíd. p. 852
daughter's arrival in the army camp, he realises the threat to her life which her presence amongst the soldiers poses and he is horrified. He first tries to commit suicide, thinking thus to appease Apollo, and then this is prevented, he almost collapses, unable to face the situation. When he orders his wife's and daughter's departure, Klytämnestra thinks he is ill but the sight of Iphigenia strengthens his resolve to rebel against the gods. Despite Apollo's command he insists that they depart as far as Kithairon. Once more, when he visits them there, the sight of Iphigenia will stir his humanity and allow his fatherly love to triumph over his hero's thirst for revenge and belief in the call of national duty, but by then Agamemnon's Prometheus effort has already been called in question. He travels to Kithairon on horseback and his election in the saddle overthrows the human scruples of a father and strengthens his desire for battle. Gone are the trivial temptations of peaceful family life. He is conquered by the enormity of his task which demands mainly courage and a strong nerve. Speeding through the moonlit night he is enchanted by Artemis who now appears to him not a cruel goddess demanding the impossible but "die Güte, die erlösend-lockende". Agamemnon feels the call of action, taking him beyond himself until he becomes almost godlike:

"Je ferner Menschen, um so näher Götter." 33

In this state of mind scruples of humanity are easily overcome by feelings of heroism. Agamemnon is a changed man. Klytämnestra appeals to him to accept his humanity, the testimony of his senses, and to throw off this delusion:

"Kannst du lobst! Kehr ab den Wahn,
fehl deiner Sinne Sinn, spür deinen Pulschlag!" 34

The consequences of his newly recovered desire for battle are however inescapable. His feelings as husband and father have

32. Ibid p. 883
33. Ibid p. 882
34. Ibid p. 885
disappeared; he has become cut off from all humanity, a stranger even to himself. No longer in control of his actions, he is now merely a puppet of the gods, "ohnmächtiges Spielzeug greiseroller Götter und Menschen." He realises that to others he may appear unconscious, the victim of a dream, but he cannot wake from it. His present state is a punishment from the gods, because, by attempting to rebel, he had stirred their ancient rivals, the Titans. Agamemnon has to accept defeat:

"denn anders nicht als einst Prometheus bin ich drom, von Ätna-Gotthe angeschmiedet." 36

The audience is meant to realise that the king's rebellion in favour of his daughter cannot be sustained. When once again he collapses under the strain, he wakes to find Iphigenia with him. He tries to explain the situation to her, but the sight of the wine she pours for him reactivates his human senses. He imagines it to be her blood and in horror he flings the cup away. For the last time he refuses to think of sacrifice and sends his daughter back to Mycenae, but such human resolve has already been shown to be fallible. The sons of Uranus, the Olympians, have already set out to overcome the rebellious Titans who are threatening to irrupt and immerse the world in chaos. Ares, god of war, reigns and man is exposed to an existence where human tears and the attractions of home and family are powerless. Agamemnon has found his purpose in life; the conflict in his mind has been resolved in favour of the inhuman demands of heroism and sacrifice.

When he returns for his daughter, he has finally succeeded to the gods' demand and is entirely consumed by the divinely inspired frenzy to accomplish his heroic task. He is "von Gott berührt und sein ohnmächtiges Werkzeug" 37 and thus irrevocably cut off from human feelings. Artemis had appeared to him.

35. Ibid p. 385
36. Ibid p. 385
37. Ibid p. 907
in a dream, justifying the Greeks' thirst for revenge and her own, which she had sworn irrevocably by Styx and therefore cannot repeal. Agamemnon treats this as a divine revelation, but like the violent Inquisition in "Magnus Garbe" it is a wolf in sheep's clothing, being in fact an instrument of the forces of Hades. In vain Klytämnestra appeals to him to wake from his dream. In vain she refers to it as blindness, madness, illness. To her it is fanaticism, the work of the house's evil demon and it threatens to reawake the curse on the family. She therefore pleads with her husband:

"Atrid, komm zu dir! Deines Blutes Dämon der böse, nicht der gute, warf dich nieder." 38

This interpretation of Agamemnon's state of mind is consistent with the wave of violence and murder which his sacrifice of Iphigenie unleashes, but for him it is but a form of words. As he had told his wife earlier, her view of life, her concept of truth is not his, and he is now immune to her taunts or to any appeal based on love or humanity. The situation calls for extreme measures and man must steel himself against weakness at such a time. Divinely inspired frenzy replaces humanity. Both Hades and Olympus join to strengthen man's courage and Agamemnon can only pray that man is not destroyed in the attempt but may regain his humanity when the hour of extreme peril has passed:

"Um uns mischen sich des Hades und Olympos Götterlüfte; wir trinken atmend sie in unser Blut und damit heiligen Wahnsinn. Artemis, erbarm dich unser und zerreisse nicht mit deiner Göttergabe das Gefäß: Gib uns der Menschheit wieder, wenn dein Fest den grauen Todeshunger dir gestillt hat!" 39

Agamemnon's action ushers in an era, in which men achieve

god-like proportions and their conflicts attain the monumental level of the gods themselves. The sacrifice of Iphigenia excites in the house of Agamemnon instinct which burst out beyond the limits of normal, rational control, providing the full existence which Hauptmann sees as the proper subject matter for a 'Tragödie'.

Just as Agamemnon says to his wife:

"Sein Gatte Agamemnon starb."

so she later can reply:

"Du hastest einst ein Weib, doch nun nicht mehr, du selber hast es umgebracht - es starb!"

All that remains are the outraged feelings of a mother, whose child has been torn from her. She also now blots out all venality and becomes a victim of one basic instinct, that of revenge on the man who sacrificed her daughter. During the whole of the Trojan War Klytämnestra is able to brood upon her revenge. It so dominates her unconscious mind that, when her chance of revenge occurs, she is no longer plagued by any human scruples:

"Mein Herr! Mein Gatte! Leere Worte spricht du, verfaulste Nöisem sind es, wirf sie fort!"

In 'Agamemnon's Tod' all her actions seem to stem from a superhuman resolve which rational minds can once again only comprehend as a kind of dream-like trance. Her state of mind resembles that of Agamemnon earlier, once he had cut himself off from humanity, and again it is a dream which incites the action. Klytämnestra has come to Clytemnestra's temple to sacrifice a lamb for her daughter in Idaea as a result of an apparition in which a bloodstained warrior had appeared cut of a precipice and stood motionless over her bed. Making this with reports

40. ibid. p. 934
41. ibid. p. 935
42. ibid. p. 960
that Agamemnon is still alive, she has begun to lose control of her senses. To overcome this, she takes a bath in the temple waters, waters which are dedicated to Hecate. Then her husband appears, she recognises him immediately. After an initial recoil: "Der Wahnsinn herrscht in dieser Nacht" her horror takes over and her every action now leads towards her revenge. Cassandra attempts to explain her state of mind to her as a victim of the gods, who strike men with blindness for their sport, but Clytemnestra almost strangles her, causing her even more to attack the blind madness which is overcoming the queen. Feigning joy, Clytemnestra leads Agamemnon into the bath room and murders him there with the sacrificial axe. Now even Agamemnon cannot recognise her, as he implores her to awake out of her trance. Then she justifies her action, he also is too weak to face the horror and recoils from such madness:

"Schreckliches, grauenvolles Leib, du bist der Wahnsinn selbst." Her action, "das Grässlich-Übermächtige" is incomprehensible to ordinary mortals, represented by the old men who have come to welcome Agamemnon. They are but children whose role is not to intervene in such superhuman affairs. All they can do is accustom themselves to the horror which is now widespread and against which there is no defence. The house of Atreus is condemned to such inhuman greatness. Clytemnestra has been overcome by her instincts for revenge and just as her action was beyond human comprehension so, as she returns to normal life, her suffering also will be intense. At the end she says:

"Ich hatte einen Traum
er jagte mich von meinem Bette auf.
Ich sah vor mir, doch Liess er mich nicht los
ich hab' ihm bis zu Ende nun geträumt.
Verbei! Kern fort, Agamem! Van heist's
erwachen!" 

\[93, Ibtd p. 973\]
\[94, Ibtd p. 901\]
\[95, Ibtd p. 901\]
\[96, Ibtd p. 990\]
In the third play in the tetralogy, 'Elektra', the title figure is even more eaten up by revenge than her mother had been. She also has been able to brood on it for a long time as she waits for her brother to return and avenge their father's murder. The first mention of her by Orestes tells us that she is living like an animal, cursed by her mother and cast out from human society. This existence seems to have robbed her of all humanity. She herself confirms this when she recognises her brother and immediately starts to incite him to avenge their father's murder. Her only emotion left is this thirst for vengeance:

"Und was aus ewer Welt noch in mir lebt,
ist eine Flamme und ein Schrei zugleich.
Ich brenne und ich schreie: Rachel! Rachel!"47

When Pylades concludes that she is mad, she turns on him as an outsider who is unable to comprehend the chains which hold Orestes a prisoner just as much as herself. Like Velani she is convinced that only by revenge can she be purified. She is fully the victim of her dream existence, as is seen later when, despite her plea not to be further ensnared in it, she reacts at Delphi to news of Orestes' death by attempting to kill the Taurid priestess whom she regards as responsible. It is finally left to Pylades to stop her killing her sister and to wake her from her dream:

"Brauche jetzt, Elektra! Weiter treibe
das Träume wüste Blindheit dich nun nicht!"48

This cry echoes Elektra's own triumphant taunt of Clytemnestra earlier. Faced by Orestes and Elektra, Clytemnestra had also realised that her attempts to shake off her trance, to escape from the dream in which she has been condemned to live, were in vain. She had to face death without making cut of her trance and Elektra was able to boast that her victim was thus

47. Ibid p. 100
48. Ibid p. 106
exposed to suffering as well as to death:

"Orucho, von de Nacht, verruchtes Weib:
Nie deinus kannst du auch im Dacken erben
ein deines Hasses rettungslose Nacht."\(^5^9\)

Faced with the need to avenge his father, Creostes also experiences the feeling that he is living in a dream yet in the presence of his mother he attempts to break the spell and search for truth without being blinded by revenge. The truth however proves nearer to his dream than to his longed-for innocence. Hytmemonota admits to the murder of her husband and so Creostes, like his father, has to overcome everything which is human within him and become a puppet of the gods:

"Du, der die Reichtum mir auferlegt,
Nimm von mir alles das, was menschlich ist,
und dann erfülle mich mit deinem Willen:
Ich bin nur noch ein Werkzeug und sonst nichts."\(^5^9\)

This proves almost beyond Creostes. The double edge of the axe reminds him that the murderer becomes its prisoner just as much as the victim and his human feelings do not allow him to forget that his victim is his mother. Unsure of himself, unwilling to become the victim of his dream, he appeals to Hytmemonota to enlighten him but the word mother awakens all her loathing of the murderous process of creation, based as it is both on the begetting and destruction of human life. In a final gesture of rebellion she curses her offspring and attacks Creostes, who is thus forced to defend himself and fulfill the will of the gods. Unwillingly he becomes a prisoner of his dream until freed from it by Apollo himself.

Each of the tragic heroes is thus placed in a situation where natural love for another member of the family clashes with a desire for revenge. This conflict within the hero is clearly motivated psychologically. Iphigenia's love for her daughter

\(^5^9.\) 1922 p. 2025
\(^5^9.\) 1922 p. 2027
is in conflict with his desire, as Greek commander-in-chief, to regain national pride by heroic revenge over Troy. Clytemnestra's mind is eaten up by the desire for vengeance, stemming from the destructive fury of a mother who has been deprived of her child and this fury destroys her love for her husband. Creon is driven on by a fateful impulse to seek out his father's murderer, although when he learns the truth, he desperately tries to deny it as filial instincts assert themselves. In each case the destructive impulse is represented mythologically as the intervention of a god or goddess. Creon's search for truth is dictated by Apollo, god of light and clarity. Clytemnestra equates the mother's instincts within her with the mother goddess Hera:

"es erhebt sich übermenschlich neben mir
die mütterliche Hera". 52

Hera is scorned by Agamemnon because she is the protectress of the Trojans and his aim is now to appease Artemis and win back her support after she had justified his yielding to the desire for revenge in a dream. It is Agamemnon's dilemma which most clearly portrays the link between man's psychological impulses and their representation in divine form. The essential prerequisite is a disturbed state of mind, which is reflected in the character's continual doubts as to his role and identity. Heroiny gradually yields its dominant place in man's mind to a superhuman resolve, with which the hero surpasses himself. This reaction to his desperate dilemma cuts the hero off from ordinary human emotion and, in the dream-like state of trance which follows, the hero is more able to face coolly the horror of his situation. To a rational observer he appears now to be the victim of an illness or a mad delusion and he himself can only reflect upon his state of mind in such terms. This state of ecstatic blindness is shown as being of god-like stature. In Agamemnon's case, by accepting Artemis' demand that Iphigenia be sacrificed, he has

52. Ibid. p. 687
grown into a demi-god himself. This turning to the gods occurs at the point of maximum stress. Previously Agamemnon had defied them but the effort had sapped his strength and reduced him to a state of collapse. Kretzschmar points out that it is at just such moments of chaos that men begin to remember the gods and if proof is needed one need only look as far as the army's frenzied attempt to offer sacrifices to propitiate the gods. Such religious fever has already overcome the army and it now claims Agamemnon as well.

The climax occurs when Agamemnon appears before the army with his victim. Aware of the psychology of mass emotion and demagogy, Hauptmann allows the scene to develop into "ein ungeheuer Paroxysmus der Führung und des Weins" in which the masses kiss Iphigenia's hands and their boundless enthusiasm entrenches Agamemnon still further in his delusion that he is the elect of the gods. An upsurge of the forces of destruction in the form of religious fanaticism also appears in 'Nagusa Carta' and there, as here at Aulis, it is seen to bring the destruction of all human values, and to herald the triumphant irruption of the dark forces of chaos into human life. In blind frenzy Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter and perpetrates in merciless blindness the great deception which ushers in the era of war, of violence and of murder. It is only in 'Iphigenia in Tauris' that the sacrifice at Aulis is seen in just perspective as a triumph of the underworld gods, "die schwarze Kuh, aus der wir weiße Milch
wie dieses Leben einzunehmen glauben
und die uns doch nur eine den Wahnsinn bringt." 53

Agamemnon is thus seen as a victim of his delusions of grandeur but this also has its mythological representation. Throughout the play Agamemnon has been attempting to placate Artemis but she, like all Olympian gods, has a chthonic counterpart, Helate. It is Helate's ship which is at anchor in the bay and early on in the play it is she who visits him in a dream and has him send for his wife and daughter. He seems to be a victim of her magic and only later, when Agamemnon's heroic resolve is developing, does she visit him as Artemis, losing her cruel

52. Ibid p. 925
53. Ibid p. 1059
appearance and appearing to him as his salvation. When Agamemnon succumbs to his religious fervor and prepares to sacrifice his daughter, she once more assumes her chthonic form and it is Fortunatus, not Artemis, who claims her victim and spirits her off to Tauris. It thus becomes apparent that Agamemnon has opened himself up not to Artemis' salvation but to domination by Fortunatus; his actions, far from opposing the Olympians, have paved the way for the uprising of Fortunatus and the forces of the underworld into the light. When man is overcome by his basic passions and is cut off from normal human emotions, he becomes exposed to the powers of the underworld and his actions are dictated by them. By sacrificing Iphigenia Agamemnon has become a victim of Fortunatus, whose hold over man is gained through instinctive impulse. Having spilled human blood, he has become a priest of death and all death's priests are also its victims. The forces of the underworld Zeus will now determine his fate and through the impulse of revenge they will also dictate the fate of the whole family. The spilling of human blood always leads to tragedy but in this case the chain reaction caused by Agamemnon's action spreads through the whole house of Atreus.

A further dimension is thus added to the consequences of Agamemnon's murderous action, yet despite the mythological framework it still remains based on natural human characteristics, which are thus provided with forceful dramatic representation.\textsuperscript{55}


\textsuperscript{55} See footnote, page 132
What then are Hauptsmana's gods? He refers to them as
"Schöpfungen der inneren Dramatik. Funktionäro des Geistes und
seiner Repräsentanten," and their conflicts do indeed seem
to represent the impulses and tensions of men's minds.

Foremost of all these conflicts is that between the Olympian
gods and their underworld hypostases, which reflects the basic
drama which Hauptmann sees as the essential determining factor
behind all existence, the perpetual battle between creation's
life-giving forces and those of destruction. Not only is Apollo,
god of light and clarity, opposed by Artemis, goddess of night,
but Artemis herself has two facets. At one point she is the
beautiful redemptress, goddess of the moon, whilst at others
she is Hekate, queen of hell whose irruption into the light is
responsible for tragedy. This dualistic view of the gods
stresses the dramatic nature of creation and of its impulses
within man. Man has to fight to reconcile these conflicting
forces and when his destructive instincts dominate, tragedy
ensues. Naked human passions are enflamed, murder occurs and
the spilling of human blood attracts further violence and chaos
as demonic forces take over. Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenic
sets this process in motion, reactivating the curse on the
Atrides, a curse which is based on the urge for revenge. This
is one of the chthonic powers' destructive weapons, as Hlythia-
nestra realises too late, after her revenge:

"Brandig - schwarz und rot

umfällt der Qualm des Schreckens unsere Häuser,
derin Klatsche unermöglich zuckt

und hin und wieder blitzt mit Hord und Zetschlag.

Aus zähflüssigen Klirrt die Kette - hört! -.

55. cf. A 338 quoted by Sachateke: op.cit p.182: "Warum
hält mich selbst der antike Mythos augenblicklich so fest?
Vielleicht, weil sein Allgemein-henschliches und sein
ervorb Dramatisches mich band! Moderne Herdgeschichten
haben mich ja eigentlich nie gereizt.

56. Kunst des Dramas p. 186

57. A 70 p.20: "Die Differenzierung des menschlichen Gehirns
musste immer mehr Göter hervorbringen ..."
taught auf mit diesen und mit jenen Glied
und wird auch unten wiederum gesagt:
ein unverzichtlich Band, das Rechte holdst.' 58

The Atrides are tragically caught up in the quarrel between Apollo and Hekate. This is the immediate conflict which determines their tragedy, which can only be resolved by a reconciliation between the two gods. Such a resolution would lead to the forces of death and darkness retiring from the light and returning to their underworld home. The living symbol of their upsurge into life is Hekate's priestess Iphigenia, whom some say is the goddess herself, and Croesus is given the task of going to Tauris and bringing her and the statue of Artemis in the temple there back to Delphi. As Croesus' only alternative is to sink into the black night of madness, he accepts the task. The resulting reconciliation between the related gods of night and day forms the subject of the last play in the tetralogy, 'Iphigenia in Delphi', where this specific case of tragedy is conditionally resolved.

Various passages hint at the reconciliation to come. Despite Delphi's inland situation, Hauptmann makes one of the priests, Minos, cleanse himself from the anxieties of the night in the sea. As he bathes, the surface of the sea shimmers in the purple light of the sun and reminds him of the blood-covered dragon Python which Apollo had slain. This hint of Apollo's power is followed by signs that the house of Atreus will soon escape from the powers of darkness. The moon does not disappear as day breaks and when the old men of Delphi are frightened, as Hekate appears at the town gates, Pythian the high priest announces the reconciliation brought about by Artemis' return from the land of the barbarians, where she had been in voluntary exile. The Olympians rejoice and pardon Croesus, as it is he who has caused the split to be healed. Thus freed from his dream-like trance, Croesus can face life anew. His mind is no longer

58. CA III p. 987
obsessed with murder and revenge. All the various tensions and impulses which play upon his mind are now hermeneutically resolved: he is healed. The last act of the tetralogy can now concentrate on the one Atrides still in death's grasp, Hickate's high priestess Iphigenie.

Hauptmann's original version of the play in which Iphigenie also becomes revitalised and returns with Creastes and Elektra to face life anew would have rendered Apollo's victory complete and definitive, but such a hopeful ending contradicts the fate which the Helen had decided upon for Iphigenie. She is their chosen sacrificial victim. Already once she has escaped the finality of sacrifice as Hickate had spirited her away to act as her priestess at Taurie. Whilst she is alive, Hickate's realm penetrates the light of day and her weapons of violence and revenge will rage on unabated. Only by Iphigenie's final, irrevocable death can Hickate claim her fully as her own and retire victorious from the light of day. The reconciliation of Apollo and Hickate thus depends finally on Iphigenie. Her voluntary acceptance of death opens the way for Apollo's absolution of Creastes and Elektra to become effective. As befits the author's concept of 'Edrauma' no joy is possible without its counterpart, sorrow. The resolution of the tragedy of the house of Atreus has to be paid for by the death of one more member of the family. With Iphigenie's self-sacrifice the fates are appeased, Hickate claims her appointed victim, the underworld forces retreat and the surviving Atrides can face a new life, purified from the wave of murderous instinct which threatened to destroy them.

The new life which proceeds from this reconciliation of the gods remains however subject to the perpetual struggle of creation, to the immovable dictators of fate which may at any time order a further upsurge of chthonic forces into the light. Iphigenie's sacrifice does not therefore represent a final absolution of the Atrides but a means whereby the curse is lifted but remains a continual threat to future generations.
A temporary resolution is thus achieved at the expense of one more victory of the powers of darkness. Iphigenia has in fact no choice but to die. Her action therefore has no Christian connotations. Her does it depend on a change of heart and acceptance of the creative, loving side of her nature.

Rather is it a testimony to heleate's power, the death without which new life cannot be born. Out of destruction is born new life, as Hauptmann's dualistic view of the laws of creation demands. For normal life to be effective, the two sides of creation must be in harmonious balance. This is achieved through Iphigenia's death, an act which terminates the upsurge of cathenic forces decreed by the inescrutable Nitra. Yet the very violence of this irruption of the powers of night, which has been the subject of the 'Tragedie', shows us just how

59. c.f. Dietrich Heinert: 'Hellenismus und Christentum in Gerhart Hauptmanns Atridentetralogie', Cape Town 1964. Perhaps misled by certain sections of the author's late novel 'Der neue Christophorus' and by the author's perpetual search for a resolution to life's tragic conflicts, Heinert is led to postulate Christian influences in the 'Atridentetralogie'. His comparison of Greek polytheism and Christian monotheism, both of which postulate one omniscient final arbiter of destiny, whether Heira or God the Father, echoes Hauptmann's own thoughts on his Greek journey at Messina, but Heinert goes further and by comparing Iphigenia's self-sacrifice with that of Jesus, he attempts to evolve a doctrine of salvation which is common to both. Unfortunately this involves interpreting Iphigenia's return to Greece as an action which frees her from heleate's grasp, a fact clearly contradicted by Hauptmann's alteration of the first version of 'Iphigenie in Delphi.' To interpret Iphigenia's sacrifice as an attainment of real priesthood, motivated, like that of Christ, by love of her neighbour, is to ignore her statement that, by renouncing life, she is at last confirming heleate's hold over her. It is moreover a complete misinterpretation of Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragedie', which derives from a pessimistic view of the tragic nature of existence and which is of specifically Greek origin.

60. cf. Introduction, footnote 36.
precarious the balance of night and day is, which we consider normal. And just as the whole of creation is seen to be continually exposed to the threat of dislocation, so also is the precarious balance within men's minds between rational and instinctive impulses. Iphigenia's suicide comes about as a result of the realization on her part that it is she who is standing in the way of a resolution to the tragedy which has attacked her whole house. It is not the sole cause of Creastes' andicklea's purification, for that also depends on Apollo. Yet it is the prerequisite for her kinsfolk's absolution. Her action makes it possible once again for Apollonian light and clarity to overcome the irruption of life's destructive forces and to restore the precarious balance necessary for normal life. At the same time it testifies to the power of Orestes, a power which may return at any time to regain the upper hand. Her suicide thus crystallizes in one action the duality of creation which lies behind the author's concept of 'tragödie'.

Agamemnon's readiness to shed Iphigenia's blood has caused the whole chain of destruction, of which she is the latest victim. 'tragödie' is thus seen not only to originate in human sacrifice but to be itself a ritual reenacting of the life of a sacrificial victim. Intense suffering cuts the hero off from human emotions and transports him into a fuller existence in which he is exposed to dark, supernatural forces. He becomes a victim of these forces and the undiluted portrayal of his violent actions and his final sacrifice petrify the audience in turn. As the ritual unfolds, they are led to realize the basic drama of life. The mythical framework, within which the action is set, is but a cosmic extension of the dramatic conflict in the hero's mind. The resolution of the tragedy is conditional on man's ability to hold in harmony the two sides of his existence and the mythical pattern of order, far from

61. cf. Michaelis op.cit. pp. 299-300. Michaelis' quotation from Rübe-Maßbürger most clearly mirrors this point, where she sees in Iphigenia's sacrifice a symbol "für die yu. x, inner latente, verdrängte Bewährung und Existenz der othorischen-helatistischen Epihre."
concealing the audience and removing their fears as a realistic setting would do, brings them even closer to a realization of the danger posed by the darker side of creation.

The author's concept of 'Tragödie' depends therefore on man's succumbing to his basic instincts. Where the early 'Tragödien' show the fall of one sacrificial victim, the 'Atridentetralogie' portrays a whole family dominated by a wave of instinctive passion. In each case, the action has its origins in murder and bloodshed, it is dominated by outbursts of hatred, cruelty and revenge, its emotions are those of fear, pain, anxiety and foreboding and its effect is a horror of such proportions that it numbs our senses by its intensity. The mythological framework exteriorizes the conflicts in men's minds in such a way as to endow them with a force beyond rational comprehension and they are thus seen to be but one example of the basic drama of all creation, a drama determined by the opposing forces of birth and death, of creation and destruction. At certain moments the destructive forces gain the upper hand and it is at such moments that tragedy occurs.

Close study of the genesis of the tetralogy furnishes a clear understanding of the way in which the author finally becomes reconciled to the full force of his vision of life's tragic consequences, as seen in the story of the Atrides. His belief in the essential duality of existence leads him to distance himself from Goethe's happy ending to the drama and in its place he introduces Iphigenie's self-sacrifice. This is not however presented as a loving Christian gesture of absolution but as an inescapable consequence of Iphigenie's role, a confirmation of death's hold over her. Iphigenie thus becomes the definitive portrayal of Hauptmann's tragic protagonist. Study of the motivation of her suicide leads the author back to the original sacrifice at Aulis and in this act of bloodshed Hauptmann sees the cause of the tragedy, the murderous action which attracted the destructive forces into the light. The
author thus abandons his plan to make Iphigenie's escape from
the axe dependent on Achilles' love for her, as his interest
has now extended beyond Iphigenie's personal tragedy. Instead
he prefers an intervention by Heidt which symbolizes the upsurge
of the forces of the underworld into the light of day. It is
at this stage that Hauptmann can admit that although they are
especially similar, his 'Iphigenie in Delphi' is entirely
different in atmosphere to his later 'Iphigenie in Aulis'.
He says to C.F.W. Behl: "Vielleicht wäre sie, nach der antiken
geschrieben, anders ausgefallen".62 Behl talks of "die wichtige
Beschwörung des Katholischen".63 In the later work this
tendency is confirmed when the author expands the whole work
into a tetralogy and makes of the two middle plays short,
startling evocations of the way in which the curse works itself
out in the lives of the Atreus family. The barbarous acts of
family slaughter testify to the hold which his tragic vision
has gained over the author. As a result the audience is forced
to accept the power of the underworld gods and to glimpse an
insight into the reason for Iphigenie's self-sacrifice. By
exercising the evil spirit which is at work in her family, she
restores the harmonious balance between the Olympian and chthonic
powers, a balance which is the prerequisite for normal human
existence. The tetralogy is Hauptmann's final creative attempt
to force us into a realisation that this balance is perpetually
threatened and that in human existence the forces of darkness
and death can never be totally overcome.

62. Behl op.cit p.160
63. Ibid p. 260
CONCLUSION

The various components of Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' can each be seen in his 'Atridentetralogie' and be traced back to the experiences of his Greek journey. In each case they have their origins inside the mind of man and their force is stressed by mythological representation and personification.

The ingredients of the "tragic pattern", which have persisted through all the various forms of 'Tragödie' make up the essential factors. The hero is larger than life-size. He is capable of superhuman resolve, whereby he cuts himself off from the calls of love and humanity and grows into a heroic state of mind in which he can more easily face the dilemmas which his situation poses for him. His decisions and actions are not subject to hesitation and scruples, and he thus appears to be living on a more intense level than normal humanity. He is just as prone to error in this fuller existence as before, and his mistakes are correspondingly magnified. In this way the audience's attention is focussed on the essential aspects of human existence, rather than on the various everyday distractions which normally cloud their view. The hero's downfall is not only more shattering in its impact but also more easily traced to the basic human dilemma which has prompted him to take the vital step which has led to tragedy. The superhuman state of mind of the tragic hero is represented as being in proximity to the gods, and clashes between heroes

1. Only Magnus Garbe is presented as having normal, human attributes and in Act V even he achieves a superhuman grandeur in distress, thus prefiguring the tragic hero of the later works.
thus attain the force of quarrels between the gods themselves.

The superior forces which destroy the hero reside within the hero's mind. They are basic human impulses, beyond the control of reason. In order that their power may be stressed and that they may be seen to be but one aspect of the essential drama behind all creation, they are portrayed as cosmic forces, mythological deities whose conflict determines the course of creation. The irrational impulse whose dominance leads to tragedy is the instinct of revenge and it is seen to be the method whereby the gods of the underworld, the cosmic portrayals of creation's destructive urge, gain their hold over man. Man's heroic resolve simply intensifies the suffering which is caused when the forces of darkness and death penetrate his mind. Working within man, they cause him to commit acts of violence and murder which eventually destroy him. Tragedy enacts the ritual whereby these superior forces, representing the destructive side of creation, claim their sacrificial victim. Human existence is shown to be conditional on the dramatic conflict which underlies all creation. Man's inability to control the basic processes of life and death is dramatised as dependence on conflict between the gods, and his inability to comprehend the seemingly gratuitous way in which these processes impinge on his life is represented in his domination by the figures of Moira, Kere or fate. They are the final arbiters, controlling the lives of gods and men with authoritative dictates, whose purposes are incomprehensible but whose content is irrevocable. Man is thus exposed to a whole hierarchy of superior forces, on whose decisions his existence is seen to depend.

The tragic action accentuates these dilemmas of human existence. The hero is shown choosing a course of action which enables basic impulses to dominate his mind. Grown immune to human weakness, he acts as a result of instinctive feelings, hatred, enmity, revenge, without any concessions
to the fear, pain or despair which he may cause in others. Existence based on such uninhibited passion can lead to extremes of cruelty and suffering which ordinary mortals are incapable of enduring. This is the subject matter of a Hauptmann 'Tragödie', the aim of which is to shatter the preconceptions of the audience and leave them horrified at the nature of existence, which the tragic action portrays. The author predicted this in 'Griechischer Frühling' when he explained the nature of tragedy. "Es kann nicht geleugnet werden, Tragödie heisst: Feindschaft, Verfolgung, Hass und Liebe als Lebenswut! Tragödie heisst: Angst, Not, Gefahr, Pein, Qual, Marter, heisst Tücke, Verbrechen, Miedertracht, heisst Mord, Blutgier, Blutschande, Schlächteterei—wobei die Blutschande nur gewaltsam in das Bereich des Grausens gesteigert ist. Eine wahre Tragödie schenhiess, beinahe zu Stein erstarrt, das Angesicht der Medusa erblicken ... " On several occasions Hauptmann says that undiluted tragedy is not for weak and sensitive audiences, but demands strong nerves. The uninhibited passions which dominate the action originate in extreme cases of human suffering, often in bloodshed, and they indicate the predominance of the darker side of life. The hero's destructive tendencies gradually gain complete hold over his mind as the action leads him inexorably into the situation where they will irrupt into violent bloodshed. The catastrophe, involving the sacrifice of human life, represents the climax of the action, where the tragedy of existence is revealed in one moment of intense horror. In the early 'Tragödien' the effect on the audience was gained primarily through the sight of the victim subjected to extreme suffering but in the 'Atridentetralogie' the effect is heightened by the nature of the crime. Murder within the family evokes a greater degree of horror than ordinary slaughter and revenge drives the various Atrides to kill a daughter, a husband and a mother, whilst a fourth murder of

2. CA VII p. 80
a sister is only just avoided. The full horror of these crimes is only realised when it becomes clear that the murderer also falls victim to his crime. Having thought of it as a means of salvation, he comes to realise that his revenge has driven him to commit the one action which renders his suffering irrevocable and cuts him off finally from the world of the living. In this respect Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' resemble those of ancient Greece. They are based on the pathos of illusion with the climax of the action producing for the hero the tragic discovery that he has become a victim of his aggression. The catastrophe thus represents the moment of victory for the forces of destruction and this metaphysical interpretation of the climax of the action gives to it a further dimension which surpasses that of the fall of the individual hero.

Behind the 'tragic pattern' lies a "pattern of order" which illuminates the individual tragedy and which is peculiar to Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie'. It consists of a mythological framework of warring deities, whose conflicts mirror in poetic form the various opposing tendencies of creation. Life is determined by two factors, birth and death, one a constructive impulse, one a destructive. This basic fact of existence is represented mythologically by the conflict between the life-giving Olympian gods and their destructive underworld rivals. When men are caught up in this conflict, they are forced to realise the dramatic dilemmas of existence. Tragedy occurs when they become victims of the upsurge of the destructive side of life. Man becomes inhuman and commits murders and outrages which perpetuate the reign of darkness. Tragedy can only be resolved when the two sides of creation, the warring deities, are reconciled. A harmonious balance can only be restored when the underworld forces retire back to the underworld. In rational terms this involves the return of instinctive forces into the subconscious
allowing man to reassert once more his control over life. Tragedy is thus "eine Art hölzlenzwang". Hauptmann reenacts the process whereby human victims are sacrificed to the forces of destruction whose upsurge into life is thus temporarily averted. From the moment when the hero loses contact with humanity in pursuit of his goal, he becomes death's living victim and the forces of death can only be assuaged by blood. One murder however simply leads to demands for a further victim, as human blood attracts the powers of darkness into the light. The only resolution to the chain of tragedy is for the victim to offer himself in self-sacrifice. Such an action demands a realisation of the true nature of existence but in the 'Tragödien' it does not lead to redemption, as in 'Indípódi'. The suicide of tragedy is born of genuine insight, not of despair, but it is an insight into the power of death, not of love. The heroes of tragedy become immune to the tender feelings of genuine humanity and are thus cut off from the redemptive power of love. When face to face with the tragedy of existence they can either follow their instinct for life and perpetuate the conflicts which beset man or they can realise that normal life is beyond them, accept their fate and by finally committing themselves to death terminate the particular incursion of the destructive powers into life which their case represents. Like Iphigenic, they hear voices and they follow these voices which determine their existence. Tragedy focuses on the destructive side of human life, being but one side of the coin.

Hauptmann's stress on the undiluted portrayal of the power over human lives exerted by the destructive side of existence raises the question of the author's attitude. Are his 'Tragödien' celebrations of murder and violence? Does he take delight in presenting the rule of darkness and death, in evoking a world of nightmares? Do the 'Tragödien' represent, as Paul Fechter has said, the dissolution of humanistic

3. CA VII p. 100
4. cf. Michaelis op.cit. p. 319, where he refers to this as 'Anruf aus der Tiefe'.

ideals in the mass psychology of the modern era? To suggest this is to contradict the author's own comments on his attitude. He saw his creation of 'Tragödien' as a terrible duty which he was obliged to fulfil if his work was to encompass the whole of existence. He called it "ein Leiden und ... ein Sichwehren wider das Tragische." The author must continually look Medusa in the eye and his 'Tragödien' are the cry of revolt at the sight. In his short story 'Siri' he talks of "der Mutschrei eines Geknebelten." "Ohne Liebe keine Tragödie" Hauptmann had said to K.L. Tank. His 'Tragödien' are a result of his love for humanity, which is deeply wounded by the sight of the predominance of creation's destructive impulses. Throughout the 'Tragödien' these are shown as hostile to humanity. The gods, their mythological representation, are presented as merciless, pitiless creatures, who play cat and mouse with men. Their demands are horrific and the nearer man approaches godlike status, the more he becomes cut off from humanity, "Grauenvoll", "gänzlos", "furchtbar", "verruch", "grausam", these are the adjectives applied to both gods and heroes. When a hero is referred to as "götternah", it implies that he has lost all human feeling, is ready to act in an inhuman, cruel manner and has become immune to the redemptive power of compassion and love. Such are the tragic heroes, characters reduced to the bare essentials of violent impulses. They are victims of the destructive side of their nature, the side linked poetically with the chthonic forces of the cosmos, the gods of the underworld. The 'Tragödien' do not celebrate the victory of the Olympians; they are based on the essential conflict of the deities behind existence and they portray the upsurge of the underworld forces into the light and the ravages which they create there until their demands are satisfied. Symbolised by the pack of Errinyen, they pursue their human prey until he falls irrevocably into their grasp; The tragic action thus resembles a sacrificial ritual, as the hero falls victim to

6. GA VI p. 928.
7. GA X pp. 372 - 441
8. Ibid p. 394
9. K.L. Tank op. cit. p.133
these forces. Trusting in his basic impulses he does not achieve the desired salvation but disintegrates, loses all claim to humanity and finally fulfils his appointed role as the human victim. His life urge being destructive, it leads him directly into the grasp of death.

The clash of intensely passionate characters in an atmosphere bordering on the irrational, where all the forces which influence man are shown as natural phenomena, external and superior to him, creates a full-blooded depiction of the dangers of inhumanity which challenges rational attempts to reduce it to familiar terms. Hauptmann uses the primitive, mythological fable in place of everyday reality, so that the spell which the 'Tragödie' casts over the audience may enable them to penetrate the mystery of existence and sense the essential phenomena of life which are beyond rational comprehension. Psychologically motivated representations of the ritual of human sacrifice, Hauptmann's 'Tragödien' fuse the metaphysical tragedy of the ancients with the psychological tragedy of the moderns and in so doing add a further dimension to the genre.

Yet the 'Tragödien' only represent one aspect of the author's late work. Seen in the overall context, their role becomes clearer. Hauptmann's Greek experience had also taught him to affirm life. "Heiterkeit" is the aim. As late as 1941 the author can still write: "Im tiefsten Grunde aller Tragik, wie sie die Kunst versteht, liegt Freude."10 This belief in the value of human existence is seen in the longing for utopia on earth which is expressed in 'Der neue Christophorus'. The impetus behind the late work is thus "salvation for all". Yet the author cannot deny the night side of existence. It must therefore be evoked without its true nature being diluted and man must learn to accept it and still affirm life, as the Greeks had done. Such full-blooded presentation cannot appeal to the weak and sensitive.

10. Kunst des Dramas p. 216
but to those with strong nerves who can bear intense emotion. Only in this way can the horrors of existence be understood, accepted and thus overcome "Der Orkus soll verschüttet werden: das ist die Riesenarbeit der Menschheit." Hauptmann thus conceives of 'Tragödie' as a powerful testimony to the destructive side of creation by means of which its consequences may be exorcised and the way opened for man to progress towards a resolution of life's conflicts. As such it is a genuine modern parallel to the propitiatory ritual of religious sacrifice from which it originally developed. It inspires an intense sensation of horror as one extreme example of the cruelty of creation is acted out. When the victim has been sacrificed and the tension is released, a genuine tragic discovery follows as we realise that the deeper recesses of men's minds are governed by natural forces over which we have no rational control. Hope must be tempered with respect for the ever-present threat of destruction. Gerhart Hauptmann's concept of 'Tragödie' does not only illuminate one side of our modern predicament. By opening our minds to the dangers of inhumanity and showing it as one example of a basic cosmic phenomenon, it offers modern man a metaphysical dimension to life and allows him to come to terms with existence on a much more secure basis. The 'Tragödien' are the prerequisites for man's attainment of a realistic utopia, the result of years of heart-searching by a humanist caught up in the chaos of the twentieth century.
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